Vision
Our vision in Vista Unified is to be the model of educational excellence and innovation.

Mission
The purpose of Vista Unified School District is to inspire every student to persevere as a critical thinker who collaborates to solve real world problems.

VUSD Values
RESPECT - treating all with dignity
TRUST - having confidence that every decision focuses on the best interests of all students.
COLLABORATION - working in a collective partnership with clear two-way dialogue that builds relationships among home, school and the community.
EQUITY: ensuring all students have access to schools, resources and supports to be successful.

Inside this issue:
- Basic Classroom Management Tips for All Grade Levels 1
- Classroom Instruction That Works 2
- SmartFind Express: Reviewing Assignments 3
- Classroom Instruction That Works 3
- Important Dates 4
- Principal’s Corner 4

So, you’re a substitute teacher and are faced with the difficult task of dealing with a classroom of students whom you do not know. You have little to no information about classroom setup or work students are expected to do. You need teaching tools to help you deal with any situation. Following are classroom management tips to help you survive the day.

1) Talk to Students Before Class: Stand at the door and talk to students as they arrive in the class. Get to know a few of them individually before you begin the lesson. This is also a great way to get an impression of how students will react to your presence. In addition, you might find useful information such as school assemblies that you may not have been informed about.

2) Act Like You’re in Control: Students are excellent judges of character. They can smell fear and sense anxiety. Enter the classroom as the teacher for the day – because you are. If something is not going as planned or your whiteboard markers run out of ink, you may need to wing it. Don't get frantic or nervous. Transition to the next activity or come up with an alternative solution like using an overhead projector. If needed, pull out an activity that you have prepared ahead of time just for this kind of situation.

3) Don’t Get Too Friendly: While you don’t need to stop yourself from smiling or being kind to students, avoid too much friendliness when class starts. First impressions are important for students who can quickly take advantage of any perceived weaknesses. This can lead to further disruptions as the class progresses. Get the class started and the lesson rolling, then relax a little. Remember, substituting is not a popularity contest.

4) Stay on Top of Discipline: You must stay present and involved in classroom management and discipline from the moment students arrive. Classroom management is key. When the bell rings, get the students to quiet down as you take roll. You might have to stop the roll-taking process a number of times to quiet the students again, but they will quickly understand your expectations. As class continues, be aware of everything that is going on in the room. Stop disruptions when they are small to keep them from escalating.

5) Avoid Confrontations: If, despite your best efforts, a confrontational student causes a major disruption in class, keep your cool. Don’t lose your temper, raise your voice or -- especially -- get other students involved. This can lead to a situation where a student feels that he has to save face. If possible, pull the student aside to deal with the situation. If the situation is truly something beyond your control, call the office for assistance.

6) Give Praise: Even though you might never teach a particular class of students again, show that you believe every student can succeed. Show that you respect the students. Give effective praise when it is due, and ensure that students feel like you are on their side and that you truly believe in them. Students will pick up on your attitude toward them, so be positive.

Classroom Instruction That Works: Chapter 2
Reinforcing Effort and Providing Recognition

How many times have you felt frustrated because students didn’t seem to be motivated? Most teachers would agree that student motivation is a key ingredient in learning. Research supports this belief—studies indicate a link between motivation and achievement. What is the link? Motivation influences how much effort students expend and how long they persist in working on tasks, and the amount of effort and persistence that students put forth influences their level of academic success.

Motivation influences achievement but what influences motivation? Student motivation is complex; many variables influence whether students engage and persist in task, including teacher, parent and cultural beliefs. Students’ beliefs about their own competence and whether they have any control over the outcome of a task, as well as their interest in the task and the reason why they are interested, also influence student engagement and persistence. This chapter will focus on two strategies that are related to motivation reinforcing effort and providing recognition.

Classroom Practice for Reinforcing Effort

1) Teach Students about the Relationship between effort and achievement:

Teaching about effort can positively influence students’ thinking, behavior, and beliefs about their ability to succeed if it helps students understand that success comes because of effort and that they control the amount of effort they put forth. Successful students know that other people, luck, and ability are not “dependable” keys to success—effort is. In other words, they know that other people can help them succeed, but other people can also stand in the way of their success. They understand that it never hurts to be lucky, but luck is not something anyone can count on. They know that ability can make school, sports, or work easier, but few people have high ability in all areas. They know that many successful people are successful because they put forth effort, not because they have high ability, luck, or other people’s help. Knowing the relationship between effort and achievement empowers students to be active participants in their own learning.

Students are not likely to change their beliefs overnight about what leads to success. As a result, teachers should regularly incorporate the relationship between effort and achievement in their lessons. Stories, whether about oneself or others, are a powerful mechanism for enhancing student understanding about effort and achievement.

Numerous stories about people overcoming odds and becoming successful through their determination and effort are found in newspapers and magazines, on TV broadcasts, on the Internet, and in students’ own experiences. Teachers can provide students with ongoing engagement by sharing examples of effort, asking students to share examples, and designing lessons that include a discussion of effort.

2) Provide students with explicit guidance about what it means to expend effort:

Have you ever heard a student who failed a test say, “I should at least get some credit for all the effort I put into this.” We’ve just said that there is a positive relationship between effort and achievement, so how can it be that some students put forth a great deal of effort and the results are so poor? One explanation is that their understanding of what it means to put forth effort is incomplete or inappropriate for particular situations. Teachers can help students develop an operation definition for what it means to work hard by being explicit about the actions and behaviors associated with effort in a variety of academic situations. For example, a teacher might tell students that working hard while taking notes involves paying attention to what is being said and linking what they hear to what they already know.

3) Ask students to keep track of their effort and achievement:

Once students are clear about what it means to expend effort, teachers can ask them to track their effort in relation to their achievement. Such monitoring helps students focus on the learning objective, on what it takes to achieve that objective, and on their progress toward doing so. Asking students to discuss what they are learning about the relationship between their own efforts and achievement provides opportunities to reinforce the control that students have over their own learning.

Reinforcing Effort and Providing Recognition (cont).

Classroom Instruction That Works: Chapter 2
Reinforcing Effort and Providing Recognition (cont).

Classroom Practice for Providing Recognition

Most people like to be recognized for their efforts, whether the recognition comes in the form of praise or as something concrete. Nevertheless, providing recognition must be done appropriately, or it can have negative consequences. The following practices are recommended to ensure that recognition has a positive effect on student motivation and achievement:

1) Provide praise that is specific and aligned with expected performance and behaviors:

How you praise, what you praise, and when you praise matters. Praise must be sincere. If students perceive that praise is not sincere, they will discount it, and there will be no opportunity for it to have a positive effect on motivation. The same is true if a teacher’s words of praise do not match his or her nonverbal behavior or if it appears that the praise is given to control or manipulate student behavior or if it appears that the prize is given to control or manipulate student behavior.

Praise should support students’ motivation to learn by helping them attribute their efforts to their motivation and their accomplishments to their efforts. To do that praise should be specific and focus on students’ attainment of established goals for performance or behavior. Praise should provide informative feedback about the effort and care that students put in their work, the progress that students make in understanding content or performing skills, or outstanding aspects of their accomplishments. When teachers praise students for tasks that are very easy to accomplish, they send a message of low expectations that can undermine achievement.

2) Use concrete symbols of recognition:

Like praise, tangible rewards can have a positive effect on intrinsic motivation if they are tied to accomplishment of objectives. Using rewards to recognize the quality of students’ work and their progress toward the learning goal, rather than task participation or completion, can promote self-efficacy and improved performance. Further, tying rewards to accomplishments helps students understand that they are not completing a task merely for the reward.

Teachers can use various concrete, symbolic tokens of recognition such as stickers, coupons, awards, treats, or other types of prizes. Rewards of this type can be helpful to develop initial interest in a skill whose value might not be apparent until students have used it for a while or until the student masters it. Such rewards are better used with routine tasks or ones that require rote learning rather than with those that require creativity or discovery.

Tips for Teaching Using Reinforcing Effort and Providing Recognition

⇒ Build attention to including effort into curriculum documents, lesson design and delivery.

⇒ Reinforce what effort is and how knowledge about effort translates into success inside and beyond the classroom.

⇒ Keep praise simple and direct, using straightforward sentences without gushing or dramatizing.

⇒ Specify the particular accomplishment being praised, point out any noteworthy effort, care, or perseverance and calling attention to new skills or evidence of progress.

⇒ Vary the phrases you use to praise students, and use nonverbal communication along with praise to convey warmth and appreciation for students’ efforts and achievements.
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vistausd.org
Facebook: VUSD Human Relations
Twitter: @vusdhr
Instagram: vistaunifiedsd

Vista Unified School District
1234 Arcadia
Vista, California 92084

Important Vista Unified School District Phone Numbers

District Office Main Line:
(760) 726-2170
HR Department Fax:
(760) 631-4537
Benefits, ext. 92206
Human Relations, ext. 92221
Payroll, ext. 92602
Substitute Desk, ext. 92207
Sub system by phone (760) 726-1379
SFE on the web:
https://vistausd.eschoolsolutions.com

Important Dates—November

November 6, 8, 9 K-5 Parent Teacher Conference (Minimum Days)
November 6 & 8 6 - 8 Parent Teacher Conference (Minimum Days)
November 12 Veteran’s Day (Legal Holiday)
November 19 - 23 K - 12 Non-Student Days
November 22 Thanksgiving Holiday (Legal Holiday)

Thank you to the following substitute teachers from our site Principals:

At Casita Center, we have four long term substitute teachers who are doing a fantastic job:

Michelle Uhor is teaching 2nd grade. She is dedicated to her students, is very caring and kind and has a great rapport with everyone.
Shannon Park teaches 4th grade. He is very energetic about teaching and loves Science.

Diane Klentsch teaches 4th grade. She makes thinking visible and is extremely child centered.
Kirsten Sellars is working as our Magnet Specialist. She teaches culinary art and said, “I love cooking and I love kids. I love this so much that I can do this every day!”

We appreciate our substitute teachers that work in long term positions to ensure that our students continue to receive the best education possible.

Laura Smith, Principal
Casita Center