CLASSROOM JOBS

Classroom jobs are an excellent way to teach students responsibility and also help them take pride in their classroom and themselves. When done well, the classroom job system can eliminate the constant competition between students to do “special tasks” for the teacher. And it relieves the teacher of numerous small tasks that otherwise become exhausting, overwhelming, and disruptive. There are any number of jobs you might choose from. At the end of this document is a list of possible jobs to get you started. Choose the ones you think you will need in the first weeks of school. Feel free to add, alter, and revise jobs weekly to make them better fit your needs.

There are many things to consider as you think about designing and implementing your jobs system. How many jobs will you have? Which jobs will need more than one person to do them? How will you teach/review each job? How often will you change jobs? Will students choose their own jobs or will you assign them randomly? If they are choosing, who chooses first? Here are some tips from those who have been there.

Tips From the Trenches:

- Everyone needs to have a job, but not everyone has to have a unique job. There are several jobs that two or three people can do at once and more than one student can be assigned to. For example, sweeping is a big job and might take one student too long to complete at the end of the day. So you might want to assign that job to 2 or 3 students.

- You never need to feel as if you are locked into a job that isn’t working. Feel free to drop, add, and alter jobs whenever necessary. Bring the students into the discussion when this happens and they will help you. Tell them when a job doesn’t seem to be working and that you are thinking of changing it or replacing it and see what they have to say and what ideas they have for making changes or replacements.

- Jobs should not be changed more than once a week. However, after that, find what works for you and your class. Many teachers change jobs every week, while others find it easier to only change every two weeks or every month.
The simplest and quickest method of tracking and switching jobs is to create a pocket chart with each job listed on a separate pocket. Then place popsicle sticks with students’ names on them into the chart pockets. Alternately, you can create a hanging chart with the jobs listed in a column and place wooden clips (clothespins) with students’ names written on them onto the chart. (See sample images of both of these methods below). Every week (or month) simply move each popsicle stick over one pocket to assign students new jobs.
Letting students choose their own jobs motivates them to do a better job. But it also takes longer to facilitate the re-assigning of new jobs each week or month. If you are going to let students choose their jobs, tell them they cannot choose the same job twice in a row, but they can go back and forth between the two they like best. Design a system that students can understand for who will get to choose first. For example, it might make sense to allow those who did the previous week’s job the best (didn’t have to be reminded, did what they were supposed to do quickly and well) go first. Put their sticks or clips in the order you will let them choose before students arrive and then incorporate the choosing into your beginning routine that day. If there are no jobs left that a student wants when it is his/her turn to choose, he/she can be “on vacation” and another student can have two jobs.

Jobs work well when the system is consistently implemented. Sometime it is easier to ask the student sitting near the door to open it when someone knocks, but then the Door Monitor wonders why someone got to do their job and they feel left out and hurt. Trust in the process and the process will work for you.

Possible Jobs for Elementary Classrooms:

- **Pencil Person** – sharpens pencils
- **Paper Passer** – passes out papers (except for homework)
- **Paper Collector** - collects papers (except for homework)
- **Homework Helper** – collects and distributes homework
- **Homework Checker** - checks in students' homework and reports missing assignments to the teacher.
- **Door Monitor** – opens and closes classroom and other doors
- **Window Monitor** – opens and closes curtains and windows as necessary
- **Operator** - answers the phone when the teacher is working with small groups or students
- **Librarian** – organizes classroom library
- **Energy Expert** – turns lights on and off when class enters and leaves room
- **Line Leader** – leads the line and sets the example
- **Caboose** – Monitors line from the back, last in line
- **Botanist** – waters and cares for any class plants
- **Desk Detective** – inspects the class for messy desks at end of each day
- **Teaching Assistant** – helps the teacher do all sorts of miscellaneous tasks
Attendance Monitor - takes attendance and brings it to the necessary location
Board Director – erases chalk or dry erase boards
File Clerk- files things
Scissorhands – cuts out things for teacher as necessary
Math Manager – organizes, collects and distributes math manipulatives (2)
Supply Chief – passes out supplies, replenishes and organizes as necessary (2)
Meteorologist – checks and records the weather and temperature, reports to the class
Calendar Chief – in charge of changing date and keeping calendar updated
Animal Caretaker – cares for class pets
Class Custodian - sweeps floors (2)
Spill Crew - deals with spills of small items, juice, paint, and so on (2)
Sanitizer- sprays one pump of hand sanitizer for others before lunch (2)
Recycling Chief - ensures recycling bins are emptied regularly and reminds students to recycle whenever possible
Creeper Crawler - crawls around under desks at the end of the day, picking up things that have fallen to the floor (bits of paper, pencils, paper clips etc.) and puts them away or throws them away. (2)
Alphabetizer - puts stacks of notebooks or papers in alphabetical order so record-keeping is easier and faster for the teacher
Messenger - delivers notes to other teachers or to the office
Decorator - helps with bulletin boards and classroom displays, tacks things up and takes things down (2)
Lunch Monitor – brings lunch bins out and brings them in (2)
Closet or Cubby Patrol – makes sure coats stay hung up and closet or cubbies are organize (2)
Nurse Buddy - accompanies students to the nurse's office if they are sick or hurt
Ambassador - helps visitors or new students learn their way around and keeps them company at lunch and recess; explains classroom projects or displays to parents or visitors with questions
Journalist- records each week's most memorable classroom events or activities (2)
Secret Admirer - writes an unsigned note of thanks and appreciation to a school worker (custodian, office worker, cafeteria worker)
Computer Technician - turns classroom computers on and off
iPad Monitor- makes sure all iPads are plugged in to charge and stored correctly at end of day
Equipment Manager - keeps track of playground equipment, brings it in and out (2)
Substitute - performs the jobs of absent students