CREATING ENVIRONMENTS TO SUPPORT LEARNING TOOLKIT

Toolkit 3 of 10 in the Utah Teacher Toolkit Series

Prepared for Utah Leading through Effective, Actionable, and Dynamic (ULEAD) Education

In this toolkit, Hanover Research and ULEAD explore strategies and resources that current and aspiring teachers can utilize to meet Standard 3: Learning Environments of the Utah Effective Teaching Standards and Indicators.

August 2020
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OVERVIEW</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUDIENCE</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORGANIZE LEARNING SPACES</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRACTICE FAIR AND CONSISTENT CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUILD PRODUCTIVE RELATIONSHIPS</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENDNOTES</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABOUT HANOVER RESEARCH</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

This toolkit provides guidance and resources to assist current and aspiring Utah teachers in developing their ability to support the growth and learning of all students via effective pedagogies and a commitment to students, families, schools, and the broader mission of education. In particular, Utah teachers should constantly strive to align their daily work, skills development, and professional dispositions to the ten standards and related indicators of the Utah Effective Teaching Standards (located here). Commitment to achieving these standards will allow teachers to support the mission of public education to “ensur[e] literacy and numeracy for all Utah children, provid[e] high quality instruction for all Utah children, [establish] curriculum with high standards and relevance to all Utah children, and requir[e] effective assessment to inform high quality instruction and accountability.”¹ Specifically, this toolkit provides teachers with tips, strategies, and resources to support their professional work and development around Standard 3: Learning Environments.

Utah Effective Teaching Standard 3: Learning Environments

The Learner and Learning
Teaching begins with the learner. To ensure that each student learns new knowledge and skills, teachers must understand that learning and developmental patterns vary among individuals, that learners bring unique individual differences to the learning process, and that learners need supportive and safe learning environments to thrive.

-----------------

Standard 3: Learning Environments
The teacher works with learners to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, positive social interactions, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation. The teacher:

▪ Develops learning experiences that engage and support students as self-directed learners who internalize classroom routines, expectations, and procedures;

▪ Collaborates with students to establish a positive learning climate of openness, respectful interactions, support, and inquiry;

▪ Uses a variety of classroom management strategies to effectively maintain a positive learning environment;

▪ Equitably engages students in learning by organizing, allocating, and managing the resources of time, space, and attention;

▪ Extends the learning environment using technology, media, and local and global resources; and

▪ Encourages students to use speaking, listening, reading, writing, analysis, synthesis, and decision-making skills in various real-world contexts.

Source: Utah State Board of Education²
Research shows that teachers are the most influential and impactful element of the formal school system in promoting student achievement. In fact, research estimates that teachers “have two to three times the effect of any other school factor, including services, facilities, and even leadership.” As the immediate organizers and supervisors of students’ educational experiences, teachers exert tremendous influence on student outcomes across multiple areas. These effects extend across dynamics such as academic achievement, attendance, social-emotional learning, behavior, future earnings, and college attendance.

Consequently, teachers should strive to maximize their effectiveness in all facets of their daily work, from planning and delivering instruction to establishing a safe and secure learning environment to acting like a consummate professional. This requires an awareness of learners’ needs, of systemic expectations, and of one’s own strengths and weaknesses as they relate to professional practices and pedagogies. It also requires teachers taking concerted action to expand their content knowledge, strengthen their instructional skills, and maintain a professional and positive mindset with students, families, and colleagues.

This Creating Environments to Support Learning Toolkit and the nine accompanying toolkits in the Utah Teacher Toolkit Series support Utah’s current and aspiring teachers in meeting the demands of the Utah Effective Teaching Standards. In particular, this toolkit will help users progress toward those indicators marking high-effectiveness for Standard 3: Learning Environments.

### Indicators of High-Effectiveness for Standard 3: Learning Environments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The highly effective teacher:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▪ Collaborates with students in establishing and reflecting on procedures to improve the learning environment;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Models positive learning interactions and guides students to consistently refine interactions via self-reflection;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Supports students to create and manage learning teams to meet learning goals;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Collects and analyzes classroom data and makes modifications to facilitate a positive learning environment;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Encourages student involvement in maintaining and monitoring their contributions to the learning environment;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Coordinates time, materials, and space to design various learning patterns and multiple learning activities;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Fosters each student’s ability to manage their own learning time;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Selects engagement strategies that align with individual student learning patterns and goals;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Actively and consistently incorporates technology and media; and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Models and expects students to transfer skills and content knowledge to real-world and work-place contexts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Utah State Board of Education
OVERVIEW

This toolkit:

- Explores design strategies for teachers to organize physical and digital learning spaces to facilitate effective instruction in their assigned grade and subject and to promote productive interactions with and between students;
- Emphasizes the importance of teachers committing to establish and enforce classroom rules and norms that students understand and that are reasonable given students’ age, development, and life circumstances; and
- Highlights explicit and implicit strategies by which teachers can build strong relationships with and between their students to promote academic success and social-emotional well-being.

AUDIENCE

This toolkit is designed to support current and aspiring K-12 teachers in the state of Utah in meeting the indicators and expectations outlined in the Utah Effective Teaching Standards, particularly Standard 3: Learning Environments.
ORGANIZE LEARNING SPACES

Every design choice a teacher makes in organizing a classroom signifies some value or priority regarding student learning and engagement. This means that teachers should be intentional about their ideal vision for student learning so that “the environment [is] warm and welcoming” and “communicates a student-centered culture based on high expectations, collaboration, and positive relationships” to students and families.

Teachers should first consider the classroom’s academic functionality as it relates to the learning objectives of the target discipline and grade and the needs of students learning in that classroom. While “educational spaces are not a catalyst for direct improvement in learning” in and of themselves, classroom design still matters due to its influence over the specific ways in which students and teachers engage in teaching and learning. Consequently, teachers should emphasize seemingly routine decisions such as where to place teacher and student workspaces, how to seat students, and what amount of uncommitted, open, or passing space to have.

Teachers should examine classrooms through their knowledge of effective pedagogies, content for their assigned subject, and intended student actions in the space. Indeed, teachers must “think about the core things that need to happen for their space, which will vary by classroom and subject, as well as who will be using that space.” Exploration of desired instructional outcomes, diversity in students’ needs and backgrounds, and the provision of rigorous, effective, and engaging learning activities will support decisions about design. Furthermore, teachers should leverage their knowledge and available resources to unite curricula, instruction, and learning environments, with primary consideration given to learning goals and how to help students achieve them.

The Three F’s of Learning Space Design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FORM</th>
<th>FUNCTION</th>
<th>FLEXIBILITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The learning space inherently promotes inclusion, safety, and learning. Physical elements—like decorations and seating—support planned curricula without the need for major changes. In fact, visitors should have an idea of function based solely on form.</td>
<td>Learning spaces should promote impactful teaching practices such as differentiation, collaboration, and self-guided exploration of content. Teachers should leverage available space and resources to plan and deliver effective lessons. Function should build on form.</td>
<td>Students and teachers should have the ability to use existing design features in several ways and to make small modifications to learning spaces (e.g., moving furniture) as needed and with minimal effort. Flexibility should be embedded in form and function.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Multiple

Keys of Classroom Design

- Arrange classrooms to be consistent with learning objectives and activities
- Reduce congestion in high-traffic areas to limit distractions
- Ensure teachers can see students and vice versa to improve engagement
- Maintain accessibility of instructional materials to maximize learning time
- Confirm all students can complete assigned tasks from their designated learning space

Source: Project IDEAL, Texas Council of Developmental Disabilities, and IRIS Center, Vanderbilt University
Relatively, teachers should recognize classroom design as a conduit for the social aspect of learning, in terms of both teacher-to-student and student-to-student interactions. In addition to engaging students actively in course content, a classroom should permit self-directed work, collaborative learning with peers, and high levels of interaction among teachers and students. In particular, teachers should be thoughtful regarding student seating, open space, and configuration of furniture, technology, and storage to increase students’ comfortability and opportunities to engage with peers and adults. At the same time, teachers should seek to “erase the line” between their own space and students’ space to encourage movement and interaction and promote active learning partnerships—rather than passive “sage on the stage” approaches.

Furthermore, teachers should explore ways to make their classrooms more physically comfortable and emotionally safe for students. If students experience discomfort, intimidation, or isolation due to a classroom’s design features (e.g., restrictive seating, culturally insensitive decorations), they are less likely to succeed. Therefore, classroom spaces should promote students’ sense of community and agency via design features that encourage exploration and fun and maintain predictability in routines and learning processes.

### Tips for Setting Up a Classroom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tip</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strategically Place Teacher Workstations</strong></td>
<td>Teachers should place their desks and other workstations (e.g., podiums) based on their intended usage. For example, if teachers intend to use a workstation as their “command center” or primary teaching position during instruction, they should place it somewhere with a vantage point to observe students. However, they should also avoid making the space overly authoritarian or isolated and, instead, make sure it is conducive to positive student interactions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organize Learning Space</strong></td>
<td>The spaces in which students will work should match the activities they will be asked to complete. Desks and tables should be arranged according to whether students will be working as a whole class, in small groups, or independently. Teachers should also consider how to increase the ease with which they can rearrange seating and designate specialized spaces in the classroom for specific kinds of work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Promote Constructive Interactions</strong></td>
<td>Teachers should reflect on ways in which they position students so that they are able to make eye contact and speak with individual students directly at any time. Teachers should also consider how to promote movement, conversations between students around curriculum concepts, and active—rather than passive—learning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CREATING ENVIRONMENTS TO SUPPORT LEARNING TOOLKIT: ORGANIZE LEARNING SPACES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tip</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Purposefully Select Decorations</td>
<td>There should always be a reason behind classroom decorations such as posters, figurines, or exhibits. For example, teachers may wish to post class rules and expectations or a class motto for students to reference. Teachers can also place content-relevant posters (e.g., math procedures, writing tips) and objects (e.g., science models, historical artifacts, artwork) that they can reference during lessons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider Student Needs</td>
<td>Students will have different learning styles and other needs (e.g., exceptionalities, language status) requiring accommodation. Teachers should consider how to appeal to such diversity in learning preferences while also ensuring that students with specialized needs can access instruction via the use of universal design features and personalized supports (e.g., assistive technology, preferential seating).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciate Diversity</td>
<td>Students want to see themselves represented in their classrooms, and teachers should seek ways to celebrate students’ identities in classroom design. This means putting up images displaying people or characters from diverse backgrounds (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender), posting rules, procedures, and mottos in all students' first language, and eliminating design features which play into implicit biases (e.g., grouping students by ability or language status).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimize Clutter</td>
<td>Too many stimuli can distract students, and a messy or cluttered workspace can inhibit focus on both teachers' and students' parts. Thus, limiting the amount of &quot;stuff&quot; on walls, desks, and floors is necessary. Teachers should also consider the value of open or blank spaces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be Open to Change</td>
<td>Teachers may find that they or their students respond negatively to a specific aspect of classroom design, or they may decide that a shift to a new part of the curriculum or a different activity type requires reorganization of space. Tweaks and adjustments to items like decorations, furniture placement, and student seating should be expected. Being open to change will ultimately allow teachers to ensure that the physical environment always promotes learning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Multiple

Even if teachers operate partially or exclusively in a virtual setting, many of the broader ideas for organizing brick-and-mortar learning spaces still apply. Teachers should continue their reflections on curricula, instructional standards, personal pedagogies, and students’ academic, social, and emotional needs, though teachers will face new challenges in how to deploy technologies to create safe, collaborative, and active learning environments. Particular attention should be paid to maximizing accessibility and user-friendliness and selecting impactful features to include in digital course spaces—depending on available technological capacity. Such features include downloadable content (e.g., PDF files, data spreadsheets), community spaces (e.g., discussion boards, chat applications), interactivity (e.g., games, simulations), and multimedia (e.g., videos, podcasts).
CREATING ENVIRONMENTS TO SUPPORT LEARNING TOOLKIT: ORGANIZE LEARNING SPACES

Teachers should consider the functionality and relevance of applications and content within the design of virtual classrooms as both elements help students attain academic objectives, facilitate social interactions, and support student comfortability. This means embedding multiple tools to present course content and facilitate instructional activities. Moreover, it means leveraging features such as discussion boards, live chat applications (e.g., video, instant messaging), and email to facilitate discussions between students and teachers about content. Finally, teachers should consistently consider layout, aesthetics, usability, and redundancy (i.e., the use of multiple methods of presenting content and engaging students in learning tasks) across their efforts to facilitate academic and social-emotional success in the online classroom environment.

Guiding Questions for Virtual Classroom Design

- How will instructional activities be impacted by available digital applications and learning platform features?
- How will social interactions be impacted by available digital applications and learning platform features?
- How will student comfortability be impacted by available digital applications and learning platform features?
- What layouts, filing methods, and content distribution methods should be used on digital learning platforms?
- What methods of live (i.e., synchronous) and delayed (i.e., asynchronous) communication are available to use?
- Can a consistent “look-and-feel” be extended across digital applications and learning platform features?
- Will students be able to access the course site and perform all the necessary functions?

Source: Center for Distance Education Technologies, Florida Atlantic University

On the next page, the Classroom Design Mapping Tool provides a template for teachers to sketch out their brick-and-mortar classrooms and plan the placement of furniture, decorations, and other objects. Relatedly, the Learning Space Design Checklist on p. 11 outlines several important criteria that teachers should consider in both brick-and-mortar classrooms and virtual classrooms. These tools will help teachers evaluate their use of learning spaces and identify areas where they can improve embedded design features.

Additional Reading on Designing Classroom Spaces

Several organizations publish extensive guidance on how to organize and orient classroom and digital learning spaces in K-12 and postsecondary settings. Resources—such as those listed and hyperlinked via the icons below—can provide K-12 teachers with new perspectives and ideas on how to better design their classrooms to promote students’ learning, engagement, and social-emotional development.

"Active Learning Spaces and Technology: Advances in Higher and Further Education" – DroitwichNet
"Get Active: Reimagining Learning Spaces for Student Success" – International Society for Technology in Education
"Learning Spaces" – EDUCAUSE

Source: Multiple
**Classroom Design Mapping Tool**

**Directions:** Teachers can use this form to sketch the physical layout of their classroom. They should measure the classroom’s dimensions, assign a scale to each box, and sketch the room shape according to the scale. Then, teachers can designate spaces to specific purposes and diagram the placement of various objects.

**Scale:**  \[ \square = \] 

*Source: Multiple*

©2020 Hanover Research
**Learning Space Design Checklist**

**Directions:** Teachers can use the following checklist to evaluate the effectiveness of their brick-and-mortar or virtual classroom’s design. Listed items highlight important aspects of design for the academic and social aspects of learning, though teachers may need to consider additional items beyond those included in this tool.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brick-and-Mortar Classrooms</th>
<th>Virtual Classrooms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DESIGN CONSIDERATION</strong></td>
<td><strong>DESIGN CONSIDERATION</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can all students see the teacher at all times?</td>
<td>□ □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can the teacher see all students at all times?</td>
<td>□ □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are all students able to view instructional presentations and demonstrations unobstructed?</td>
<td>□ □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is student seating organized in a manner that promotes small group collaboration?</td>
<td>□ □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does open space exist for students and teachers to move through the classroom easily?</td>
<td>□ □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there designated areas for specialized activities (e.g., experiments, peer review)?</td>
<td>□ □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can the room and its contents be rearranged to accommodate shifts in learning activities?</td>
<td>□ □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are decorations relevant to content or students’ emotional and social needs and cultures?</td>
<td>□ □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do all students and the teacher have a workspace free from clutter and distraction?</td>
<td>□ □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the learning space represent and account for student diversity?</td>
<td>□ □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there features to facilitate communication between teachers and students?</td>
<td>□ □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there tutorials or written guidance on using embedded platform features?</td>
<td>□ □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can all students access course materials and complete learning activities?</td>
<td>□ □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do students have a designated space or mechanism to collaborate with peers?</td>
<td>□ □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are course materials and applications organized in a user-friendly, logical manner?</td>
<td>□ □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do digital applications have a clear and relevant purpose in addressing learning goals?</td>
<td>□ □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is curriculum content presented in multiple ways (e.g., text, video, simulations)?</td>
<td>□ □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can students complete learning tasks using two or more pathways of choice?</td>
<td>□ □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the learning platform have any active features that might distract students?</td>
<td>□ □</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do digital applications and materials contain embedded supports for diverse students?</td>
<td>□ □</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Multiple*
CREATING ENVIRONMENTS TO SUPPORT LEARNING TOOLKIT: PRACTICE FAIR AND CONSISTENT CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

PRACTICE FAIR AND CONSISTENT CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

When it comes to managing brick-and-mortar or virtual classrooms, teachers need to deploy a “variety of skills and techniques[...]to keep students organized, orderly, focused, attentive, on task, and academically productive.” Teachers should also recognize that classroom management, learning, and social dynamics have their basis in multiple interconnected spheres of influence and responsibility: teachers themselves, students, families, and school climate. Thus, teachers should work proactively with students, families, and colleagues to develop and codify a set of norms, rules, and expectations for students’ academic and social behaviors to govern their courses and those participating in them.

To encourage desired behaviors from the outset of the school year or the start of a new unit or lesson, teachers should collaborate with students to establish expectations and formalize rules and consequences. Students need to understand what they are expected to do, how they are expected to do it, why they need to act in certain ways, and the rewards for doing so (and the consequences for not doing so). Including students in a discussion around rules and norms helps teachers better understand how they learn and what their expectations are for instructors, peers, and planned learning activities. Importantly, teachers should recognize that even with student input, they may need to mandate and explain certain rules to adhere to school policy, promote safety, and ensure successful instruction as it relates to the target grade and discipline.

Phases of Classroom Management

- **Preventative Phase**
  Teachers should consider ways to promote positive behavior and discourage negative behavior as they set rules and expectations with students for a given instructional sequence (e.g., one lesson, the full school year). Prevention includes organizing the classroom and planning instruction in such a way as to reduce the potential for problematic behavior.

- **Supportive Phase**
  During instruction, teachers should reinforce expectations and encourage desired behaviors needed for students to get the most out of learning tasks. Support may include praise, reminders, or rewards. The main idea of support is to provide ongoing monitoring and assistance to help students adhere to outlined expectations.

- **Corrective Phase**
  During and after instruction, teachers may need to address students’ behavior more directly. Correction is not necessarily punitive, as it could be as simple as signaling and redirecting off-task students or repositioning oneself in closer proximity to a distracted student. However, it may include communications with families or disciplinary action, as needed.

Source: Classroom Management Toolbox | Eastern Washington University

©2020 Hanover Research
Strategies to Set and Reinforce Behavioral Expectations

**Teach and Model**

Teachers should describe expectations and the rationale behind them to minimize confusion and promote buy-in. Likewise, teachers should provide direct instruction on performing behaviors and model them in working with students.

**Provide Examples and Non-Examples**

Teachers should review and demonstrate multiple examples of given behavior in practice and across different situations. In addition, teachers should identify and model instances of related unacceptable behaviors to further clarify what desired behaviors do and do not look like.

**Encourage Practice and Reflection**

Teachers should allow students to role-play expected behaviors and embed opportunities for students to practice those behaviors within instruction. Furthermore, teachers should establish mechanisms by which students can reflect on their own behavior and how well it meets expectations.

Source: Center for Student Achievement Solutions

Teachers should consider creating a behavioral contract with students and families. Such artifacts will codify teachers’ expectations for students (and families) and vice versa to establish a foundation for “an open, supportive, and reflective learning community.” The Classroom Contract Template beginning on the next page and the Classroom Rules Evaluation Checklist on p. 15 can support work in this area.

Simultaneously, teachers can encourage productive behaviors and reduce problematic student actions by setting and displaying high expectations for students during instruction and in their social interactions with students. Teachers should determine a clear vision for excellence in their subject area and grade-level and implement instruction that helps students attain mastery of content and skills. Indeed, if teachers create a learning environment and curriculum that convey genuine respect for student potential and honest commitment to achievement, students will be more likely to focus on tasks and practice positive behaviors. Thus, teachers should make a concerted effort to:

- Develop, communicate, and implement classroom motivation and management plans;
- Implement instructional plans for bell-to-bell teaching and rigorous online learning;
- Organize and arrange classrooms and digital learning spaces to spur productivity;
- Establish high academic standards;
- Communicate expectations to students and their families;
- Actively engage each student in instructional tasks;
- Keep students on target by using tasks that are of interest and of high value;
- Provide timely, relevant, and specific feedback about progress to students to encourage their continued success;
- Adopt grading practices that display high expectations and reduce frustration; and
- Deal with severe behavior immediately according to proactive and clear policies.

Teachers also need to communicate expectations to students and families and provide guidance and support on how students can meet expectations. This encompasses explicit statements “of expectations for student actions and interactions in ways that the students can understand and achieve” before and during instruction. For example, a virtual school teacher may create a list of rules for communicating in video chats and model appropriate decorum for students.
**Classroom Contract Template**

**Directions:** Teachers can use this template with students and their families to outline academic and behavioral expectations, classroom rules, and associated rewards and consequences. Space is provided to establish expectations, rules, rewards, and consequences for students and teachers.

### For Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expectation/Rule</th>
<th>Reward for Following</th>
<th>Consequence for Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### For Teachers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expectation/Rule</th>
<th>Reward for Following</th>
<th>Consequence for Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Education World and Center for Learning and Teaching, Crowley Independent School District (TX)*
Classroom Rules Evaluation Checklist

Directions: Teachers can use this checklist to determine the overall strength of classroom rules that they develop in isolation or in tandem with students. When a rule is created or proposed, teachers should ensure that it meets the following five criteria before formalizing it in their classroom code of conduct:

- **Clear**: Students should know what is expected of them by reading or hearing the rule.
- **Reasonable**: Students should be able to realistically follow the rule given their age and background as well as environmental circumstances.
- **Enforceable**: Teachers should be able to implement the rule and be willing to invest the time and effort to address violations.
- **General**: While rules should not be vague, they should address several behaviors as opposed to one specific misdeed. This will minimize “loopholes” and student argumentation about a rule’s enforcement.
- **Positive**: Rules should be written to describe the desired behavior rather than the undesired behaviors. For example, a positively stated rule would be “Log off the computer when you are done using it” rather than “Do not stay signed into the computer if you are finished using it.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

©2020 Hanover Research
CREATING ENVIRONMENTS TO SUPPORT LEARNING TOOLKIT: PRACTICE FAIR AND CONSISTENT CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Clear descriptions and models of desired behaviors will reduce confusion and guide students in completing tasks and working with others. It is also imperative that teachers check student understanding of expected behaviors via observations, conversations, and other monitoring techniques, as students may encounter difficulties depending on their cultural backgrounds, prior educational experiences, and family values. Expectations cannot be ambiguous if teachers want all students to adhere to established expectations, whether they teach in a brick-and-mortar or virtual school setting.

Furthermore, teachers must reinforce positive behaviors and correct negative behaviors. For example, teachers might tie incentives to specific behavioral goals (e.g., privileges, tangible rewards) and display conscious positive reactions to desired student behaviors (e.g., praise, gratitude) as a form of reinforcement. Relatedly, teachers should redirect students to appropriate behaviors as necessary using verbal and visual skills and must follow through on disciplinary consequences to correct misbehavior as outlined in published policies and procedures.

**Effective vs. Ineffective Praise for Positive Reinforcement**

**EFFECTIVE PRAISE...**

- Is delivered contingently upon student performance of desirable behaviors or genuine accomplishment;
- Specifies the praiseworthy aspects of the student’s accomplishments;
- Is expressed sincerely, showing spontaneity, variety and other non-verbal signs of credibility;
- Is given for genuine effort, progress, or accomplishment judged according to standards appropriate to individuals;
- Provides information to students about their competence or the value of their accomplishments;
- Helps students to better appreciate their thinking, problem-solving, and performance;
- Attributes student success to effort and ability, implying that similar successes can be expected in the future; and
- Encourages students to appreciate accomplishments for the effort they expend and their personal gratification.

**INEFFECTIVE PRAISE...**

- Is delivered randomly and indiscriminately without specific attention to genuine accomplishment;
- Is general or vague, not specifying the success;
- Is expressed blandly without feeling or animation and relies on stock, perfunctory phrases;
- Is given based on comparisons with others and without regard to the effort expended or significance of the accomplishment of an individual;
- Provides no meaningful information to the students about their accomplishments;
- Orient students toward comparing themselves with others;
- Attributes student success to ability alone or to external factors such as luck or easy task; and
- Encourages students to succeed for external reasons (e.g., pleasing the teacher, earning a reward).

*Source: Crisis Prevention Institute*
CREATING ENVIRONMENTS TO SUPPORT LEARNING TOOLKIT: PRACTICE FAIR AND CONSISTENT CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Teachers will want to take similar steps in the virtual environment to those they would in a physical school building, though the dynamics of executing these steps will differ. Expectations, rules, and consequences should still be the result of collaborations between teachers, students, and their families to maintain student engagement and academic integrity and to codify procedures for accessing digital platforms, attending live learning sessions, and completing independent and group tasks. Relatedly, teachers will need to ensure that they and their students follow established procedures and adhere to expressed expectations by consistently implementing the rewards and consequences outlined in any behavioral guidance for virtual learning.

Additional Reading on Classroom Management

Several organizations publish extensive guidance on various facets of classroom management, including setting expectations, teaching desired behaviors, enforcing consequences, and providing positive reinforcement. Resources—such as those listed and hyperlinked via the icons below—can provide K-12 teachers with additional support as they develop and implement their own style of classroom management.

- "Classroom Management Guide" – School of Teacher Education, University of Northern Colorado
- "Reframing Classroom Management: A Toolkit for Educators" – Teaching Tolerance
- "Classroom Management Strategies: Resource Guide" – Prevention First

Source: Multiple
BUILD PRODUCTIVE RELATIONSHIPS

T rusting and positive relationships between students and teachers are essential for academic success and social-emotional wellbeing. While teachers should never seek to become “popular” or friends with their students, they should act and speak in ways that will build rapport with students and that warrant respect. At the same time, teachers should recognize that building relationships is both a process and an outcome, meaning no single moment or strategy will solidify a lasting positive relationship with any one of their students.

30 Suggestions to Build and Maintain Rapport with Students

- Contact students before school begins letting them know that you are looking forward to having them in class
- Incorporate personal stories and experiences within lessons
- When a student is sick or misses school, personally contact the student or their families to check on them
- Utilize humor and do not be afraid to laugh at yourself or the mistakes that you make
- Depending on the age of the student, dismiss students with appropriate verbal or nonverbal salutations every day
- Be enthusiastic about your job and the curriculum you teach
- Support your students in their extra-curricular endeavors and attend events as you are able
- Go the extra mile for those students who need help
- Conduct a student interest survey and find ways to incorporate their interests into lessons throughout the year
- Provide your students with a structured learning environment.
- Talk to your students about their individual strengths and how to limit their weaknesses
- Ensure that each student believes that they are important to you and that they matter
- From time to time, write students a personal note encouraging them to work hard and embrace their strengths
- Be fair and consistent when it comes to student discipline
- Interact with students in the cafeteria and other common spaces
- Celebrate student successes and let them know you care when they falter or are facing difficult personal situations
- Create engaging, active lessons that grab every student’s attention and keep them coming back for more
- Smile and use positive body language during and outside of class
- Do not be dismissive of a student or their suggestions or ideas
- Talk to your students regularly about the progress they are making in class
- Admit and own up to your mistakes
- Take advantage of teachable moments, even when it may venture away from the actual topic of the day
- Never demean or berate a student in front of their peers
- Engage in casual conversation with students during non-instructional times
- Give your students a voice in your class and allow them to make choices about their learning
- Build relationships with the families of your students
- Make home visits from time to time, as your district’s and school’s policies allow
- Make every day unique and exciting
- When you see students in public, be personable with them

Source: ThoughtCo

The process of building productive relationships with students begins the moment students enter a classroom or log-on to a virtual learning platform (and perhaps even earlier based on a teacher’s reputation) and extends for the duration of the course. Teachers should try to get to know their students’ academic needs, learning preferences, interests, and familial and cultural background from the
CREATING ENVIRONMENTS TO SUPPORT LEARNING TOOLKIT: BUILD PRODUCTIVE RELATIONSHIPS

outset. In addition, teachers should practice caring and empathy for students. Careful framing of interactions is vital to ensure that teachers’ communication of interest, caring, and empathy comes across as sincere, and teachers should be mindful of their use of “tone of voice, proximity, use of humor, de-escalating responses to defiant behavior, and gentle ways of giving constructive feedback.”

A Theoretical Model of the Teacher-Student Relationship

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOCIAL RELATIONS</th>
<th>ACADEMIC RELATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▪ Caring about students, their needs, and their interests</td>
<td>▪ Accounting for differences in student learning styles and needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Establishing mutual trust</td>
<td>▪ Applying appropriate classroom management strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Enhancing emotional and physical security</td>
<td>▪ Motivating students to learn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

POSITIVE STUDENT OUTCOMES

| ▪ Fewer disruptive behaviors and suspensions | ▪ Lower dropout rates |
| ▪ Higher academic engagement | ▪ Better attendance |
| ▪ Improved grades | ▪ Less anxiety and stress at school |

Source: Frontiers in Psychology and Education Week

Teachers should also facilitate the development of positive peer relationships between students. As in the formation of teacher-student relationships, teachers can promote positive interactions and connections between students by leveraging a number of community-building activities and collaborative learning tasks. For example, a teacher can regularly embed collaborative small group learning in lessons and simultaneously use strategic grouping strategies to increase the volume of interactions students have with diverse peers. Teachers should also model good social skills and accepted social norms for students who need additional support to successfully engage with peers.

Principles for Activating Positive Peer Relationships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRINCIPLE</th>
<th>RELATED ACTION ITEMS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Create a Safe Learning Space | ▪ Accept differences between students
| | ▪ Facilitate discussion and other interactions between students
| | ▪ Maintain confidentiality regarding students in all communications
| | ▪ Address conflicts among students using effective strategies
| | ▪ Model vulnerability for students |
| Nurture a Community Mindset | ▪ Model inclusion and collaboration
| | ▪ Break up cliques
| | ▪ Use multiple student grouping methods during learning tasks
| | ▪ Treat students equitably rather than equally |
| Facilitate Relationship-Building Activities | ▪ Balance structured “get-to-know-you” activities with informal interaction time
| | ▪ Model open participation in social activities
| | ▪ Strategically pair diverse youth for learning activities |
CREATING ENVIRONMENTS TO SUPPORT LEARNING TOOLKIT: BUILD PRODUCTIVE RELATIONSHIPS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Related Action Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Pair Collective Action and Reflection** | ▪ Build relationships through activities  
▪ Structure reflection to reinforce relational learning from activities  
▪ Apply learning to real-world scenarios beyond the classroom |
| **Structure Shared Decision-Making** | ▪ Solicit students’ input in planning curricula and instruction  
▪ Facilitate creation of shared rules and norms  
▪ Model group problem-solving processes |
| **Build Relationships with All Students** | ▪ Express care for students’ needs  
▪ Share power in the classroom  
▪ Challenge students to grow and advance their skills and knowledge  
▪ Differentiate supports to help students engage in positive social interactions |

Source: Search Institute

When it comes to the virtual learning environment, teachers should still seek to build relationships with and between students. In the absence of face-to-face communication, teachers can conduct outreach to students (and their families) via mechanisms such as digital interest surveys, virtual discussions to establish agreements for participating in digital learning communities, and individual check-ins and communications with students around their progress and well-being. Teachers should also continue to facilitate student interactions via collaborative learning tasks and digital communications tools.

**Strategies to Foster Relationships During Distance Learning**

▪ Send a text, email, video, or note that says students’ success and wellbeing matter  
▪ Work with students to set expectations, norms, and goals for learning in virtual settings  
▪ Hold students accountable for completing assignments and participating in digital learning activities  
▪ Offer students choices of assignments and lesson pathways  
▪ Facilitate breakout sessions and whole group discussions using video and audio chat features  
▪ Assign group activities so students can practice collaboration and communication

Source: Search Institute

The **Relationship-Building Behaviors Checklist** on the following page outlines some suggestions to help promote positive relationships in virtual and brick and mortar settings. Listed strategies will help teachers build rapport with students and create conditions for students to interact successfully with peers.
**Relationship-Building Behaviors Checklist**

**Directions:** Teachers can use the following checklist to evaluate the extent to which they practice key behaviors that promote positive relationships in the classroom. Listed items highlight several effective strategies for promoting respect and rapport, though teachers may need to consider additional items beyond those included in this tool.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Design Consideration</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you project an image that tells students you are here to build rather than limit them as people?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you let students know that you are aware of and interested in them as individuals?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you convey your confidence that each student can meet well-defined standards of values and demands for competence?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you enhance the academic expectations and evaluations that families hold for their children’s ability?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you serve as a model of sensitivity and high ideals for each student?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you communicate effectively in public with students?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you communicate effectively in private with students?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you encourage students to express their opinions and share their ideas?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you convey concern and interest for students’ needs?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you promote a classroom climate that is physically and emotionally inviting?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you exhibit enthusiasm for course content, learning tasks, and students?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you interject humor into instruction?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you make a concerted effort to interact with each student on a regular basis?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you encourage students to praise and interact positively with peers?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you set realistic but challenging expectations for students?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you show a desire to learn more about the various cultures represented by your students?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you provide opportunities for all students to shine?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you work with each student to establish goals, develop strengths, and overcome weaknesses?</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Inclusive Schools Network*
DEVELOPING ENVIRONMENTS TO SUPPORT LEARNING TOOLKIT: ENDNOTES

ENDNOTES


2 Figure contents quoted verbatim, with minor adaptations, from: “Utah Effective Teaching Standards and Indicators.” Utah State Board of Education, 2013. pp. 1–3. https://www.schools.utah.gov/file/9fcdbbfb-bacd-4574-9e2e-f4c43268c601


7 Ibid.


DEVELOPING ENVIRONMENTS TO SUPPORT LEARNING TOOLKIT: ENDNOTES


10 Figure contents quoted verbatim, with minor adaptations, from: “Utah Effective Teaching Standards,” Op. cit., pp. 10–12.


DEVELOPING ENVIRONMENTS TO SUPPORT LEARNING TOOLKIT: ENDNOTES


DEVELOPING ENVIRONMENTS TO SUPPORT LEARNING TOOLKIT: ENDNOTES


37 Figure adapted from: Hsu, S. et al. “How to Design a Virtual Classroom: 10 Easy Steps to Follow.” Center for Distance Education Technologies, Florida Atlantic University. pp. 2, 4–6, 8, 10–11. http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.555.1973&rep=rep1&type=pdf


©2020 Hanover Research
DEVELOPING ENVIRONMENTS TO SUPPORT LEARNING TOOLKIT: ENDNOTES


46 Figure adapted from: “Classroom Management.” Classroom Management Toolbox | Eastern Washington University. https://inside.ewu.edu/managementtoolbox/


DEVELOPING ENVIRONMENTS TO SUPPORT LEARNING TOOLKIT: ENDNOTES


[54] Figure adapted from: Williams, C. “Establishing Classroom Expectations.” Center for Student Achievement Solutions, January 13, 2019. https://www.csas.co/establishing-classroom-expectations/


DEVELOPING ENVIRONMENTS TO SUPPORT LEARNING TOOLKIT: ENDNOTES


72 Figure contents quoted verbatim, with minor adaptations, from: Kizlik, R. “Student Management Techniques from an Education Expert.” Crisis Prevention Institute. https://www.crisisprevention.com/Blog/Student-Management-Techniques


DEVELOPING ENVIRONMENTS TO SUPPORT LEARNING TOOLKIT: ENDNOTES

82 Figure contents quoted verbatim, with minor adaptations, from: Meador, D. “Strategies for Building Rapport with Students.” ThoughtCo, February 27, 2019. https://www.thoughtco.com/strategies-for-building-rapport-with-students-3194262


Figure contents quoted verbatim, with minor adaptations, from: Sullivan, T. “Activate the Power of Peer Relationships.” Search Institute, April 23, 2020. https://www.search-institute.org/power-of-peer-relationships/


ABOUT HANOVER RESEARCH

Hanover Research provides high-quality, custom research and analytics through a cost-effective model that helps clients make informed decisions, identify and seize opportunities, and heighten their effectiveness.

OUR SOLUTIONS

ACADEMIC SOLUTIONS

• College & Career Readiness:
  Support on-time student graduation and prepare all students for post-secondary education and careers.

• Program Evaluation:
  Measure program impact to support informed, evidence-based investments in resources that maximize student outcomes and manage costs.

• Safe & Supportive Environments:
  Create an environment that supports the academic, cultural, and social-emotional needs of students, parents, and staff through a comprehensive annual assessment of climate and culture.

ADMINISTRATIVE SOLUTIONS

• Family and Community Engagement:
  Expand and strengthen family and community relationships and identify community partnerships that support student success.

• Talent Recruitment, Retention & Development:
  Attract and retain the best staff through an enhanced understanding of the teacher experience and staff professional development needs.

• Operations Improvement:
  Proactively address changes in demographics, enrollment levels, and community expectations in your budgeting decisions.

LEADERSHIP SOLUTION

Build a high-performing administration that is the first choice for students, parents, and staff.

OUR BENEFITS

EXPERT
200+ analysts with multiple methodology research expertise

FLEXIBLE
Ongoing custom research agenda adapts with organizations’ needs

DEDICATED
Exclusive account and research teams ensure strategic partnership

EFFICIENT
Annual, fixed-fee model shares costs and benefits