Center for Leadership & Educational Equity

Together We Can Make A Difference"
Classroom Design for Beginning Teambuilding

Developed in the field by educators.

Purpose
To develop concept of teamwork within all students at your school so that they see themselves as a part of a community here and recognize that they have a lot to give and receive in learning to get along and work together.

Concept
Teamwork involves: getting to know other people listening to the ideas of others planning and making decisions together taking on jobs and responsibilities that contribute to getting the work done everyone!

Knowledge
1. All students will know the names of at least 3 other people in their class by the end of the day.
2. All students will have new ideas of what it takes to be a part of a team.
3. Students can identify connections between working together and learning.

Check for Understanding
At the end of the day ask each student to:
1. write down the names of people that they have met in the class today.
2. write down at least two things that you need to do to work together as a team.
3. answer the following question:

If someone outside of school asked you "why do you play games at your school?" what would you say to them to help them understand the importance of team building and learning at school?

Room Set-up
Circle of Chairs

Supplies Needed
Chalk, 5 packages of index cards, roll masking tape, box of paper clips, paper plates, quarter, ball (or other object that can safely and easily be grabbed with one hand.)

Activities
1. Introduce notion of teamwork (5 minutes)
Ask if anyone has ever been on a team? Ask if anyone watched any of the Olympic team events on T.V.? What do you think it takes to be a great team? (write all answers on the board) We want to learn how to work together as a team this year and so we're going to get started today.

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2. Introduce Wild Wind Blows (10 minutes)
Everyone here has a seat but me. In just a minute I will say my name and then the following: The Wild Wind Blows for everybody who: I will say something that is true about me. If it is true about you then you need get out of your chair and find a new seat. I will try and get a seat too. So that one of you will be left without a seat. Then you will come to the middle and introduce yourself to the group and say the same thing again. Processing None

3. Introduce Crossword Connections (15 minutes)
Pass out Paper Plates Ask each student to write their first and last name across the middle of the plate. Explain that the students have just 7 minutes to connect with as many people as possible. A connection occurs when you find someone who can:

1. Write their name on your plate in a way that includes a letter from your name or another name on your sheet.
2. You write on the back of the sheet one thing that you have in common with that person: Ex, things you both like: food, movie, free time, places you've been, family size, etc.

After the time is elapsed, ask how many people made 5 or more connections/ 6 or more? 10 or more? Processing What kinds of connections did you find with each other? Were you surprised by any of the connections you had with people? What other reactions do you have to this activity?

4. Introduce House of Cards (30 minutes)
Students stay in the same small group. Explain that the purpose of this activity is to build a house that will stand on its own and to make it as tall as possible using only three kinds of supplies: index cards, paper clips and masking tape. Each group has 15 minutes to work and you will signal when there are 5 minutes left and then one minute left. When you signal the third time, each group is to stop building and move away from their house. Optional: Ask students to estimate how tall their house is and then measure each house. Processing Ask each group to take a couple of minutes to discuss and report out loud: What were some ways that we worked well together as a group? How could we have worked together better? Have each group report out and write their responses on the board. In the large group ask: How did people help out in your group?

Did everybody do the same thing or did they make different contributions?

7. Introduce Electric Current 25 mins.
Ask students to sit in two lines (either at desks or on the floor) Explain that each line is a team. The goal of the game is to be the first team to score 7 points. Your team scores a point every time you successfully read a signal at the front end of the line and pass it down to the end of the line for the last person to pick up the ball. Whichever team picks up the ball first scores a point. I will flip a coin, and if it lands heads, your team is to pick up the ball. If it lands tails, your team is not to pick up the ball. Your team scores a point, if the coin lands heads and you pick up the ball first. Your team looses a point, if the coin lands tails and you mistakenly pick up the ball. When the coin is tossed, everyone on the team will have his or her eyes closed except the first person in line. The first person in line will signal to pick up the ball by squeezing the hand of the next person. This squeeze goes all the way down the line. My instructions will be: "Eyes closed, heads down, flip"

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A team will lose a point, if anyone on the team opens their eyes during the play. After a team scores a point, everyone opens their eyes, rotates one position forward and the play resumes. As each new "leader" comes to the front of the line, make sure before you flip the coin that both people are clear on what they are to do.

Processing
What did it take for your team to be successful in this activity? Who was a leader in helping the group succeed? (1st person, last person and everyone in the line) In what ways can each of us are leaders in this class or at school?

6. Closing (15-20 minutes)
We've just spent some time working together this morning. Help me list each of the activities we've done.

Possible Discussion Questions: What have you learned about each other today? What have your learned about working with other people? What do you think getting to know each other and building a team has to do with teaching and learning here at school? Ask students to complete check for understanding questions. Share your own insights on the day.

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