

# THE IMPACT OF CREATING AN EMOTIONALLY SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT IN MATH CLASSROOMS

We interviewed Rebekah Berlin to discuss her study that delves into the relationship between teaching practices common across subject areas and mathematics-specific teaching practices, particularly in light of newer College and Career Ready (CCR) Standards. This resource highlights Berlin's insights on the importance of creating emotionally supportive classroom environments and the implications for teacher development.



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## Holistic Teaching Approach

The need for a holistic approach to teaching emphasizes the importance of both subject-specific pedagogies and content-agnostic practices, such as creating an emotionally supportive environment.

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## Study Focus

The study examined over 400 upper elementary mathematics lessons from Washington DC public schools, looking at the relationship between mathematics-specific teaching practices and emotional support, classroom organization, and student engagement.

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## Findings

The study identified four main types of lessons:

- **Turbulent Learning Environments:** Characterized by lower productivity, negative climate, and low emotional support, with few opportunities for engaging in mathematics.
- **Inconsistent:** Featuring mid-level scores on classroom organization, leading to inconsistent opportunities for engaging in mathematics.
- **Orderly:** High scores on classroom organization but lower emotional support and student engagement, with no significant difference in mathematics engagement compared to inconsistent lessons.
- **Supportive:** Emotionally supportive, well-organized, and highly engaging environments where consistent CCR-aligned mathematical engagement was observed.

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## Implications:

The study suggests that while mathematics-specific support is crucial, teachers may also benefit from support in creating emotionally supportive and engaging learning environments.

## In Conclusion:

This study highlights the complex interplay between teaching practices and classroom climate, underscoring the importance of a comprehensive approach to teacher development. Educators can use these insights to enhance their teaching practices and create more effective learning environments for students.