



# CHAMPS Tips: The First Day

## The First Day

## Tips for Teachers and Coaches

Soon, students will be walking through our doors with a whole year's worth of potential and excitement. It is important that we set up our classrooms so all students can be successful, and they learn as much as possible. The first step in this is having a plan and knowing which elements of CHAMPS/DSC you will be trying at the beginning of the year. Some examples you might consider are:

- Filling out a Classroom Management Plan
- Developing and posting rules
- Developing and implementing an attention signal
- Developing and implementing CHAMPS expectations for a classroom activity or transition
- Developing a plan for correcting misbehavior
- Monitoring and improving ratio of interactions
- Developing entering class and dismissal routings

Whether you are starting with one part of CHAMPS or diving head first into full CHAMPS implementation, it is critical that you plan for the first day of school. Some things that you might consider preparing are:

- **Developing a modified schedule for the first day of school** – The first day is going to run much different from the rest of the school year. Having this scheduled out will help you ensure everything gets covered. Having this schedule posted in your room will help students feel comfortable by knowing what is happening when.
- **Make a sign for your room** – Your name posted on your door can be helpful for parents and students by helping them be sure they have found the correct room.
- **Prepare a beginning activity** – A beginning activity can give students something to do while they wait for the class to start and sets the expectation for engagement in the classroom. This task should be something students can do independently. This may include a coloring sheet, a getting-to-know-you sheet, etc.

The first day can set the tone for the whole year. When the day runs well, students leave feeling comfortable and motivated for the next day. Here are some things you might do to make students feel welcome and help them learn your behavior expectations from the beginning.

- **Display your schedule for the first day** – By having this on the board first thing in the morning, it lets students know what to expect and gives them something to read if they finish the beginning activity early.
- **Greet the students individually as they enter the room** – Greets may include standing at the door and welcoming them as they come in. It may also be a longer ice breaker activity where you learn a little about each student.
- **Get students' attention as soon as the bell rings** – By taking control of the room as soon as the bell rings it sets the tone for the year that every minute is important. It also starts conditioning kids to prepare for learning as soon as the bell signals the beginning of the day/period.
- **Communicate the most important information about your classroom in the first 10 minutes** – Introduce yourself and share your long-term goals for the class. Share the Guidelines for Success or other values that apply in your classroom, and teach your rules. At the end of this time, students should know who you are, what you expect, and what they will learn while they are with you.
- **Teach your attention signal** – Your attention signal will save you enormous amounts of time over the course of the year. It is critical that you teach it and start to engrain their response early on.
- **Introduce the schedule for the day and start using the three-step process for communicating expectations** - Teach your expectation for each activity, procedure, or routine. Next, watch your students to see if they meet the expectation. Then, give feedback to the group about their performance.

A well-managed first day will go a long way in developing engagement and relationships with your class. Use these strategies and we can all be CHAMPS!