

Original Paper

Motivating and Meeting Students' Diverse Needs with Positive Classroom Design and Social-Emotional Learning

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Abstract

Classroom management has been a primary concern of teachers ever since we can remember. Excellent classroom managers are teachers who understand their own needs as well as the needs of their students. Teachers must get to know their students, where they come from, what motivates them, and what they need in order to best understand them. Through establishing a positive classroom environment, teachers can work to encourage and motivate students through promoting self-discipline while utilizing social-emotional learning.

Keywords

classroom design, social-emotional learning, close proximity, reflection, Procedures, Rules, Intrinsic Motivation, Routines, Teaching, parent involvement

1. Introduction

Nearly 40-50% of new teachers leave the profession within the first five years of beginning teaching (Ingersoll, 2012). Teachers leave the profession due to many reasons such as discipline issues, inadequate support from school administration, staffing problems, and low levels of faculty input in school-related decision making (Ingersoll, 2001; Sorbet & Kohler-Evans, 2019). Increasing teacher workloads and lack of parent and student participation are also major concerns of teachers (Hughes, 2012).

Teachers now more than ever must be organized and have a detailed plan of action for every aspect of their classroom in order to minimize distractions and maximize learning experiences of their students (Sorbet, 2019). Awareness of and training in these techniques can change teacher behavior, which in turn changes student behavior and ultimately affects student achievement positively (Marzano, 2003).

2. Establishing a Positive Classroom Environment

2.1 Procedures

On the first day of school and the first two weeks to follow, teachers should begin to establish routines and procedures for how they want the classroom to run. This includes expectations of student behaviors, procedures for the classroom, and rules by which the classroom operates. During the first two weeks of school teachers are not focusing on subject matter or content but are teaching procedures and behavioral expectations (Wong, 2009).

Procedures are established in classrooms to ensure the day runs smoothly. Procedures may be created for any aspect of the day such as to begin and end the day or class period, to regulate use of materials and equipment, and to guide transitions, group work, seatwork, and teacher-led activities. With procedures in place, the teacher can minimize student distractions and maximize student instructional time spent on task thus creating a smooth-running classroom.

Example of a procedure:

Entering the room at the beginning of the day

Students are to enter the room quietly. Student assignments are to be placed in the assignment bin. Students will be seated and begin the opening bell assignment on the board (Notar & Sorbet, 2020).

Other procedures to consider establishing: (list is inclusive and appropriate grades K-12)

- Make-up work
- Neatness and legibility
- Turning in late work
- Whole class attention, quieting the class, or call backs
- Collecting or turning in papers
- Taking attendance
- Broken pencils/sharpening pencils
- Students needing assistance during seatwork
- Restroom privileges
- Procedures as to when to get out of seat
- No textbook, paper, pencil, etc.
- Dismissing class to recess, lunch, end of day, etc.
- Accessing Chrome books, iPods, technology and returning them daily.

2.2 Rules

At the beginning of the school year, teachers should determine three to five classroom rules to set expectations for student safety and maximize their instructional time. Rules should focus on the positive and negative words such as not, no, never, are typically avoided. Teachers may decide to establish three of the five rules themselves while allowing input from the class of students to create the remaining two rules in an effort to build community and allow the students to feel a part of the decision-making process (Notar & Sorbet, 2020) Below are some examples of classroom rules:

- 1) I will come to class with all my needed assignments, papers, and supplies daily.
- 2) I will follow all school wide rules.
- 3) I will respect my classmates and my teacher's property.
- 4) I will be safe.

2.3 Consequences

According to Denton, teachers should utilize reinforcing, reminding and redirecting language when working with students (2013). Teachers should begin the school year teaching the rules and procedures to their students. The teacher should follow up daily by reinforcing the rules and procedures that have been established in the classroom. Teachers verbalize when students do something "right" by giving academic feedback to students and giving positive statements to the whole class when procedures are followed.

When a student begins to exhibit off-task behavior, teachers then use reminding language to remind the students of the rules and procedures. When reminders are not effective the teacher must then redirect students' behavior. Following reinforcing, redirecting and reminding students to follow the procedure or rule, the teacher may then implement an appropriate consequence that will reinforce the rule or procedure that needs to be followed (Notar & Sorbet, 2020). A reference is always made to have the child refer to what is expected of them through a specific rule or procedure that is common knowledge in the classroom. Several consequences can be utilized as long as they are non-punitive in nature. Some consequences may include:

- a written behavioral reflection
- one on one discussion with the student away from the group
- time away from activity to reflect on choices made
- contact of a parent for a conference (after you have tried the above)
- contact of an administrator in extreme situations

2.4 Preparing the Whole Child

A teacher must think about so many things when preparing the classroom environment for their students. Without the basic needs being met, a child cannot be expected to learn at the same levels as other children. According to Maslow's Hierarchy of Thinking, In Maslow's *A Theory of Human Motivation* (1943), humans were labeled with having 5 needs. These needs started with the most basic and moved to the highest level or the most complex.

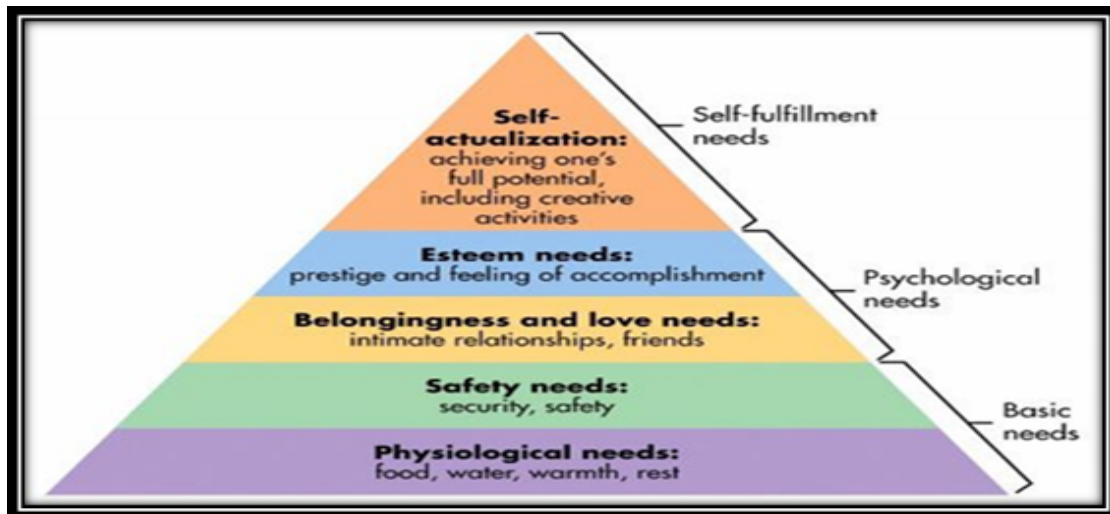


Figure 1. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Adapted from A Theory of Human Motivation (1943))

The physiological needs at the bottom of the pyramid include food, water, warmth, and rest or those needs most closely related to the basic physical needs the body must have for survival. Students come to our classrooms and some have these basic needs but some do not. As a teacher we must understand their behaviors reflect whether or not their basic needs are being met.

The second level of needs depicts warmth and safety needs. If the basic needs at the lowest level of the pyramid are met, then a new set of needs emerges. Students in our classrooms may have the very basic needs met but may not feel safe in their own home due to crisis situations. Schools are meant to be a safe place for children despite today's threat of violence reported in schools across the nation. These children may exhibit misbehaviors in our classroom due to this.

The third need of Maslow is the need for love and belonging. The person who has the other two levels of needs met will emerge to this level and notice a need for a friend, sweetheart, wife, or children. This person hungers for affection and relationships. Some of our students may have the basic needs of food, clothing, shelter, and safety but there may be a disconnect between them and their guardians which causes a lack of attention or sense of belonging. These students will seek our attention in order to best achieve this basic need of love and belonging. This is where the teacher is the role model.

The fourth level of needs is the esteem needs. These needs describe the people in our society who have a need for a stable and high evaluation of themselves by others. This level refers to self-respect and self-esteem as well as achievement and respect from others. This need attends to building a reputation through attention, recognition, or appreciation through feelings of self-confidence and self-worth. Some of our students may have the basic needs of food, clothing, shelter, safety, love and belonging and may need that fourth level of esteem so that they feel accepted among peers and thought of as a valuable part of the class or of a peer group. Students who are bullied or who do not necessarily fit in at school may act out to try to meet this need.

The fifth and final stage of Maslow's original five stages of human motivation refers to the need for

self-actualization. Not all individuals will achieve this stage. Self-actualization is the highest degree of needs in Maslow's *Hierarchy of Needs* (Maslow, 1943). We as teachers must provide the opportunity for this. It is here where methodology and learning activities give students opportunities to show their abilities beyond the old paper and pencil rote memory learning.

When Dr. Notar was a first year teacher he followed for several weeks what all the other teachers were doing ... read the book, answer questions. Not only was it boring for the students, but for him also. He assigned a chapter for them to read and make a project that was based on the chapter. What he got was drawings, models, a doll, and many more items that each student had to present and explain how their project fit into the chapter. He was amazed at the various talents the students had that would not participate in class, turn in homework and all the other things that take place in a classroom. What was even more exciting for him was the use of these projects in following years to enhance his instruction (each project had the students' name) ... when the students saw what the previous years had done an associated the name with the project it gave them insight what they could do.

In Dr. Notar's World history course, he had the students write a letter to a foreign country mission at the United Nation for information on the country they picked from the list of members. They then upon receiving the information (every country responded) had to answer a series of questions about the country. Students had five minutes to tell something unique about the country to the class. Another requirement was that they participated in a parade of nations and the posting of the flags in the hall of the school with their names on cards attached to the flags.

2.5 Fostering Intrinsic Motivation

The goal in education is to foster a sense of intrinsic motivation in students so that they are motivated on their own to do their work and achieve throughout their educational career thus acquiring the information and being able to also and most importantly, apply what they have learned in real-world situations. Teachers must work to motivate and engage students in order to foster their own intrinsic motivation in order to instill a sense of pride in their own drive to do their very best to achieve. Students who do not come to school with basic needs met cannot easily acquire the intrinsic motivators to achieve due to the majority of their attention and energy is spent on meeting their own basic needs. Through teachers addressing what is missing in their students including social-emotional needs as well as basic needs including food, clothing, shelter, feelings of safety, love and belonging teachers can begin to meet students where they are, provide them what they need in order to then and only then begin to educate and motivate students to continue to want to succeed in school.

So much can be said regarding children coming from crisis situations where social and emotional needs are not being met which is a direct relation to basic needs. Students cannot be made to learn or participate or even be motivated to care about school work when their basic needs such as food, clothing, water, shelter, and safety are jeopardized. Without the first three levels of basic needs being met, a child will not progress because the foundation is not there. A child whose basic needs are not met will not care about science or math if they are hungry or being bullied and feeling unsafe.

We as adults focus so often on the challenges that life throws our way and we navigate through it but not without heavy thinking and reflection on our part. Children in crisis situations need to come to a safe place with a loving and warm and caring teacher who supports them while engaging them in fun and interactive learning experiences so that they can begin to navigate through using a learned resilience. Through these experiences a teacher can take a child in crisis and change their perspective on their own educational future. Positivity and basic needs goes a long way and teachers are often the providers of both once the child steps foot inside the classroom door.

2.6 Social-Emotional Learning

Social emotional learning focuses on responsible decision-making which helps all children make choices regarding their own personal behavior based on ethics and social norms within their own school and home environment. The *Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning* or *CASEL* (<https://casel.org/what-is-sel/>), defines social-emotional learning as learning that both children and adults need in order to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. Through creating lessons utilizing the *CASEL* wheel competencies including: (a) self-awareness, (b) self-management, (c) social awareness, (d) relationship skills, and (e) responsible decision-making, students gain self-awareness while also learning how to best work with others in the classroom.

Students with increased social-emotional learning in elementary classrooms have a tendency to have decreased behavioral concerns. Becoming socially aware increases empathy and allows students to understand that people all come from diverse backgrounds. Children need social-emotional learning in order to be able to manage their own emotions and develop empathy and friendships within the classroom setting in order for the classroom culture to be one of positivity, community, and friendship (<https://casel.org/what-is-sel/>). By incorporating social-emotional lessons with children, the teacher can increase students' abilities to make appropriate behavioral choices which may in turn improve the classroom community and behavior as a whole.

2.7 Parent Involvement

Parent involvement is such an important aspect to a smooth-running classroom. When we keep parents informed and offer opportunities to become involved in our classroom, we create a positive learning environment all around and at minimum invite some extra hands to help out with the numerous projects throughout the year.

Parents want to know the happenings of their child's school and classroom. They want to be involved and want to receive feedback from their child's teacher. Parents want to know their child's academic progress frequently and not just when the child's work is substandard.

When Dr. Sorbet was in the classroom she encouraged parents to be involved in various ways as they used their own talents. Some parents could come and organize copies and activities for the students' assignments. During the holidays in her elementary classroom, parents would sign up for a time to pull students two at a time to the hallway to work on holiday ornaments and crafts. There were even two

parents who volunteered to help facilitate physical education twice a month with her during the school day. There are a variety of ways to encourage parents to volunteer in the classroom but the teacher must make the effort to solicit them based on what they are willing to provide.

While we welcome the few parent volunteers who do not work during the day into our schools to help us, we also know that many parents work and may not be able to volunteer at the spring festival at the school or go along on field trips. What we also know is that many parents are willing to donate craft or snack items to the class as well as cut out and create small projects that you send home in lieu of working within the school day in your classroom. Parents may be invited to participate in a holiday event or performance provided by the school. In order to best meet the needs of the parents, schools should host these such events during a typical lunch hour so parents may be able to get away from work to attend or possibly in the evening after work or school.

2.8 Parent Communication

Communicating with parents is a key component in the success of the children as well as the teacher during the school year. The most important thing you can convey to your parents is that you are dedicated to the best interests of the children in your classroom. There are many ways to communicate weekly with parents about school and classroom happenings. Some include: class websites that are updated at the beginning of each week, paper copies of weekly newsletters, and emails and other technology such as Remind and Group Me messages that allow teachers to send class updates to parents. Nowadays most parents do have some access to technology whether it be through a Smartphone, tablet, computer, or other type of electronic device but we must remember that some may not. Teachers must address the needs of all families and be willing to also provide paper copies of weekly newsletters and other school information to those students who may need it.

The correct way to communicate with parents is through immediate and ongoing methods. Dr. Sorbet remembers beginning every school year with a phone call home to introduce herself to the family, parent, and/or guardian of the student enrolled in her class. The teacher should begin the school year with an email or phone call to the parents of their students even before the first day of school. This email or phone call could be simply an introductory message that you are happy to have their child in your classroom and a time for you to provide your contact information. Throughout the school year the teacher should continue to communicate with parents in their classroom as a way to keep parents informed of school and classroom events, assessments, or other upcoming assignments that are due. When you stay in close communication with the parents or guardians throughout the school year, the phone calls made regarding behavior usually is received with a “grain of salt” because you have established that you care.

2.9 Volunteering

One common question among teachers is always, “how do I engage my parents to volunteer in my classroom.” There seems to be an easier flow of parent volunteers in the elementary grades than in middle and secondary grades. In order to best engage parents in volunteering at the school or in your

classroom, the teacher must communicate to the parent all of the opportunities available to assist as they arise. One suggestion would be at the beginning of the year to send home a list of types of volunteer opportunities with a space for parents to write in their availability and contact information. Teachers should also provide a space where parents who cannot volunteer during the day but could provide donations or time creating or cutting out items at home as well.

During the first two weeks of the school year the teacher should include this form in the online forms or printed welcome packet that will go home to parents and encourage the students to return this form. Once returned the teacher can organize the volunteers according to the opportunities throughout the year and call or email the parents as they are needed.

It is often difficult for single parents to volunteer with school-related activities but providing them with outlets to provide support through weekend sporting events, take-home projects, making phone calls or creating digital media for the class are ways that these parents can provide assistance.

2.10 Weekly Progress

Parents are eagerly looking to see the progress of their child on the various tests, assessments, activities and other assignments you give in your classroom. Teachers should spend time each week providing some type of academic feedback to students and parents. This feedback may be in addition to the regularly graded assignments that are posted digitally on a school wide system allowing parents and students regular access to see averages of grades. Teachers should be diligent in their turnaround of grading assignments to be able to remain current in the grading schedule but should also provide ongoing academic and behavioral feedback to parents.

Teachers should avoid their first phone calls or notes home to be always negative in nature. In lower elementary grades teachers could provide a take home behavioral calendar that shows positive feedback as well as concerns on a weekly basis that may be sent home along with graded papers in a folder for that week for parents. In upper grades, teachers may send regular emails or notes home to parents providing positive feedback as well as concerns along with graded papers on a weekly basis. Other types of progress monitoring programs in place may include online versions where the parent is immediately notified via email when a behavioral concern arises as well as positive feedback from the teacher sent directly to the parent on a day to day basis.

2.11 Tricks of the Trade

There are many ways the teacher can save their voice during the school day. Harry Wong suggests we spend our day teaching not disciplining. There are many tricks of the trade that teachers can use to reinforce positive behavior simply using the body movement and body language of the teacher rather than words.

2.12 Teacher Awareness

Jacob Kounin presented his model of classroom management that focused on the teacher knowing what is going on in all parts of the classroom at all times. He believed that teachers need to learn to be present and be able to attend to multiple issues simultaneously. Being able to multitask and take care of

several things in the classroom while teaching is referred to as having wittiness. Kounin also believed that the teacher should be able to overlap and as they were completing a task with one student they could also be beginning another task with others in the classroom. He suggested that the teacher plan lessons with momentum which included the smoothness of a lesson and having a steady pace without sharp stops that allowed for students to become engaged but not satiated. Students who are satiated can and will become bored and will possibly become less engaged in the lesson which leads to student misbehavior (Charles & Cole, 2019).

2.13 Group Alerting

Teachers can use a variety of procedures to get group focus. Teachers can use give me 5, echo clap, and other attention getters to get whole group attention. Soon teachers will be able to gain all students' attention by nonverbal group alerting.

2.14 Close Proximity

Teachers should use close proximity to students as a first line of reinforcing rules and procedures. A student who is off task may change their behavior if a teacher enters their "space". The student can be redirected simply by the teacher moving closer to the student who is off task which encourages self-discipline without the teacher actually correcting the student verbally. A teacher who is constantly moving around the room while delivering instruction is going to be able to notice off task behavior and can address it simply by moving into the students' space and acknowledging that the teacher is aware of this behavior. If we as teachers want to focus on maximizing instructional time, then we must reinforce the rules and procedures in our classroom through carefully monitoring our students at all times.

2.15 Choosing our Words Carefully

According to Denton, teachers should utilize positive language such as reinforcing, reminding and redirecting language when working with students (2013). Teachers should establish rules and procedures in the classroom and use reinforcing language to reinforce these expectations. When reinforcing the rules and procedures is not enough, Denton suggests moving to reminding language. Reminders simply refer the student back to the procedure that is not being followed. When reminders are still not effective, Denton suggests using redirecting. It is in redirecting that we as teachers must approach the student using close proximity and get the student back on task. The most important comes next in that the teacher remains close by until the student stops the off-task behavior and turns the situation around to begin following the procedure. At this time the teacher can trust that the redirection has worked and can move to the next student or task.

When speaking to our students we must also choose our words wisely. Haim Ginott suggested to use congruent communication and sane messages when working with students to help with their behavior. Sane messages are messages that are designed to pinpoint the behavior rather than the character of the student (Charles & Cole, 2019). He suggested to use appreciative praise to show students that you want them to cooperate with you as you preserve the student's dignity.

2.16 Establishing Rapport with Students

When Dr. Notar taught high school, he attended sporting events, plays, concerts, and any other activities to support his students. He attended these alone, sometimes with his wife, and sometimes he brought his whole family. What was most important was he was seen outside of the classroom. He was amazed at the number of students that would come and introduce themselves, sometimes with their parents. He would then return to his classroom and comment on seeing them at the sporting or recreational event and credit their achievement.

Dr. Notar taught American and World history. The American history a senior-level course. The English department required a “paper” as did the American history course. He went to the English department and found out what was required for their paper and made the same requirements for the American history paper. When the students came to me with problems with their paper in American history, He knew they would be having problems on their English paper. Providing instruction on the problem helped them in both classes. More importantly, the students felt more comfortable asking for help and advice.

Another example was when *Gone with the Wind* was showing at the movies. It coincided with my lectures on the Civil War in the history class he taught. The school administration agreed to allow him to take the senior class to see the movie. Upon returning to school, the students had to write a comparison of the movie to what they had learned in class about the Civil War.

He requested no additional chaperones on this field trip and that he would handle the 180 students to attend on his own. It seems my high school had a reputation as a “bad” school in Memphis. The theater operator had called to ask when his students were coming to the movies.

He first set the expectations with his students and explained to the students their responsibilities. He then assigned, to his wonderment, the six most challenging behavior concerns in his classes as monitors. They went to the movie and when we returned the principal was standing out in front of the school to question where we had gone. Dr. Notar replied calmly “to the movies.” Later he presented the papers to the principal and had no problems after that with getting permission to go “outside the box” for that period of time in education.

3. Professional Responsibilities as a Teacher

3.1 Addressing Personal Needs as a Teacher

As stated previously, teachers need to be aware of students and best understand if basic needs are being met at home. If there is a behavioral concern, teachers should think about the basic needs and try to determine the cause of the misbehavior. It is the responsibility of the teacher to meet the child where they are and help to educate the whole child. In order to best meet individual teacher needs as a teacher, the classroom teacher must first meet the needs of their students.

According to Maslow’s Hierarchy of Basic Needs (1943) (see Figure 1), the teacher can see behaviors

arise in the classroom and estimate the child's needs based on that behavior. Once the teacher understands the needs of the student, then they can begin to meet those needs within the classroom as best as they can. This includes making sure that the students have a warm and caring place every day. The teacher may not be able to control what is occurring at home but can do their best to provide a safe place at school that fosters belongingness and builds self-esteem. As the teacher is able to meet the needs of their students the students become engaged in learning and the classroom becomes a community of learners. Through this community of learners the teacher can foster intrinsic motivation through providing motivating lessons and exciting classroom experiences all while maintaining a positive and smooth-running classroom environment. Through meeting their student's needs in the classroom, the teacher can begin to meet their own teacher needs as well.

By comparing Maslow's *Hierarchy of Needs* (1943) with the *Hierarchy of Teachers' Needs* (Sorbet, 2019) we can determine that teachers begin their careers at the bottom of the chart (see Figure 1 and Figure 2). In Maslow's *Hierarchy of Needs*, the first basic level of need is food, water, warmth, and rest while the first level of the teacher needs includes the basic desires to find organizational skills, classroom management, schedules, and environmental familiarity. As teachers progress throughout their professional careers, they move upward through these beginning extrinsic factors (Sorbet, 2019).

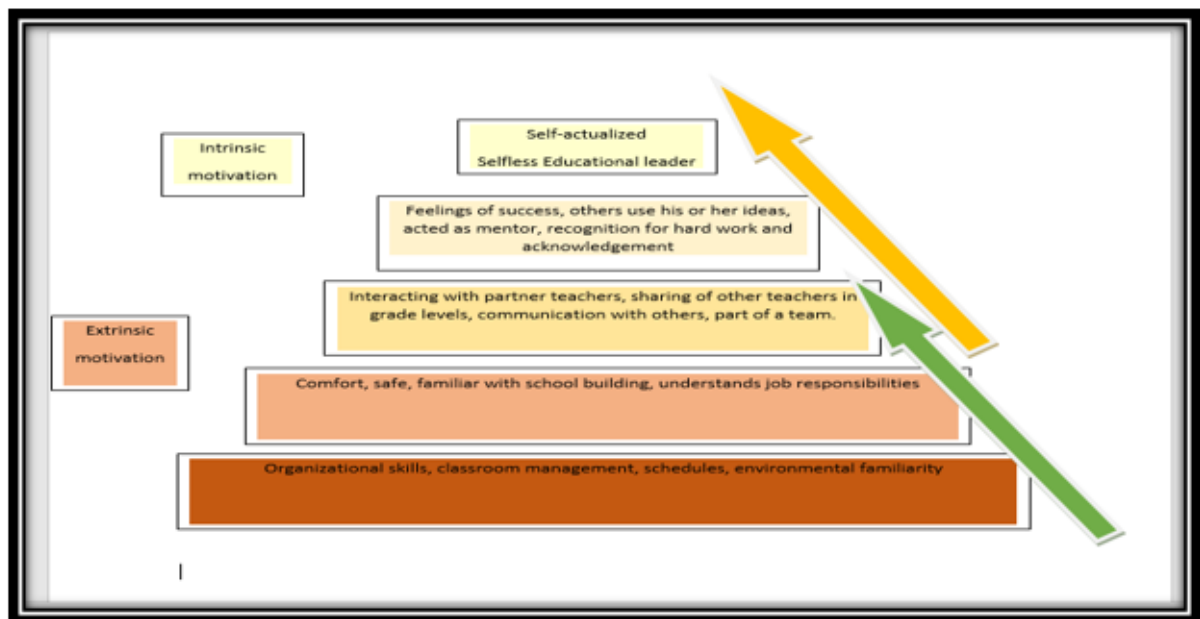


Figure 2. Hierarchy of Teachers' Needs Chart

The second level of the Hierarchy of Teachers' Needs chart, like Maslow's second level describes one of comfort, safety, and familiarity with school building and job responsibilities. Teachers are steadily climbing through the extrinsic factors as they gain experience in the teaching profession. Teachers gain experience and slowly arrive at the third stage where they are interacting with partner teachers, sharing

among other teachers within their grade levels, and learning how to communicate with others as part of a team (Sorbet, 2019).

Teachers reach the fourth stage as they become comfortable in their work environment, all basic needs are being met and now they are prepared to best mentor or support other teachers in the field (Sorbet, 2019).

The final and highest level of the chart when they are self-actualized as described very similarly in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. This level is the selfless leader who is willing to assist and support others in the profession for personal gain of intrinsic satisfaction and contribution to the field of education

Teachers enter their classroom with the hopes of fulfilling basic needs for their students through providing a warm, safe and positive learning environment. Through this teachers can then move through the next levels of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs with their students in the hopes that learning will take place.

Teachers also need basic needs to be met in their workplace in order to feel organized and familiar with their role as the teacher. Once these basic needs are met the teacher can move to feeling safe and understanding their job in their classroom at their school. It is only after these basic needs are met that the teacher can feel comfortable enough to interact with partner teachers and communicate and share ideas with other colleagues thus feeling part of a team. Through this intrinsic growth up the Hierarchy of Teacher Needs the teacher soon feels successful, may be recognized for their hard work and soon may be asked to serve as a mentor to other teachers. Through this process the teacher also grows which, in turn provides a more positive learning environment for the students in their classroom.

It is concerning when teachers do not have their basic needs met that we see teachers struggle in the classroom. Teachers who are not being fulfilled in their own personal basic needs regarding their teacher workspace may find themselves resorting to behaviors that do not model best practices among their students. These teachers may lash out and criticize students verbally as they compromise the child's dignity in the classroom due to the fact that the teacher is at a loss and does not have the basic skills needed to meet the behavioral challenges in their classroom.

3.2 Accepting Feedback and Self-Reflection

Teachers will be observed throughout the year and should accept any feedback given by the administration as constructive criticism to help them to grow to best meet the needs of their students. One very important aspect of accepting feedback is to self-reflect. Teachers must take the time and take all feedback given and determine how to make positive changes in order to best service the students in the classroom. The biggest feedback comes from the students. When they come into the classroom how do they greet you? Are they restless, are they excited, are they preparing for class? Their body language and behaviors are all signs of feedback.

3.3 Attending Professional Development and Challenging Yourself to Grow

How many of you have sat through "teacher day" professional development? Did you learn anything?

Was it the administration talking? Was there a presentation of something new and were you able to implement immediately or was the material coming and would be available eight weeks after the training?

The authors see professional development based on teacher needs. Therefore, the teachers should have a voice in what the training should be.

For example, one school was having challenges with parents asking questions about standardized test scores. Several of the teachers were having excellent results answering the parent questions and several were not. At professional development trainings that year, those teachers who felt comfortable with explaining scores to parents got together and presented techniques to help deliver this information to the faculty. Their professional development was: based on teacher needs, physical location centered, hands-on, available for immediate use, and presented in a give and take atmosphere.

4. Conclusion

Teachers in today's classrooms are called to meet the needs of their students. Through organization, creation of procedures and rules, fostering intrinsic motivation in students, providing engaging lessons, organizing information and paying careful attention to the manner in which instruction is delivered while adjusting along the way, teachers can do just that. Well-planned and thoughtfully organized classrooms allow teachers to provide a variety of meaningful learning experiences for students to be successful.

Teachers must choose their words wisely when speaking to their students. Using appropriate positive language and nonverbal cues helps build students' self-esteem and self-control as well as fosters students' self-discipline. Teachers are called to motivate young learners through teaching and giving respect in order to teach respectful attitudes down the road.

As teachers meet the needs of their students, their own teachers' needs can be met. As intrinsic motivation is encouraged in young people within the classroom, so is intrinsic motivation developed in the teacher as well. The teacher grows in their profession as they meet the needs of their students and support the students as they grow. This reciprocal growth process enhances learning and fosters the motivation to continue striving for excellence both in learning and instruction of the whole child socially and emotionally as well as academically.

Everything that happens, be it by the administration, teachers, students and parents, has a ripple effect. You as the classroom teacher can only do what you can control ... make good ripples like you have skipped a stone several times.

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