

Capstone Synthesis Paper

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Diversity in the Classroom

An educational classroom is made up of a wide variety of students. These students are different; they each come from different backgrounds and have experienced different things in their lives. Out of the twenty-something students in the classroom, no two students are alike. The differences amongst the students are what make a classroom unique. The success of each student in the classroom is what is most important when being an educator. There are different ways an educator can ensure the success of all students in their classroom. The way for success in all students is to be prepared and have multiple strategies for inclusion in the classroom.

Trauma Plan

The first thing that I will be doing in my trauma plan is to set up my classroom environment in a certain way. By setting up a safe environment for students, the students will feel safe and secured in the classroom ("Trauma," 2021). Before the school year begins, I will set up my classroom in a structured, organized way which will allow for routines and procedures to run smoothly. I will also include a daily visual schedule on the board with the times on the board. I also will have a safe space set up in my room with different calm down tools. I want to include visuals about different breathing techniques (see Appendix A) and various fidget tools. It is also important for the lighting in the room to be calming for the students. Instead of using bright fluorescent lighting in the classroom, it is more beneficial for the lighting to be warm and homey. Something else that I want to include in my classroom environment is flexible seating options. As a class, we will decide what the expectations are for flexible seating and sign the poster (see Appendix B). I might include yoga mats, rocking chairs, floor pillows, tall stools, swivel chairs, etc. The first thing that needs to be considered is how the environment is set up to support students who have gone through trauma.

The next thing that I would do in my trauma plan is to ensure my teaching strategies are catered to students who have gone through trauma. Having consistent routines is very important for students who have been affected by trauma. It is important to have a visual schedule and try to keep it as consistent as possible. Another thing is to use warnings for transitions; sometimes, transitions can be difficult, so using warnings before the transitions can be helpful. Also, to give warnings if something is being changed in the middle of the day, some children may be triggered by abrupt changes, and letting the students know beforehand is helpful for them to prepare for the change.

During the presentation, Mrs. Krukenburg talks about Maslow's hierarchy of needs, and she talks about that safety needs to be the first thing that needs to be met. Resources that help students feel safe are food, clothes, and shelter (Krukenburg, 2019). I can provide that with either extra snacks in my classroom or other individuals at the school with those resources. I know I have seen counselors keep extra clothes, snacks, toothbrushes, toothpaste, etc., for students to come and grab whenever they are needed. Another thing I want to incorporate into the classroom is provided breakfast. Some students do not either have the funds for breakfast or are in school early enough to eat it in the cafeteria. Giving 10 minutes of the morning for students to finish their breakfast or be given breakfast would help the day run more smoothly.

The most important thing about having a trauma-informed classroom is the relationship between the students and the teacher. Being able to have a relationship is the most critical part of teaching in a trauma-informed classroom. Another important thing is to be educated. I want to be equipped with as much knowledge about trauma care as I can. I know that I will get training and coaching throughout the year, but I want to use that knowledge to my advantage.

Cultural Diversity

The inclusion of all cultures is especially important in the classroom. Not every student will have the same culture, but it is important to celebrate and educate each other about the different cultures. During an interview with an educator, she shed light on how to allow the celebration of culture in the classroom. She said, "it is important to educate children about different cultures, religions, and holidays because it helps make them more aware of these things and help cultivate an inclusive classroom" (Kocis, 2021). A classroom can be made up of students who practice and follow different cultures and acknowledging and educating about them is important. Even if not all students believe in these cultural traditions, those who practice and believe them are acknowledged and represented. Diversity can be celebrated in many ways through various projects. I would celebrate diversity through an art project (see Appendix C) with an inclusion quote in the center. The bulletin board could be changed to celebrate different holidays or religions, etc.

A Native American tribe that will be prominent in the area I want to teach in is the Chippewa tribe. The Chippewa tribe has seven values: Gwayakwaadiziwin, which means honesty, Dabaadendiziwin which means humility, Debwewin which means truth, Nibwaakaawin which means wisdom, Zaagi'idiwin which means love/compassion, Manaadendamowin which means respect, Aakwade'ewin which means bravery/courage ("Culture," 1998). These seven values are what make up the Chippewa or Ojibwe culture. Some of their traditions included Pow Wows, which is made up of various dances like the Grass Dance or the Jingle Dress Dance. The language the Chippewa tribe speaks is called Algonquian and uses a different alphabet; however, mostly elders only speak this language, but it is becoming more prominent for children to use this as a second language ("Chippewa," 2021). A way to allow students to feel welcomed in the classroom is to allow a family member or friend of their tribe to speak about their tribe and

culture. If there is no family member available to come into the classroom and speak, there are other available resources. Anton Treuer is a Bemidji professor who is a part of the Chippewa tribe. I would reach out to him and ask for some time with him to speak to my class. Although he is farther away from the city I plan to teach in, the zoom meeting would make it easy for him to be virtually in our classroom. I would use him as a resource to speak about the Chippewa culture and its traditions. Anton Treuer is an author, speaker, trainer, and professor and could be used as a valuable resource (see Appendix D). Students would be able to learn and ask questions about the Chippewa tribe.

Interventions/PBS/PBIS

PBIS stands for positive behavioral interventions and supports, and PBS stands for positive behavioral supports. PBIS is an evidence-based framework that uses three tiers that support students. Tier 1 is universal prevention for all students, this tier targets and impacts everyone across all settings. The tier 1 practices include school-wide positive expectations and behaviors that are taught, established classroom expectations aligned with school-wide expectations, a continuum of procedures for encouraging expected behaviors, a continuum of procedures for discouraging problem behavior, procedures for encouraging school-family relationships ("Getting Started," 2021). Tier 2 is targeted prevention, where the interventions and practices target the students who are not successful and need extra support. The practices of tier 2 include: increased instruction and practice with self-regulation and social skills, increased adult supervision, increased opportunities for positive reinforcement, increased pre-correction, increased focus on the possible function of behaviors, and increased access to academic support ("Getting Started," 2021). Tier 3 is intensive, individualized preventions that target only a few students. The practices of tier 3 include function-based assessments, wraparound supports, and

cultural and contextual fits ("Getting Started," 2021). When PBIS is used effectively, it improves student outcomes, reduces exclusionary discipline, and improves teacher outcomes.

Human Relations

Relationships are crucial to education, and there are many ways to foster student-teacher relationships, parent/guardian-teacher relationships, and teacher-teacher relationships. Having positive relationships with students is crucial for their educational success. I plan to form those relationships throughout the school year in various ways. I plan to get to know the students at the beginning of the year by getting to know me sheet (see Appendix E). I will also be communicating with students throughout the year in the classroom and other school-related activities after school. I also plan to send out newsletters to parents/guardians each week to let them know what is going on in the classroom throughout the weeks. I may also create a Facebook page that allows parents and guardians to interact with all of us in the classroom. I then would use Facebook messenger to communicate with the student's families and email and phone. Professional relationships are also important, and I plan on creating those with my coworkers and administration. Administrators are vital for a well-run school; I want to acknowledge and appreciate all of the work they do for their school.

References:

Chippewa (Ojibwemowin). Chippewa language, pronunciation and language. (2021).

<https://omniglot.com/writing/chippewa.htm>.

Culture. Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe. (1998). <https://www.millelacsband.com/home/culture>.

“Getting Started.” *Center on PBIS*, 2021, www.pbis.org/pbis/getting-started.

Kocis, B. (2021, June 1). Personal interview [Personal interview].

Krukenberg, Katie, director. *Trauma-Mrs K. Swivl Teams*, 2019,

cloud.swivl.com/v/10cf17f079c556dec298674a3c637e96.

“Trauma-Informed Strategies to Use in Your Classroom: Resilient

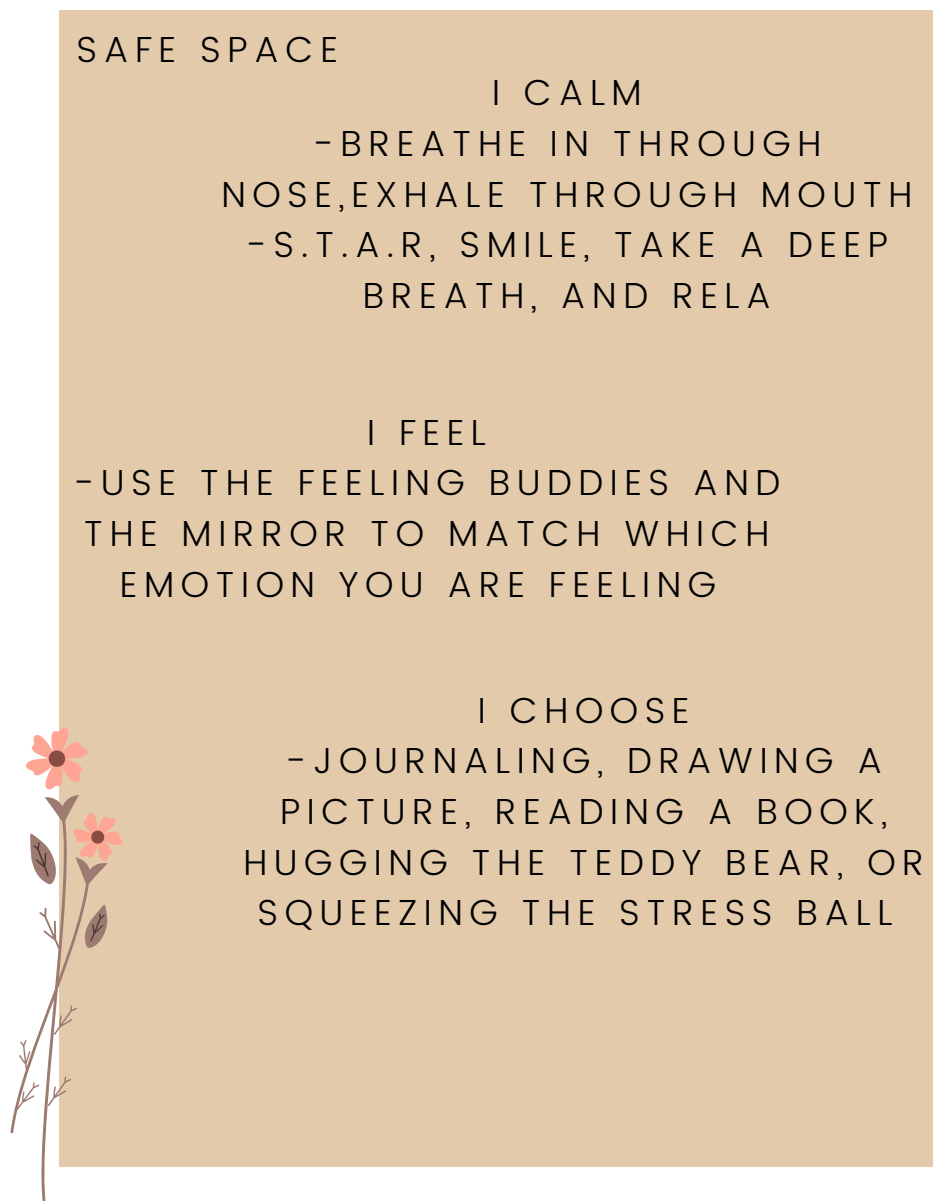
Educator.” *ResilientEducator.com*, 8 June 2021, [resilienteducator.com/classroom-](https://resilienteducator.com/classroom-resources/trauma-informed-strategies/)

[resources/trauma-informed-strategies/](https://resilienteducator.com/classroom-resources/trauma-informed-strategies/).

Appendix A

Safe Space Poster

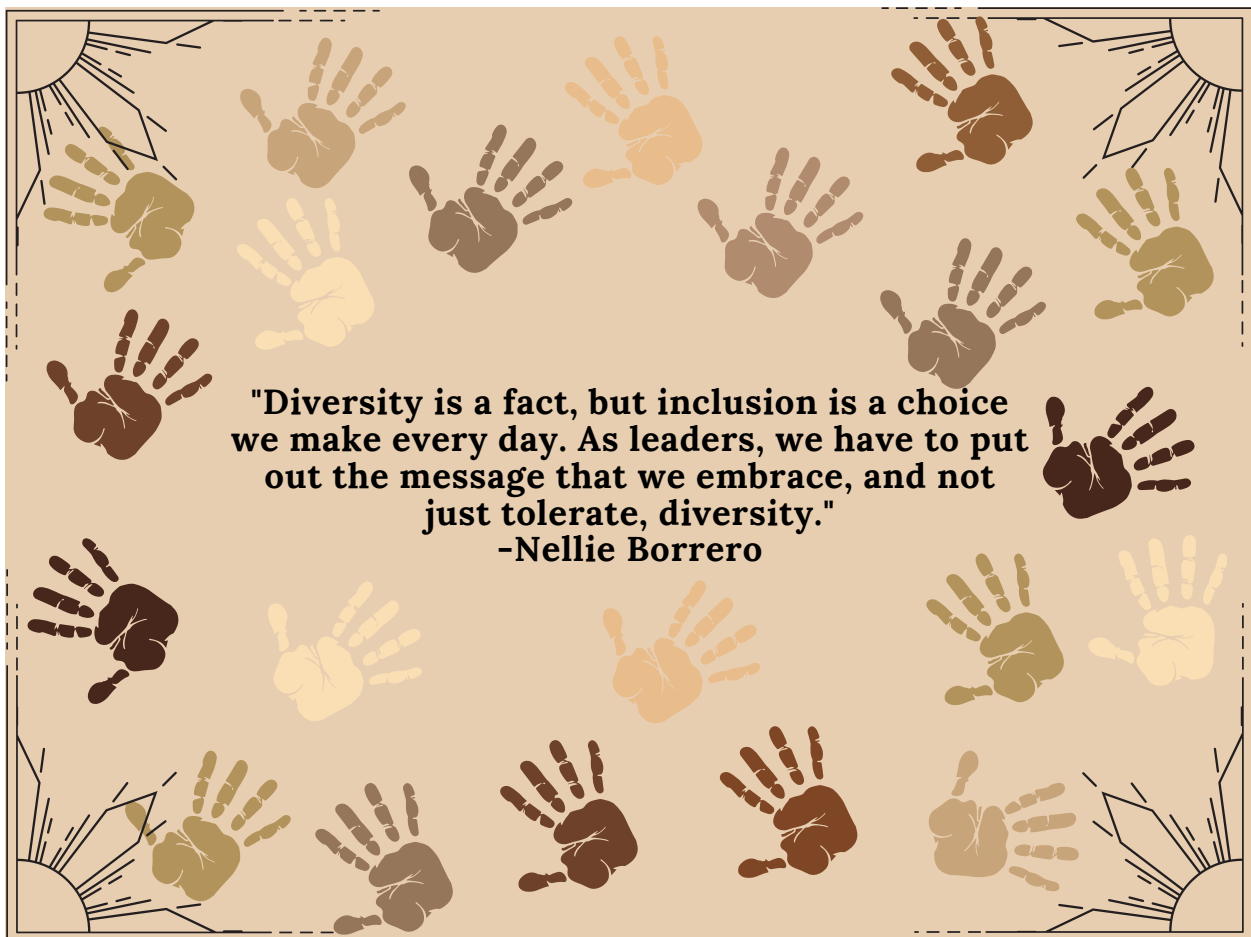
This poster uses three things that help students calm down, identify what they are feeling, and find solutions. The I calm section includes breathing techniques to help calm the student down. The I feel section helps students identify what emotion they are feeling by using visuals. The I choose section allows students to pick an activity or thing that will help them be ready to participate in the class again.



Appendix B

Diversity Bulletin Board

Bulletin boards are a creative way for students to be involved in the classroom. This bulletin board allows the students to participate and visualize that although they may be different, they are still the same. This bulletin board is also customizable and can be changed to celebrate anything we are studying in the classroom.



Appendix C

Contact Information

The contact information for a resource I may use about information and history of the Chippewa tribe is Anton Treuer. He is a Bemidji State professor, and I would contact him to talk to my class and he would inform my students about information and the history of the tribe.

Anton Treuer

Bemidji State University

Phone: (218) 755-3968

Email:

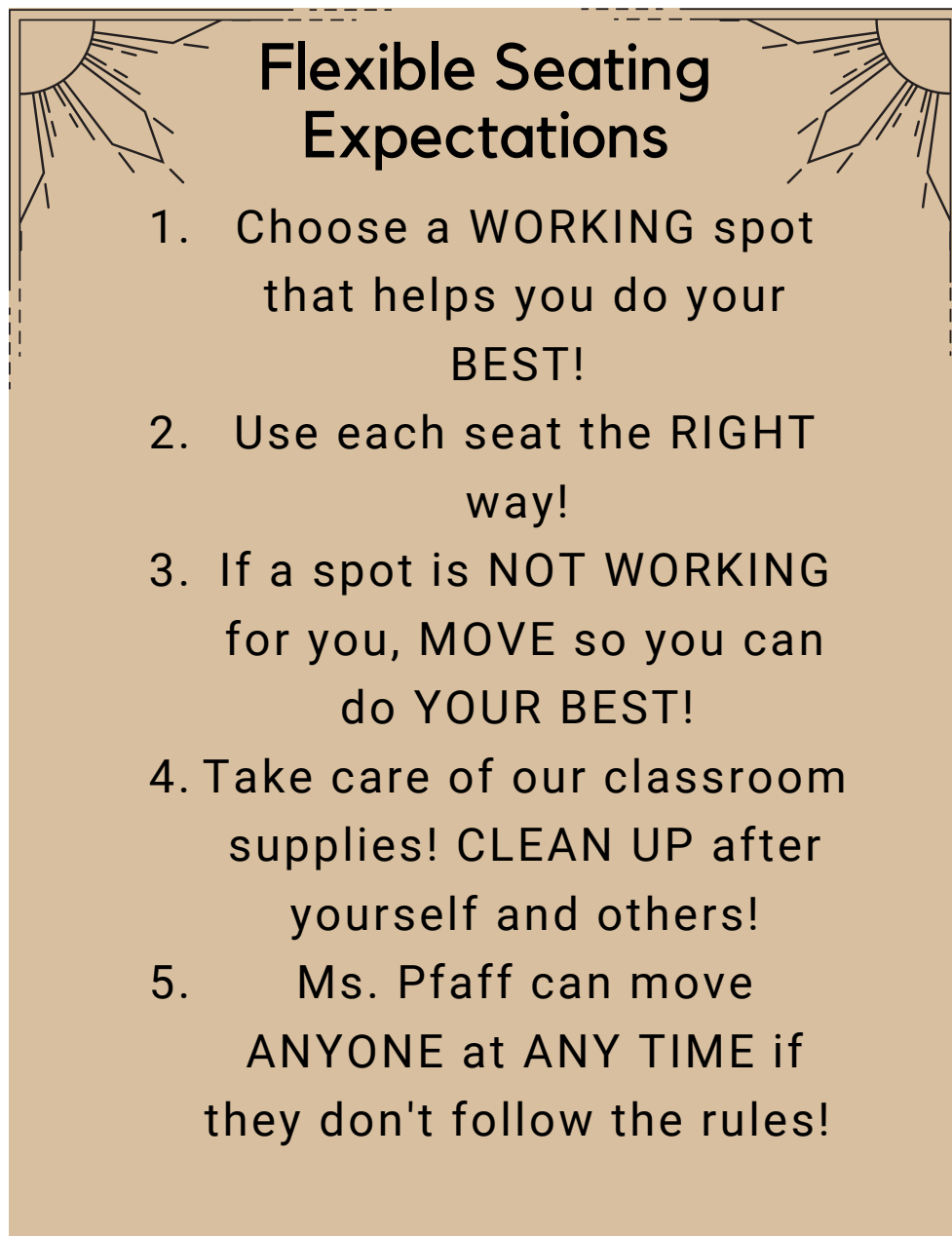
Anton.treuer@bemidjistate.edu

Website: antontreuer.com

Appendix D

Flexible Seating Expectations

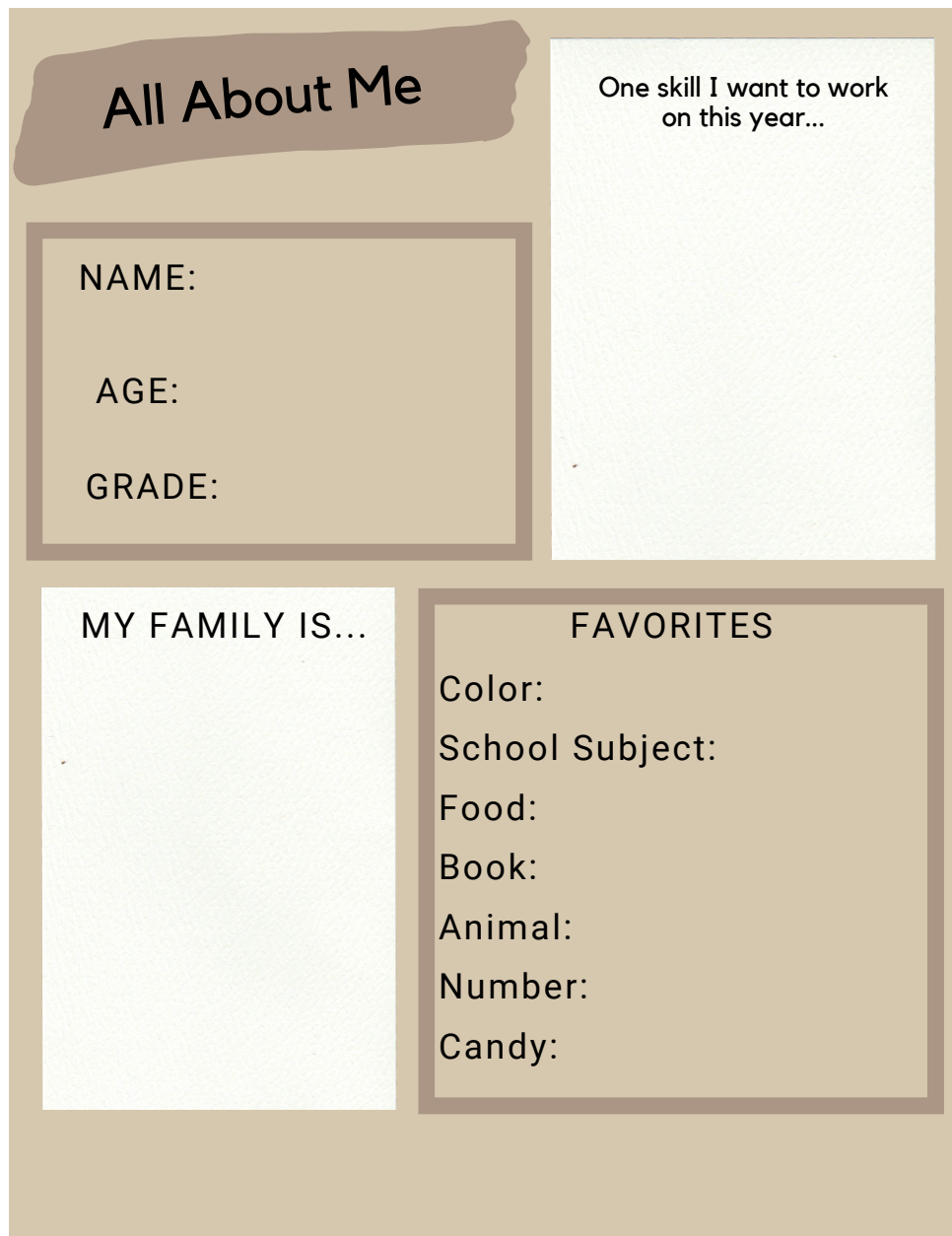
Flexible seating is something that I want to include in my classroom. I think when using flexible seating, there are certain expectations that need to be followed. These expectations will be on a poster in the classroom, and all of the students will sign the poster and be expected to follow the rules throughout the school year.



Appendix E

All About Me

The all about me worksheet will allow me to get to know my students a bit more before the school year begins. I would send home this worksheet during the open house and would expect to have them returned in the first couple of days of the school year. These would allow me to know some information before actually getting to know my students on a personal level.



The worksheet is titled "All About Me" in a dark brown banner at the top left. It is divided into four main sections:

- NAME:**
AGE:
GRADE:
- One skill I want to work on this year...**
- MY FAMILY IS...**
- FAVORITES**
 - Color:**
 - School Subject:**
 - Food:**
 - Book:**
 - Animal:**
 - Number:**
 - Candy:**