### **Diane McCabe Smith**

### **Plan for Managing the Learning Environment**

1. **Building Relationships:** Routine strategies are those methods you employ regularly to build and maintain relationships. Intervention strategies are used to overcome a relationship gap for specific students or situations.

Building Relationships		
Strategy for daily use	Description and Rationale	
Greeting and welcoming students at the door.	Most teachers have shifted to the greeting at the door approach to welcoming their students into the classroom. For elementary schools, the morning greeting is truly important for setting the standard for the day. If a student is walking into the school perhaps tired, feeling harassed, upset about anything that happened before school began and then is greeted by a smiling teacher or staff before heading to the classroom can pivot a child into the positive. Many teachers have emotional charts outside of their doors for a student to indicate what mood they are feeling in. This is good on a couple levels. The student is feeling valued and seen about his or her current mood and feeling empowered by getting a chance to express the mood. Also the teacher is getting a good sense of what the current mood or tension of students is. If all students are coming in upset then the teacher can address that. If a student is feeling sad, confused or angry but not wanting to cause a scene, it allows them to indicate so to the teacher without causing a lot of attention to themselves. A good teacher will recognize this and approach the student once in the classroom while the others are unpacking.  Other methods of saying hello are asking the student to point to which greeting he or she would like. Here is an example poster of five ways to greet. Posters such as this can be purchased on Amazon.  GREETINGS!  Fist Bupp  Fist Bupp  Fist Bupp  Say Hello	

It could be a combination of both -the greeting and feelings. Other teachers may even add in sign language.

Research has shown that morning greetings by teachers will positively affect a student's day and that this will spill over into the classroom. Additionally for such a low cost strategy it has a huge impact on the student in the learning environment opening them up to better learning and better behavior.

The current research suggests one quick, simple antecedent intervention that can increase student on-task behavior during the first 10 min of class. Merely greeting a student at the door with his or her name and a brief, genuine pleasantry increased student on-task behavior.

Allday, R. A., & Pakurar, K. (2007). Effects of teacher greetings on student on-task behavior. Journal of applied behavior analysis, 40(2), 317–320. https://doi.org/10.1901/jaba.2007.86-06

#### Getting to know students

Not only does the individual morning greeting help a teacher get a good sense of how his or her student is arriving at school each day but it helps with getting to know each student individually. If a student is routinely upset each day, a teacher is more likely to take note of this if seeing it immediately. But also learning the outside interests of students is extremely important. This aids in being able to hold a conversation with students. Teaching isn't all about delivering instruction. Teachers need to focus on the challenges a student is facing and observe the learning styles of students so teaching and instruction can be tailored to accommodate these findings. But a teacher also needs to get to know the strengths of students, too.

Research is showing that a student that feels like they have a healthy relationship with their teacher will perform better because of a desire to learn.

Rimm-Kaufman, S & Sandilos, L. (2010). Improving Students' Relationships with Teachers to Provide Essential Supports for Learning. American Psychological Association, https://www.apa.org/education-career/k12/relationships

Be approachable and show a genuine interest.
Community circles - morning meetings.

I smile often especially in the hallways when passing all students - even the surly ones that eventually come around to me. I say good morning, good afternoon, how are you? I include as many normal greetings as I can. I've been known to dance with students, attempting the latest tik tok dance moves and doing farmer brown jumps. I hang out with students in the hallway during the indoor morning lineup. They tell me about all manner of things, ranging from last

night's dream, what they plan to do at dismissal, to who they are visiting on a weekend.

Being approachable to all students is essential. If a teacher isn't approachable then the idea of learning about the interests of your student is off the table. Holding morning meetings where the teacher asks what everyone did over the weekend is a good start. Most teachers in my school hold morning meetings and squirrel time, which is a time of reflection or discuss school issues of importance.

#### Creating a Supportive Environment

Classrooms should have an atmosphere where students feel safe, valued, and respected. No students should feel silenced or discouraged from speaking and engaging in a conversation with peers or the teacher. Again, this atmosphere begins with a morning greeting.

### Outside classroom - on school premises

Hanging out during recess and making yourself accessible for chats and walkabouts I feel is a must - even if once a week. I love being at recess. I have a student that I call my Magnet because she sticks so closely to me. Because others see her strolling with me causes me to pick up others who see that I'm approachable and available to be silly during recess.

#### **Book lending**

Teachers can find their own thing that connects with students but mine is book lending. I continue to supply lots of books in my classroom. I allow students to come in, browse, and take books to read. There are two rules: 1) the book must be read, and 2) do not bend the books. I've been doing this for years and it's such an easy way to connect with most students. I also enjoy filling in book requests. If I don't have it, I promise to look for it at the Thrift Store. I feel like I am helping promote the love of reading. Students like to come in and talk to me about books they are reading. I also have the other service of giving my extras to the media center. At some point during the year funding for new books always dries up, so I let my media specialist turn to my supply.

## Greeting upon virtual arriving

Teaching virtually means no one is coming through the door, instead, they are being accepted into a virtual layout - a head and shoulders on the screen. As students arrive into the waiting room and then accepted into the classroom, teachers should still have a method of greeting each student by name. By doing this there is an established sense of belonging and connection. Personally greeting each student eliminates that feeling of isolation which can be felt by distant learning. It's also a good way for the teacher to take attendance.

#### **Community circles**

Just like a morning meeting, the teacher can initiate an opportunity for each student to tell the rest of the class about their day, weekend or any other news. Taking it in turns and respecting one another is the

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	same practice used when sat on a carpet doing the same activity.	
Options for responding	Options to respond can vary. The teacher can offer responses by chat, by being on camera and verbally responding, allowing thumbs up / thumbs down to agree or disagree with other student comments.	
My availability before, during and after the school day. Monitored chat groups.	It became apparent to me early on that some students were getting lonely and feeling isolated from friends. I always made myself available online before class began, during lunch and after school. I was home myself, it was during the pandemic and I generally didn't have anywhere to run off to. I'd even let students set up chat playdates so they could connect with each other. They knew I was online too, but that was my rule for it to happen. I'd mostly monitor it and make sure it didn't go sideways. Sometimes it involved playing a game of e-hangman and I'd be invited to play, too.  I never missed a birthday. My daughter would laugh that all her	
Birthday celebrations and other achievements.	classmates and teachers could hear me and my students belting out happy birthday songs from my basement office. If there was any other interesting news I always wanted to hear it and allow my students to share with their classmates.	
I dropped off goodie bags at my students' doorsteps.	I enjoyed recognizing celebration days just like we did for brick and mortar schooling. I'd create goodie bags and drive around delivering them to my students. I still get thanked for doing this and it's been a couple of years since it happened. I would have my son run and drop them at the door. I figured he looked less suspicious running to doors.	
Strategy for interventions	Description and Rationale	
Community Circle - suggestion box	At our school we have something called Squirrel Time - this is a time for teachers and students to discuss school community issues. A third grade teacher colleague allows her students to discuss problems and then provide problem solving options. She doesn't allow grumbling sessions or targeting and identifying one on one problems. No names or finger pointing are allowed, either. She has a "Suggestion Box" where issues can be reported.	
Building student relationships with teachers	One strategy a teacher can use for increasing a positive relationship with any students is to start with a plan. Pick three ways to have an interaction with those students that are a struggle to connect with. For example it can include a greeting (morning), include a positive conversation (in-class), recess or lunchtime and do one physical and allowable interaction such as a high five or a wave. While this seems forced, that will only be at the beginning, then it will feel normal for	

	both student and teacher.
Encourage peer to peer positive interactions	Come up with a plan where students can complement each other. This can be in the form of filling out "Shout Outs" tickets that are collected and read out once a week during a class meeting. All Shout Outs must be positive. I have a colleague who does this and it's fun to be a part of. I've even been on the receiving end of these Shout Outs which I still have on my desk.

2. **Classroom Norms:** Classroom norms are the foundation of a safe, engaging, student-centered learning environment. List 3-5 explicit, concise, and positively framed norms that will guide the learning environment.

#### **Classroom Norms and Behavior Expectations**

- Have Respect and have a good attitude. The golden rule or bible quote of "treat others as you want to be treated" (Luke 6:31) is useful for the classroom. Respecting each other by accepting our strengths and flaws is necessary for a classroom. We must also come to class with a positive attitude and be available to support fellow classmates with their learning.
- Participation. Active participation is not only more enjoyable, but it stops the teacher from ruling the roost with the instruction. It also promotes the sharing of ideas and encourages collaboration between classmates. Allowing for discussions as a whole group or even by table group helps teach students how to interact with one another.
- **Be inclusive.** While it shouldn't have to be stated, teachers need to remind students that they are all important and that they should be inclusive with one another. Everyone must have an equal chance to be heard and respected. Only when this is happening will a positive classroom atmosphere be achieved.
- **Be cooperative:** Knowing how to cooperate with classmates is important and should be practiced often. By refusing to work with others, or actively snubbing other classmates is combative and aggressive.
- It's ok to Make Mistakes: Why else would students be in school? It's to learn and students need to understand this. They also need to know and learn that mistakes are ok as long as we can learn something from them. It is not an opportunity to be disrespectful with someone. We can say, "That's ok, it's a good start but how can we improve?"

#### Strategies or Modifications for the Virtual Learning Environment

• **Respect:** The teacher should model respectful behavior and responses. Show active listening and waiting for a turn to speak. Discourage disrespect and deal with it

Section 2 cont... & Section 3

immediately. Continue to emphasize that being respectful with one another is important.

- Participation: Teachers should encourage active participation by requesting that screens are turned on Also provide for various participation options. Allow students to submit written options, audio submissions, and use of chat. Hand raising can be done with the "blue hand raise" button. I once made a full size blue hand on a popsicle stick for each of my students for them to raise up to the screen because I kept forgetting to notice the virtual hand raise.
- **Provide Feedback:** The teacher should offer feedback to all students. If feedback is addressing behavior, don't only point out when your students are not performing as expected, remember to reward all students verbally about good behavior, too.
- 3. **Routines and Procedures:** Clear and consistent routines and procedures assist teachers in managing their learning environment effectively. List out your top 3-5 routines and procedures that you would implement in your classroom.

Clear Routines and Procedures		
Situation	Steps and accommodations (as needed)	
School arrival and greeting at the door.	<ul> <li>When the bell rings, the teacher should be at the door to greet each student.</li> <li>Use a displayed poster to ask how each student wishes to be greeted, a wave, a hug, a fist bump/high five or something else like a little jig.</li> <li>Have students enter the classroom and proceed with unstacking and unpacking.</li> <li>Some students with morning jobs, such as pencil sharpening and straightening up books, should do that.</li> </ul>	
GREETINGS!  Whigh-Five  Fist Bump  Hug  Handshake  Say Hello	Modifications:  If a student is pushing in line / cutting classmates to get to me. I ask them to please respect fellow students that were ahead of them and go back to their spot.  A student charging at me to tattle on a classmate. I ask the student if it is catastrophic and if not, please wait in line and I will deal with it once in the classroom.  A student is eagerly taking a long time to tell me something, then I will ask that they hold the story a little longer and I can't wait to give my full attention to it once we are in the classroom.	

Morning routine after morning greeting at the door.



Source: Lakeshore Learning online catalog

- Unstack chairs and unpack backpack. Place all items including lunch in assigned cubbies.
- Put green take home folders on the desk.
- Sit down at desks and either read, finish some unfinished work or color.
- By desk groupings (blue, green, red, and yellow) hand any parent notes, completed forms or change of dismissal plans to the teacher. Place any homework pages in the "Homework Turn-in bin".

#### **Modifications:**

I find out a student is darting around the classroom while chairs are still up. I shake my head and remind the darting student not to run around and remind the class that I have a fear of students poking themselves in the eye with the chair legs, so please take them down and settle down. My students are usually right at that inconvenient height with chair legs. A student once poked himself in the eye with a chair leg and I've been a bit freaky about it ever since.

### Discuss daily agenda schedule.



Source: Zippi Kids-Teacher Resources

- Teacher discusses the plan for the day using the daily agenda schedule with designated times for various subjects, activities, transitions, and breaks throughout the school day.
- As the teacher goes from one subject to subject, the subject agenda for the day is also discussed.

#### Dismissal routine



- While seated at desks, give out reminders about homework, announcements, and other matters.
- Give a run down on what work will be on tap for the next day.
   Ask if anyone has any questions
- Ask if everyone knows their dismissal plans especially if after school clubs have freshly started.
- Call students by desk color to go pack up and stack their chairs then go to the carpet.

Wait for the Principal's announcements.

#### **Modifications:**

If a student claims to be walking home with a friend "walker" or going on a different bus but this is news to me, I will make the student sit down while I check emails, call the office for any dismissal updates and contact the parents by Remind. It's my responsibility to look after my students and I can't let them dictate to me plans I have not been informed about by parents or the main office. The student will need to wait until I get confirmation either way.

#### **Routines for the Online Classroom:**

#### Virtual Entry Room.

Please wait, the meeting host will let you in soon

Personal Meeting Room

Source: zoom screenshot

#### **Greetings** for **Virtual** Morning Meetings

If you can see all students' faces:
• Funny Face Greeting – each student makes a funny

- Wink Greeting each student winks to the group
- Wave Greeting each student waves to the group
   Baby Shark Greeting each student does a "baby shark chomp" to the group
- ASL "Good Morning" Greeting each student signs

For the online distance learning classroom, students do not physically arrive at school, instead students log on to a virtual platform's waiting room. This is the equivalent to students physically lining up outside a brick and mortar classroom.

- Open the waiting room 15 mins before the start of school. This is the virtual check-in.
- Accept all students into the online class at once.
- The teacher greets students once the entire class is "in". Start the morning greeting saying each student's name.
- The teacher can do a virtual equivalent of greeting each student with greetings for virtual: Funny face, wink, wave, etc.
- This is a good time to do digital attendance.

#### **Modifications**:

If a student refuses to talk with the camera on, I will encourage all camera use and remind students of the requirement to be on camera. I will ask that a student send me a chat to explain why he or she is not on camera.

I continue to say hello and tell the student it would be nice to see his or her smiling face. If I suspect there is something else happening, such as chronic shyness, I will offer the use of chat to the student to say good morning. Hopefully this will gain the student's trust.

I may also offer to talk to the student during a break in a break out room.

## Morning routine, after greeting.

Source: EdTech Classroom



- The teacher asks all students if there are any changes in the day for the students, such as leaving early.
- If homework was set and to be submitted through Canvas, or whatever platform is being used, find out who didn't complete it.
- Go to the teacher slides and discuss what is coming up for the day.

#### **Modifications:**

some other way.

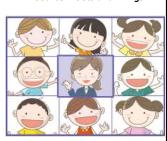
If a student keeps calling out and not waiting his or her turn, remind all students that it is expected that they wait their turn and that I will get to each and everyone one of them. If homework is not being completed, work with the students to find out what is happening. Perhaps the student is still unsure how to submit work. Perhaps the student prefers to submit it

# Discuss plan for the online schedule's day.



- Discuss the schedule which is being shared to students on a shared screen. Go through the order for the structured online schedule which should include designated times for the live synchronous day, independent work (asynchronous), and all breaks, lunch time, and dismissal. Go through it line-by-line. Ask if there are questions.
- During the day as each new subject begins, the teacher will repeat the process concerning the subject making sure students know what is expected of them.

### End-of-Day Routine. Source: Roots and Winas



- The Teacher should review key points from the day.
- The teacher should ask if anyone still has any questions about the current day's work.
- The Teacher should repeat the assignments instructions and expectations to be submitted, if any assigned.
- School-wide announcements should be announced such as, "Remember tomorrow is a non-instructional day for students".
- Say goodbye to all students.
- Offer to stay on line to chat with any students needing to talk.

#### **Modifications**:

If a student continually interrupts, I mute all from my end and I explain my need to do this as a reminder.

If a student is confused about the dismissal messages, I can offer to stay online and explain anything.

4. **Transitions:** Plan your transitions with a step-by-step process in the table below, and model with students within the first weeks of school. Review and practice these transitions with students after extended breaks, midyear, and when you add a new student to your class.

Transitions		
Situation	Steps	
Whole group to small group to my kidney table.  Learning Station #1 Small Group Instruction  Learning Station #3 Online Learning  Learning Station #3 Online Learning  Learning Station #4 Collaborative Project  Image source: https://catlintucker.com/2015/07/creating-small-learning-communities-with-the-station-rotation-model/	<ul> <li>I start the lesson "whole group" with an activity based on the subject we are learning. This serves as either an introduction to our subject or a way to check-in to see what we know and have done so far or already know It can also serve as a warm up activity. My whole group can be completed while students are on the carpet or seated at their desks.</li> <li>Once that whole group activity has finished, I will announce the small group activities (the entire class is involved moving to stations).</li> <li>The goals and instructions for the group work are given reminders regarding acceptable behavior – walking/running, noise levels, who is responsible for collecting materials etc. is all reviewed. I remind my students of expectations while in small groups. I will also go over each of the activities set at the stations.</li> <li>If a small group is being pulled to my kidney table at the back of the class, then that will be announced too,</li> </ul>	

explaining what the small group will be doing with me versus what I expect the rest of my students to be working on.

- If I am working with small group stations, there will be a timer set for each station, and my students will know that all the supplies needed will be provided at each station.
- If I am working with a select few students on my back table/kidney, they will know what items to bring to the table, such as workbooks, otherwise, I will have everything on the table that will be needed.
- Once it's time to transition from my whole group teaching to small group(s) I will have a signal with my bell to get their attention. I also use a countdown of 3-2-1 with a call and response of \*clap, clap\* "Class, Class", "Yes, Yes"
- There will be a visual timer set with 30 seconds for students allowing for students to go to their station.
- My students will now transition to their next activity quietly and with careful speed.
- If my small groups are moving from station to station, they will be aware of who is in their group by looking at the chart on the boxlight showing exactly which group is in what activity. There will be a timer showing too. With these types of groups, I will walk around not only to ensure everyone is acting in accordance with our classroom expectations, but to be on hand to answer questions and help with any difficult tasks that come up.
- If I'm pulling my small group to my kidney table, this information will also be posted on my box, showing which students are coming to me - what materials they should bring

and our goal. The rest of the class will see on this same screen their work to be completed too. Again, I will have a timer visible to the class.

- Once the time is approaching for stations to be rotated, all groups will be given the same 1 minute warning time for cleaning up the station. (This time might be adjusted depending on the activities.)
- Once our time is up for either the small group stations or the small group at the kidney table, I will bring everyone back together to discuss our activities. I'll make sure my students have understood their activities and also I can answer any questions as well as let my whole group share their thoughts.
- I can finally discuss and address any moments of frustrations felt by any groups or individual students. We can hammer out any details to make it an even better experience next time. I value my students' opinions and ideas oftentimes our discussions provide me with some great ideas to include in our future day-to-day activities.
- Students will be instructed to silently move around the class to their small group stations.
- Students are positively encouraged to continue completing the assignment.
- The students are given positive reinforcement for a job well done.

#### **Bathroom Transitions**

After recess (indoor or outdoor)

I've had different ways to transition my students to the bathroom. My choice of bathroom routine depends on the grade, classroom location, expectations set out by the school, my grade teammates and the time of day.

 I'm consistent with reminders about the expectations of knowing what proper hygiene is, not going into the bathroom to play, socialize or harass someone. To make No <u>PENCILS</u> or other

CLASSROOM OBJECTS

are allowed in the bathroom.
Leave outside.

Source: Poster created by DianeMcCabeSmith for custodians' use.

sure my students understand giving someone privacy - remind students not to look under stalls or do anything silly like flashing each other. I expect that hands are washed - but I do remind my students to always wash their hands, and I will even ask upon return if hands were washed.

Sometimes, I get an "Oh" or an "Oops" so I just smile and send the student back.

- My students know I expect them to keep the bathrooms clean by correctly disposing of paper towels, not splashing the water and of course, flushing toilets.
- My students are advised to tell me of any inappropriate behavior by other students, or if the bathrooms are messed up, or perhaps a toilet is blocked.
- No one is supposed to make any detours or play in the hallway. Students must walk directly to and from the bathroom. Students mustn't run unless it is a desperate and sudden need for the bathroom. In that case, I may pop my head out the door and keep an eye on the student to visually see that my student has headed directly to the bathroom, as requested.

#### After recess - indoor/outdoor

- In most cases, the teacher picks up the class from either outside lineup or from the indoor recess location.
- Students follow the teacher in single file walking to the classroom. Last year, I moved my class to the far end of the hallway away from the APR/cafeteria and other grades moving in and out for lunch because it was getting too congested and chaotic. They line up against the right hand side hallway wall, then take turns for the bathroom and water fountain. They know to wait until someone else comes out if more than three students need to go.

- Not all students require going to the bathroom.
- Once we have all regrouped we quietly walk up a floor to our classroom continuing in single file.

#### From the classroom

• My students indicate a need to go to the bathroom using either a school-wide used hand signal, or a predetermined signal agreed on by the class at the start of the year. I can nod yes, or hold up my finger to quietly say, "wait" meaning I may have two boys or two girls already out. As soon as a student returns to class I can nonverbally indicate that the next student can go.

Last year my class and I were lucky to have bathrooms located nearby on either side of us (including a staff bathroom) and at the end of the hallway in the main school entry area. I could potentially send eight students at the same time to all four locations.

I never found my bathroom breaks disruptive - we had a pretty good system down.

Presently my students are asking to go to the "Woods" leftover from our Benchmark Unit 7 on Investigating the past and I did my Pioneer Day — which lasts more than one day. As a Pioneer on the Oregon Trail my Pioneers asked to go to the "woods" for the bathroom and the stream, river or waterfall for the water fountain. It usually lasts until the end of the year. One rule is not to be chased by a bear, attacked by a wolf, bitten by a snake, trip over branches or fall in the river.

#### Before we transition to a special

Before lining up to walk to our special, I start asking who needs to go to the bathroom while we are tidying up. Since specials are not that long, I don't want my students wasting the teacher's lesson and

time by running off to the bathroom.

Schools must practice up to 10 drills per school year. All practice fire drills are pre-scheduled with teachers notified. On the specific date and time, the fire drill alarm is initiated by the fire marshall. Silent flashing lights occur.

- Students and teachers stop what they're doing and immediately walk towards the classroom door and line up.
- No items should be taken with students and the only item the teacher takes is the emergency drill folder.
- Students will walk out of the classroom in an orderly single file maintaining silence while walking briskly along the school's pre-assigned evacuation route to the emergency exit.
- Each teacher's class has an assigned meeting place at least 50 feet away from the school building. In my school's case it is either on the back field or black top or further up the residential street in the front of the school.
- Students will stand facing away from the school and wait until the "all clear' is announced.
- Students will quietly return to the building in single file.

### Transition to practice fire drill





**Transitions for the Online Classroom:** 

## Transition to Break-out rooms (similar to stations)

You have been assigned to Breakout Room:

Breakout Room 2

Join Breakout Room

If breakout room sessions are serving as stations - each group completing different activities -then students will know the time each station will provide - usually 15-20 min sessions.

- Explain that students will be placed into pre-grouped breakout rooms. (If the teacher sets up the groups before class begins this will eliminate requests by students to be with friends.)
- Describe what the upcoming activity will be for the breakout rooms.
  - Include what the goal is for the groups working together.
  - Give the time amount the groups have in their breakout room.
  - Explain the station if students are working independently.
- Question the students to ensure they understand expectations of breakout room behavior.
  - Provide verbal praise to those students that know the expectations.
  - Re-explain any gaps in understanding to those students who do not know the expectations.
  - Explain how to ask for help from the teacher or get the teacher's attention.
- Remind students that the teacher will be popping into the breakout rooms to listen in or assist. (The teacher should attempt to spend an even amount of time with each breakout room. The teacher will not just be in the main room waiting for the session to be over.
- Countdown 3-2-1, or Ready, Set Go-to-Rooms or other forms of fun send off for sending students into the breakout rooms.

#### Transition bathroom breaks

Since distance learning means everyone uses their own facilities, this also opens up the classroom to many more disappearances to the bathroom at unscheduled times.

Section 4 cont...



Image Source: Created by DianeMcCabeSmith

It's important to have some consistency with the online classroom and it isn't conducive to learning if students are randomly leaving the screen.

I will go over the suggestion that students should go to the bathroom before they log on to class.

I can set bathroom breaks during brain breaks, and times when I have scheduled standing and movement breaks.

#### Transition to new subjects

#### Revised

During regular in person classes, there will also be subject changes. Virtual online school is no different. With the exception of specials (Art, Mexia, Music, & PE) and definitely in the lower grades, students tend to stay with the same teacher all day. There needs to be good procedures to help students vswitch subjects seamlessly and without confusion.

It's important to give students ample time to prepare for a subject change occurring shortly. The teacher should have gone over the day's schedule at the start of the school day as well providing prompts often by using timers, verbal and visual reminders.

While students won't need to move to a different area of the virtual classroom, they may need to have different materials on hand for a switch. At the start of the school day it would be good for the teacher to go over all the materials needed for the day followed up by reminders prior to the new instruction block beginning. For example when I switched to math, I made sure that my slides included images of the books needed, plus I would hold up images of the Eureka books or the actual book. Students could hold up their materials to the screen, too.

 To show a transition is in progress, the teacher could have a consistent routine, such as brain break and soft music to indicate a change. Also the slides being displayed wou;d show a change is coming up. This would serve as a reset period to get ready and collect materials needed for the next block of instruction.

- For older grades, transitions may also involve students closing out one module or instructional video and opening another, or even logging off to join a different virtual classroom or breakout room.
- If some students are finding it hard to refocus and get ready for transition for example jumping around in front of the camera, clearly playing on the floor, banging things into the camera, teachers can find alternative ways to give these students extra reminders about the upcoming subject changes and scheduled breaks. It could be done through private chat, by holding up an object, providing gentle verbal reminders and visual reminders on the slides. (responsiveclassroom.org).

# Transition for exiting and leaving class/dismissal

In the same way teachers don't want student from the physical classroom leaving early on their own accord, the same can be said for the virtual classroom. Teachers should discourage students from leaving early and most certainly having students miss receiving important information. Ordinarily — more so older grades, before dismissal, all students should know where to find assignments and

have a chance to ask the teacher questions.

- Teachers should encourage students to exit class calmly without disturbing others who are still discussing the lesson with the teacher or classmates.
- Students that have alerted the teacher about leaving early. A calm goodbye or direct chat to the teacher is sufficient.
- 5. An Information-Intensive Environment: Creating an information-intensive environment, including various print and digital texts that are developmentally appropriate for your students, can enhance student vocabulary and contribute to a positive classroom climate. This section outlines the steps to create a developmentally appropriate information-intensive environment. Then, write a brief reflection on how your information-intensive environment will impact your classroom climate.

#### **Information Intensive Environment**

- Provide the ability for students to interact with a print-rich and information-intensive set of materials not only in the media center but in the individual classrooms.
- Provide a wide variety of reading materials, both fiction and non-fiction, research materials, primary sources, access to online digital media and research platforms (usually sourced by the media specialist).
- Create learning stations or have arrangements that allow students to learn through wholegroup teachings, discussions, debating, hands on projects, independent work, and smaller group work. Always make sure there are enough materials available to be successful.
- When engaged in research learning projects, allow for students to research, process and produce their findings as well as deliver a presentation in whatever mode of delivery available or offered. Display work.
- In classrooms, have easily accessible Chromebook carts where each student has access to his or her Chromebook for research.
- Critical thinking and researching. Right now my class has begun an opinion project on

"Should Zoos (or Aquariums) Exist?" While it is part of the Unit we are covering, the unit only has students read a simple opinion article. I am having my students research the topic, form an opinion, pros and cons, write an opinion piece, create a joint visual display for the hallway for others to see and then present their findings individually. Students will create a miniature model animal enclosure that shows plan improvements, then students will discuss ways how as a future generation for the animals enclosures can and should be improved.

- Provide enough materials and information that cover international and worldly information. Broaden materials from being American-centric, to a worldly perspective.
- By consulting with teachers, reading specialists and following the directions from the county, will help make good decisions on the inclusion of information that can mirror the way students look and feel, their cultures and traditions. Take the lens away from one culture to be multicultural.
- Create school events that continue to help students explore the world and its knowledge.
- Lastly, I think it's important for teachers to share their information-intensive approach with other teachers and students in the entire school (probably easier the smaller the school) so teachers can work together to make sure there are no gaps in the plan to be an information-rich environment as a school.

Research: 2017 Creating a Print-Rich Environment in the Classroom, Early Literacy Initiative Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Hyderabad, Practitioner Brief 8

#### How will your information-intensive environment impact your classroom climate?

In my opinion, providing a multitude of materials for students to access can only lead to a positive classroom climate for students. The climate will be exciting, as students maneuver through materials to find answers to what they seek. The climate will be inquisitive because students are finding new and interesting materials to dig deeper into inquiries. The environment will answer questions and promote creating more inquiries once the first set has been satisfied.

The information-intensive environment will result in teaching students to adeptly know how to utilize the information, with proper handling and analyzing what they find in a positive and effective way. This environment will keep students thinking and questioning. Like Generation Genius says, "Always question, always wonder."

6. **Technology Tools:** Technology can improve how you manage the learning environment by helping save instructional time, track trends in student behavior, create lines of communication with families, and even empower students to take leadership roles.

### W GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Section 6 cont...

6. Technology Tools: Technology can improve the way you manage the learning environment by helping save instructional time, track trends in student behavior, create lines of communication with families, and even empower students to take leadership roles. Integrate some technology tools for managing the learning environment in a physical and online classroom into this planning document and explain how you plan to use each.

Management Technology		
Technology	Rationale and Use	
	Technology used in the MCPSmd classroom can vary by grade, so I'll will concentrate on the elementary level use of technology	
	Teacher use	
Telephone	All classrooms have a regular telephone for internal and external landline calls. The office and health staff will call if the teacher doesn't not hear the overhead intercomm	
Chromebooks/Dell laptop and desktop	It is standard for all teachers to have access to a Dell laptop and desktop.  Both of these are connected and work together so we can screenshare to our Boxlight. We are also given a laptop for use at home and travel.	
Boxlight *Introduced in 2022	Boxlight is an interactive smart whiteboard that is connected to teachers' desktop and laptop. It allows teachers to screenshare presentations from our desktops from our Drives as well as interactively use with students.	
07.44		
Document cameras	Teachers use document cameras for items that are not electronically saved. MCPSmd distributed Aver brand cameras during distance learning. We can also use Elmos. This is includes small physical items and book pages.	





Internet Service



Classroom Software/Educational Programs









Printers, Scanners and Laminators

Chromebook Carts – charging bay and Chromebooks

Document cameras are updated projectors that teachers can keep on their desks. These came in hand for remote learning.

Teachers need access to the internet, so the entire school is wifi-enabled. We must go through our MCPSmd portal accounts in order to prevent inappropriate content being used. Teachers run into a fairly strict blocked notice for many sites as part of the MCPS website ban and access policy is pretty strict.

**See, opinion article**: Silver Chips Online: Parikh, Sachin, 2022, Feb 2. "It's overkill" m MCPS clearly oversteps in its website ban policy".

MCPSmd have access to many prem approved online programs to serve various roles"

**Class Admin Management:** Synergy is the system teachers use to take attendance, take lunch counts, and add to Gradebook. Synergy has all the personal data of students. It is also used as a communication tool between staff, parents and students.

ParentVue powered by Synergy is the tool used by parents to access their child's records including report cards and attendance information. MCPSmd has many education programs available to teachers and students. Teachers can access these logins and password through the School's Media Page (Somerset ES).

**Classroom Management:** Teachers uses ClassDojo and now Remind as assistive ways to monitor student behavior interactively with students. ClassDojo is a fun program. Remind is more of a communication tool MCPSmd recently announced as the program to use.

Each floor of a school can house a workroom containing a printer and scanner. There is a laminator located on the Main Floor. These are all essential to the teacher's working day.

For students: Each classroom (in my school, at least) has a Chromebook cart/charging bay which holds up to 30 student Chromebooks for student use. These are used for project research, testing and other educational purposes.



### Section 6 cont...

#### **Technology for the Online Classroom:**

#### Document cameras



Teachers use document cameras for items that are not electronically saved. MCPSmd distributed Aver brand cameras during distance learning. We can also use Elmos – a different brand that does the same job. Objects that can be shown includes small physical items and book pages. Document cameras are updated projectors that teachers can keep on their desks.

#### Chromebooks

Both teachers and students were given the use of a personal Chromebook to use from home so that teachers could teach and students could access the online lessons.

#### Internet connection

To teach or learn remotely, it is important to have an internet connection or at least some internet.

#### WIFI Booster/Extender



Based on my own experience when I was teaching remotely during the lockdown, I had to install WIFI boosters in my home office to limit the bad connections and zoom drops.

# Learning Management System



In order to keep students safe while being taught remotely, school's provide a learning management system platform for school related communication, distributing assignments and for sharing documents. My school used CANVAS and Google Classroom.



### Internal Webcams and external webcams



All school distributed Chromebooks have internal webcams. Externa webcams can also be used. This helped with desktops without a functional webcam or to create a better angle for the zoom.

I used Logitech for my office desktop. I also used extra mac laptops to get a better visual on all my students I was teaching.

7. **Communicating With Families:** Use the box below to describe tools that you would use to communicate regularly with families about students' progress, achievements, or behaviors. If your environment does not allow family communication, identify how you would provide regular communication with school administrators.

#### **Family Communication**

#### **Tools for Regular**

**Communication:** What tools will you use to ensure that you regularly communicate students' progress, achievements, and behaviors to families?

- Remind
- MCPSmd .org and .net emails
- Class Dojo
- Canvas Homeroom pages (provided by MCPSmd)

REMIND: In September, 2023 MCPSMd approved and introduced the use of a new communication and messaging tool for this current school year. The tool is called Remind, and all MCPS schools and staff, including teachers, central office students and parents will all have Remind accounts created to allow all concerned with the ability to send and/or receive messages. The other useful part about Remind is that people may choose which communication tool they would like to use: text message, email or phone, people can even choose a preferred language.

Prior to its official implementation this year, my first grade team leader suggested we all use Remind and so I got my first try with Remind last year. It worked great. I was able to use it to send quick non-urgent messages. I could send group messages 'reminders" such as "It's PE tomorrow, remind students to wear sneakers and bring a water bottle." Or, "We have Media tomorrow, library books can be returned". I also used it to send little "glows" about the class from the day. I often used the tool to send images so my parents felt like they had a window into our day. I used it to send art project images, hallway images, classroom decorations and so on. It worked really well and I became a fan of it.

In emergencies I was also able to use it to send direct messages to a parent or caregiver, as well as send any last minute schedule changes.

<u>History:</u> Since I'd only heard of Remind last year, I looked up when it was first developed and apparently the Remind platform was developed in 2011 by Brett and David Kopf. It was also originally called Remind101.

The intention of use has remained the same with updates and expansion of features: a communication tool designed to help teachers and students stay connected about class-related matters. (Now, note now the educational group has expanded.)



#### https://www.remind.com/blog/remind-rebrand

Also, the platform can be used via SMS, the web, email, iOS app (Apple/Mac devices), and Android app. As an Apple and Mac devotee, the ease of use with my phone was easy and convenient.

#### MCPSmd.org and .net

As an employee of MCPS we are automatically given a .org and .net account. The .org account is the secure account also known as our portal account. All official correspondence comes through the teacher or educational staff's member's account. Emails between teachers and families tend to be more formal in approach. I use this platform to email any concerns I might have about a student that occurred during the day.

Interschool/interoffice emails use .org and we receive all county updates through this account. If we receive any emails from outside the organization, they are immediately quarantined. All emails are deleted after a year.

Our .net/gmail email address is more informal and associated with Google. It is the email that is used when documents have been shared to us from our Drives. We can receive external email in this account. I will also use this account to correspond with parents. Usually it is less formal conversations that come from this account. Parents may want to share some fun news that happened over the weekend or send me some images using this email address.

#### **Class Dojo**

I've used Class Dojo for about 5 years. While I was told about the tool to use as a classroom management tool, I quickly did use it for that. I did use it for rewards and sending informal messages and images to parents similar to how I use Remind. Younger students like ClassDojo because of the ability to create a monster avatar after an egg has hatched. Each student in the class starts with an egg and as parents initiate the account, the hatching countdown begins.



It's always a fun conversation starter with student's to discuss their style of monster avatar. It gets students invested in the program. Other features I use are the random picker, points distributed whole group or subject specific.

#### CANVAS homeroom page provided by MCPSMd

Our district uses CANVAS which became in use during the pandemic and remote distance learning. It was a way for teachers to post the work and students and parents to access it.

We still have access to CANVAS and some teachers enjoy building their classroom pages. I'm one of those teachers. I can use CANVAS to post resources to my students and parents. I can post messages about upcoming activities and events. This is not an efficient method for relaying any time sensitive messages and instead it acts as a placeholder for course information and grade specific supplemental educational materials.



I enjoy the creative side of CANVAS. Teachers can have the settings to send alerts to parents when content is updated.



### GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION Section 8

8. **Students' Needs & Behaviors:**. Complete the chart below with possible behaviors that students might exhibit based on their needs.

Needs and Behaviors		
If a student has need,	these are potential behaviors.	
Physiological  Physiological: Lacking sleep - what it looks like:	If a student has sleep and rest needs, potential behaviors a teacher may see in the classroom setting are inconsistent moods and emotions such as irritability, anger, withdrawing, self-harm (mood swings).	
<ul> <li>lack of attention</li> <li>inability to understand the school work</li> <li>incoherent</li> <li>lacking in energy</li> </ul>	A teacher needs to be able to identify this issue and pull in. Appropriate help if needed. It's also important for the teacher to understand what the root cause is for the lack of sleep. It could be caused by a number of things, such as a medical condition.	
- lacking in strength or motivation  Children 6 to 12 years of age should sleep 9 to 12 hours per 24 hours on a regular basis to promote optimal health. (Paruthi et al., 2016.)	Lack of sleep affects a student's ability to concentrate on the lessons (impaired cognitive functions) and ability to feel motivated or want to participate.  Unfortunately, at the younger age groups that I teach, it becomes obvious how chronic lack of sleep negatively affects a child's brain development, eventually causing academic issues due to staying on grade level. As children develop sleep needs change but at any age, and even as	
How could a teacher alleviate this sleep deprivation issue?		
<ol> <li>Have a safe place/quiet corner for the student to relax.</li> <li>Pre-arrange with the health room or counselor to allow the student to go take a nap.</li> </ol>	adults, lack of sleep or lack of quality sleep can cause havoc on how a person functions both cognitively and physically  If lack of sleep persists for whatever the reason, the long term problems arising from this can affect health and long term academics.	
Homelessness or fear of losing home life stability	If a student is experiencing, homelessness, rehousing, or fearing losing the stability of a home, this could manifest itself in many ways. Anxiousness and stress would be easily spotted.	

### How could a teacher alleviate a student's anxiousness over homelessness?

- 1. Be sure the student is welcomed and feels safe.
- 2. Have a change of clothing in the closet for the child, some hygiene products, snacks, and a toy or comfort object.

If a student looks dirty and smells, due to lack of access to cleaning facilities, these students may get targeted by peers and classmates.

#### **References:**

Owens J; (2014) Adolescent Sleep Working Group; Committee on Adolescence. Insufficient sleep in adolescents and young adults: an update on causes and consequences. *Pediatrics*.

Paruthi S, Brooks LJ, D'Ambrosio C, et al. 2016) Consensus statement of the American Academy of Sleep Medicine on the recommended amount of sleep for healthy children: methodology and discussion. *J Clin SleepMed*.;12:1549–1561

#### Safety - What it looks like:

- calm and relaxed
- expresses feelings
- confident enough to ask for help
- Engages in positive interactions with classmates
- Follows rules
- acts predictably
- Focused and actively participates

## What can a teacher do to make sure the student is feeling safe?

- If the safety issues are coming from within the school from other students, go out to recess, and monitor the playtime, or the lunch period. Make sure any other teachers, like specials, are made aware of the potential problem.
- 2. Provide comfortable and well maintained furniture and acceptable and diverse classroom decor to make the student feel safe.
- 3. Provide undisrupted routine or rhythm. (Maslow, 1943.)

If a student is not feeling safe then here are the behavioral issues that might present with nervousness, irritability, anxiousness, depression, and acting withdrawn.

In Maslow's original paper he states, "He seems to want a predictable, orderly world. For instance, injustice, unfairness, or inconsistency in the parents seems to make a child feel anxious and unsafe." (Maslow, 1943.) If a student is feeling this at home, and then feels the same at school, this needs to be changed. A teacher would need to be able to recognize behaviors in the classroom to be able to remedy this situation.

A student can not adequately be in the correct state of mind to start to learn.

A teacher must make the student feel safe by emphasizing features in the classroom that make the student feel safe. If the student is not ready to accept the teacher then make sure there is some adult in the building that the student can go to feel safe. This needs to be a school-wide effort amongst the staff to make all students feel safe and have a plan of action in place for certain cases.

#### References:

Cohen, J., McCabe, E. M., Michelli, N. M., & Pickeral, T. (2009). School Climate: Research, Policy, Practice, and Teacher Education. Teachers College Record, 111(1), 180-213.

#### **Love and Belonging - What it looks like:**

- healthy psychological development
- Positive feels of well-being
- Good academic performance

If a student feels a sense of belonging and acceptance in his or her school and classroom environment, then this will go a long way to reducing anxiety and stress. Focus is always impacted negatively if a student does not feel at ease. As a teacher we want to remove this feeling.



- Continued positive behavioral development
- Healthy social skills
- Resilience towards conflict

### How can a teacher develop a place of love and belonging in the classroom?

- Build positive relationsing by showing genuine interest in his or her students. Not just on a school level but interest in students and their home life.
  - 2. This also means the teacher should be approachable to all students.
- The classroom should feel inviting and not alienate any child. The classroom should reflect diversity to include all students.
- Allow students to have some input in the classroom decor. Make it their own.

If a student is struggling to feel love and belonging, then the teacher should find another way to connect with the student. It's important not to overlook this student as being too hard to deal with or too time consuming to connect with. A student that feels a sense of belonging develops healthy behaviors in the classroom, which will also affect academic performance, which receive support in the classroom by the teacher. This student will feel safe enough to make curious and intellectual attempts without fear of rebuke.

#### Esteem - What positive self esteem looks like:

- Emotional stability
- Sense of security
- Motivated to do well
- Good concentration levels
- Empathy towards others
- Good social skills

It's important for a teacher to create a welcoming environment for all his or students. All students should feel wanted and valued in the classroom. By feeling valued a student will perform much better. This will build a better self image and increase positive confidence.

The student will exhibit good behavior in the classroom and even be able to empathize and help peers with their struggles. In fact, on a sociable level the student that has each the esteem level will reveal healthy friendships. They can help with conflict resolutions in their peer groups.

#### <u>Self-Actualization - What it looks like:</u>

- intrinsically motivated
- Creative and problem solver
- Independency
- Positive relationships
- Honesty
- Emotionally well
- Good moral and ethical development

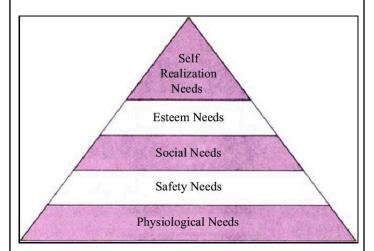
If a student has reached self-actualization then, according to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs the behaviors that could be witnessed in the school setting could be as followed a student that is intrinsically motivated to achieve goals of learning because he or she finds it fulfilling and meaningful not merely to gain the grade or for a nod of approval.

Students will be able to handle more intense activities with more detail. Such projects or assignments will not derail this student.

#### How can a teacher support a self-actualised student?

- 1. Offer choices on projects
- 2. Give constructive feedback and help the student understand how to improve on the works
- 3. Provide work that pushes and challenges the student.
- 4. Implement inquiry based learning to get students to create their own questions and research.

Here is possibly the earliest rendition of Maslow's Pyramid. Maslow did create the pyramid or triangle that is extensively used. (Bridgman et al., 2019.)



#### **References:**

Bridgman, Todd & Cummings, Stephen & Ballard, John. (2018). Who Built Maslow's Pyramid? A History of the Creation of Management Studies' Most Famous Symbol and Its Implications for Management Education. Academy of Management Learning and Education.

C. D. McDermid, 1960. "How money motivates men," Business Horizons.

Maslow, A.H. (1943). "A Theory of Human Motivation". In Psychological Review, 50 (4), 430-437.

McLeod, S. (2018). Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Simply Psychology.

However, the student will still need to have needs met even at this stage of the pyramid.