INTASC 9: Management of Behaviour Issues

*“Externalizing problem behaviors”*

Today I was observed for my management of behaviour issues, more specifically, the externalizing of issues that students are having as they manifest in my classroom. The most consistent issue that comes up while I am teaching is when students are talking while I am talking. Most other things (more drastically falling out of line) have been squelched for the most part. However, talking while I am talking is particularly annoying for me and I would love to figure out more effective ways of getting them to respect the appearance of my voice in their field of listening and respond swiftly by stopping the chatter.

My mentor teacher noted that I often say “Who’s talking” when I hear chatter, but this statement has no direction, it simply calls for the students to realize that there is too much chatter, but not who is individually responsible. I want to change this but I say statements like that are directed at the general class because I cannot fairly discern who is talking and who is not. Some backs are towards me (which is unavoidable as I prefer them in tables and some classes have 30 students) so it makes it difficult to blame someone for causing chatter. Next class instead of just making a blanket question of “Who’s talking”, I’m going to immediately go investigate where a large amount of chatter is, look to see who is talking the most and immediately writing their name up on the board. I made a system where if your name gets written up you get tick marks for how often you get in trouble that day and three ticks is a lunch detention.

I am also not putting enough of those names up on the board, and this is a critique from my mentor. Sometimes it's because I don't feel the behaviour warrants going up, sometimes I cannot figure out the culprit of the chatter, and sometimes I feel that I would rather be able to control the behaviour alone, with my presence only.

Wanting to control the behaviour alone stems from me seeing a consistent set of behaviours among Parkville teachers. This is not to say that the behaviour doesn't exist elsewhere (because it does) but it is certainly a commonality I think a lot of teachers share. I have noticed that teachers are quick to use 3rd party means of behavior management instead of first attempting to control the behaviour with presence alone. So instead of going through the escalating stages of behaviour and its corresponding consequences, some teachers will jump stages or assign consequences inconsistently. I feel that it is very important for me to try to control a classroom with me: my eye contact, the way that I carry myself, the interactions that I have and the decisions I make within the classroom that reside and do not leave my classroom. I will analyze further to try and strike a perfect balance of managing behavior in my classroom mostly with those three aforementioned things but also use lunch detentions more often than I have been. If it is what they are accustomed to for consequences then it may help curb bad behaviour.

To conclude, my mentor teacher noted that there seemed to be no single group of students that was on the receiving end of my behavioral management so I was more interested in the concept of behavior management as a whole.