**CLASSROOM MEETINGS AND COMMUNITY-BUILDING ACTIVITIES**

**TIPS**

1. Make certain that everyone is included and that no one gets left out.
2. Make certain that sharing is appropriate.
3. In the first meeting set the guidelines. Explain confidentiality in case a student would share personal information. (What we say in circle, stays in circle). (See Community Circle Expectations document.)
4. Like your word wall for academics, make a SEL word wall. As you discuss new things about SEL in your classroom, add a new word to the SEL word wall.
5. These are the minimal things that we want you to do. You can do more!
* You can read a story to go along with the theme.
* Students may make cards, write stories or friendly letters, or make projects.
* You can make a system to recognize students who show the behavior that goes along with the activity. For example, if you are working on compliments one day, write the names of the students on the board whom you hear give a compliment. Pick 2-3 of these kids to give a PBIS point to if you want.
* Be creative and have fun!

6. Do not force kids to participate. Encourage them to participate. Hopefully, over time everyone will want to be part of the classroom community.

7. Protect kids from put-downs from peers, especially those kids who are vulnerable to this kind of interaction from others.

8. Always start in a circle on the floor. Separate if there is partner work. Then come back to circle to share.

9. Include yourself in the sharing, too.

10. Building a sense of community is an on-going process. It needs to continue after the first 7 days.

11. Every time you have a new student, you need to work hard to build the sense of community again. Revisit the name games and sharing info about self. Do this daily for a while after a new student joins your class.

12. You also need to re-build the community after a student leaves.

13. Make space in your classroom for kids to sit in circle.

14. Be aware of students with autism or other social problems. They may have a difficult time with these activities to begin with.

15. For the sharing: After you give them the instructions, tell them to start thinking now of what they want to share so that they the sharing can go quickly.

16. When you share as a large group, feel free to add in some shoulder-partner sharing, too, so that everyone gets a chance to talk, at least to one person.

**The plan for the first week is for seven days due to our school beginning each school year on a Thursday. The activities for this first week of morning meetings come from a variety of sources. The books that were used were:**

* **The Morning Meeting Book by Roxanne Kriete and Carol Davis**
* **80 Morning Meeting Ideas for Grades K-2 by Susan Lattanzi Roser**
* **80 Morning Meeting Ideas for Grades 3-6 by Carol Davis**
* **99 Activities and Greetings by Melissa Correa-Connelly**

**DAY 1: CLASS MEETING—MORNING**

1. Learning names
2. Make a name card for each student ahead of time on an index card. Put in a basket.
3. Sit in a circle and say, “When we try to learn everyone’s name and say ‘hi’ or ‘hello’ to each other, we feel happy that they are here. Let’s practice.”
4. Draw out a card and show it. Ask whose it is. Identify student by name. Give student card and model a greeting. “Good morning, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. I’m glad that you’re here today.” Then have everyone say it together to the student.
5. Greet each student in this way.
6. Collect cards and keep.
7. After all the students have been greeted, have each child share something that he/she likes to do. After all the students have shared, pick a student to remember what one student said about their name and something that they like to do. Have all students take a turn at remembering what someone else shared. Try to have them remember different students, so that everyone gets remembered. Example: A student would say, “He’s Johnny and he likes to read.” If they have on name tags, instruct them to cover them up. If it gets bogged down, just have the whole class participate in remembering the name and what each person likes to do.
8. Include yourself in sharing, too.
9. Explain that everyone is welcome in this class. One way for everyone to feel welcome is to say hello to each other.
10. Develop expectations together for class meetings and community activities, such as listening to each other, being respectful, one person talks at a time when in circle, etc.

**DAY 1: COMMUNITY BUILDING—AFTERNOON**

1. Have the children line up by alphabet according to the first letter of their first name.
2. Do a “wave” with the names—first person says his/her name, and everyone quickly says their name. Then do “wave” backwards.

**DAY 2: CLASS MEETING—MORNING**

1. Three fun facts
2. Work in partners. Find out 3 fun facts about each other.
3. Come back to large group. Introduce partner by name and share 3 fun facts about them.

**DAY 2: COMMUNITY BUILDING—AFTERNOON**

1. Finger tracings
2. Work with a partner. Trace a letter on partner’s back with finger and partner is to guess what the letter is. Switch and let the other person do the tracing.
3. Do this for 3-4 rotations with different partners.
4. For the older students, you can ask them to write a short 2-3 letter word on their partner’s back after you do the rotations of the letters.

**DAY 3: CLASS MEETING—MORNING**

1. Friendship Bingo
2. Instruct them that are playing Friendship Bingo, but the object is not to get boxes in a row. The object is to get to know as much as they can about their classmates.
3. Show them the paper and tell them that they are to find people who match the description. They must ask the questions, not just hand the paper to someone, and say tell what is true for you.
4. They are to write the name of person in the box. If they don’t know how to spell the name, the person can write it or tell them.
5. They are to ask different people the questions. Each person should be on their paper only one time. It is okay to have a 1-2 people repeated one time.
6. At the end, ask how many matches they found: How many found 5 or more? 10 or more? etc.
7. Ask them what they found out about their classmates.

**DAY 3: COMMUNITY BUILDING—AFTERNOON**

1. “I like to…” circle with motions.
2. Stand in a circle. Each person says their name and says “I like to…” (They make a motion with their hands, feet, or body to represent that activity). Everyone says, “Welcome, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, who likes to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and make that same motion.
3. After everyone has shared, do a “wave” of motions: The first person just does their motion and then the next, etc. Do frontwards and backwards.
4. To dismiss to their seats, you can review the activities shared by holding your hand over a student’s head and have the other students say their name and do their motion.

**DAY 4: CLASS MEETING—MORNING**

1. Talk about what they need from others to feel welcomed in a new place and what they need to feel like they belong to a group.
2. How do you feel when people welcome you of do things that let you know that you belong to that group?
3. What groups do you feel that you do belong to? (family, friends, classroom, school, church, Scouts, B&G Club, Y after-school, etc.)
4. Talk about what things people might do to let them know that they are not welcomed or that they do not belong to a group.
5. How do you feel when others act in ways that you do not feel welcomed or that you belong?
6. What can we do as a classroom to make certain that everyone feels welcomed and that they belong here?

**DAY 4: AFTERNOON**

1. Names
2. Find the people whose first name begins with the same letter as your name.
3. Find the people whose last letter in their first name is the same letter as your name.
4. Count how many letters are in your name. Find the people who have the same number of letters in your name.

**DAY 5: CLASS MEETING—MORNING**

1. “If you’re like me….” circle
2. Stand in a circle with one person in the middle. The person in the middle says, “If you’re like me, you like…” The teacher says, “If this is true for you, then do \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (make up a motion, such as stand on one foot, walk in place, scratch your head, etc.) Each student gets to say one thing that they like to do. Continue until everyone has had a turn. Point out how much they have in common.
3. To return to seat, hold you your hand over the student’s head and have class say his/her name and what he/she likes to do.

**DAY 5: COMMUNITY BUILDING—AFTERNOON**

1. Line-up by physical trait—blue eyes, brown eyes, hazel eyes, green eyes; blonde hair, brown hair, red hair; color of shirts (from lightest to darkest), etc.
2. Line up by height—shortest to tallest

**DAY 6: CLASS MEETING—MORNING**

1. Compliments
2. Define compliments. Make a list of compliments. (Later put this info together in a sign to display in your room.)
3. Explain that compliments begin: “I like…”, “I like the way you…”, “I like it when you…”
4. Explain that compliments are always received with “thank you.”
5. Give a compliment to the person on your right.
6. Discuss how they felt when they received a compliment, when they gave a compliment.
7. Do again but give compliment to person on their left.
8. Encourage them to give a compliment to at least one person every day.
9. You can keep track of the compliments to reward the students—a compliment jar which when full means a cookie party, whole class PBIS point, etc. You can also reward students on an individual basis for giving out compliments.

**DAY 6: COMMUNITY BUILDING—AFTERNOON**

1. “Would you rather…”
2. Go through list of choices. (You can find list of choices online.) Instruct students which side of the room to go to make their choice. They need to make a choice. They can’t stand in the middle. (But if it is a struggle, don’t force it.)
3. Point out how we are alike and how we are different, and that one choice is not better than the other.

**DAY 7: CLASS MEETING—MORNING**

1. Name words
2. Divide the class in groups of 3-4. They need one piece of paper and a pencil.
3. Instruct them to write down all their names and then make as many words as they can from the letters in all their names. (Try to put a good speller in each group.)
4. Come back to circle and share the number of new words created and some of the words that they made.

**DAY 7: AFTERNOON**

1. Line up by shoe size—smallest to largest
2. Line up by birthday month—from beginning of school year to end of school year into summer, from Jan to Dec.
3. Line up birthday day—1st to 31st