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EDUC 111

Reflection Ch. 9/10

This reading was about authentic instruction and curricula for creating a community of learners. The reading went into great detail about classroom environment and things that are within our control to manipulate in order to achieve optimal results from our students. For example, classroom climate was addressed and eight characteristics given to make sure it is enhanced. Those eight characteristics are: 1) a productive, class-oriented focus. 2) group cohesiveness. 3) open, warm relationships between teacher and students. 4) cooperative, respectful interactions among students. 5) low levels of tension, anxiety, and conflict. 6) humor. 7) high expectations. 8) frequent opportunities for student input regarding classroom activities. These eight keys to classroom climate are great suggestions for creating good chemistry and facilitating a respectful, trusting environment. Another important thing to remember when trying to facilitate a good classroom environment is the physical dimensions and organization. For example, when you are giving specific instruction at the front of the room, you may want the desks organized in rows and facing forward. However, when students are collaborating with one another and learning from discussion, this desk setup would be inefficient. Teachers must constantly be aware of the physical dynamics of the classroom, and be ready to make adjustments in order to maintain the best learning environment possible. Another main point of this reading was the four different types of curriculum. The first is explicit curriculum, or the things that a school/teacher intends to teach the students. The second kind is hidden curriculum, or the types of things that the school atmosphere and culture teach the students unintentionally. The third kind is null curriculum, or the things that are not included in the particular educational curriculum. Finally, the fourth kind of curriculum is extracurricular or

cocurricular programs, which offer students the opportunity to broaden their academic, social, and physical horizons beyond the scope of the standard school day.

The topics and advice in this section will be very valuable to me in the physical education setting because the environment and instructional strategies are extremely important keys to maintaining order, assuring safety, and enabling effective learning to take place. If students do not feel safe, welcome, and included, then they clam up and shut down. Very little learning can occur when a student feels vulnerable and resorts to defense mode.

I once read in the Journal of Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance, an article about adapting classroom activities and equipment in order to accommodate students with various disabilities. I feel that this goes along with creating a respectful environment. If a student with a disability sees that adaptations have been made to include them in the activity, they feel respected and welcome. If these accommodations are not made and the child is forced to sit out or participate in a separate activity by themselves, they may lose interest as well as feel unappreciated and hence, unmotivated.

The whole world can benefit from careful planning of curriculum, instruction, and environment in the classroom. However, cultural trends must be taken into consideration when making adjustments to a class. Things that are seen as acceptable in the United States may be seen as unorthodox or even offensive in another country. This is why it is always important to know the culture of the region before you begin teaching.

Many things need to be taken into consideration when creating an effective classroom. Not only does the material have to be relevant and stimulating, but the instruction and environment must also be conducive to the learning process. The more aware a teacher is of this concept, the more successful they will be.