

Youth Leader Tips: Developing Classroom Expectations/Agreements

Target Audience: Older Elementary, Middle, High School

Message and recommended activities by: Akeem and Zyiona (Members of our Youth Leadership Council)

Receiving students' input and opinions on how to create a safe and effective classroom environment is crucial to achieving a community in the classroom.

Students may have their own thoughts and suggestions about how the classroom should operate and those thoughts could enhance the environment of the classroom if they were shared with the teacher and discussed openly. Below are some activities that teachers could use to include students' voices in developing classroom expectations. Keep in mind that the expectations that the teacher and the students create should be reviewed throughout the school year to keep everyone reminded of what they are expected to do.

Classroom Expectations/Agreements: these are not code of conduct/rules -- but rather, conditions and actions needed to create a safe/brave/effective learning environment that will provide students what they need to be able to be powerful learners.

- Have students debate topics around expectations to get more engagement/input/ideas (eating in class, using technology, seating chart, calling out vs calling in, making mistakes, talking, helping each other, responsibility/accountability, etc.). If students struggle to come to an agreement, the teacher can make suggestions and/or facilitate a decision-making process.
- Students share Pluses and Wishes for creating a positive learning environment. Teachers could use students' individual thoughts as an exit ticket out, so the teacher has time to look through them before bringing back to students the following day. This may help the teacher to facilitate the development of agreements that are good for all members of the classroom.
 - Pluses: Things teachers have done in the past that worked well in creating a positive learning environments
 - Wishes: Things you wish teachers understood/ would do to create positive learning environment
- Daily check-in: Have your students complete a survey or answer a question at the end of the class to ask how class went and share any suggestions they have on how to improve things within the classroom.

SEL Targets: Social awareness, decision making

