

Capstone Synthesis Paper

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There are certain aspects a teacher needs to research when creating a plan for each child to succeed. These areas are cultural diversity, trauma, intervention, human relations, and positive behavior systems. These five areas each are different, however, are all connected through building relationships with the student and parents. Each student is different and brings something different to the classroom.

Cultural Diversity

Cultural diversity is very complex and far more diverse than just ethnicity. Values, beliefs, stereotypes, and past experiences may influence the way an educator behaves in the classroom. However, the educator needs to realize that each student is individually different than the next. Therefore, it is necessary for a teacher to create a plan for each child to succeed. When teaching a culturally diverse student, a teacher needs to realize that many school factors may play a role in how the student will succeed. Some of these factors are how the school deals with diversity, the atmosphere the school brings, or the curriculum.

“Of all these factors, the personal and academic relationships between teacher and their students may be most influential. This relationship has been referred to as the “core relationship” of learning the role of teacher and students, the subject matter, and their interaction in the classroom” (Sandbox Networks, 2011, p.1).

Creating a relationship where the student fully trusts the teacher will benefit the child throughout the rest of the school year. In learning more about the student, where he/she came from, the stories they have, or the life they used to live will help the teacher accommodate the student more. The teacher can use specific strategies to help student learn, such as using visuals, repetition, group work, giving clear directions, and knowing their background information. One

example of this is in the creation of lesson plans. The teacher could make these lesson plans more meaningful and relate them back to something in the real world for that student. An important aspect to remember when teaching diverse students is to appreciate all the new information he/she will learn from the students about their different cultures. The differences between the cultures is something to remember when teaching them. According to Sandbox Networks (2011), “Effective teachers of culturally diverse students acknowledge both individual and cultural differences enthusiastically and identify these differences in a positive manner” (p.1). Creating a warm, safe environment and positive behavior in the classroom will provide the diverse students the sense that the teacher cares for their future.

Trauma

Trauma is very individualized and can affect each student in a different way. There is no measurable way to see how trauma may affect each student. Therefore, a teacher will need to ask himself/herself how should we help children who have had a traumatic event succeed? In the Paper Tigers Documentary, it showed that children who have experienced trauma are wired for survival and are constantly in fight or flight mode. If children are constantly in that mode, how are they going to be able to sit through a class and comprehend what the teacher is teaching? It all starts with one caring adult. Therefore, a necessary first step to take is creating a relationship between the teacher and student.

“Rebecca S. Brown, LCSW suggest these strategies in working with students impacted by trauma: clarify your role with the student, establish yourself as a safe individual, create an environment of respect, give the student opportunities to make choices, talk about safety and what steps you will take to help the student be and feel safe” (Ingram, n.d., p. 23).

Being able to connect with the student and let them know that they are not alone will go a long way. This will also help in creating a warm and safe environment. One approach teachers will need to take to create this type of setting is have a predictable routine and structure. Another approach is to create a separate place in the classroom that is used when students need to calm down. This space will be filled with comfortable seating, warm colors, visuals, sensory materials, and calming music. Creating a safe environment will make sure the student knows they are safe in the classroom, emotionally and psychically.

Intervention

Creating a relationship with the student is crucial. In my interview with Jody Cymbaluk, she talked about the strategies she uses when she needs to intervene. Jody stated, “One of the most important lessons to take away from this interview is when parents are upset, always talk face-to-face and never over technology.” When people communicate over technology, meaning gets lost. Jody also said that it is important to give clear boundaries and expectations of what to expect for the upcoming year. Expectations are also important to give to the students at the beginning of the year. Therefore, when a teacher needs to intervene, he/she can think back to the expectations and boundaries she established in the beginning of the year. The last important piece I learned from Jody is to always keep documentation. She explained to me how she keeps a document for everything. If she discusses something with the parent she can go back and find exactly what she needs for that discussion. It will help the teacher be more organized and create stronger partnerships between the teacher and parent.

Human Relations

Jody Cymbaluk stated, “Each student is different and each student brings something new to the table; remember that.” When creating a plan that allows each child the chance to succeed,

a teacher needs to remember exactly what Jody said. A teacher will never know exactly what a student has gone through, whether that is a traumatic experience, getting bullied, or in the stage of transitioning. Therefore, creating a relationship with the student will allow him/her the chance to feel cared for and safe. “In order to value all of their students, effective teaching staff know their students, understand their contexts and embrace what their students bring and contribute to higher education” (Devlin, Kift, McKay, Nelson, Smith, 2012, p. 7). Communicating with the students and taking the chance to learn about their differences will help the teacher create a plan where each student succeeds. The other key relationship each teacher needs to foster is with the parents. Parents are the key to learning more about the student. Jody stated some strategies she uses to form a better relationship between her and the parents. First is create an open line of communication right at the beginning of the year. This will allow the relationship only to grow from there. Second, is to always try to involve them in the classroom. Jody said, “Let them be a part of field trips, classroom parties, or snack time. It will be huge to get them into the classroom and involved in their child’s learning.” One strategy I would implement in my classroom is to invite a parent to come in and present to the class either about what they do or what they like to do. One example of this is when we are learning about fire or combustion, if a parent is a fire fighter, then invite them in to present. This will allow the children to connect the lesson to a real-life situation and will help strengthen the relationship between the student, parent, and teacher.

PBS

Positive behavior support systems are implemented into school districts and classrooms around the country in hopes of promoting a specific desired outcome. For the specific system, I researched there were three tiers, with each tier representing something different. Tier one is an important part because it approached situations with a proactive approach instead of a reactive

approach. It consisted of rules, routines, and arrangements. For this tier to be effective, the teachers need to be consistent when enforcing the rules and routines. The second part of this tier is about praising appropriate behavior. When a teacher praises the student, the behavior the student was doing will reoccur. Tier two is different than tier one because it only involves some students. “Tier two support is designed to provide intensive or targeted interventions to support students who are not responding to Tier one support efforts” (PBIS, 2019, p.2). Tier two will focus more on smaller group interventions. That way, the students who need extra support will receive more attention and positive reinforcement. The highest tier on the pyramid is tier three, which is for only a few children. According to PBIS (2019), “Tier three support is provided to the 1-5% of students who may have very serious problem behaviors and may require more intensive and individualized supports” (p.3). The supports provided are used to reduce the targeted behavior, whether that be the frequency, duration, or intensity of it. Jody explained how she uses a positive behavior intervention in her classroom. She uses a system known as a stoplight. Each student starts on green, but once a student is misbehaving or not listening to the rules then Jody will tell the student to go move his/her stick to the yellow light. If the student continues to not listen or does something bad, such as hitting another student or the teacher, then the teacher will call the parents and the student will leave for the day. Jody explained that everyday each student starts over. Therefore, they all start on green again. Overall, a positive behavior support system can benefit every student in the classroom.

When creating a plan for each child to succeed, a teacher needs to remember that each child is different. Therefore, creating a relationship with the student and parents will allow the teacher to learn how each child learns best. One needs to remember that a child may have gone through something traumatic and not to take anything they say or do to heart. When talking to

the student or parent, it is important to remember that they are bringing new diversity to the table, which can be a learning experience in itself. Overall, when creating a plan, it is important to take into account how the teacher would like to be treated in that specific situation and proceed from there.

References

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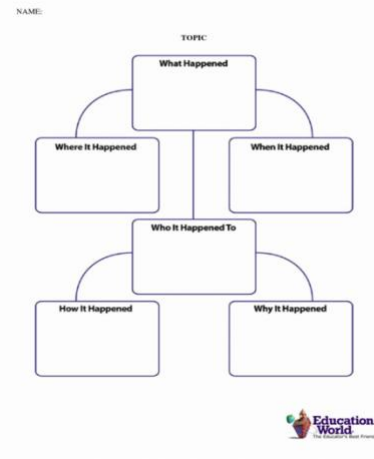
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Appendix: Cultural Diversity

There are three specific tools that I would use for part of my cultural diversity plan.

Teachers need to come up with strategies to help their English language learner students. I have two strategies that I would like to use. The first one is using visuals as an aid. Visuals are a different way for the students to comprehend the information. If the students do not grasp what the teacher is saying or is going too fast, the use of a visual aid will help the teacher explain the information in a different way. Some visuals I would like to use are graphs, flow charts, pictures, or drawings.

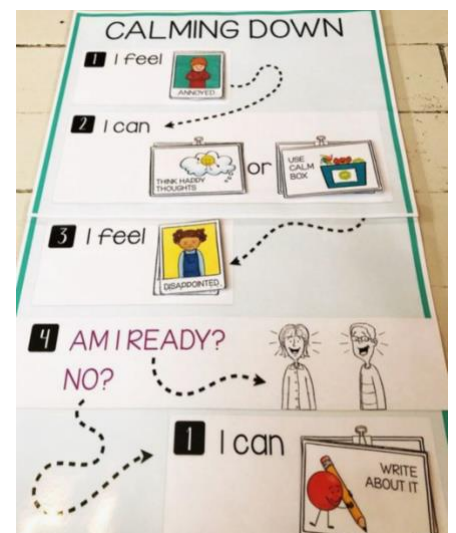
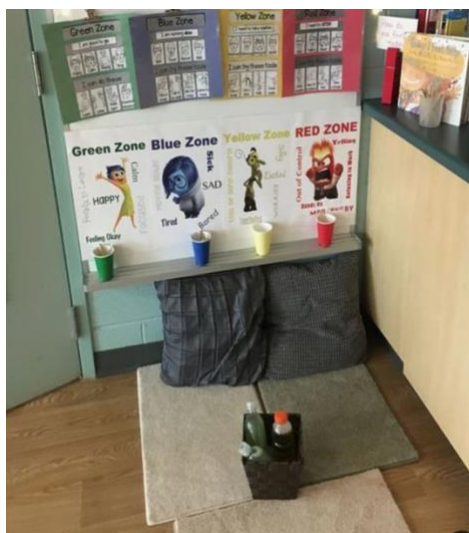


The second strategy I would use is repetition. This is something I would use for all of my students, but EL students would benefit greatly from it as well. One way to implement repetition in my class is through reviewing with the students. I could play a review game with the students. This would be a way to incorporate the information we review into a fun activity.



Appendix: Trauma

One of the most crucial parts of my trauma plan will be my “cozy corner”. This is a space that is separate from the rest of the room because this will give the student a chance to calm down in their own space. In a safe place, there will be a tent or curtains. This will allow the students to be partially closed off if they would like to be alone while they calm down or cry. There will also be visuals up. These visuals will have safe phrases, such as, ‘You are okay,’ ‘You are safe,’ ‘You are important.’ I will also have feeling cues up, because this will help the student show me how they are feeling without talking. The cozy corner will allow the students to calm down in a private place and they will be able to take as much time as they need.



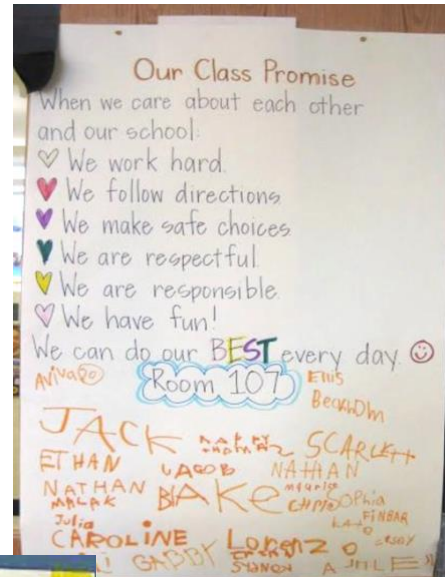
Appendix: Trauma

The other important part of my cozy corner is what I would put in it. I would create a kit filled with sensory items and headphones that are connected to calming music. The kit would be full of books, sensory bottles, fidgets, and pinwheels. I felt pinwheels would be important to add because it will help the student take deep breaths and calm down in a visual manner. Fidgets, sensory bottles, or squishy toys are something that the child could use to calm down and take their mind off the situation that triggered them.



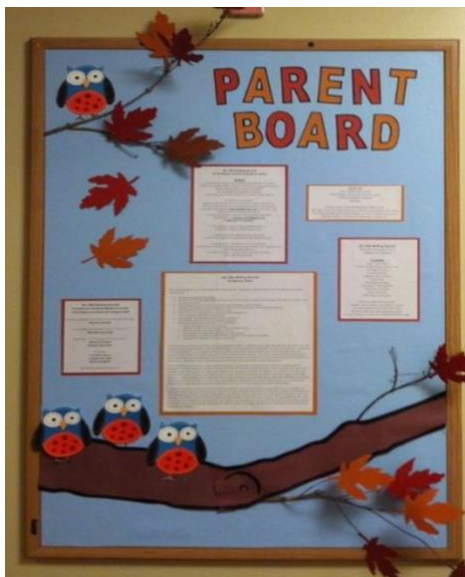
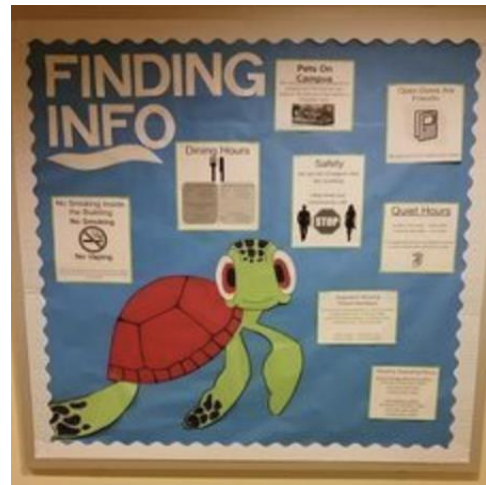
Appendix: Intervention

One aid for intervention that I will look to is the rules and expectations that my class and I created in the beginning of the year. I think it would be important to create the rules of the classroom together. Therefore, at the beginning of the year each student will create some promises they would like to see and then as a class we go through them and discuss them. Once all the students and I have decided on the classroom rules, I will create a poster board and each student will sign it. This is also a sign of documentation. Each student will know the rules and if they break them, I relate back to that poster.



Appendix: Human Relations

Human relations include involving the parents. Therefore, I need to create an information board specifically for the parents in my classroom. This board will be in one corner of the room and will consist of the calendar, important events, a suggestion tab, sign-up sheet for volunteering, and the monthly newsletter. This board will be a way for the parents to come in and learn what events they can get involved in. The information board will also be a way to connect with the parents and strengthen my relationship with them. This will ultimately help the students succeed, because the parents will be involved in their education.



Appendix: PBS

The positive behavior support system that I researched had three tiers. The first tier consists of rules, routines, and expectations. This tier is for all of the students in the classroom. The second tier is only for some of the students. In this tier, the teacher works in smaller group work. This will allow the student to get the attention they need. The third tier is only for a few of the students. In this tier, the goal is to reduce the intensity and frequency of the certain behavior.

