

Transition Practices & Setting up your classroom

Before the Beginning of the School Year

1. Make contact with your new group of students:
 - a. Telephone or video call with each student, postcard, email
 - b. OR “Welcome video” sent to each parent’s email addresses
2. Invite challenging or highly anxious students to come and visit you at school, during a Ped Day. These 1:1 visits helps you to get to know each other, reduce anxiety and for the student to know where their classroom will be. This goes a long way to easing into the new school year!

Preparing the Classroom

1. **Have a “Welcome” sign on your classroom door** with each child’s name on it. We recommend having your picture, in the middle, as a great way to welcome them into this new year with you!
2. **Determine the physical layout of the class and desk/table configuration**
 - a. Create a desk/table configuration that will based on your students’ needs, as much as you know of them for now
 - b. Determine the different areas in your classroom: make it visual for students to know where things are. Keep it simple, less is more!
 - c. Ensure that students have a space to keep their personal belongings (ex. school bag, lunch box, etc.).
3. **Colour-code and/or label materials that can be accessed by students (*think Executive Functioning*).** Keep things clear, simple and organized. Categorize: learning material / socio-emotional material, classroom setting, transition tools (baskets by subjects.
 - a. A group Community Basket is suggested even though students are expected to have their own materials.
 - b. Fidget items, sound reducing headphones and disco-sit cushions (for those who need them, but accessible to all)
 - c. Alternate work station options – clipboard, standing station option, lapdesk, “coffee” table, etc.
 - d. Alternate seating options – stools (Ergoergo, Hokki), sit & surf, foam tiles, bean bags, biking desk, cushions,
 - e. A variety of alternative, quiet time activities
 - f. Building & Creating community activity
4. **Cover up any area that will not be accessible to students.** We recommend using light, solid colours (plastic tablecloths or fabric) as these will provide less visual stimulation than bright colours and busy patterns.
5. **Remove as much clutter as possible** – think of it as increasing the size of your room from the inside. Everyone will benefit from more floor and air space!

Setting the Stage for the Year

1. Determine the routines that will be essential – These will NEED TO BE TAUGHT

- a. Travelling in the building
- b. Accessing the bathroom
- c. Morning Message & Morning Entry Routine
 - i. Have a message on the board that is awaiting their arrival
 - ii. Have a task (or a few) for them to do upon arrival
- d. Use of alternate seating and alternate work stations – What is available, how does one access them?
- e. Snack and lunch routine
 - i. When and where can I eat
- f. End of day – getting ready to go home routine
 - i. School bag preparation
 - ii. Walkers/Picked-up by parents
 - iii. Bus
 - iv. Daycare

2. Other adults coming into the classroom – Introductions are very important

- a. Pre-identify who will be coming, for which reason and what time of day
 - i. Specialists
 - ii. Support Staff
 - iii. Resource Teacher
 - iv. Professionals from the school board
 - v. Administration
 - vi. Special guests