Preface to Volume 2, Issue 1
Keaton Anderson, Associate Editor

Welcome to another addition of Journal on Best Teaching Practices, a journal made by students, for students. This issue of the journal is themed toward topics teachers, new and old, need to think about before the teaching process even begins. Such article topics included in this issue are classroom arrangement, daily classroom agendas, getting the most out of lesson plans, student rewards, building a classroom community, collaborative learning, and parent involvement.

Haley Chinander’s article “The Teacher’s First Day of School: What to Do Before Walking into Class” explores ideas new teachers need to consider before opening their classroom door for the first time. These include finding a mentor, classroom layout, available technologies, and parent involvement before school even starts.

“Placement of the Teacher’s Desk” is Matthew P. Krych’s article dedicated only to the teacher’s desk placement. A seemingly simple task can play a huge difference in the classroom dynamic. He discusses the desk location and its effects as well as if a desk is necessary at all.

Olivia Wannarka addresses the issue of classroom orientation in her article “Organization in the Classroom.” She describes in detail where certain objects should be in the room in order to create a positive learning environment along with the optimal learning conditions for students.

The next article describes in great detail the importance of a classroom agenda. Natalie Lewis explains how using a daily schedule can promote time-management, reading skills, writing skills, and leadership in the classroom in her piece “Daily agendas: the key to organizing the classroom.”

Writing a lesson plan can be an extremely time consuming process for teachers. Marissa Fredrickson examines in her article “Time to Get Serious: How to get the most out of your lesson plan!” which components should be included in a lesson plan to be the most productive for students.

“Building a Classroom Community” written by Sara Joslin, describes how teachers can intentionally build their classrooms to provide an emotionally stable, physically engaging, and growing academic community. She also explains how children who work toward a common goal tend make stronger connections with classmates and the content being taught.

Anna Wessel writes about a unique type of learning in her article called “Peer Learning Strategies in the Classroom.” She explores some ideals that make up peer learning including peer tutoring, small and large groups for class discussion, and online discussion and feedback.

“Let’s Collaborate about Cooperative Learning” by Sarah Renslow explores the world of cooperative learning. Along with examining solutions to problems teachers might face with collaborative learning, the article shows how students working with small groups are able to collaborate with one another and achieve academic as well as social benefits.

Kaile Marlatt addresses the topic of student rewards in her piece “Worth the Reward.” She describes how rewarding children for completing tasks and being well behaved can help them improve, but if rewards are improperly utilized, the child and the classroom can suffer.

The last article by McKell Larson titled “Getting Parents Involved in the Classroom” expresses how to get parent involvement before school even begins. He shares the different types of involvement, ways to get parents involved, and the positive outcomes of parent involvement in secondary education.