

# The Responsive Classroom

## At The City School

### An Overview

The City School uses Responsive Classroom social emotional curriculum as an approach to teaching and classroom management. This approach incorporates practical strategies that integrate social and academic learning throughout the school day while helping to create a climate conducive to high academic achievement. The Responsive Classroom was developed by The Northeast Foundation for Children. The Responsive Classroom is a group of strong classroom management strategies that are in line with 1 Corinthians 14:40. Let all things be done decently and in order. The results of using these strategies gives The City School a sense of order in a caring community.

The Underlying principles of the Responsive Classroom approach are:

- The social curriculum is as important as the academic curriculum.
- How children learn is as important as what they learn: process and content go hand in hand.
- The greatest cognitive growth occurs through social interaction.
- There is a set of social skills children need in order to be successful academically and socially: Cooperation, Assertion, Responsibility, Empathy, and Self-control (C.A.R.E.S.)
- Knowing the children we teach - individually, culturally, and developmentally is as important as knowing the content we teach.
- Knowing the families of the children we teach and inviting their participation is essential to children's education.
- How the adults at school work together is as important as individual competence.

The City School staff has been provided with ongoing professional development in the following components of The Responsive Classroom.

- **Morning Meeting:** a gathering of each class at the start of the school day. Students greet one another, share news and participate in a team building activity to prepare for the school day.
- **Rule Creation:** Students take an active role in creating classroom rules. The practice what it looks like to meet the goal of each of 4 or 5 rules they developed together. Student Hopes and Dreams are developed for the school year to remind them of the goals they set throughout the year.
- **Positive Teacher Language:** Teachers are very intentional with words and tone that they use. Teacher Language promotes active learning and self-discipline. Reminding, redirecting and reinforcing language are three types of language used.
- **Logical Consequences:** Consequences are restorative and not punitive. The purpose of logical consequences is to reach the heart of the student and equip them with the social and emotional tools to help them make wiser choices. Students learn to fix their mistakes while preserving their dignity.
- **Classroom Organization:** is setting up a physical room in a way that encourages student independence and productivity.
- **Collaborative Problem-Solving:** Students are taught to use “I” statements while conferencing and role playing to resolve conflicts.
- **Academic Choice:** Students are provided teacher-structured choices in various academic activities.
- **Guided Discovery:** This is a method of introducing class materials using a format that encourages independence, creativity and responsibility.

Prior to the start of implementing the Responsive Classroom, the staff developed school-wide procedures.