

Dear GPOC Folks,

This upcoming year has its work cut out for us. After much trial and error, I have a few helpful hints that may help you as you start the year in your own teaching environments (whatever that may look like right now). Please do not hesitate to reach out to me if you have any questions or need help brainstorming ideas to be covid safe while teaching music in your classroom.

Take Care,

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Helpful Hints

- Posting student expectations can be an incredibly valuable tool in the music classroom. Ever found yourself re-explaining a simple or multi-step procedure over and over again? Create a sign with the procedure steps written out or a series of images that explain what to do. This should be very visible in a place where students can remind themselves of the procedure or the teacher can simply point to the sign if too busy to stop class to re-explain something.
- While posting teacher-written procedures is helpful for young students, teachers can also benefit from posters and signs that pertain to teacher language. When classroom skills are written right there on your wall, it's easy to name those goals out loud as positive reinforcement for students. In my classroom this year, we are working toward demonstrating the five social/emotional competencies of Responsive Classroom: Responsibility, Cooperation, Self Control, Assertiveness, and Empathy. I am including these terms in my morning messages and frequently naming them out loud as my students and I process each skill and where they must be present in our daily class activities. Ultimately each classroom will create a poster about these skills containing little blurbs about what each of them means and how each skill impacts our music room environment. It might not look "Pinterest perfect", however, allowing students to create posters of their learning/behavior objectives is an effective way to boost student comprehension and buy-in. It allows them to take ownership of the music room environment as well as being active participants in their own learning process.
- After the Social/Emotional Competencies are posted in my classroom, they will become consistent goals for student achievement. The posters will serve as easy reminders for me to give students verbal praise. As a class, we briefly recognize moments throughout each class when students demonstrate the social/emotional competencies. I will call out the skill I see, name who demonstrated the skill (either one person, a small group, or the entire class), and then I count to three for a power clap from all students. It is so much fun to imbed little moments of praise in every activity and the students really like it!