

**Curriculum Proposal - Care, Relationships, and Collaboration**

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### **Abstract**

Empathy is an essential aspect for all facets of an educational system, specifically in art classrooms. Lack of empathy and collaborative skills can cause issues in relations and classroom management throughout the school year. Utilizing resources such as group lessons, community activities, and classroom reflections can allow for the kind of collaboration needed for students, teachers, and all those involved in a school system to succeed in their endeavors.

## **Inquiry to Curriculum III – Curriculum Proposal**

### **Introduction**

Building empathetic relationships in the classroom has always been a point of discussion in America. There is a cause-and-effect correlation that these relationships create, where the cause/issue is the lack of empathy and ineffective classroom management. At the same time, the effect/solution is collaborative learning and ethic of care (Harmon, W. 2017, Tornio, S. 2021, Xu, L., & Yang, Q. 2019). Using inspiration based on an existential curriculum philosophy, we aim to encourage and implement an open learning environment through students' creativity. We also aim to include ideas based on an Open Classroom pedagogy, which enlists collaborative tools to enhance students learning group settings (Cuban, L. 2021, Rathbone, C. H., & Smith, L. A. n.d.). These classrooms were popular during the 1970s due to the economic climate and have become more established in recent years. Bringing effectiveness and empathy to the classroom by integrating a collaborative curriculum enables teachers to participate and be successful in an educational environment (Harmon, W. 2017, Tornio, S. 2021, Xu, L., & Yang, Q. 2019).

### **Curriculum Rationale**

A well-balanced curriculum is required for every classroom to be successful. Care, relationships, and collaboration are all needed for both students and teachers to function efficiently in a classroom (Harmon, W. 2017, Tornio, S. 2021, Xu, L., & Yang, Q. 2019) With this outlook in mind, our curriculum is essential in classrooms. Now more than ever, with the effects of COVID-19, it is necessary for students, parents, and teachers to be involved in this sort of classroom. To accomplish this, our curriculum focuses explicitly on individual students and their journeys to success. While this is done in group settings and lessons based on the arts and

self-expression, the goal is for students to achieve success on their own terms with help and encouragement from others. This has been based on an Existential Curriculum Philosophy, while also incorporating different pedagogies and lessons to further the success of the curriculum.

### **Curriculum Overview**

We want to engage with younger students, preferably those who are at the elementary level. Our audience includes students, teachers, and parents. We aim to involve everyone that has a connection to our students. We want the ideas behind the curriculum to be implemented to all those involved to incorporate consistency for students. We think that this will have a significant impact on students and see positive results within the curriculum.

Our time frame for this curriculum is over a whole school year. Although depending on the outcomes within that year, we can prolong it over a few years to see the long-lasting effects this curriculum has on students. The curriculum can extend into extracurricular events such as a school club or summer program. Ideally, this curriculum is continued for many years to see results from students.

Our objectives include implementing the importance of care, building relationships, and collaborative learning to students, teachers, and parents. Maintaining consistency is vital for students to learn and understand our concepts thoroughly. We will implement this consistency through daily classroom tasks. These can include morning check-ins to ensure students are all in a positive mindset for the day, discussions about the plan for that day's lesson and future lessons and reflections at the end of each day to ensure students gained the intended concepts and ensure they know what to expect in the future.

## **Curriculum in Practice**

With each lesson within the curriculum, we will include differing aspects to implement care. Lessons will surround students with themes including identity, community, and self-expression. Lessons like this can consist of designing community spaces that they think would be beneficial or mapping their identities as they see fit in a sort of collage or drawing. It can also include field trips to local areas around the community where students can create art in a different setting (while allowing students to vote and suggest where this occurs). The possibilities can be discussed between students and teachers and can be endless. These lessons also incorporate an open classroom setting, where students have the freedom to express their ideas about what they want to create. Lessons such as the ones listed above will lead to community building within the classroom and relationships between teacher and students.

The introduction of new artists each week will lead to students learning how to appreciate other's artwork as well as their own. Students must recognize that they can create artwork just like other artists. The inclusion of artist presentations and the introduction of artists around the community can lead to understanding how others can inspire students. We will also introduce the idea to students that they can be inspired by those artists and their teachers, who may also function as artists on the side. This will allow students to trust us and build a stronger teacher-student relationship. We can tailor these artists and their artwork around how culturally relevant they are to the students. We believe that creating lessons that involve the importance of the students themselves will excite students and build relationships with themselves, other students, and those artists.

To implement this type of curriculum to others outside of the classroom, we will hold a teacher workshop to influence teachers with our ideas. Teacher workshops will be introduced as

a seminar where the curriculum is presented and further explained. We will go in-depth into the importance of the curriculum and why it is needed, as we have done in our proposal. We will also provide resources for the teacher, including TAB (Teaching for Artistic Behavior) events and lessons as well as a list of other lesson plans that fit into the curriculum. A workshop could also be something to involve the parents in as well. We will hold a separate parent workshop and adapt it differently for parents to further understand what their children will be undergoing in the classroom. This will allow parents to continue this curriculum outside of the school to maintain the consistency discussed above.

### **Assessments & Reflection**

Students will be given multiple ways to reflect on their work during class. This reflection can take many forms, and students will be given options as to how they would like to reflect (written reflection, discussion, etc.). These reflections specifically can be in the forms of formal or informal critiques, self-grading based on rubrics given by the teacher, or simply allowing students to write freely about what they learned throughout each project. As the teacher, we will consider the student's group and individual reflections when going into the assessment phase. This is implemented under the belief that if students reflect on both their successes and failures, they are learning.

Students will be assessed with basic rubrics and guidelines for artmaking, considering craft, creativity, technical aspects, etc. However, to integrate our specific curriculum, we will show students each rubric as each assignment is introduced to show them what is expected. When grading, teachers will also consider each student's reflection and feedback, as mentioned above, to ensure that each student's voice is heard and reflected into their final grade.

**Conclusion**

Our curriculum proposal aims to include an entire community in the education of their students, specifically those who are younger and more mailable. To improve the outlook on the future for those students and make modern-day society more positive, knowledgeable, and enjoyable for all included, we believe this can be achieved through this curriculum, and we hope to spread our ideas to those who run the future.

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