Ideas to Implement the Comprehensive Model

SEE workshops that focus on strategies for a democratic classroom will examine strategies to give students age-appropriate leadership roles in the class and teach them methods to form consensus agreement such as Cero-a-Cinco.

Democratic Classroom

Cero-a-Cinco: A consensus building strategy

Cero-a-Cinco (Spanish for zero to five) is a useful consensus-building strategy for classroom projects. Consensus does not necessarily mean unanimous agreement. Consensus should mean everyone's opinion is respected and the group attempts to achieve a super majority or 75 percent or more of the team.

Practice cero-a-cinco with non-controversial decisions and encourage the team facilitator, recorder and reflector (refer to team roles) to work together gathering as much information possible from the team to achieve a strong consensus.

Steps for cero-a-cinco—

1. A proposal is made for class/team consideration.

2. Team facilitator makes sure everyone understands the proposal and then requests a vote. Everyone votes with their hand and shows all five fingers (cinco) to no fingers (cero) with the following ranking to be understood by the team. Cinco (5) fingers indicate you strongly support the proposal. Cuatro (4) fingers indicate you like the proposal but may have a suggestion to improve the proposal. Tres (3) fingers note you support the proposal but have some suggestions. Dos (2) fingers indicates you think the proposal could work, but you have some reservations. Uno (1) finger notes you would go along for the sake of consensus, but you see some problems with the proposal. Cero (0) fingers indicates you do not support the proposal and have strong objections.

3. The team recorder can tally the number of fingers and the team facilitator can request oral feedback from those that vote with three or less fingers. This feedback might help the team modify the proposal for a new vote.

4. If the proposal is modified, a new round of cero-a-cinco begins.

Practice—

Draft a proposal for team consideration. Clarify and vote using cero-a-cinco. What is the range of fingers displayed and average for team?

Are there team members voting three or less fingers? What are their ideas or concerns? Do these ideas help improve the initial proposal?

Do you have a modified proposal for a new round of cero-a-cinco?