

TIPS FOR NEW AND VETERAN INSTRUCTORS

**The following is a guide of tips and tricks in a guide that
allows you to review at your own pace.**

Survival Strategies for Classroom Management

Veteran instructors didn't get to where they are by luck. They put into place classroom survival strategies: I.E. Classroom Management (usually learned from their mentor or other veteran instructor) to help them bring structure and order from chaos. Let's look at several specific proven "survival strategies" that will help you organize your program into a well-run and respected professional classroom and lab/shop environment:

Classroom management is crucial in supporting a structured learning environment, especially when there are students in the classroom with behavioral/social exceptionalities. The best teachers with the best classroom management expertise are always prepared!

At the beginning of each session:

- What routines are in place to determine how the students enter the class?
- What routines are in place to ensure all students are actively engaged in the teaching / learning continuum?
- What signal is in place to get your students' attention?
- Do students know what to do at the start of the day, or any time during the session?
- What procedures are in place for the disobedient student?
- What do students do with returned homework, timecards, or notes from home?

During work times - whole or small group:

- What is the signal or routine for leaving your classroom?
- What is the procedure for the students finishing early? Be ready for this.
- How do you establish what the acceptable noise level is?
- How do students get help and when do they leave their seats?
- During a lecture, what is the process when students need to sharpen their pencils, go to the locker room/bathroom or put something in the trash or re-cycle bin?

Student Work:

- What is the routine for incomplete or missed work?
- What is the consequence for late work?
- Where do your students put completed work?
- How do you track student work?
- How long before you grade and return class or homework assignments?
- Have you explained your grading system and clearly defined your grading criteria?

Miscellaneous:

- What routines are in place for lab/shop, classroom clean up?
- What routines are in place for going to the locker room when class is in session?
- What routines are in place for dismissal?
- What are your expectations during group work to ensure students are on task?
- How do you know if your students are aware of all of your routines?
- What is the procedure if you or a student gets seriously injured in the lab/shop?
- How do you handle phone calls or e-mails to parents?
- How do you communicate class expectations and other general information to parents?

When you are well prepared to 'handle' anything, you'll find that your discipline issues are well under control. Be prepared to have an answer for each item on the checklist - especially helpful for newer teachers.

Teaching Rules and Routines:

The best strategies for establishing acceptable behaviors are those strategies that are pro-active and preventative. If you want cooperative student/students, they need to understand and be able to follow your rules and routines. Meeting this goal will ensure that you have a good learning environment.

First of all, you will need to communicate your expectations for acceptable behavior. How will you do this? You will teach the expectations, simply telling students about your expectations is not enough. The following steps will provide you with everything you need to meet with success:

1. Describe the acceptable behaviors with words and actions; be specific. For instance, instead of telling them to use acceptable voices, describe the levels of noise for the various activities. Demonstrate that you expect silence during lecture period and reading time. Ask them to demonstrate what voices are used during group work, they should speak relatively quietly to their group members. Ask them who they should be talking to a group times.
2. Provide opportunities for students to practice expected behaviors. Be sure to focus on the students who experience behavior difficulties to demonstrate and tell you what the acceptable behaviors are in the various situations.
3. Provide honest and ongoing feedback. Always let your students know if they are behaving appropriately or if there is something they could be doing to improve their behavior. Be specific when telling students what it is about how they're behaving. For instance, you may say that you really liked the way that they put everything away so quickly and quietly. Give regular reminders and feedback, this will help to establish a great climate for learning.

What about the student that breaks the rules? This student should not be embarrassed. If there are other students around, you will need to bring the student to a spot that is away from the other

students. Ask him/her why he/she thinks you've asked to speak with them. Usually they can tell you. Ask them how they should have handled the situation and what they'll do next time. Include them in the consequence that should happen. Sometimes they'll tell you that they should work alone or that they should give an apology. Your consequence needs to be logical and fit the behavior deviation.

Although you won't be able to predict absolutely every behavior problem that you may encounter, it will be possible to identify many of them. Once you are prepared for the most common behavior problems, you will be able to cope and be able to change many of them. It's often wise to prepare a list of potential behavior issues and preventative and reactive strategies that will lead to ongoing acceptable behaviors. Being prepared for and knowing how you'll handle behavior deviations is half the battle.

Develop Routines and Procedures

The following practices will assist in maintaining order in classroom & lab/shop areas.

- Require students to report to class ON TIME
- Require students to change and get ready to work and learn
- Have a routine for taking attendance, making announcements, collecting information or student work and follow it daily
- Record absences and tardys every day
- Have a carefully prepared lesson ready for your students
- ALWAYS be prepared... Don't expect students to be prepared & organized if you are not
- Students want structure. Remember, you are probably one of the most stable influences in your students life
- Be in close proximity to where students are working
- Move around the area being sure to get close to everyone not just a few or those who are closest to your line of vision and hearing
- Use small group instruction techniques in the lab/shop, and explain the consequences of not working within your assigned group
- Group students according to ability, not with their friends
- Use upper classmen/women as instructional aids, shop foremen/women
- Establish start-up and shut-down procedures and make sure they are followed

Other classroom management tools:

- Weekly job assignment lists (lab foreman/woman, tool crib/toolbox manager, etc.)
- Weekly clean-up assignment lists
- Mark outside of textbooks with large numbers so you can quickly see if any books are missing
- Emergency procedure list (what to do if you or a student are seriously injured)
- Bins/holders for completed work
- Mailroom type holder for chapter handouts, integration worksheets, etc.
- All computer monitors facing where you can see them at a glance
- Tool storage system (pictures of tool room or other tool storage to quickly identify missing tools)
- Sign-out sheets, hall passes and absentee forms at the door.
- Always have several OSS (out of school) or ISS (in school suspension) packets ready
- Completed assignment, chapter, homework, etc. check off list
- Emergency lesson plans

Be Prepared and Organized

Strategies for Being Prepared: The following facts may help in understanding the need for being prepared and having a routine.

- Despite periodic displays of protest, students desire and require direction. They, more than any other age group, are the world's greatest conformists. This is frequently proven by their inevitable submission to peer pressure.
- Students really want to learn. Most of them also sincerely like to be in school, notwithstanding occasional comments to the contrary. In view of this, it is not surprising that effective teachers quickly learn that it is important to have the classroom under control at all times. When confusion exists, concentration is impossible and actual learning is reduced to a minimum.

The following strategies are meant to help the new teacher begin the year right

- Learn your student's names as soon as possible. Make this a first day priority. Students feel valued when you remember their name.
- The name of the game is Plan, Plan and Plan Ahead
- Meet with your mentor, have a clear idea of what is to be taught and how it is to be taught before you enter the classroom.
- Post daily assignments in the same location every day.
- Students need to know what they are doing and why they are doing it. As the teacher, you need to tell them, prepare the guidelines and put the directions in writing so they have them as a resource.

- The use of written guidelines with objectives increases student completion of assignments.
- Teach your students the daily routine of the classroom and lab/shop.
- Be consistent with your routines and don't vary them much.
- Students will follow your lead.
- Organize the way you begin the day, practice the routine with your students, and stay with the same routine. Review the routine
- Post a daily schedule on the bulletin or whiteboard

Measurable Goals and Standards

Set high, measurable and obtainable goals for your students. Clearly communicate these standards and expectations for classroom or lab/shop participation and behavior to students.

- Students will work to meet the standards if they know what they are.
- Post the rules around the shop/ lab
- Make sure all students are aware of the rules before you begin to enforce them.
- Don't change the rules without discussion.
- Make sure your rules align with the school rules and policies.

Have a procedure for monitoring students and share it with your students. A work ethic grade/daily grade provides instant feedback and allows students to know how they are doing and helps promote open, meaningful communications between you and your students.

- Follow the HCCTC grading policy
- Maintain accurate competency/task lists and an up-to-date grade/attendance book.

Classroom Management Techniques

- Organize the room and materials (neat, clean, posters, student work, word wall, etc.)
- Develop a workable set of rules and procedures with input from teachers and students (clarify to students the consequences of misbehavior).
- Assure student accountability through grading (be positive).
- Formulate and explain consequences (keep it simple, be consistent).
- Plan activities for the first week (more is better).
- Maintain a management system (address problems immediately...be consistent).
- Increase instructional clarity (state objectives...model lesson).
- Organize instruction (well-thought-out, timed, varied lesson plans).
- Adjust instruction for particular groups (lesson plan provides for various levels of achievement).
- Establish and communicate high expectations for student behavior (use positive phrases; 'You are doing a great job!').

- Get to know students as individuals; take an interest in their plans and activities (acknowledge awards, encourage sports activities). Share a bit about yourself to connect with students.
- Make use of humor, when suitable, to stimulate student interest or reduce classroom tensions (do not take yourself too seriously).
- Learn when to walk away from a situation...learn to choose your battles wisely. Kids come to school with lots of “baggage,” and sometimes it is just better to give them some leeway rather than trying to force them into doing something.

Remember, you can be friendly, but you cannot be your students’ friend

The use of specific classroom management techniques makes for well-managed classroom environments. Students need to be taught what constitutes appropriate behavior, what the school and classroom rules are, and how to follow them. These teachers must be consistent in articulating demands and monitoring compliance, but the most important thing is to make sure that students know what to do in the first place.

With high school students, the best results are obtained by vigilantly reminding students about the school and classroom rules and procedures and monitoring their compliance with them. High school students generally do regard consequences for misbehavior as fair and acceptable, provided that the consequence “fits the crime.”

The most frequently used management techniques are those that prevent small problems from escalating into big ones. A simple technique can prevent many classroom incidents.

Teachers set the tone for the day by greeting each student personally as they enter the classroom. Use the opportunity to establish rapport and deal with such minor problems as gum chewing, boisterous behavior, bad moods, or unwanted materials, quietly and discretely...before they erupt into public confrontations that threaten control and disrupt the class.

Once students are in the classroom, you will want to continue with some of the techniques identified below that will help you to maintain control without confrontation.

- Establish eye contact.
- Move around the room and increase proximity to restless students.
- Send a silent signal.
- Give a quiet reminder.
- Re-direct a student’s attention.
- Begin a new activity.
- Offer a choice.
- Use humor.
- Practice positive reinforcement.
- Don’t YELL...maintain a firm tone.
- And when all else fails, try something else!

Managing the Lab Environment

Having a daily management system or shop/lab routine will help reduce discipline issues and time wasted, while keeping your shop/lab running efficiently. The daily shop/lab routine should remain consistent and students need to be trained on the routine. The training needs to begin on the very first day of lab/shop.

The number 1 problem in the shop/ lab is not discipline... it's the lack of procedures...the lack of structured, well-rehearsed procedures and routines equal discipline problems.

Remember, teachers who are prepared, organized and train students on shop/lab routines will benefit from the structure built into the day and see better results from their students.

Remember the teacher who was always easily sidetracked? It might have been entertaining, but you probably didn't learn much. There are a few simple methods for organizing the classroom lab/shop environment.

In a classroom setting, post an outline on the board every day. Having a guide to follow can be beneficial to both students and teachers. Include the following:

- Date and Time
- The Big Picture: Major objectives, lesson topics, etc.
- Specifics: Page numbers, skill names, new vocabulary, etc.
- Identify Class Outcomes: Ex-is there an assignment on which students will *be graded*?
- Identify Homework Assignments
- Pennsylvania Department of Education Academic Standards/Eligible Content

Think about how you will arrange the physical space. Consider:

- The position of your desk.
- The students' work area. Is there a place for large, small group, and individual work?
- How are the materials and supplies organized?
- How will tool and equipment security be monitored?

Finally, plan how you will keep track of students' work, progress, and behavior?

- Are your rules for safety and class conduct clearly communicated and displayed?
- Do you have a system for keeping important papers and monitoring student progress?

These are the essentials. Never underestimate the value of being well prepared. Having a daily management system will reduce discipline issues, and keep your classroom or lab running efficiently.

When you communicate clearly, organize your physical space, and keep good records, you will avoid unnecessary questions, discussion, and wasted time.

Strategies for Being Organized

Organization is important for students in the lab/shop. Maintaining a well-organized shop/lab will help you manage the learning environment. It will save you much energy and wasted time, which is why it's so important for you to have organizational strategies. They will help you to manage your time more efficiently. The more organized you are, the more time you will have to devote to teaching.

Below are some basic organizational tips for teachers:

- Be prompt to school or appointments. It's suggested that you arrive to school a half an hour before the students.
- Use your Outlook calendar or other calendar to keep track of important appointments, meetings, etc.
- Prioritize tasks.
- Try to organize your desk at the end of the day.
- Keep a supply of forms, pens, and other materials on hand.
- Use a "To Do" list.
- Use folders or 3-ring binders to keep important information.
- Document phone calls, parent conferences, or other contacts i.e., phone numbers
- Return phone calls as soon as possible.
- Document student IEP issues
- Keep a calendar, pen, and note pad near your phone and computer.
- Use the e-mail! It's a great way to communicate with parents/guardians and other Teachers.

Build a Support System

You will more often than not need input and help from others. Schools rely on interdependence. No one should operate in isolation in a school environment. Whether or not you are afforded a veteran teacher as a mentor, it is essential for your satisfaction and success that you begin immediately to develop your own support group within the school. Members of that group should include:

- Your mentor
- Other teachers related to your subject area.
- Individuals you naturally gravitate to because you have things in common
- Others in the school who work with students in your program i.e., guidance counselors, and specialists such as special education educators.
- Secretaries/administrative assistants and other office personnel who can answer questions about school procedures
- Your immediate supervisor
- Individuals who handle student discipline and attendance

Effective Management of the Learning Environment

The time spent setting expectations for your students is the best possible use of your time during the first few days/meetings in a new school year. Every teacher should have prepared the following information for the first meeting with students rules regarding behavior in each classroom:

- Specific classroom lab/shop learning expectations or rules
- Grading criteria by which you evaluate student performance
- Required clothing

You should decide whether you would post this information or distribute it individually, or both. You might also consider distributing this information and require a student and/or parent/guardian's signature. The important thing is that teacher expectations for the performance of students is documented and communicated at the very beginning of the school year and in each and every classroom and lab/shop.

Good Teachers and Managing Stress

Six Attributes and Characteristics of Good Teachers

1. Good teachers care about their students. They are committed to the success of their students. They simply refuse to let their students fail. They value the opportunity to make a positive difference in the life of young people.
2. Good teachers know their subjects well. They are lifelong learners. They are driven to continuously acquire new skills and knowledge.
3. Good teachers deal with their own problems and reflect on their own practice. They see problems as challenges and opportunities for learning and improvement. They strive to develop solutions that best address the problems they encounter. By confronting and dealing with the problems and reflecting on their own practice, in the end they acquire skills, knowledge, and confidence.
4. Good teachers possess good classroom instructional management routines. Some examples of good routines:
 - a. Being present at the door to greet and gauge students
 - b. Starting classes promptly
 - c. Articulating the objectives at the beginning of a lesson
 - d. Changing the instructional pace and momentum
 - e. Frequently illustrating with concrete examples
 - f. Checking for understanding from time to time
 - g. Providing wait time after a question
 - h. Engaging all students
 - i. Keeping disruptions to a minimum
 - j. Providing or seeking a summary at the end of a class.
5. Good teachers are the center of attention in a class and appear to be in control. Their lessons are clear—thus holding their students' attention, and they have presence—indeed, they strive to develop presence. They are leaders in the classroom and constantly direct the instructional process.
6. Good teachers understand how to work around difficult situations. They value long-term relationships. They thrive and shine in crises.

Reduce Stress by Avoiding These Common Mistakes

Mistake #1 – Underestimating the Importance of Being Prepared For Class Every Day

Problems in the classroom will appear and expand most often due to lack of preparation on the part of the teacher. You will need to spend considerable time preparing lessons in your first year of teaching. It is definitely time well spent. Plan, plan, and plan some more. Plan how to start, how to take attendance, how to group students, how to check work, how to close the class, etc.

Mistake #2 – Not Knowing School Rules and Policies

Read and reread and keep handy the language in the student and faculty handbooks, especially policy that is related to disciplining students and recording and reporting on daily attendance. You must understand and follow the prescribed procedures in the school handbooks. Everyone in the school should apply school rules uniformly. Don't create your own version.

Mistake #3 – Not Being Well Rested and Ready To Teach

Make a commitment to yourself to arrange your life so that your responsibilities as a teacher are not compromised. Your students need you. They will learn as much about you as a person as they will about what you teach them about subject matter.

Mistake #4 – Avoid Asking For Help or Advice

Teaching is all about solving problems. A school is a community and those who choose to work in isolation are out of place and detract from a positive school climate. Two, three, or four heads are always better than one. Everyone needs to rely on everyone else in a school setting.

Mistake #5 – Overlooking Small Behavior Problems Until They Disrupt a Class

Keep small problems small by taking the appropriate action before they grow. Documenting behavior and contacting parents should be the next step to take if speaking with the student directly has not worked.

Mistake #6 – Losing Your Cool with a Student

When you find your blood pressure rising during an incident with a student, you put yourself at a considerable disadvantage if you allow your anger to become apparent. If you stay calm, you stay in control. Refuse to argue. You can negotiate or discuss a situation, but never debate a student.

Mistake #7 – Inappropriate Language

Always maintain your decorum and control as a professional and as an adult. Students may forget much of what you teach them, but they will always be listening if you say something inappropriate. When you do you can be sure that they will be telling others about your remark(s).

Mistake #8 – Keeping the Class Manageable By Telling a Lot of Stories and Jokes

Don't overdo shallow entertainment in place of strong teaching. Apply your energy and humor and creativity to dynamic and engaging lessons on the subject matter you are responsible for communicating.

Mistake #9 – Your Lesson Ends Before Class Is Over

Even if it involves clean up or preparing for the next day, make every moment in your class meaningful. Never allow students to simply wait for the bell to ring. Keep them engaged and focused on something significant. Down time is wasted time and often leads to behavior problems.

Mistake #10 – Sitting At Your Desk While Students Are Working

You are at a disadvantage when you sit down during class time. Circulate and stay on your feet while students are under your supervision. If you must sit while students are working, sit behind, rather than in front of students.

Mistake #11 – Remain Positioned At The Front Of The Classroom

Proximity to students has a great influence on their behavior. Make a point to position yourself near each student, not just the ones seated up front or those who approach you for assistance.

Mistake #12 – Disciplining Students In Front Of Other Students

Discipline students one on one and privately. When you discipline in front of others you do so in front of an audience that often sides with the student. Avoid stopping the learning of others to give attention to one or two students who are misbehaving.

Mistake #13 – Becoming Too Friendly With Students

Students need quality adults in their lives. The school is full of potential friends. Be friendly, but you cannot be their friend. Maintain your status and dignity as their teacher. They need good teachers. You are not expected nor should you try to be a parent (but remember your responsibility of in loco parentis) or a police officer. To be effective as a teacher you need to keep a professional distance emotionally, as well as physically.

Mistake #14 – Calling In Sick When You're Not

Your students need you every day. Use sick time for when it is absolutely necessary. Students lose a lot when their regular teacher is absent. Also, remember abuse of sick days can lead to disciplinary action.

Mistake #15 – Coming In When You're Sick

Yes! Your students need you every day. However, if you are not feeling well and are not effective, or are contagious with the flu or a cold, you are doing more harm than good by coming to school. Stay home until you feel well enough to meet the day's challenges head on.

Don't Lose Your Sense of Humor

The top ten signs you're a school teacher:

- **When in public, you stare down misbehaving children.**
- **You correct the English of the clerk at CVS.**
- **You may be a geek, but your pocket protector is filled with red pens.**
- **You believe the city should add Ritalin to the drinking water.**
- **And that one-child policy they have in China? Maybe we should look into it.**
- **When people call you by your first name, you don't even look up.**
- **National Endowment for the Arts? Oh, that NEA!**
- **You start thinking maybe home schooling's a good idea after all.**
- **You're too tired even to respond to people who say, "You're lucky. You only work six hours a day and get summers off."**
- **Letterman/Leno/O'Brien who?**

Focusing on the Needs of Students –

Promoting Equity

Teachers must make every effort to assure that all students receive equal opportunity to learn and to succeed in school. It is not enough to teach to the “middle of the road.” Teachers are expected to make every effort to reach all of their students and to offer appropriate support and encouragement to those students who, for a variety of reasons, are a challenge to teach.

To attend to students equally, teachers must continually reflect on their practice. Some questions that teachers might ask themselves in order to assess fair treatment appear below.

- Do I react to poor behavior more quietly with some students than others?
- Do I predict performance or award grades subjectively?
- Do I solicit responses from all students, just a few, or just those who volunteer answers?
- Do I reprimand certain types of students (boys, girls, minorities) more than others?
- Do I afford all students the opportunity to develop skills that require leadership, organization, self-discipline, independence and maturity?
- Do I provide positive reinforcement equally?
- Do I hold all students accountable for abiding by school rules?
- Do I grade students objectively?
- Do I apply standards for performance consistently?
- Am I consistent in applying consequences for misbehavior?
- Am I consistent in applying consequences for non-performance?
- Do I afford consideration for extenuating circumstances equally?

Recognizing & Appreciate Student Diversity

Diversity is part of schools. Career & Technical programs enroll a diversity of students. Enrollment includes “special populations” including students with disabilities, students who are English language learners, economically disadvantaged students and students enrolled in programs that are nontraditional for their gender, as well as single parents and single pregnant students. This can be a challenge for a new Career & Technical teacher, but this can also be an exciting environment in which to teach. Within the career & technical education environment teaching students to work in teams can eliminate many stereotypes and prejudices.

Here are some tips to help you implement a plan for working with the wide range of students:

- D-Differences are important and need to be respected.
- I-Insist that put downs, comments, and acts of discrimination will not be allowed in your lab/shop or classroom.
- V-Value each student as a unique, contributing member of your group.
- E-Express to students that they are accepted regardless of their differences.
- R-Race, color, religion, national origin, gender, disability, and sexual orientation are no reason to treat someone differently. Reflect on your own biases, and how you will manage them in your day-to-day teaching.
- S-Speak to students when issues arise. It may be appropriate to speak individually with students who need to be educated more about diversity. Embarrassing someone in a group will only serve to perpetuate a problem attitude.
- I-Inform your students. It is your responsibility as a teacher to address specific issues of discrimination and harassment, what they mean, and how they manifest themselves.
- T-Train your students through a variety of methods, including modeling, role-play, reading and writing, and student presentations.
- Y -You are the key element in the lab/shop or classroom who determines the tone and develops healthy attitudes about individual differences.

Goals that Will Help Teachers Become Better at Their Jobs

Whether you are a first year teacher or have one year left before you retire, goal setting will help you improve personally, and professionally.

Setting goals is a very personal decision. Many schools will require teachers to turn in written goals for the year at the start of school, a fact which should encourage every teacher regardless of requirements to do so. Personal and professional improvement throughout the year can only be a good thing. Look at three different areas when setting your goals: personal goals, organizational goals, and lesson improvement goals.

Personal Goals Relating to Self and Relationships

It is important for teachers to consider themselves when thinking about goals. Improvement of self will lead to a healthier teacher, who is better equipped both emotionally and physically to handle the challenges that come up each day. Improving professional relationships falls into this category as well, considering the fact that the better the working environment, the more focused the teacher will be.

- Have a more professional appearance.
- Remember to have fun and enjoy teaching.
- Stay positive even when things change.
- Form a better working relationship with your mentor, peer/instructional coach.
- Improve teacher-parent communication, with a focus on positive notes home.
- Build better relationships with other staff.
- Establish and maintain a classroom management plan.

Examples of Organizational Goals:

- Organize filing cabinets by subject/theme.
- Put things away after using them.
- Plan ahead at least one week.
- Improve documentation for things that happen in the classroom.
- Keep up with grading.
- Collect more samples for student portfolios.
- Maintain two separate files for student: a regular file of student work, and a documentation file.
- Plan thoroughly, with a desired outcome in mind.
- Set high but realistic expectations for all students and explain how they will be achieved
- Create curriculum notebooks. Keep a record of lessons/units and put together notebooks for each of the major themes in curriculum notebooks.
- Organize files by standard.

Examples of Lesson Improvement Goals:

- Incorporate rigorous academic integration into more lessons.
- Minimize wasted minutes – Always have extra stuff ready for end of the day/class
- Spend more time focusing on foundational skills and concept development.
- Introduce weekly learning journals.
- Implement two new strategies that you have learned.
- Incorporate more technology in the classroom.
- Ensure students are fully engaged in the learning process at all times
- Prepare more thorough lesson plans and follow the content, but make allowances for “teachable moments” plans.

- On a regular basis incorporate more skills testing practice through instruction and homework instead of cramming before the test

When considering what professional goals to set, consider choosing one goal from each category: personal, organization and lesson improvement. Becoming a better-rounded teacher will be helpful as you continue to teach the next generation, and will hopefully improve your life as well.

The Importance of Careful Planning

Good discipline & reasonable control do not just happen – it’s the result of careful planning and consistently implemented.

- You must know what you want, what you expect of the students.
- You must convey your expectations to your students. In other words, do not make students guess what they need to do...they may guess wrong!
- You must make them accountable by having them sign an agreement (your student/parent letter).
- You must have a system of consequences and rewards, which are legally and consistently carried out.
- You must always treat a student with respect. Never allow your anger at a student’s misdeeds to impair your good judgment and reduce your professionalism.

Factors that contribute to reasonable classroom control: Careful lesson planning is the main component of good discipline. It is an excellent idea to meet the students at the classroom door for the following reasons:

- You can monitor the hall.
- Your presence may remind students to hurry on to class.
- The personal, friendly “Hello” conveys an attitude of interest and caring.
- You may be able to pick up certain “vibes” to things going on that you will want to watch during the period.
- When students enter the classroom, there should be a routine to be followed (an expected behavior).

An objective written on the board helps students focus and direct their energy and attention during class.

Even when students are working in groups or with partners, the teacher must be in control. This is achieved by advanced preparation in which the teacher carefully explains the lesson and the expectations for completion.

It is generally advisable to have students submit their work at the period’s end, thus holding them accountable and having an immediate understanding.

A light, the fast-paced lesson is more conducive to good discipline than boring or undirected, where neither teacher nor student is certain about the lesson's objective or point.

Creating a Climate for Learning

Creating a climate for learning is probably the most important—and most difficult—task a teacher faces, but it can be even more difficult for beginning teachers. Setting the classroom environment is critical. For a new teacher, that means pretending that you know what you are doing.

The most widespread management technique at home and in the classroom is “nag, nag, nag.” It is also probably the least effective. How can you avoid making that technique your own and create a “climate for learning”? Here are some suggestions:

- Develop a set of written expectations you can live with and enforce.
- Be consistent. Be consistent. Be consistent.
- Be there. Be there. Be there.
- Be patient with yourself and with your students.
- Make parents your allies. Call early and often. Use the word “concerned.” When communicating a concern, be specific and descriptive. Call for positive remarks, too.
- Do not talk too much. Use the first 15 minutes of class for lectures or presentations, then get the students working.
- Break class periods into different activities. Be sure each activity flows smoothly into the next.
- Keep all students actively involved. For example, while a student does a presentation, involve the other students in evaluating it.
- Discipline individual students quietly and privately. Never engage in a disciplinary conversation across the room.
- Keep your sense of perspective and your sense of humor.
- Know when to ask for help.

Model the Desired Behavior

Teachers must model respectful behavior. Below are a few suggestions of behavior teachers should exercise to foster a positive climate in their classes.

1. BELIEVE
 - a. Believe that each student can succeed and tell them that you do.
2. RESPECT
 - a. Respect the uniqueness of each student and ask them to respect it in others as well.
3. APPROVE
 - a. Approve of positive contributions and let the class know you are pleased.
4. MOVE
 - a. Move around the room, looking for the excellent work students are producing.
5. BUILD
 - a. Build bonds and encourage pride in students and their effort.
6. REWARD
 - a. Reward behavior that enhances a favorable climate.
7. SHOW
 - a. Show you care. Call home with a positive story or comment.
8. HELP
 - a. Help students learn to do the right things by modeling the behavior you expect.
9. AVOID
 - a. Avoid negativity always.
10. PAY ATTENTION
 - a. Always pay attention to the right things.

In the student-teacher relationship, a line must be drawn between the teacher and the student.

This line could be labeled “respect,” and it should never be crossed. A teacher who tries to be a good sport or a buddy is making a great mistake. This teacher gradually loses the respect of students and eventually finds the class beyond his/her control.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

Incorporating Different Learning Styles into Lesson Plans

There are three different styles of learning that a teacher faces on a daily basis: visual, auditory, and tactile/kinesthetic. Some students learn best one way, but research has shown that students learn using a combination of the different modes of learning. As teachers, we need to step out of our comfort zones and adjust our teaching to meet the diverse needs of our students. Here are some easy things that you can do to address those needs.

- *Visual learners learn by seeing.* They like to talk with their hand and they also need to write a lot of notes in order to remember information. Visual learners also like color, pictures, illustrations, graphics, and charts. The visual learner needs a quiet setting in order to learn. In order to address the needs of the visual learner, teachers should allow students ample time to take all the notes they feel that they need. We can also provide highlighters so students can color code their notes and worksheets. Since they need quiet to learn, we need to make sure there is time in the day in which all the students are quiet. Presentations are a great way for them to learn along with reading and writing information.
- *Auditory learners learn by hearing information.* These students like to talk to themselves, or speak out loud when writing down information. Reading aloud is a great way for these students to learn. In the classroom, if presenting information have students repeat the information back to you out loud, this will help them process the information. In math class, as they work on problems have them explain out loud what they are doing to solve the problem. The more auditory learners speak information out loud, the better they will remember.
- *Tactile/kinesthetic learners learn by doing.* They are the hands-on learner. They need to manipulate things and do projects in order to grasp information. They are very active learners and need to move around and take frequent breaks. In the classroom, teachers need to use manipulates and create hands-on projects for the students to complete. Flashcards would be a good way for tactile/kinesthetic learners to learn because it is hands-on. Another great idea for the hands-on learner is by encouraging them to talk with their hands. Since tactile/kinesthetic learners can be easily distracted, have they sit in the front of the classroom.

Hopefully, these few strategies mentioned will help you incorporate all of the learning styles into your classroom. You will have students that fall into at least one of these categories, so you must find a way to mix this in. It is unfair to the students if they do not receive education the way that they learn. These simple tips can be easily incorporated into any classroom. Research suggests writing VAK (visual, auditory, kinesthetic) in your lesson plan book, and as you write your lesson plans, cross each letter off as you address it. Doing something as simple as this can make a significant impact on your students.

CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE TEACHING

The Ability to Motivate

What moves us into action? What drives us to succeed? Motivation is an important part of the learning process. When students are motivated, there are fewer behavior problems.

Teachers at the high school level sometimes encounter students who arrive with negative attitudes based on prior experience. It is particularly important, therefore, to help students replace their preconceptions with a new enthusiasm for learning. What drives a student to succeed can be personal and individual, but there are also a number of conditions that you can create to raise student motivation levels. Let's look at some of the major motivators that determine student achievement.

Strategies for Motivating the High School Student

- *Personal Involvement.* What meaning does the learning have for students? How is it relevant? Why should they be interested in the concepts and ideas?
- *A Positive Environment.* You, the teacher, set the tone. Your lab/shop is one in which all students and staff are respected. Your demeanor, attitude and body language all create an environment conducive to learning.
- *Security.* When students have concerns about being harassed or humiliated they become anxious and defensive. When students feel safe they can focus on learning.
- *Minimize Fear.* When students are fearful they are less likely to take good risks and attempt new learning.
- *Teacher Approval.* Show that you are pleased, that you care, and that you are invested in teaching.
- *Clarity.* If there are clear signals, students can make the effort. If there is confusion, students will shut down. Communicate clearly and listen carefully to student responses.
- *Pleasure.* Is it fun? Is there humor? Your enthusiasm is contagious and your students will enjoy your class or lab.
- *Novelty.* Is there anything new in your teaching/learning strategies or is it just a repetition of the tried and true?
- *Success Seminars.* Everyone feels better when success is evident. The level and kind of success may vary, but the effect is the same. Share student success stories with the class, with other teachers and with parents.
- *Win/Win.* Teacher motivation is tied to student motivation. When students are successful, we succeed as well.

10 Proven Tips for Success

1. Be in charge! If you're not, someone else will be. Aim to be a low key, centered and reasonable authority figure.
2. Be prepared! You've done your homework, and you're ready for the challenges of the first days of school.
3. Be proactive! You've planned for potential snags, and organized yourself accordingly. You recognize a problem before it becomes an emergency.
4. Manage time well. You know the schedule, and how your teaching time fits into the school day.
5. Be direct and honest about what you know or do not know. Students will respect your candor..."That's a great question and I truly do not know the answer, perhaps you could help me out by doing a little research to find the answer?"
6. Know your audience. High expectations are individual, and should challenge rather than frustrate.
7. Enforce rules with respect for individual students. You are clear and consistent so that students aren't guessing about what's acceptable.
8. Have a balance between ritual and novelty. Students know that the day is organized in a particular way, but there is variety in activities and lessons.
9. Know your building and how to locate resources.
10. Have a professional demeanor. You look and act the part of a caring and reasonable role model.

Using Academic Integration Strategies to Get Unmotivated Students Working

- Have students write something every day!
- Complete a time card
- Describe the lab, classroom activity or technical task worked on that day
- Exit slips
- Journals
- Complete job repair tickets
- Textbook chapter summary
- Internet "scavenger hunts"
- Describing a task to a classmate
- Write a response to the days lesson or task as an opinion piece

However, it is vital you provide ongoing and timely feedback. Give students points for all completed work...even if, for example, there are no right or wrong answers.

Integrate Rigorous, Relevant Math that is Relevant to Technical Tasks

- There are many CTE math integration strategies available for you to use. For example: PDE/BCTE Math “T-Charts”
- Incorporating Language Art components into your CTE lesson
- [PDE SAS Web site](#)

What I Know, What I Think I Know, What I Want to Know...

Have students fold a piece of paper in thirds. In the first column, write what you know about a topic. In the second column, write what you think you know about a topic. In the third column, write what you want to know about a topic. You can also do this exercise on the board

Current events or quotes...

Place a quote or a headline on the board. Have students reflect on the quote in a journal, notebook, or discuss it in class.

Incomplete sentences...

Write out sentence stems and have students complete them. This can be content driven or statements like the following:

- I realize that...
- I'm surprised that...
- I am disappointed that...
- I could change if...

Stump the Teacher...

The class comes up with questions for the teacher on the topic/unit of study. The teacher gives the answer (may or may not be correct). The class has to decide if the teacher's answer is correct. If the students decide correctly, they get a prize

Question Mark...

On a large poster board or piece of paper, draw a huge question mark. Have the class brainstorm what they know and place it in the “dot” part of the question mark. Next, have them brainstorm questions and write them in the “question mark” area. At the end of the unit, go back to the question mark, and review the question

Word Splash...

Write a word on the board. Have students come up and write the first thing they think of when they see/hear that word. You may want to remind students of discipline codes, including no vulgar or inappropriate language

Vocab Bingo...

Using a “Bingo” card, have students randomly fill in all the blanks with technical terms from the textbook chapter review, works bank or other vocabulary list (the list should have at least 30 words). Call out the words randomly. When bingo is called that person must define all the technical terms of the words that made bingo. If they can do this, they receive a prize (a homework pass or healthy snack). If they cannot define all the terms, start over! This is a great reinforcing exercise that is also a life-saver after an assembly or fire drill and there is only 15 minutes left in the session—just enough time for a new teacher to lose control of the classroom setting.

Math Integration...The PDE Math T-Charts

T charts “bridge the gap” between CTE and math and can be used by both math and CTE teachers. This resource consists of three components: a T-chart, a script, and practice problems. Each T-chart will demonstrate how a CTE teacher teaches the concept covered by the eligible content and how a math teacher teaches the same concept. For instance, a carpentry instructor teaches how to determine the pitch of a roof. A math teacher teaches how to calculate slope. The T-chart will compare the two and identify the vocabulary associated with the concept. The script that accompanies the T-chart will help the teacher bridge the gap between the two by comparing similarities and differences between the two approaches and identifying common mistakes made by students. The practice problems will be set up so that three problems are in context, three are generic applications, and three are in plain math language.

Assigning Meaningful Homework Assignments

Research shows that, under the right conditions, homework can be a useful tool for increasing student achievement. What, then, does a new vocational-technical teacher need to know about homework?

- **BENEFITS.** Homework helps reinforce work done in school and gives the teacher a better idea of students’ strengths, weaknesses, and mastery levels. It also encourages students to work independently.
- **POLICIES.** Teachers need to have a homework policy that is consistent and communicated. Students will need to know how much homework is worth and how much and how often it will be assigned.
- **RELEVANCE.** Homework must be meaningful to students. They must understand the purpose, and it should be aligned with the skills they are developing. It should never be perceived as busywork.

- **VARIETY.** It is crucial to vary homework assignments as much as possible to avoid the ‘homework rut.’
- **REVIEW AND GRADING.** If homework was necessary to assign, it is essential to review and discuss when students submit it. It should be graded and returned promptly.

When homework is well integrated into the teaching and learning process, it can enhance skill and personal development.

Writing Effective Assignments

Learning has nothing to do with what the teacher **COVERS**. Learning has to do with what the student **ACCOMPLISHES**. In a significant assignment, the students are told at the beginning of the assignment what they are to accomplish at the end of the lesson. Thus, if the students know what they are to learn, they increase their chances of learning. The effective teacher knows the procedure for writing an assignment.

Writing Effective Tests

The primary reason for giving a test is to determine if students have accomplished the criteria of the assignment. The criteria govern what questions and how many are to be written for a test. The criteria also govern:

- 1) What students turn in for homework
- 2) How the teacher writes the test.

If the student masters a task, give the student enrichment (not more) work or ask the student to help other students in a cooperative model. If the student does not master the task, give the student remediation or corrective help.

Grading Effectively

Grading on the curve is the worst thing that can be done to a group of students. Grading on the curve gives you rank order; it tells you nothing about achievement. The effective teacher does not grade on the curve. A student earns a grade based on percentage mastery of the criteria.

The role of a teacher is not to grade a student. The primary role of the teacher is to help every student reach the highest possible level of achievement.

The Ineffective teacher:

- Covers chapters
- Finds busy work for the students

The Effective Teacher:

- Have the students learn towards a set of criteria
- Teaches to the performance of those criteria

Rubrics for Grading

A rubric is an excellent tool for teachers because it is a simple way to set up grading criteria for assignments. Not only is this tool useful for teachers, but it is also helpful for students as well. A rubric defines in writing what is expected of the student to get a particular grade on an assignment.

A good rubric also describes levels of quality for each of the criteria. These performance levels may be written as different ratings (e.g., Excellent, Good, Needs Improvement) or as numerical scores (e.g., 4, 3, 2, 1). Under mechanics, for example, the rubric might define the lowest level of performance as "7-10 misspellings, grammar, and punctuation errors," and the highest level as "all words are spelled correctly; your work shows that you understand the subject-verb agreement when to make words possessive, and how to use commas, semicolons and periods."

Rubrics help students and teachers define "quality."

When students use rubrics regularly to judge their work, they begin to accept more responsibility for the end product. It cuts down on the "am I done yet?" questions.

Rubrics reduce the time teachers spend grading student work and make it easier for teachers to explain to students why they got the grade they did and what they can do to improve.

Parents usually like the rubrics concept once they understand it, and they find rubrics useful when helping with homework. As one teacher says: "They know exactly what their child needs to do to be successful."

There are many advantages to using rubrics:

- Teachers can increase their direct instruction quality by providing focus, emphasis, and attention to precise details as a model for students.
- Students have explicit guidelines regarding teacher expectations.
- Students can use rubrics as a tool to develop their abilities.
- Teachers can reuse rubrics for various activities.

A good teacher not only uses assessment scores to determine a grade, but they should also use them to measure what students learned, and more importantly, *UNDERSTOOD*. If students do poorly, was it because they did not learn what was taught? If so, the instructor needs to look at his or her curriculum delivery methodology. Assessment scores are a two-way street: they measure learning, but they also measure teachers.

Behavior and Discipline Guidance

Suggestions for Reducing Behavior Issues

As has been previously stated, the best way to avoid behavior issues is to manage your lab/shop or classroom well. Being organized and proactive will eliminate most discipline problems. Even in the best learning environments, however, behavior problems will occur. As with other classroom management strategies, it is best to have an effective plan and system to deal with various situations that may arise. There are many experts and many models, but they share some common themes:

1. **RULES.** Students need to know what they are. Post them so they are visible. Your list should be short. *Focus on what you consider essential or joint issues.* Your mentor can help you with this.
2. **CONSEQUENCES.** Identify what will happen due to certain behaviors: warning, detention, parental call, referral to the office, etc.
3. **SCHOOLWIDE CONSISTENCY.** Whatever your system is, it should support the school-wide policies and the student handbook rules.

The following conditions determine significant interaction when conflicts and negative emotions surface.

1. **CUES.** Make eye contact with the student, place a name on the board, and continue to teach when possible.
2. **NEUTRALIZE EMOTIONS.** If an issue needs to be addressed, refuse to take student behavior and avoid excessive emotion and confrontation personally.
3. **DEFUSE THE SITUATION.** Take a deep breath, talk to yourself internally, and avoid threats.
4. **REFUSE TO BE DRAWN INTO AN ARGUMENT**
5. **FOCUS ON BEHAVIOR.** If possible, separate the student from the rest of the class to address the behavior and the consequences.
6. **RESOLUTION.** Regardless of the infraction, the behavior should be an opportunity to reflect, problem-solve, learn, and move on. Listen to the student and give critical feedback. Allow the student to redeem him or herself and leave on a positive note.

Finally, in a well-managed classroom or lab/shop, students who exhibit behavior problems at the high school level sometimes have a history of behavior issues. If you suspect that may be the case, check with special education personnel. If the behaviors seem particularly disturbing, speak with your Director. Identify behaviors, look for patterns, and act on your observations. It may be necessary to devise a behavior plan that involves a team to manage the student consistently.

Common Behavior Issues, Their Causes, and Possible Solutions

Many standard behavior issues need to be addressed, which sometimes seem beyond our control. Let us look at what they are, why they occur, and how you can handle them. If you suspect any type of abuse (physical, mental, sexual, substance, or alcohol) or health issue, you are legally responsible for reporting your suspicions and referring the student to the SAP Team.

TARDINESS AND ABSENTEEISM

- The problem: They disrupt the learning process, and students miss essential information.
- Possible causes: avoidance, attention-getting.
- Results: They set a negative tone and encourage a negative work ethic.
- Your solution: Keep good records, communicate clearly with the student, staff, and family, and enforce consequences.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- The problem: Mixed messages from the media and society, coupled with students' desire to experiment and gain status.
- Possible causes: Personal issues, students' social circle, family history, and availability.
- Results: Destructive behavior, students not 'school ready.'
- Your solution: Inform students of school policy. Be alert to students for cues, times, and patterns.

BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

- The problem: Verbal and physical abuse interfere with student functioning and create a hostile learning environment
- Possible causes: Learned behavior, frustration, revenge, and need for power or control.
- Results: The perpetrator continues to use destructive means to deal with issues. The victim feels unsafe and powerless to deal with the situation.
- Your solution: Act rather than ignore. Have both parties write what occurred. Follow school policy. If patterns emerge, refer students to support staff.

FIGHTING

- The problem: Students see fighting as an acceptable method to solve the conflict.
- Possible causes: Glorification of violence in the media, lack of training in a family environment that encourages violence as a reasonable problem-solving method.
- Results: There is a disruption of the learning environment, and school-wide safety issues emerge. Students and staff face potential legal ramifications.
- Your solution: Listen to rumors and conflict both in and out of class. Provide a visible adult presence in strategic locations: hallways, the cafeteria, etc. Act on information and communicate with staff regarding peer mediation and conflict resolution.

Ways to Avoid Negative Interactions with Students

A common problem with new teachers is language and behavior that makes a problem or potential problem worse.

Do not...

- Use deals or threats to achieve satisfactory behavior
- Accuse a suspected wrongdoer based on previous behavior
- Ridicule a student's dress or behavior
- Pass your discipline problems too quickly onto someone else to solve
- Get into a "yes you will" contest with students who are "deifiers."
- Raise your voice or argue with students.
- Threaten a student in any way
- Associate with other teachers that have a negative attitude towards their job or their work

Use any of the following statements with students under any circumstances:

- Shut up
- You will never amount to anything
- You are just like your brother
- Get out of here
- I have had it with you
- What is wrong with you?
- What are you stupid?

And so on and so on..

LAWS AND REGULATIONS

Laws and regulations continue to be made and modified to advance and protect the rights of members of our society, including students and parents/guardians. In public education, a focus is placed on equal opportunity and equal protection. Specific legal references for new teachers are provided below. Whenever a concern arises that is related even remotely to laws and regulations; teachers should discuss the issue with a school administrator. Laws and regulations are subject to change; thus, it is recommended that they be researched regularly.

TITLE VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Federal Law)

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin. This law has and will continue to have a significant impact on public education.

TITLE IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Federal Law)

This law extends civil rights protections based on gender to individuals. It provides that no person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school or any town or obtain the advantages, privileges, and courses of study of such public school based on race, color, sex, religion, or national origin. No person in the United States shall, based on sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

Title IX legislation addresses sexual harassment. Educators must understand these terms and be very sensitive to what constitutes a sexual harassment complaint.

What is Sexual Harassment?

Sexual harassment of students is a real and severe problem in education at all levels, including elementary and secondary schools and colleges and universities. It can affect any student, regardless of sex, race, or age. Sexual harassment can threaten a student's physical or emotional well-being, influence how well a student does in school, and make it difficult for a student to achieve their career goals.

Sexual harassment can take two forms: quid pro quo and hostile environment.

Quid pro quo harassment occurs when a school employee causes a student to believe that they must submit to unwelcome sexual conduct to participate in a school program or activity. It can also occur when an employee causes a student to believe that the employee will make an educational decision based on whether or not the student submits to unwelcome sexual conduct. For example, when a teacher threatens to fail a student unless the student agrees to date the teacher, it is quid pro quo harassment.

Hostile environment harassment occurs when unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects a student's ability to participate in or benefit from an education program or activity or creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment. A school employee, another student, or even someone visiting the school, such as a student or employee from another school, can create a hostile environment.

Regardless of which type of harassment occurs, a school must take immediate and appropriate steps to stop it and prevent it from happening again. The judgment and common sense of the teachers and administrators are essential elements of any response.

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-112) “Section 504” (Federal Law)

As part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504 became the first federal civil rights law to protect individuals with disabilities' rights. Section 504 provides that: “no otherwise handicapped individual in the United States shall, solely because of his/her handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”

The federal government prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities within programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance, including public schools.

Students who have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of their major life activities are protected. Most schools require a recent diagnosis by a physician or clinician. Those who have disabilities, such as orthopedic impairments or medical conditions such as hepatitis but do not qualify for special education services, are included.

A 504 plan states the disability and its effect on a significant life activity (learning is a major life activity). The plan lists a series of accommodations that the school will provide in order for the student to benefit from the full range of programs and activities that the school provides.

Examples of accommodations include *time requirements for testing, learning aids such as electronic devices, software, preferential seating, and extra time for passing between classes.*

Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990 (Federal Law)

In 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed, giving full civil rights to all individuals with disabilities. It extends Section 504 by prohibiting discrimination in public and private sector services and telecommunications. For students with disabilities, the ADA prohibits discrimination and extends the right to access all educational programs and services whether or not the school receives federal funding.

Carl D. Perkins Vocational- Technical Education Act (P.L. 105-332 (Federal Law)

This federal law provides significant funding to school districts and public two-year colleges for programs that meet the law's vocational and technical education definition.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) (Federal Law)

IDEA is the federal law addressing educating individuals with disabilities. Some key pieces include:

- Ensuring that students with disabilities are included in accountability systems.
- Reducing the special education paperwork by deleting short-term objectives and benchmarks from Individual Education Programs (IEP) (except for students who take alternate assessments).
- Establishing methods to reduce the number of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds that are inappropriately placed in special education.
- Ensuring the discipline provisions for students with disabilities continue to protect these students' rights to a free, appropriate public education.
- Providing funding for professional development for special educators.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) ACT (Federal Law)

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 may represent the most significant change in public education's federal regulation over the last 30 years. The statute affects schools (including vocational-technical schools and programs) in many ways. Its requirements fall into roughly four areas:

- Testing and accountability
- Employment and hiring practices
- Choices for parents/guardians
- Miscellaneous provisions
- Employment and Hiring Practices

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) places significant and wide-ranging requirements on local school districts' employment and hiring practices.

Choices for Parents/Guardians

No Child Left Behind gives parents options for helping their children if they are enrolled in schools where student test scores fall below the state’s identified “passing” grades. Schools receiving Title I funds must issue an annual Report Card to every parent, including information on teacher qualifications and school test results.

School Choice for Safety

States receiving NCLB funds must establish and implement a statewide policy allowing a student who attends a persistently dangerous public school or becomes a victim of a violent criminal offense while attending a different public school.

Home Schools

No Child Left Behind prohibits the federal government from exercising any control over home schools.

Pupil Privacy

NCLB requires local school districts to adopt student privacy policies in consultation with parents.

Miscellaneous Provisions

Constitutionally Protected School Prayer

To be eligible for funds under NCLB, a local school district must certify that it does not deny participation in constitutionally protected prayer.

Boy Scouts

If a school allows youth or community groups to meet in its facilities before or after school, it may not deny equal access to the Boys Scouts of America or any other group defined as a patriotic society.

Sex Education

NCLB expands the ban on using ESEA funds to operate a condom distribution program in schools and prohibits funds from going to programs that distribute any kind of contraceptives.

Military Recruiters

Under No Child Left Behind, local school districts receiving funds must, upon request, give military recruiters basic contact information (names, addresses, and telephone numbers) about high school students.

Homeless Students

No Child Left Behind underscores federal protections for homeless students. Simply put, local school districts may not discriminate against students because of their homelessness.

Ban on Indoor Smoking

A section entitled Pro-children Act of 2001 prohibits federal, state, or local agencies from permitting smoking in indoor facilities owned or leased by school districts.

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (Federal Law)

The law's primary purpose is to provide continuity and necessary services to students who become homeless that will allow them to achieve the educational standards set for all children. The law reiterates that homeless students are to be permitted to participate in all the programs for which they are eligible.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

COLLABORATING WITH COLLEAGUES

Working effectively with colleagues is an essential part of a successful first year. To provide the best possible service to your students, you need to develop quality relationships with your fellow staff members. Many new teachers have genuine concerns about working with veteran faculty members. Here are some suggestions to enhance your relationships with your colleagues:

- **COMMUNICATE.** Learn the names of staff members early in the year. Respond to memos, phone messages, and emails promptly.
- **USE YOUR EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE.** Avoid getting caught up and hung up. In any organization, people have different points of view. Avoid egos and power struggles. When working with difficult staff members, stand up for yourself without being confrontational. Seek out positive and supportive staff.
- **BOUNDARIES.** Maintain a professional demeanor. Refuse to allow your personal life to spill into your workspace. Be mindful of appropriate information, and avoid gossip and rumors. When having a conversation about a student, keep the information confidential at all times.
- **MEETINGS.** Be on time. Listen. Have adequate and accurate information. Be clear, direct, and brief. Record essential information.
- **ACTION VS. TALK.** You will earn your colleagues' respect more through action than through talk. Do what you say you are going to do.
- **ADD TO THE SCHOOL CULTURE AND CLIMATE.** Have a 'can-do' attitude that tells your colleagues you are a team player. Add to morale by being a positive force on your staff.
- **BE A BUILDER.** Build relationships. Build teams. Build a better workplace by cooperating with your colleagues.

Your success as a new teacher will develop as you interact effectively with the faculty and staff. As you build relationships, you will begin to see yourself as an essential part of a team and earn a reputation as a dependable and resourceful

Building Learning Communities

Evidence shows that in schools where teachers work and talk together about effective instruction, the job satisfaction of individual teachers and student performance is enhanced. The following suggestions support collaboration that can benefit the new teacher.

- Maintain an open door. Welcome colleagues to observe your classes and arrange to visit colleagues' classes.
- Build strong relationship skills. Make an effort to work well with others, including the principal and parents/guardians.
- Negotiate in favor of students. Take the initiative to modify curriculum and instruction for the good of the students and the school.
- Maintain a commitment to ongoing planning. Use and value common planning time for developing curriculum, improving instruction, and addressing student learning issues.
- Extend networking beyond the school. Make use of conferences, the web, and other means to stay connected with those outside of the school that can educate and serve your students.
- Reflect on practice. Read about new approaches to curriculum and instruction and have conversations with your colleagues about improving your practice.
- Demonstrate a willingness to explore. Try different approaches to teaching and be open to learning new skills and content.