Purpose

This research focuses on providing teachers with strategies to manage a diverse classroom of middle school students to create an inclusive and supportive classroom environment.

Overview of the project

Applying a mediation model requires a complete shift in a teacher’s approach to classroom management. Such a drastic change may not be accomplished overnight; however, teachers can take steps towards this goal by implementing mediation tools in their day-to-day interactions with students. While certainly not an exhaustive list, the strategies presented will support both novice and veteran teachers in mediating a middle grade classroom.

The mediation topics covered in this research include: Mental models, body language, positions versus interests and needs, identifying common ground, the use of I-Statements, active listening, encouraging perspective taking, escaping the drama triangle, honoring conflict styles, and creating a conflict management plan.

Conclusions and implications

Through a mediation paradigm, outcomes are no longer dictated; the students have power in the situation, and are thus much more likely to bring resolutions to fruition because they invested in
the creation and process of ideas. Though this process, we empower our students to take control of the conflicts in their own lives. The mediation approach shifts how we, as educators, understand our relationship with students and makes us advocates for social justice in our classrooms, schools, and communities.