Building a Caring Community

Building caring classroom relationships is the key to creating a successful learning community. Research has shown that students thrive in classroom communities that meet their basic psychological needs for autonomy, belonging, and competence. When such classrooms emphasize the importance of cooperation, collaboration, kindness, and personal responsibility, students are more likely to treat one another with respect. As a result, they feel safer and more secure in school and are more willing to take risks to share their thinking. They are better able to stand up for what they believe and to be sensitive to others’ feelings and opinions. Students are more likely to be motivated to learn for the sake of learning, rather than for good grades or other extrinsic rewards. They can work out problems, and they are more likely to take responsibility for their behaviour and their learning.

The staff at Belgrave South will use the first two weeks to build the learning community environment throughout the whole school. The time spent establishing the learning environment for the year is crucial as the grade becomes a team and develops its sense of purpose. During the two weeks the whole school will focus on the following areas:

- Establishing class rules
- Reviewing school rules
- Beginning portfolios
- Establishing class routines
- Setting up classrooms with displays
- Developing criteria for classroom tasks
- Identifying learning styles
- Developing personal profiles
- Being a good sport / playing games
- The importance of healthy foods, water and rest.
- Learning how to work co-operatively in groups
- You Can Do It – Steps to Success
- Sun Safety / Sunsmart
- Establishing the Writer’s Workshop
- Friendship skills
- Establishing the Reader’s Workshop
- Developing a team spirit

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