***Classroom Management Essential Questions***

**(1) Classroom Procedures:**

**Do I have very specific *classroom procedures*?**

**Do I take time to emphasize my classroom procedures as *the top priority* the first day or two when school starts -** before teaching content?

**Do I spend the first 1-3 weeks *practicing* the procedures with the students -** rehearsing, explaining, correcting, and reinforcing them?

**Before and when giving directions, do I ensure I have *student attention*?** How can I do this?

Examples:

“In this classroom, we always raise our hand to receive permission to speak.”

“During direct instruction or whole-class discussion, we always raise our hand to receive permission to speak. During group work or other activities, you can speak freely, but with an acceptable, non-disruptive volume.”

“In this classroom, if we become angry or frustrated, we pause or excuse ourselves before speaking.”

“Each day when you arrive to class you are to immediately (fill in the blank).”

**(2) Classroom Rules (or Expectations):**

**Do I have a few carefully selected *classroom rules?***

**There are a lot of rules I like, but what are the 2-3 that I *must* have in order to have the learning environment I want?**

**Are my rules easy to understand and *easy to identify* when followed and when not followed?**

Examples:

“We will not be rude.” “Cell phones are out of sight, not in use - unless given permission by the teacher.”

“Behavior must not disrupt the learning environment” (then provide *specific* examples).

**(3) Classroom Discipline Plan:**

**Do I have a *specific plan of action* when procedures aren’t followed? And when rules are broken? When this happens, my first step is this. When that happens, my first step is that.**

**Will my *first step* be** an immediate consequence (Detention or Office Referral) or an intervention (clear warning, reminder/redirection, “time out”)?

**What will be my *second and third steps* in discipline:** an immediate consequence (Detention or Office Referral) or an intervention (“time out,” one-on-one conversation, a scheduled one-on-one follow-up, a call home, temporary or extended denial of a privilege, temporary removal from class in hallway, a form of restitution in lieu of a formal consequence if restitution is fulfilled)?

**Which approaches are most effective at *changing student behavior* -** consistency, clarity, communication, understanding root causes and being proactive, punishment, accountability, proper modeling of desired behavior, building relationships, networking with other staff, contacting parent(s)?

**For what behaviors and what situations will I write an office referral? When will I call a parent? When will I call an office to have a student removed from class?**

**Do I *communicate* my discipline plan to my students? Is it clear to them? Does it deter unwanted behavior?**

**What *battles* am I going to fight? Which ones aren’t worth fighting?**

Reminder:

Students are more likely to behave when they have clear expectations, consistent follow-through, but in the context of rules that make sense to them, discipline that seems fair, and most of all, when administered by someone they like and respect.

**(4) Classroom Teacher:**

**Do my students *respect* me? Do they like (or enjoy) me as a professional adult?**

**Do I *greet* students as they enter the room?** Individually? With conversation, a smile, compliments? As a group once everyone is present?

**What 1-2 things would my students *change* about how I present myself?** What would they change about how I teach or about the learning environment I have created for them?

**What are 1-3 things I could *intentionally* do to *connect* with students?**

**Is my class fun or interesting *to* *my students*?** Is it one of their favorite classes? If not, why? What could I do to make them look forward to my class?Are they engaged? Are they active in their learning? Am I “the sage on the stage” or am I a facilitator of *their* learning?

**Am I reminding myself of how *teenagers* see the world?** Do I take things too personal? Do I stay calm, get angry, or become easily annoyed?

**Am I being more *proactive or reactive* in my approach towards my students?**

**Am I learning from colleagues who have found consistent success with their students?**

Reminder:

Ignorance is bliss, but perception is reality. As educators, we must model self-reflection and continual learning, even and especially in regard to the development of our own selves.

**(5) Golden Concepts:**

**Pick your battles.**

**Avoid power struggles.**

**When a student is angry or frustrated, give them some space - don’t push his/her buttons.**

**Be clear and consistent.**

**When they test your patience, be calm. When they test your expectations, be consistent and explain your reasoning.**

**Build relationships.**

**Be humble. Leave ego at the door.**

**With every “relational bridge” that is burned, circle back at a timely moment to rebuild it. As a servant leader, be the one to initiate this process - within an hour, after a day or week, or within seconds.**

**Have one-on-one conversations/meetings to “get on the same page” with students.**

**Hold students accountable by *addressing* the unwanted behavior - it doesn’t always have to be punishment. In fact, sometimes punishment can backfire and make the behavior and relationship worse.**

**Consequences are not always the most effective tactic.**

**Be firm and consistent, but have an “I’m for you” attitude.**

**Fair isn’t always equal. Sometimes equity is achieved through *different* treatment for *different* students in *different* circumstances.**

**Treat every day as a new day, a new start, a new opportunity.**

**Don’t take things personally - teenagers will mess up. Not only is it human, but it’s developmentally inevitable as they mature and learn from failure.**

**Listen (teenagers are already predisposed to believing adults don’t listen and don’t really understand). Let them share their perspective and how they feel without arguing it or having a response.**

**Smile, laugh, have fun. Enjoy the students. Remind yourself why you entered the profession.**

**Don’t forget the power of grace, second chances, forgiveness, new starts, relationships, mediation, and restorative practices.**

**Be consistent, calm, and caring.**