Classroom Management & Instructional Strategies

Technical Assistance Center on Disproportionality

Metropolitan Center for Urban Education
@ New York University
By the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:

• Understand the key factors that create a sense of urgency for building improved student relationships.

• Self-reflect on the ways in which they connect and interact with all students and understand how this impacts disproportionality.

• Identify proactive classroom management strategies that promote caring, positive school environments.
WHY NOW?

Building improved relationships for all students, especially struggling and gifted learners, is at the top of the American educational agenda. Many factors are attributable to this sense of urgency.

- Legislation, i.e., NCLB, IDEA, RTI
- Disproportionality
- Achievement Gap
- Gender Gap
- Demands of the 21st Century
Response to Intervention (RTI)

• New York is rolling out RTI in September in pilot schools
• IDEA mandates RTI in 2012
• Tiers 1 and 2 are not special education interventions, but fall squarely in the domain of general education. Tier 1 is universal design and Tier 2 is more individualized.
Response to Intervention Model

Tier IV: Special Education

Tier III: Referral to a Child Study Team or Instructional Support Team

Tier II: Intensive assistance as part of a general education support system

Tier I: Culturally responsive instruction in general education classrooms
Disproportionality Begins Early and Persists (Rausch & Skiba, 2004)

![Bar graph showing likelihood ratios compared to white students for African American and Hispanic students across elementary, middle, and high school levels.](image)
Students with Disabilities

US DOE, 2005

Likelihood to be placed in correctional institution compared to White Students with disabilities
The Achievement Gap

Every year, thousands of children head toward school already behind. Many never catch up.
2007 NAEP Grade 4 Reading
All Students, New York

Percent of Students

- Proficient/Advanced: 31%
- Basic: 34%
- Below Basic: 34%

All Students
2007 NAEP Grade 4 Reading by Race/Ethnicity, New York

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Proficient/Advanced</th>
<th>Basic</th>
<th>Below Basic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2007 NAEP Grade 8 Reading by Race/Ethnicity, New York

African American

- Proficient/Advanced: 14%
- Basic: 42%
- Below Basic: 44%

Latino

- Proficient/Advanced: 16%
- Basic: 40%
- Below Basic: 44%

White

- Proficient/Advanced: 43%
- Basic: 44%
- Below Basic: 13%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Graduated NY: 9th Graders Graduating 4 Years Later (2005)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>68.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>45.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>81%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Special Education by Gender

Disability Rates for Race-by-Gender Categories (2006) as a percent of the national average

3 Strategies for Improving Student Relationships
Strategy #1
Know How Your Students Perceive You

“Both African American and white teachers must be willing to interrogate the ways in which middle-class norms shape their “presentation of self” in the classroom since such values impact the teaching-learning process.”


Activity: Dr. Phil’s Test
Strategy #2
Administer Interest Surveys to Students & Parents

In addition to administering student interest survey (samples in your folder), parents should be surveyed about their children’s interests because parents often reveal talents and interests that students inadvertently omit. The parent survey also facilitates relationship building with teachers.

Activity: Complete a parent survey for your child or a child you know.
Strategy #3
Make Your Classroom Culturally Responsive

“When teachers and students come from different cultural backgrounds, planned efforts to cross social borders and develop caring, respectful relationships are essential.”

Weinstein, Curran, Clarke (2003), Culturally Responsive Classroom Management:

Awareness Into Action, Ohio State University

– Conduct cultural self-assessments.
– Become a guardian of equity and access.
– Value the diversity of your students.
– Adjust practices and attitudes to meet the changing demographics of your classroom.

Activities:
Complete a multicultural checklist  -  With a partner, match Chinese & American idioms
In-School Causes of Discipline Problems

1. Competitive Environment
2. Student Boredom
3. Powerlessness
4. Unclear Limits
5. Requiring Students to Earn Educational Opportunities
6. Lack of Acceptable Outlets to Express Feelings
7. Attacks on Dignity

Curwin, Mendler & Mendler (2008)
The 7 Stages of Prevention

(Curwin, Mendler & Mendler, 2008)

1. Know and express yourself clearly
2. Know your students
3. Make your classroom a motivating place
4. Teach responsibility and caring
5. Establish effective rules and consequences
6. Keep yourself current
7. Deal with stressful conflict
Stage 1: 
Know & Express Yourself Clearly

• What is your teaching/management style?
• What are your strengths and weaknesses as an instructor?
• What verbal and body language do you use often to communicate, and how might these impact student behaviors and/or learning outcomes?
Resources:

• Self – Quiz

• Discipline With Dignity Surveys

• Our Words Matter
Stage 2: Know Your Students

- Learning styles & needs
- Interests
- Academic/behavioral strengths & weaknesses
- Literacy & math level
- Communication style
- Cultural background/language
The Cultural Continuum

**Surface**
- Food and Festivals

**Transitional**
- A few multicultural units of study are in the curriculum

**Integrated**
- Multicultural units are integrated into the curriculum

**Social Change**
- Multicultural units are used as part of social justice curriculum
The Iceberg

A Deeper Understanding of Culture
Above Waterline

**Surface Culture**

These are aspects of culture that are explicit, visible, and taught:

- food, dress, music,
- visual arts, drama,
- crafts, dance, literature,
- language, games
At and Just Below the Waterline

Unspoken Rules
This is the transition zone is where the cultural observer has to be more alert: the area where implicit understandings become talked about, and explained courtesy, contextual conversational patterns, concepts of time, personal space, rules of conduct, facial expressions, nonverbal communication, body language, touching, eye contact, pattern of emotions, notions of modesty, concepts of beauty, courtship practices, notions of leadership.
Below the Waterline

Unconscious Rules

"Hidden" culture: the habits, assumptions, understandings, values, judgments ... that we know but do not or cannot articulate.
DVD:

Common Sense of Differentiation:
Meeting Specific Learning Needs in the Regular Classroom
Stage 3: Make Your Classroom A Motivating Place

- Discipline will **NEVER** replace motivating activities or effective teaching methods

- Provide choices

- Make it real: Create learning activities that are based on topics that are relevant to your student’s lives.

- HAVE A 5-10 minute “DO NOW” posted when students enter the room.
Do Now (5-10 mins)

**Purpose of routine:** to immediately engage all students, activate prior knowledge, *whet appetites*, and *bait the hook* in preparation for the lesson.

**Example:**

Work in pairs to put **three** + signs and **one** − sign between the following digits so the answer is 100. Do not change the order of the digits.

9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
High School Survey of Student Engagement

Figure 7. HSSSE 2006 Respondents’ Views on Various Pedagogical Methods

To what degree does each of the following types of work in class excite and/or engage you?

- not at all
- a little
- somewhat
- very much

- teacher lecture discussion and debate
- individual reading
- writing projects
- research projects
- group projects
- presentations
- role plays
- art and drama activities
Stage 4: Teach Responsibility & Caring

• Have students involved in as many decisions as possible (homework, test questions, topics of study, room set-up, etc.)
• Assign jobs
• Get them to do for others
• Foster self-regulation: Responsibility can also be enhanced in behavior modification programs by involving students in monitoring and reinforcing their own behaviors
Putting Self-Regulation Together

- Goal Setting
- Planning
- Self-Motivation
- Attention Control
- Learning and Resource Management Strategies Applied
- Self-Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reflection
- Self-Reinforcement
- Cognitive Regulation (Metacognition)

Motivation Regulation
Resource Management
Ethical Caring
(Noddings, 2002)

• Requires *reflection & self-understanding*—We need to understand our own capacities, how we are likely to react in various situations, and our selfish tendencies as well as our generous ones.

• 4 Components of Care:
  – Modeling
  – Dialogue
  – Practice
  – Confirmation
FAST: An Interpersonal Problem Solving Strategy

**Freeze & Think**

**Alternatives**

**Solution Evaluation**

**Try it!**
Stage 5: Establish Effective Rules & Consequences (social contracts)

- Establish social contracts- A list of values, rules and consequences that define proper behavior deemed necessary for good learning and teaching to occur.
- This generally works best when teachers identify the school/class values and involve students in defining the rules.
- Variations of social contracts include having students propose rules for the teacher as well as for each other.
Creating Classroom Rules

• Keep it positive

• Avoid vague or nebulous terms

• Involve students (even if leading)
Stage 6: Keep Yourself Current

• Continue learning about child behavior, theories of discipline, and some of the research into psychology and education as it applies to discipline

• “Knowledge alone will not make you a better classroom manager, but knowledge can generate alternatives.”

  (Curwin, Mendler & Mendler, 2008, p. 59)
Staying Current

- Think of your school as a...
  - Research facility
  - Professional think-tank
  - Critical friends group
  - Teacher support program
Stage 7: Deal With Stressful Conflict

• Many discipline problems occur because stressed out-teachers are trying to get stressed out kids to do what they want.

• Strategies for reducing stress:
  – Anticipate the predictable
  – Do not take inappropriate behavior personally
  – Develop mental toughness
References & Resources


References & Resources


