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**Journal #3**

During my classroom experience I observed a lot of positive reinforcements for students and staff. The classroom was organized with lots of visuals, graphs, checklists and expectations for students. Throughout the classroom there are friendly reminders of what makes a “bright light writer and reader”. Each table was labeled by colors, along with a “first and then” table for transitions during stations. All of the tables included visuals cues for students of what is expected of them. The teachers utilize the smart board for morning meeting and whole group lesson, with interactive power points, music and videos. Every part of the classroom is utilized with children’s work. The daily schedule was easily accessible and constantly referred throughout the day. I was really impressed with the teacher’s organization for differentiation and assessment throughout the classroom. The teachers are constantly walking around with clipboards assessing students, with limited instruction and support. Instead the teachers in the classroom enforce critical thinking questions, allowing children to try first before asking for help and supporting children becoming competent and independent. The classroom has a lot of support with a 1:4 student and teacher ratio, it allows the teacher to better manage and provide 1:1 attention for students needing help.

In the classroom the co-teachers were very supportive and complimented each other teaching styles and methods. They both shared the same classroom goals, beliefs and supported each other throughout the day. During whole group lesson the teachers teach together by bouncing ideas of each other and relating it back to the goals and objects. They divide the roles of assessing specific students, and both teachers implement differentiation for the special needs children and general education children. Both teachers plan together and bounce ideas and compromise on the best way to teacher the lesson. The classroom strongly supports stations, and children rotating every 15 minutes to different subject areas in each station. There are enough adults in the classroom that make the stations very effective by giving students support, without overwhelming them. The teachers also practice parallel teaching the same subject matter in different groups. This is usually presented during writing workshop, but the objectives are the same for all the children in the classroom.

Something that was noticeable in the classroom management of the classroom was the tone and energy reflected by the teachers. The teachers’ voice is always pleasant, with stern but soft commands. The teachers never raised their voice, and they did not practice enforcing strong consequence besides a child having to leave a circle. I particularly liked how the teachers addressed the problem behavior or problem right away, by discussing it with the child right away and explaining why their behavior was inappropriate. They used a lot of direct language, such as “quiet hands” and explaining what that looks like. To help with transitions the teachers used a lot of songs and movement breaks to help children with focusing. They provided a warm and welcoming learning environment for the children, and they did so with the energetic and positive energy given throughout the day. Children are constantly being praised for positive behavior instead of being reprimanded. In the back of the classroom there is a classroom “Kindness tree” which the teachers must physically witness an act of kindness, and then the child must color a leaf to add to the tree. Throughout the weeks of the school the “kindness tree” continues to grow with leaves. It is a great representation of classroom community and incorporating the idea of kindness and children becoming aware of others.

Observing the teachers in the classroom painted a better picture of an effective co-teaching model. The teachers worked together in all areas of classroom management and instruction, which was reflected on children’s work. The children in the classroom really benefit from having teachers that provided more positive support than negative. There were a lot of teaching strategies that I would easily implement in the future. Specifically the different ways the teacher interact and speak to the children I the classroom.