Homework
1. Research subject.
2. Organize notes.
3. Write outline.

ESSAYS DUE IN ONE WEEK!

Every Student
Every Lesson
Every Day

Taking the Mystery Out of Classroom Management
This PDF is a read-only document.

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- Tiered Interventions and EWI meetings
- Creating a can-do culture and climate
- Classroom strategies
- Academy strategies

Bibliography

Suggested Reading List

Appendix
Introduction

Taking the Mystery Out of Classroom Management:
Every Student, Every Lesson, Every Day

A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops.

- Henry B. Adams
  Journalist, Historian, Academic, Novelist

Managing a classroom can sometimes feel like trying to herd cats. Most veteran teachers, if they’re being honest, can remember their first few years of teaching as the ones which taught them the most. Unfortunately, some of the lessons were learned the hard way. Trial and error was the approach – and, oh, there were plenty of errors, right? Placed your first and last name on the board on your first day on the job, did you? How did that work for you, “Susie-baby”? Allowed your students (all thirty of them) to get books from the bookcase... at the same time? Still have memories of the stampede and the ten minutes needed to get some semblance of order, don’t you?

We can learn much from our mistakes, and many of us manage to finally develop techniques and strategies that provide a classroom environment conducive to learning. Wouldn’t it be nice, though, to have some built-in supports for developing effective classroom management from the very first day of school? And wouldn’t it be nice, even as veterans, to share the weight and the joy of student successes? Also, wouldn’t it be great to know that your enthusiasm for teaching is shared by the entire school staff and that a team of teachers with which you work will support you if you fall?

Working together as members of interdisciplinary and content teacher teams, academy/house teams and other school teams, you and your co-workers can do a great deal to ensure a positive working environment where teachers can teach and students can learn. A “can-do” culture and climate can be built. So, let’s get started.
Three Key Elements

Talent Development Secondary’s (TDS) pillars of operation provide much of what is needed to produce the “can-do” school and classroom climate that enables teaching and learning. The TDS Transformation Manual explains the work that is done within each pillar. This classroom management manual will focus on how teachers can create, improve or strengthen classroom management by attending to important aspects of the following:

- Pillar I: Teacher Teams and Small Learning Communities
- Pillar II: Curriculum and Instruction with Professional Development
- Pillar III: Tiered Student Supports
- Pillar IV: Can-Do Culture and Climate

As our discussion focuses on developing effective classroom management within TDS pillars, three elements will emerge as essential: trust, organization and consistency. The first, trust, is so key to establishing a positive learning environment that we will begin our discussion with it.

Building Trust

Why do many of us continue to make appointments with the same doctor or dentist year after year? Why not switch doctors – try someone new? It is likely that many of us stay where we are because we trust that our physician is looking out for our best interest. We would hesitate to enter an office if we thought that those working there were more interested in collecting hefty paychecks than in making us better. When we sense that something other than our well-being is at work, we head for the door. So it is with students and teachers.

In fact, some research shows that students consider the trust factor more important than anything else – even more important than teacher content-area competence (Bergman & Gaits, 1990). This is not to dismiss the importance of having teachers who are experts in their various disciplines; it is simply to say that students are more likely to respond positively to teachers they trust.

So, how do teachers build trust with students? Well, it doesn’t happen overnight. You will learn methods for developing trust in the chapters that follow, but they deserve mention here, as well. Darcy Miller contends that trust is developed through positive communication and interaction between teacher and student. She offers some culturally sensitive non-verbal and verbal communication suggestions that will be highlighted in Chapter 3 and should prove helpful, especially to novice teachers. (Miller, 1998)
In addition to developing positive communication, we also build trust by providing a classroom climate that is positive, safe and inviting. The work begins with teams that organize and plan together and are consistent with carrying out the plans. This brings us to the other two key elements of effective classroom management: organization and consistency. A brief discussion of these follows.

**Organizing**

Though organizing well seems a given, a surprisingly large number of teachers struggle with this. **Organizing** includes everything from establishing routines for students, to creating procedures that are consistently monitored, to planning engaging lessons that are evaluated for effectiveness and adjusted when needed. It can include everything from how and when students can use the pencil sharpener to what they are expected to do when they hear the bell ring. An organized teacher has procedures planned and the classroom in place before even one student comes through the door. He/she has developed a method for sharing how students will operate in the classroom, how they should move when appropriate, and what they should be attending to during different segments of the lesson. Modeling behavior is often essential. Practice is often needed. Upcoming chapters will provide numerous options for organizing as teams and as individual classroom teachers. Coaches are available to help with all of these processes in Talent Development Secondary schools.

**Being Consistent**

Coaches will also assist teachers as they try to consistently keep procedures and routines in place. **Consistency** provides students with the security of knowing what to expect. This may sound trivial, but, in fact, it is exceedingly important. Inconsistency breeds confusion and leads to chaos. If procedures for lavatory use are only consistently adhered to in two rooms, while in other classrooms “anything goes” rules the day, problems are bound to occur. As members of an interdisciplinary team, you must work to keep each other on track. “No weak links” should be your mantra. Or, more positively, “All for one and one for all,” perhaps. Similarly, as individual classroom teachers establish procedures for functioning in their own rooms, they should be aware that consistency remains an important issue. Don’t say one thing, then do another; doing so will destroy student confidence and will create confusion... and we’ve already mentioned where that will lead. Know that all discussion of planning and organizing in upcoming chapters will have consistency as an underlying imperative.
Now, as we begin our journey through the world of classroom management, let’s keep these three essential elements in mind. They will have starring roles even before school opens, as will be seen in the chapter that follows.
Chapter 1

Before School Begins
How Prior Planning Can Ensure a Strong Opening

*He who has begun has half the deed done.*
- Horace

Much can be done prior to the opening of school to ensure that everyone gets off to a good start. When school starts with things in place, students recognize that their arrival was anticipated, and that people cared enough to prepare for them. Of course, the school as a whole will be planning many aspects of the opening, but academies and grade houses and the interdisciplinary teams within them can set the climate early with organization and planning. This chapter will address some of those things that can be done within each of these communities to get the year started right. Also, you will find “Opening Strong” plans which may be helpful in the appendix.

Our work is vitally important and anything this important is fraught with challenges and frustrations. Our students bring many gifts and too often many hardships with them to school. It is the intent of Talent Development Secondary to develop the structures and the processes that celebrate these gifts and address these challenges—not in isolation but as a caring and mutually supportive community. The real secret to this work is developing mutually supportive teams to share the knowledge, pool the resources, and take on every challenge.

- Charles Hiteshew, CEO Talent Development Secondary
**Academy/Grade Houses**

Members of academies/houses can use time during the summer months to ready space and themselves for the upcoming year. The more that’s done before students arrive, the better. This involves commitment on the part of all. Effective teachers and staff members know that waiting until students enter the building to make decisions and determine procedures can be a recipe for disaster. Be pro-active. You and your colleagues will be thanking yourselves all year if you have planned ahead and prepared. Some things to have in place would be:

1. **Ensuring dedicated space for academies/grade houses**

Schools that are divided into academies or grade houses foster a sense of community and help create a feeling of home. These are places where “everyone knows your name” and everyone is happy to see you. Before school begins, academy/house members can inventory the space to be certain that all the bases are covered. Some things to look for:

   - Are interdisciplinary team classrooms in close proximity?
   - Are there enough desks in each room? Are they clean? If not, could teachers clean them?
   - Is equipment in each room in working order?
   - Do windows open and doors lock?
   - Is there at least one closet in each room that locks or could lock if a combination lock were purchased?
   - Are lavatories ready for student use?
   - Are academy/house entrances clearly marked?
   - Are the floors clean?
   - If painting was needed, has it been done? If not, could academy team members make that happen?
   - Are academy/house posters and banners prominently displayed?
   - Are academy/house expectations and goals prominently posted?
   - Have decisions been made about how students will move through the academy/house? How will they travel to the cafeteria? To the media center? To the lavatories? To the computer lab?
Preparing the academy/house space should be a communal task. Those who will work in the space should invest time in creating a welcoming environment. As with anything else, first impressions matter. When students come on the first day of school to an attractive, clean, organized section of the building, it speaks to them. It says, “The people who work here care about me.” This helps get things off to a good start.

2. Creating a schedule that accommodates team planning and shared cohorts

In many schools, scheduling falls to a few members of the school administration or staff. In a Talent Development Secondary school, JHU TDS representatives (school transformation facilitator, school and student support services facilitator, field manager, etc.) should be a part of that small team. Though schedules are created for the school, academy/house members should advocate for schedules that allow members of interdisciplinary teams to meet daily during the school day. In addition, interdisciplinary teams should share the same cohorts of students. The benefits of having shared planning periods and shared students are many. When teachers share a manageable number of students and are able to work and plan together to ensure the success of those students, classroom management is positively impacted. When schedules are in place long before the opening of school, planning can begin then, as well. Meetings to discuss possible preventive Tier I interventions can be conducted, and these preventive measures can be in place as the first students file into the academy/house on the first day of school. The TDS Transformation Manual includes sample schedules in its appendix, but examples have been included in this manual to provide easy access for teachers.

3. Selecting team leaders

TDS supports distributed leadership to ensure that student-related decisions are made by those who work most closely with students. Team leaders have an important role as they work to keep the team focused on team goals. The sooner team leaders are selected (in middle grades and 9th grade), the sooner planning for students can begin. The selection process options are discussed in the TDS Transformation Manual, so they will not be discussed here. Once the team leader is in place, however, the roles of other team members can be determined. When the entire team is in place, the work of the interdisciplinary teams can begin in earnest. Decisions that can be made at this stage will be discussed in the next section of this chapter.

4. Implementing a summer bridge program

Some TDS schools offer summer bridge programs for incoming 6th and 9th graders. Often the teachers who will be teaching the students during the regular school year teach the summer bridge courses as well. This gives teachers an opportunity to get acquainted with students before the official school year begins.
During the summer bridge sessions, students can strengthen math or reading skills, participate in enrichment courses, and get to know their future classmates. Teachers and staff members can introduce students to school expectations and procedures and to social skills that will be important in the upcoming school year. For instance, a 5th grader moving to 6th grade can expect more homework, more teachers and more interaction with a larger number of peers. Lessons that help students prepare for the transition fit well in a summer bridge program and increase the chances of having a smooth opening.

5. **Arranging for the mailing of academy/house correspondence with parents**

Though interdisciplinary teams will correspond with parents before the opening of school, the academy/house should do the same. By letting parents know about important upcoming activities, beginning-of-the-year expectations, uniform policies and purchase information, etc., the stage is set for forming the academy-parent partnership. Ideally, the academy will be able to solicit the help of parents for many projects and activities during the year. Including them in the conversation from the beginning can help to make that happen. In addition, parents who have been invited to take part in positive initiatives are more likely to be helpful partners if student behavior issues occur.

6. **Planning for the purchase of attendance, behavior and course performance (ABC) incentives**

The school should be developing resource maps (lists of all resources that could support students as they work to improve their attendance, behavior and/or course performance – see sample in appendix) for the interventions they have available at each tier and the interventions that may still be needed. The map for Tier I could certainly be started before school opens, as Tier I deals primarily with prevention. The resource map may reflect ideas for student incentives that could be available school-wide. However, that doesn’t mean that separate academies/grade houses can’t plan to have incentives for their students. There may be academy/house-specific incentives that could be offered. For example, a Culinary Arts Academy might give aprons to students who have perfect attendance. A Ninth Grade Success Academy might plan a college visit for those who have improved their grades during the semester. The possibilities are limitless, but having a plan and purchasing some incentives prior to opening helps the academy/house get started immediately. During the summer, local businesses can be approached to see if they could contribute to the cause. It is easier to do many of these things before the students arrive.
7. **Planning and conducting 6th/9th grade orientations**

Many schools have orientation sessions for incoming students. Often, these sessions involve a gathering in the auditorium and a walk through the school. Some schools, however, have found being a bit more creative pays off. One TDS high school in Hawaii included team activities in the mix to get students actively involved with the students and teachers on their team... it helped with bonding and set a positive tone. The James M. Campbell staff involved student teams in Makahiki games (outdoor Hawaiian games), but commonly known competitions such as a tug-of-war or a three-legged race would work as well. Be creative. (See Campbell’s Freshman Orientation Day activity plan in the appendix.)

Work with your academy members to put a little punch in the orientation. The positive feelings that will be generated can only help with relationship building later.

8. **Planning for special initiatives**

The members of your academy/grade house may have decided that they want to institute a late room. Or a reflection room. Or a tutoring center. Or a recovery/twilight program. If so, plans should be in place long before students arrive. Planning committees can be formed and these should include members of the interdisciplinary teams. Considerations for the establishment of a twilight school can be found in the appendix of the *TDS Transformation Manual*. Careful planning for all special initiatives is essential. For example, many of us have been in schools where reflection rooms are no more than places to send students to sit for a designated period of time. If you pass one of these rooms, you might see students playing cards, painting their nails, or just talking about nothing in particular. There is seemingly little “reflection” going on. To make the reflection room one that actually benefits students and staff, you might consider the following:

- The reflection room should not be a “holding tank.” Careful planning is necessary to make this a true opportunity for students to reflect on their behavior and to determine methods for improving that behavior.
- The reflection room should be manned by someone qualified to confer with students as they reflect on inappropriate or disruptive behaviors. This person should be prepared to actually work with students, not sit at a desk watching them. A babysitter is not needed here. A qualified professional with experience working with “at-risk” students is required if the reflection room is to be effective.
- The school transformation facilitator and team leaders could work together to plan for an effective reflection room. Some things that might be included are:
  - A structured activity that the student completes upon arrival. This could be a form on which the student states the reason for referral as well as some possible ways to avoid this problem in the future.
Some method of keeping track of student referrals. How often has a student been referred? By whom? For what reason? This information will be valuable at Early Warning Indicator (EWI) meetings when decisions about other intervention options are discussed.

Time to confer. The professional who operates the reflection room should have time to sit with each referred student to try to determine the cause of the behavior and to plan a strategy for helping the student and improving the situation.

Additional structured activities that are either behavior-related or curriculum-related to ensure that time here is well-spent.

**Interdisciplinary Teams**

One of the most effective ways of dealing with many classroom management problems is to involve all members of the interdisciplinary team. The teachers on the team should hold the same high academic and social expectations for students and make it clear to students that misbehavior in one classroom will be the business of all members of the teacher team. Planning and decision making at the team level can be powerful – teachers on teams that use common planning time wisely would attest to this. The bonds that will hold the team together should begin forming prior to the opening of school. Team members must get to know each other…interests, strengths, professional work style, etc. Just as teachers often allow time for students to get to know their teammates, teachers need time for the same. Before school begins, team leaders should be selected...see options for team leader identification in Chapter 2 of the TDS Transformation Manual. Team members should not only interact during this time, they should be involved in team building activities. The TDS school transformation facilitator is typically prepared to help with this. Activities could include scavenger hunts, sharing of survey information, potluck lunches, etc. Once the members of the team have jelled, they can begin to ready themselves for the upcoming school year. Preparation could include:

1. **Conducting initial team meetings**

   Besides forming bonds that will carry team members through some of the rougher days of the school year, teachers can use early meetings to do some initial planning for themselves and students. Examples of this would be:

   - Creating team norms – This process is described at length in Chapter 2 of the TDS Transformation Manual. In brief, teachers establish norms for operating during team meetings. Some topics to consider when creating these norms might be: attendance, promptness, meeting place and time, active participation, basic conversational courtesies and assigning of tasks.
• Determining team expectations and goals for students – Though some of the
expectations, procedures and routines may be determined after teachers become
familiar with students, wise teachers have some essentials in place before school opens.
The team can decide:
  o The procedure for student movement between classes (see Chapter 2)
  o The procedure for lavatory use (See appendix)
  o The procedure for latecomers (See appendix)
  o The procedure for handling students who need “time out” (See appendix)
  o The procedure for handling returning students and late assignments (See appendix)
  o The procedure for posting objectives and the daily bell ringer (See Chapter 3)
  o Any other procedures that the team deems necessary for a smooth opening

2. Working with other academy/house staff to plan and implement 6th/9th grade orientation

Create a day that will make students want to come to school. Let students see you actively
involved in providing an “exciting place to be” from Day 1. Your team could help with any of the
following (and more):

• Creating team-building activities
• Creating activities that enable competition among teams
• Creating the letter or appealing flyer that will be sent to parents announcing the
  orientation
• Planning how students will tour the academy area
• Planning any whole-group assembly or meeting
• Planning treats for students in each of the team classrooms that will become their homes
  away from home.

3. Composing the letter that will be sent from the team to parents/guardians of students

Team members are wise to build positive relationships with parents early in the school year.
When parents receive a letter welcoming them as partners on “the team,” they feel motivated to
help. Early correspondence sets the tone for the year. If you are informing parents of
expectations that you will have of their child, do so in a positive way. In other words, your
lateness policy becomes the vehicle for helping their child to reach his/her goals, not a punitive
measure to establish your authority. In short, get the parents interested and on your side. Make
it clear that your team wants to work with them to ready their child for life beyond middle/high
school.
4. Painting, decorating and cleaning the team area

The truth is, you rarely hear effective and successful teachers whining about what they don’t want to do because “it’s not their job.” If the paint is peeling off the walls and crusty bits of it are peppering the floors, effective team members join forces to do something about that. This area is, after all, their home away from home... the place where they spend most of each week day. It should be a bright and cheerful place, a place where they feel comfortable and a place that invites others to enter. If that means having a painting party to brighten the hallways and/or classrooms, so be it. You can do that. You’d get it done if the same problem existed at home, right? Yes, in an ideal world the district would attend to these things and schools would have new paint jobs regularly. Now, back to the real world. There are times when you and your teammates will need to take initiative to get needed things done. Make them opportunities for bonding and having fun. Have a pot-luck lunch to break up the day. In addition, consider soliciting the help of non-profits, church groups and community groups. You might be surprised at their willingness to assist.

After the walls are painted and dry, decorate them. Create banners, posters, and bulletin boards. Post attendance charts and create “good work” areas in the hallway in anticipation of the good work that you will soon be displaying there. Do the same in classrooms. You can help each other with this. If there is an artist on the team, take advantage of that fact. You might want to have a theme that threads through each room... comic book characters, popular cartoon characters, popular movie themes, etc. If you have some spare potted plants at home, bring them in.

If desks are dirty, clean them. If a film of dust covers the sills, get rid of it. If the teacher who had this room last year left boxes on the floor, move them to the storage room. Your room and your team area speak for you. What do you want them to say? “Welcome,” or “run for your life”? Believe it or not, good classroom management begins with details such as these.

Chapter Summary

Consider investing time before school opens to get organized. Doing so will build your confidence and make you feel ready to start the year on good footing. Work with the members of your academy/house and your team to do what is needed to “open strong.” Once students arrive, it will be important for the academy and interdisciplinary teams to help students to get off to a good start. Suggestions for doing this will be discussed in the next chapter. The next chapter will also address how teams can keep the positive momentum going. It’s all about teaming, friends.
Chapter 2

How Teaming and Small Learning Communities Contribute to Effective Classroom Management

Five guys on the court working together can achieve more than five talented individuals who come and go as individuals.

- Kareem Abdul-Jabbar

So, the walls are painted, the floors are polished, and the classrooms and halls are decorated. Now, the students arrive. This is not the time to retreat into your classroom and isolate yourself. From Day 1 students should see that you, your academy/grade house members and your interdisciplinary teammates are unified and ready to go. The academy leader is at the academy door welcoming students as they enter your area of the building. You and your teammates are at your classroom doors welcoming students to both the team and to homeroom. Together you can do what needs to be done... move students ahead. Helping students to get off to a good start is the first step toward accomplishing this. Though some of the activities and procedures described below may have been planned earlier, their successful implementation should set the positive tone needed for a smooth beginning. Consistently keeping routines and procedures in place will help to make the entire school year a successful one.

Special Note: Schools that have adopted academy and grade house models have done so because school leaders recognize the power of having interdisciplinary teams that plan together. These leaders know that they set the direction of the school and that they can positively influence student learning by redesigning the school into smaller learning communities and by providing teams of teachers with coaching assistance as well as intentional professional development. This type of leadership produces a positive academic and social climate. Under this leadership, academy/grade house members, teacher teams and students can thrive.
I. Getting Off to a Good Start, or “Opening Strong”

Academy/Grade House

Everyone who works in an academy/grade house is a member of the academy/grade house team. This large team may include partners such as City Year (CY) corps members or the Communities in Schools (CIS) site coordinator. It certainly includes teachers, administrators, academy leaders, the academy counselor, the academy social worker, TDS instructional coaches, and the TDS school transformation facilitator. All of these team members can work together to ensure a successful start to the school year for the students assigned to the academy. They can:

1. Establish an academy/grade house data collection system

Academy decisions should be data-driven. When interventions are determined for individual students or groups of students, data should be driving the decisions. The academy/grade house will use this data to provide preventive measures to address things that we already know students struggle with, and intervention strategies for newly exhibited behaviors. All members of the team should have access to the ABC data of their students and regular opportunities to monitor that data. Often the data must be gathered from various places (attendance data from the attendance monitor, behavior data from the dean who handles office referrals, course performance data from teacher grade books). Ideally, however, a school will use a computer system that can store all student data. With this type of system, teachers can view a full student profile in one place… easy access… very efficient. Using the data, teacher teams can identify student behavior patterns and intervene quickly to keep problems from escalating.

2. Begin implementing Tier I interventions

Hopefully, some Tier I interventions were planned prior to the opening of school (see Chapter 4 of the TDS Transformation Manual). If data was available, activities and incentives that would help prevent inappropriate behavior can kick in right away. For example, if many students struggled with getting to school on time last year, why not begin the year with a friendly competition that rewards the team with the best punctuality record? Or, if last year many teachers struggled to keep students on task, start the year with a “caught you doing something good” campaign. Late arrivals disrupt the flow of instruction, so try to nip problems like these in the bud by anticipating them and having ways of countering them already at hand.

3. Hold a meeting with academy/grade house staff, students and parents

Many schools have a “Back to School” night for parents and students. Consider scheduling a “Small Community Evening” for the parents of students within your academy/grade house. Involve students in the event in meaningful ways. If the evening is to begin in the auditorium or media center, have students seat their parents. To personalize the activity, have parents move through the academy and team areas which have been prepared by teachers and students:
treats in each room, attractive displays, “welcome poems” written for parents by students and their teachers. Make this an occasion that will motivate parents to take an interest in academy/grade house operations and that will result in parental support for efforts to ensure student success.

4. **Share the “movement plan” with students**

We have all been in schools where students run in hallways, congregate in stairwells, and race each other to the lunch room. All that’s needed to make the scene complete is a loud blasting of Steppenwolf’s *Born to Be Wild*. It gives one a headache just thinking about it. To prevent this headache, work with members of your academy/grade house to plan the flow of student movement through the academy. Make expectations clear to students, and hold them accountable. Some things to consider:

- How will students move from class to class? Will teachers stand at the door as classes change? Will the bell dismiss students, or must they wait for the teacher’s signal to pass to the next class? The latter is usually a much better way to go - more on this in next chapter.
- How will students move to the cafeteria? To the auditorium? To the media center? Will teachers accompany students to their destination? Are there particular routes that students must take? Are there hallways that they should avoid or stairwells that are off limits?

Remember, all academy members must monitor and enforce the movement plan if it is to work effectively. The team leaders should be certain that all members of their respective teams are pulling their weight. Consistency, folks, consistency. It is so important.

5. **Implement academy/grade house bonding activities**

When students feel closely connected to their academy/grade house community, they are more likely to cooperate and behave appropriately. Work together to create vehicles for student/teacher bonding. Some possibilities are:

- Community Read – Select a book that all members of the academy/grade house will read – every student, every teacher, the academy leader, the counselor... everybody. Members of the Ninth Grade Success Academy at a TDS high school in Baltimore decided to use *The Pact* (Davis, Jenkins, and Hunt), a book about three young African American men from Newark, NJ, who promised each other that they would all finish college, go to medical school and become doctors. Everyone in the academy read the book. Students viewed a documentary about the authors at an assembly, and participated in group book discussions. Some of the students even traveled to a school in Washington, DC, to hear the authors speak. This was an extremely motivating activity
that provided students with an opportunity to share something special with their classmates, teachers, and administrators. It was a splendid way to begin the year.

- Pen-Pal Activity – There are TDS schools all over the country. Why not have academy students in one city correspond with academy students in another? The school transformation facilitators in each school could help to facilitate the activity by making initial contacts and helping to organize the project. Students would benefit from: 1) Learning about another city; 2) Practicing letter writing skills; 3) Sharing ideas and opinions, etc. Received correspondence could be placed in the hallways for all members of the academy to read.

**Interdisciplinary Teams**

The TDS distributed leadership model empowers interdisciplinary teacher teams to make decisions that will benefit both students and teachers. The earlier that teams start to plan and organize, the sooner they will experience a positive teaching/learning environment. Students reap the benefits of this as they move into classrooms that are calm, safe and inviting. Some things that teacher teams can plan and implement early in the year are:

1. **Routines**

   There are some routines that teachers must develop solely for their own classrooms (these will be discussed in the next chapter), but other routines will be standard across disciplines and will make life on the team better for teachers and students alike. Once the routines are decided upon, they must be conveyed to students in a way that makes it clear that all teachers on the team will monitor and enforce adherence to them. There must be no weak links...EVERY team member must be on board! Remember, if you are lax with monitoring and enforcing procedures and routines, everyone on your team is affected negatively. Don’t let that happen. These routines may apply to:

   - **Locker use** – When can students go to lockers? If exceptions are to be made, must students have a signed pass to the locker? May students share lockers, or must they use only their own? Will there be consequences for visiting lockers at inappropriate times?
   - **Movement to and behavior at assemblies and town hall meetings** – Will students wait to be accompanied by teachers? Will they be required to move quietly to the assembly/town meeting to avoid disturbing classes that may still be in session? Will students sit with the class when they enter the auditorium or cafeteria? Will they be expected to fill every seat in the row without disturbing others or yelling to friends across the room? Will students be expected to follow directions and remain quiet and polite, respecting presenters or performers? Will there be consequences if they don’t do this? When students file out of the auditorium or cafeteria, will there be procedures that they should follow?
• Hallway movement – When classes change, will students be expected to move immediately to their next class? Must they maintain appropriate voice levels while in the hallway (no shouting... no screaming)? Will rough-housing of any kind be deemed inappropriate? Will each of the teachers on your team stand in the hallway near their classroom doors to greet students and monitor movement? Will you hold each other accountable for doing this?

• Use of computers or special academy equipment – Will rules for use be posted and reviewed with students? Will special lessons be created to demonstrate appropriate use of equipment and/or appropriate behavior in rooms that house equipment?

• Use of and behavior in the media center – Must students always be accompanied by a teacher when reporting to the media center? Will you and your team members meet with the media specialist (librarian) to create some uniform procedures for media center use? Will individual students or small groups of students be allowed to report to the media center for special assignments? If so, will there be special procedures that students must follow on those occasions?

There may be other routines that you and your teammates will need to put into place. Just be sure that all of you are on board and that all of you are committed to being consistent with monitoring and enforcing.

2. Team rewards and incentives

Team rewards and incentives can be more personalized than those provided at the school or academy levels. Your team of teachers will be more familiar with the likes and dislikes of students on your team. If you are part of a career academy, some of your incentives can be related to your pathway. Remember that not all incentives will come with a cost. Creating a huge congratulatory poster for an individual student and placing it in a prominent team area can provide as much incentive as a coupon for a free burger at the local fast-food establishment. You and your teammates can generate creative ideas if you put your heads together. Determine criteria for earning rewards and behaviors that warrant incentives, then get to work organizing and planning your team’s program.

A pathway is a series of interrelated courses comprised of a core curriculum and real world experiences, with a specific career focus, populated by 150-180 students taught by 7 to 8 teachers. In a TDS high school, a career academy is created from two related pathways, e.g.: the Human Service Academy might contain a Tourism and Hospitality pathway and a Medical Career pathway.
3. **Team expectations and goals**

Plan them carefully, limit them in number, and then post them prominently on large poster paper in the team hallway. Enough said.

4. **First town hall meeting**

All teachers and students on the team will come together periodically for a town hall meeting. Later in the year, these meetings might be used to allow students to have input on field trip decisions and other team activities. Students should have already learned what is expected of them as they move to such events and how to behave once they get there (see Routines in previous section of this chapter).

During the first town hall meeting students might determine the team name, team colors, and a team motto. They might plan a team bonding activity to create a huge team collage, create a paper or cloth team quilt, or make plans for a team skit or play where each cohort is assigned to a different scene or act.

Use the first town hall meeting to make students feel a part of something positive and unifying.

5. **First-week perfect attendance certificates**

Yes, hand these out at the end of the first week. Reinforce good habits early and continue to recognize students in a consistent, systematic, organized way. These are things that help build student trust, remember?

6. **Beginning of the year Mastering the Middle Grades (MMG) and Freshman Seminar (FS) social skills lessons**

If you are teaching in a TDS middle school or Ninth Grade Success Academy, make good and early use of the curriculum that has been provided. Some students lack the very skills that contribute to classroom management problems. Address them early and often using your handy-dandy MMG and FS materials. These courses were specifically designed to address skills that many students have not mastered. In addition to providing explicit instruction in academic and social skills, these courses have more far-reaching benefits. One survey given to 10th grade students who had taken Freshman Seminar in the 9th grade showed that 47% of the 10th graders were still using conflict resolution skills that they had learned the year before. An additional 31% of the students acknowledged using the conflict resolution skills when they were reminded to do so by their teacher. If you are the teacher on the team who teaches Mastering the Middle Grades, share the seven social skills with other members of your team as you teach them. Your teammates can post the skill in their rooms and reinforce the skills throughout the year. For example, if the social skill is “learning to listen,” the MMG teacher can teach the skill and all team members can post the name of the skill in the front of the room and have students practice using the skill. In Freshman Seminar, social skills are not taught in stand-alone fashion, but are
incorporated into the curriculum. If the Freshman Seminar teacher keeps his/her teammates abreast of skills as they are scheduled to be taught, however, all teachers on the team could reinforce the skill. This organized way of addressing social skill deficiency shows students that your team is unified in its expectations of them and that you consistently support each other’s efforts to get them moving in a positive direction.

7. Explanation of team grading policy

Students on the team need to know that there will be consistency in grading: what students need to accomplish for an “A” in one room is consistent with what they need to accomplish for the same grade in another classroom. Your team should develop a grading rubric that is shared with students as early in the year as possible. In addition, grading distribution percentages should be determined and shared as well. For example, will all of you agree that homework will count for 20% of the quarter grade? Or that test and project grades will count 40%? Determine a reasonable distribution, share that with students (on a course syllabus, perhaps), and be certain that all of you adhere to your team decision when it’s time to record grades. The clear presentation of expectations at the beginning of the year should considerably reduce confrontations with students at report card time.

II. Keeping It Going

Academy/Grade House

If your academy has gotten off to a good start, keep it rolling. Don’t lose momentum, or things may backslide. Priorities include:

1. Academy support of interdisciplinary team decisions and activities

Successful interdisciplinary teams work very hard. They spend numerous extra hours planning and invest much time and energy creating and monitoring. They need to be supported. Academy/grade house administrators or leaders and school transformation facilitators as well as other support staff should assist these teams in all ways that would be appropriate. Could you help them organize a field trip? Plan an event? Arrange a room for an activity? Could you support them as they work to keep routines in place? Also, could you provide some rewards and incentives for teachers? Doing so would go a long way toward building and sustaining morale. Remember that strong interdisciplinary teams are at the heart of every successful academy/grade house. Help in any way you can to keep the heart pumping.

2. Consistent monitoring and enforcing of academy/grade house expectations, procedures and goals

When Rudolph Giuliani was mayor of New York City, crime went down and NYC became a safer place to live and visit. He achieved this by consistently attending to the details. From graffiti to jaywalking – you followed the rules or paid a price. The result was a cleaner, safer city for citizens
and tourists alike. Academy/grade house rules and procedures must be monitored and consistently enforced, and good behavior must be rewarded so that students see that there are consequences for behavior, both good and bad.

3. **Academy/grade house assistance with report card conferences**

Interdisciplinary teams will do most of the planning for report card conferences (see Chapters 3 & 5 of the *TDS Transformation Manual* for information on report card conferences), but they may need help. The most effective conferences are conducted by impartial adult participants. School transformation facilitators, counselors and other academy staff can assist by helping the team locate and invite adults who would be interested in participating in this valuable activity. The opportunity to talk about their progress or lack of progress with an unbiased, interested adult motivates students to either continue their good work or begin to make positive changes.

4. **Academy/grade house data collection**

For team EWI meetings (see Chapter 4 of the *TDS Transformation Manual*) to be effective, teachers must have access to updated attendance, behavior and class performance data. The academy leader and the TDS school transformation facilitator should ensure that data is being collected, collated and made available. Team members can provide appropriate interventions to students in need if they have easy access to this data. This is essential. Many behavior problems can either be prevented or circumvented if red flags are addressed quickly.

5. **Updating the school resource map with available resources**

The resource map should be a document that changes as the needs of students change. It should be updated regularly by adding new resources or interventions as they are designed and/or become available. Resources that are no longer available or no longer apply should be removed from the resource map. Efficiency is key to the tiered intervention process and teachers should not have to sift through items on an outdated resource map only to discover that some resources can no longer be used. Teachers will add to the resource map during the year, as will others in the academy and the school. The school transformation facilitator and others can do much to ensure that the map represents the best resources available during any given time period. (See sample resource map in appendix.)

**Interdisciplinary Teams**

The value of working together to maintain a positive learning environment cannot be overstated. Problem solving is simply easier when teachers join forces to do it, and some of your common planning time can be used to share classroom management strategies, plan new approaches, and discuss how to keep things going. Hats off and kudos to you and your team if you started the year on a positive note! Don’t stop now. Keep it going by continuing to attend to the following:
1. **Consistently keeping agreed-upon routines in place**

As students start to show signs of cooperation and begin to exhibit appropriate patterns of behavior, don’t be tempted to drop your guard. Students look to you for guidance, and consistency provides them with a sense of security. It is far more reassuring to enter a room or team area when you know what to expect and what is expected of you. Isn’t that true for all of us? Is there anything more disconcerting than heading into the unknown, if the unknown could possibly prove dangerous or unstable? Keeping routines intact will help students build a sense of responsibility to themselves and others, and will also help to maintain an atmosphere that is conducive to learning.

2. **Changing expectations, goals, or routines as needed (team decision)**

Oh, dear. Doesn’t this contradict what was said above? Well, not really. If all routines have proven effective, definitely keep them in place. But what if some of them are not working? For example, suppose you and your teammates created a hallway movement plan that has proven disastrous. Well, create a new one, using what you now know to guide the new planning. Also plan how you will bring the new information to students. Will you call a town hall meeting? Will each of you be responsible for informing one cohort of students on the team? Whatever you decide, make certain that all students are receiving the same message, and that all interdisciplinary team members take responsibility for monitoring student adherence to the new routine.

3. **Updating posted attendance charts each week**

Pay close attention to student attendance. While it may seem that student attendance has no bearing on student behavior, in fact, the opposite is true. When a student is sporadically absent, the disruption caused by his/her return can be significant. As a team you can and should devise a method for handling returning students (see suggestions for handling returning students in appendix). However, getting the student to attend more frequently is better still. Better for classroom management, and better for the student. By posting aggregate attendance data in the hallway, you alert students to the fact that your team cares about them. You want them there – every day.

4. **Reevaluating the incentive/reward system, making changes as needed**

Incentives and rewards work well… until they don’t. If your team has determined that students are no longer moved to cooperate when they are given chocolate goodies or pens with the team name on them, perhaps it is time to consider some changes. We want to move students toward behaving because it’s the right thing to do, of course, but some students will need motivating nudges. Have a mix of incentives/rewards: real items, recognition, special freedoms, special events, responsibilities with status, etc. Some incentives and rewards will be handled on the academy/grade house level, but teams are wise to create or determine team rewards and
incentives that are more personally connected to the team community. Keep reevaluating their effectiveness, and try some new ideas when what you’re doing becomes stale or ineffective.

5. **Recognizing perfect attendance each month**

You should continue to recognize perfect attendance throughout the year. This can be done by placing posters with the names of perfect attenders in the hallway or by placing certificates for individuals in the hallway. The more recognition for appropriate or outstanding behavior of any kind, the better. Students should see that moving in the right direction pays off. Perfect attenders could be given special privileges at different times during the year. Many schools recognize these students at awards assemblies. Be as creative as you like, but keep patting students on the back for jobs well done.

6. **Reinforcing Mastering the Middle Grades and Freshman Seminar social and study skills**

The skills learned in MMG and FS should be reinforced in every classroom — even when the courses are no longer being taught. After all, the skills taught in these classes are not ones that students learn to pass a test or quiz. They are skills that, if practiced and mastered, will benefit them for years to come. They will also benefit you. If you want students to exhibit appropriate social skills in your classroom, you and your teammates should consistently and uniformly reinforce the skills.

7. **Conducting peer observations**

Have you built trust among team members? If so, really help each other. If one teacher is struggling with a particular class that others are handling well, throw the struggling teacher a life line. With his/her consent, take turns observing the class in question. Share what you’ve seen through your observer’s lens and make suggestions for alleviating the problem/s. Remember that observations like this must be handled carefully. Your presence must not, under any circumstance, undermine your teammate’s authority in the classroom. Work with your instructional coach as you move through this process.

8. **Planning interdisciplinary units**

Students often become more engaged when they see how things connect. A student who loves social studies but hates English might be more motivated to attend to work in English if it is connected to what he/she is doing in social studies. Work together as a team to develop several interdisciplinary units that can be taught during different quarters of the year. Doing so may capture the attention of some students who would otherwise be apathetic.

9. **Continuing to implement Tier I interventions**

If the preventive measures are working, don’t let up. Add to your intervention list as you brainstorm ideas for countering potential behavioral setbacks. Tier I interventions are
exceedingly important. So many disciplinary problems can be averted simply by anticipating them and having a preventive measure in place. More on this in Chapter 4.

10. Determining and implementing Tier II and Tier III interventions for students who need them

This will only be touched upon here as it will be covered more thoroughly in Chapter 4. Using the ABC data provided by the school and academy, you and your teammates identify students for whom Tier I interventions prove insufficient. These students will need additional supports to succeed.

11. Conducting EWI meetings

Using updated resource maps and current student data, team members and other appropriate parties (partners, counselors, social workers, STFs, etc.) will determine interventions needed for identified students at Early Warning Indicator (EWI) meetings. In addition, interventions will be monitored for effectiveness at these meetings. The level of support needed by individual students will be determined by the data. Getting early help to students who need it can only benefit you and your teammates as you work to create well-managed classrooms.

Chapter Summary

Help students get off to a good start by organizing early and putting routines and procedures in place at the very beginning of the year. Be consistent in your approach, and unified in your message to students. By doing so, you and your teammates will help each other create the learning environment that enables students to be successful.
Chapter 3

How Effective Curriculum and Instructional Practices with Accompanying Professional Development Help Ensure a Classroom Climate Conducive to Learning

The number one problem in the classrooms is not discipline; it is lack of authentic learning tasks, procedures and routines.
- Harry Wong
  Educator, Educational Speaker, Author

It takes as much energy to wish as it does to plan.
- Eleanor Roosevelt

When students are engaged in meaningful learning activities in an organized classroom where procedures are clear and routines are in place, there are likely to be few, if any, discipline problems. Professional learning communities (PLC’s) can assist you and your co-workers as you strive to create this positive climate in your classrooms. When members of your interdisciplinary team and content team view your work together as an opportunity to advance your professional growth, you will likely begin to see how powerful work within these PLC’s can be. It is here that you will encourage each other to try new strategies that are driven by student needs. Student challenges will be discussed and solutions to problems will be researched and planned. The work done in PLC’s positively impacts each individual teacher’s work in the classroom. Below find ways that the content team PLC can help you advance professionally and how these advancements can transfer to benefits in your classroom.
A Professional Learning Community

Though teachers belong to several professional learning communities in a TDS school, this chapter will focus on work within content teams. Content teams might be comprised of teachers who teach the same course or they might be comprised of teachers who share the same discipline (department teams). Most of our discussion will involve what teachers who teach the same course can do to assist each other. When members of these content teams plan units of study and create assessment tools together, classroom management can be positively affected. Really. No kidding. Why? Well, students tend to respond more positively to teachers who are always well-prepared: teachers who present information in an organized way and get them involved and engaged in meaningful activity. You can better ensure that you are well-prepared by planning with members of your content team. Members of a content team can help each other by:

1. **Planning, planning, planning**
   
   Well, we’re back to teaming and organization, right? You were warned that there would be themes threading through our discussions. Let’s take a minute to think about this logically. Are you more likely to be well-prepared for class each day by sitting and planning alone with just the resources you can locate and the ideas that you can conjure? Or might it help to work with others to establish unit goals and to back-map to determine how you will get students to reach these goals? Once again, chances are good that working together will produce a better result. By pooling your ideas and sharing some of the work required to plan a unit well, and by consistently monitoring the effectiveness of the plan, you and other content team members can keep each other organized and focused. This, in turn, will help to keep students focused. The instructional coach, of course, will help you and your teammates through this planning process.

2. **Sharing ideas, practices, tips**
   
   Veteran teachers often have a bag of tricks from which to pull when situations arise. They can share with new teachers all that experience has taught them. It might be an effective way to teach students how to support a topic sentence, a way to help students remember important historical events, or a way to motivate students to complete home assignments. Enthusiastic, competent veterans are often generous with tips and advice. Younger members of a content team, take advantage of this generosity. There may be an unofficial mentor on your team who is willing to share some of his/her best practices with you. Be receptive. You may not use everything you learn, but some practices could prove to be invaluable.

   Veterans may also find that they can learn much from the enthusiastic young teachers in their content area. What new teachers lack in experience they often make up for by bringing fresh ideas to the table. Veterans, be receptive to new ideas and willing to listen as the younger members of your team share their thoughts. Doing so can help you add some zing and punch to lesson approaches that might have become a little musty and dusty over the years.
3. Determining the pacing of courses and lessons and setting benchmarks

As content team members plan, keep in mind that quality trumps quantity. As you pace course material and lesson activities to meet the needs of your students, you can help each other by sharing challenges that certain classes of students might present and you can determine an appropriate schedule to match each group of students. Identifying benchmarks and determining when and how they should be met is an easier job when accomplished as a team. Again, back-mapping from goals to determine a logical sequence of instruction and activities should prove helpful.

4. Planning assessments

Units and lessons are not the only things that content teams can plan together. They should also determine (and, if time allows, create) assessments, both formative and summative (see TDS Transformation Manual for more information). Formative assessments can help each individual teacher adjust instructional delivery when results indicate that this is needed. When students see that you are willing to make adjustments to accommodate them, trust is built. Instructional coaches are prepared to help with this process.

5. Looking at student work

Content teams can meet to look at student work for a variety of purposes. This practice helps teachers determine the level of understanding achieved by students as they worked to meet objectives. When students who did not understand/meet objectives are identified, discuss strategies that might help those students. This is an especially meaningful activity when all members of the team are using work assignments that were created together. Getting a group understanding of how students performed on given tasks can generate valuable discussion about delivery of information and instructional strategies. It can also help all teachers to brainstorm methods for re-teaching or reviewing information, making sure that instruction is student-centered and not teacher-centered, and ensuring that more students are ready to move forward. Students who understand the course material are less likely to act out. Help these students to feel a part of the class by carefully looking at work and adjusting instructional methods as needed. (The National School Reform Faculty www.nsrfharmony.org/protocols.html provides protocols to help teams organize their time for different tasks. Their tuning protocol for looking at student work can be found at this site.)

In-Class Practices

For many teachers, this is where management is most challenging. Some of you have probably already been thinking, “Sounds great to plan with different teams to handle team behavior and to create effective units of study, but what do I do when it’s just little-old-me in the room with students? How do I keep my own classroom settled enough to implement these fabulous lessons I have planned with others? Besides keeping in place routines that the interdisciplinary
team determined, what do I do?” Well, we’re back to our theme. You **build** student **trust** by organizing yourself and your room and by creating routines that are **consistently** monitored and enforced. **What works for the team, will work well for you, also.** And remember, in a TDS school you will have an instructional coach and a JHU instructional facilitator to help throughout the year. Consider some of the following as you begin to plan your in-class approach:

**Classroom organization/environment/instruction**

So, what do you organize? How do you create this structured but inviting environment that will help students develop a sense of responsibility and a willingness to cooperate? How do you plan instruction that will engage students? Step by step. One foot in front of the other. Let’s begin.

1. **Seating/Desk Arrangements**

How will you arrange the desks in your room? Whatever you decide, be sure to create seating charts as they will make it easier to learn students’ names and will make taking attendance an easier and more efficient task. Some seating arrangements are described below.

   a. Cooperative learning grouping – TDS courses include cooperative learning activities, so desks can be arranged to accommodate teams of four students. Students can then work together more easily. Desks should be arranged so that no student has his/her back to the front of the room. Suggestions for keeping this arrangement and other arrangements in place will be discussed in the routines and guidelines section. Effective ways for handling cooperative learning activities will also be discussed later. (See appendix for a sample cooperative learning seating arrangement.)

   b. Seminar discussion arrangements – There may be times that you will lead seminar discussions and you’ll want to arrange student seating to accommodate this activity. This type of seating arrangement, unlike the grouping arrangement, works better when used for the specific purpose of discussion. It does not work well as a permanent seating system. For days when you plan seminar or other types of discussions, however, consider getting to school early enough to create this desk formation. You might want to devise a way of indicating where students will sit, because as they enter the room they will probably move to sit with “buddies,” which may or may not work well. To manage this situation, you could create a poster of the seating arrangement with seat designations indicated for each student. The poster could be prominently placed in the front of the room, possibly where the drill or starter activity is normally found with clear directions for students to follow. (See two possible discussion arrangements - Horseshoe and Circle - in the appendix.)
Note: There are a number of possible seating arrangements that you might want to try to accommodate a variety of lesson types. The team grouping works well for most lessons. If you experiment with others, solicit the aid of your instructional coach. If you don’t feel ready for groups, for example, you and your coach may decide to start by pairing students. The coach can offer advice for organizing the seating process to cut down on possible behavior problems that can arise from changes in the learning environment.

2. Classroom Routines/Guidelines

One can’t say enough about the importance of establishing routines and setting guidelines for students. These are so essential to classroom management, yet some teachers seem not to understand this. Don’t be one of those teachers! As early in the year as possible (first day of school for some) get routines in place and make the guidelines for classroom activity crystal clear. Believe it or not, students are looking for guidance. They may not initially respond as though they are, but they are. They want to know what’s expected of them and they will cooperate more readily when the environment has a high level of positive predictability. So, let’s discuss some of the routines and guidelines that you can institute to create a well-managed, positive learning environment.

a. Seating students

Since we’ve just talked about possible seating arrangements, let’s begin here with other seating issues. These range from where to seat students to how to keep the seating areas clean and neat. Some things to consider:

- Seating students – Some teachers like to wait a week before determining where students will sit. This allows them the opportunity to learn some names and to observe behaviors. You could do this, but don’t wait too long. If students are sitting near friends who take them off task, it’s best to handle that quickly. Create a seating chart and, with the help of your coach, get students into seats that will better allow them to focus. If you have grouped seating (4 desks together; cooperative learning groups), have students who were sitting in one group of desks stand quietly at the side of the room. Call the names of students who will now be sitting in this area, letting each student know to which seat he/she has been assigned. Stand next to the group of desks until all students are appropriately seated. Move to the next grouping of desks and use the same method for seating students. Continue until all students are in their newly assigned seats. Your coach can help you with additional organized methods for seating students.
• Creating seating charts – Explain to students that they must be in their assigned seats when roll is taken. Now, all you have to do is look for empty seats, check the seating chart to determine who should be sitting in them, and quickly mark those students absent in your grade book. If you create your charts on your computer, when seat changes become necessary, you can simply move names around on the screen and run a new copy of the chart.

Tip: Place your seating charts in three-hole-punched plastic covers, then place them in a binder. When class begins, simply flip the binder open to the chart you need and quickly take roll. It takes no more than a minute. If you are presently spending 10 minutes calling each name at the beginning of each class period, you might want to try this method. It is much more efficient and gives students almost no time to get off task. You will have the roll taken before they have finished the starter activity.

• Keeping desks orderly – Nothing says “anything goes in this room” like desks, chairs and materials in disarray. Students respond to this and they will soon be in disarray if you don’t establish routines. Students must be taught how to operate in your room, beginning with the area they will inhabit for much of their time there. If you do not teach them to clean the group area, to place the books in the center of the group in a neat pile, to place all lesson materials in the basket in the center of the group, etc., before you dismiss them, then you can expect to spend many hours of your teaching career straightening desks and returning things to their proper place. The time you spend teaching students to do these things will be well worth it... within days, your life as housekeeper will be over.

Tip: Early in the year, explain that you dismiss students; the bell does not. When the bell rings, dismiss students by group. Shortly before the bell, direct each student to pick up trash around his/her desk. Before being dismissed, each student should straighten the desk and place the chair under it. Have a trash basket near the door so that students can easily deposit their trash on the way out. Use this procedure, group by group, until all students have been dismissed. As the year moves on, the procedure becomes routine. You will be able to dismiss the entire class at one time with the occasional reminder to straighten a desk or properly place a chair under one.
b. Greeting students

Don’t listen to those who tell you that standing in the hallway as students pass to their next class is “not your job.” In fact, every member of your team should be out in the hallway to monitor student movement. This helps prevent inappropriate behavior in the hallway that can spill over into the classroom, and it helps those who would misbehave to think twice about doing so. It also sends the message to all students that your team of teachers cares about their safety. Trust is built this way.

Use hallway time to your advantage. As students enter your room, greet each one by name. Congratulate a student who made the winning basket during yesterday’s basketball game. Welcome students who have been absent, letting them know that they were missed. Give an encouraging word to a student who is finally understanding the work and urge him to keep trying. Sharing these little moments with students helps to build positive relationships.

As you stand in your doorway, you can actually get some things accomplished. If your first activity will require seat changes, hand each student a colored paper with his/her name on it and tell him/her to sit in the group that has a table tent of the same color. Instantly you will have saved 10 minutes of class time. You can also use this time to pass out flyers or starter activities that you printed out for this particular day. In other words, don’t view hall monitoring as wasted time. You can accomplish so much in those 3-5 minutes. Use them wisely.

c. Handling lesson materials and student work

You should organize to reduce opportunities for off-task behaviors. Even the way you pass out papers or collect books can contribute to calm or chaos, depending on the method you choose. Your instructional coach can help you organize the details of classroom procedures, of course, but here are some practices that have worked well for other teachers around the country:

- Passing out papers #1 – If there are handouts that students will need, consider placing a neat pile of them face down (one per student) in the center of each group before students enter. This cuts down on movement and does not take time away from the lesson.
• **Passing out papers #2** – Return student work while the class is working on an independent assignment. This could be when students are completing the bell-ringer, or when they are involved in a guided practice activity. Quietly slide the returned material face down under each student’s binder. Tell students ahead of time to hold any questions about the grade or comments you have made on their piece of work until after class or after school. You may want to confer with students about their work. If so, quietly call students to your desk while others are working. Make sure that you are seated so that you can see all members of the class. Don’t conduct conferences with individual students with your back to the class. All kinds of things can go on behind you if you do, and many of those things will have nothing to do with your lesson.

• **Storing books or other materials** – Store neatly any books that are used during class time. Bookshelves obviously work best, but even if books are stored in a closet, place them in there in an orderly way. Students take their cues from you. If you place books or other materials around the room haphazardly, students will do the same. As has already been mentioned, placing a neat stack of books in the center of each group at the beginning of the day will limit confusion that can result from having students retrieve books from the bookcase. Make sure that students stack them neatly at the end of each period, then, at the end of the last period, have one person in each group return the books from their group to the bookshelf. Make sure that the books are shelved neatly. Students may need to practice activities such as this.

**Tip:** If there are four desks in a grouping, place four books there each day. This way you can account for the books more easily. Even if one group member is absent, the remaining members are responsible for stacking or returning four books. If you have six groups of four, then you know that you should have twenty-four books at the end of each day.
• Handling submitted assignments - When students are asked to pass their papers to the front of the room, there will almost always be one or more minor disruptions. A student may roughly grab a paper from the hands of a classmate or tear a classmate’s paper by accident, causing retaliation that can come in many forms... an obscene remark, a punch in the arm, etc. To avoid these conflicts, develop an organized way for students to submit work. Many teachers provide baskets or trays for each class. The baskets can be tiered and labeled; they are sometimes on a base with wheels so that the teacher can roll them to his/her desk for easier paper grading. If you have three classes, consider having two to three tiered trays for each class. Label the tiers by class period (Period 1, Period 3, Period 6), then label each tray to indicate the type of assignment that should be placed in each (writing assignment, classwork, homework, etc.). Place the trays near the exit door. When students are dismissed, they can place assignments in the appropriate tray on their way out the door.

d. Getting students’ attention
Some teachers flick the lights off and on; others raise one hand and wait for students to raise their hands as they quiet down. Teachers have different methods for bringing students back to order after a group or partner discussion activity. Some methods for doing this follow. Just remember that you must teach students the method and students may need to practice it several times before it becomes routine. Also, if the method stops having the desired effect (everyone is quiet and all eyes are on you), you might need to revisit/review, or you might want to try a new method. All methods are designed to keep teachers from shouting to get students quiet. That method, as some of you may have discovered the
hard way, is not very effective and can actually cause the noise level in the room to escalate. The idea here is to calmly and quietly bring student attention back to you.

- Flick the lights off and on – Explain that student conversation should stop within 3-5 seconds after the lights begin flicking. Practice.
- Raise your hand – For this method to work, you must make eye contact with several students to get the hand raising started. If no one is looking at you, you will be standing in the front of the room with a raised hand... looking a bit foolish. Some teachers require that all students raise their hands when they see the teacher’s signal. Others only require that students stop talking. Still others will say, “Hands up.” The students are taught to raise their hands and respond by saying, “Mouths closed.” This last method often works well on the middle school level.
- Count back from 5 – The teacher holds a palm up and begins counting aloud... 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1. Some teachers will make their raised fingers correspond to the number that they are calling – 5 fingers up when they call “five,” 4 fingers up when they call “four,” etc. By the time they reach 1, all students should be quiet. Practice.
- Say, “One, two, three; all eyes on me.” – Well, that pretty much says it all. If eyes land on you, but students continue to talk, practice will be needed.
- Clap – Some teachers use the “clap once if you can hear me” method. Theoretically, all students clap once, and then quietly direct their attention to you. If students start to clap at inappropriate times to be funny, or clap and continue to talk, you’ll need to have them practice, or... you may want to use another method.
- Flash a sign that says, “Eyes on me.” – Visuals work best for some teachers. Consider trying one if verbal commands are not working well for you.
- Allow student input – If you have students reasonably settled and are able to conduct class discussions that do not become disruptive, you might consider having your students select a method for getting the class quiet and attentive. If they can’t come up with something themselves, you could share several possible methods with them and have them choose one. Students do like to be part of the decision-making process.

e. Getting the class started

Whether it’s called a do-now, a starter activity or a bell ringer, most teachers know that students need something to occupy their time after they enter the classroom. You will still be on hall duty when the first students enter, and left to their own devices, students may engage in activity unsuitable for the classroom. If you have taught them the procedure for entering the room and immediately beginning the starter activity, you will only have to pop your head in the door to remind the few who are not attending to their work that they
should immediately begin to do so. The starter activity should appear in the same spot on the board every day. Review activities work well as starters, as students can complete the assignments without your help. An engaging topic that requires students’ written opinion/thoughts can also be an effective starter. Work with your coach and members of your content team to develop a variety of starter activities that will provide students with effective, meaningful review or will require them to think critically or creatively.

f. Ending the class in an orderly way

We’ve already covered ways to dismiss class: straightened desks, materials neatly replaced, trash picked up, assignments ready to be deposited in labeled trays. Before the bell rings, however, you should consider having a wrap-up activity that reflects student learning and that brings the lesson to a logical conclusion. Many teachers prefer to give brief summary assignments that are used as passes for exiting class. Students hand their exit passes to you as they file out of class at dismissal. A student must have the pass completed in order to exit. You (and possibly your interdisciplinary team) should determine the consequences for students who do not produce a pass. Be consistent. If the exit pass is to be one of your routines, make expectations and consequences clear. (See the appendix for a sample exit pass idea contributed by Courtney Perrine, a former teacher in Miami, who is now in the Education Transformation Office.)

g. Rewarding students

Build in ways to reward students for good classroom behavior. In fact, consider rewarding students for progress toward becoming well-behaved. Students are recognized for academic progress, of course, with “Good Work” displays and certificates. Create a separate reward system for good behavior recognition. Some ideas are offered here, but talk to members of your teams and your instructional coach for additional ideas.

- Will Bills – A TDS teacher whose last name is “Will” created a reward system that allowed students to earn “Will Bills.” She created paper money and placed her picture in the center of each bill. While students were working on group tasks, she would circulate through the room. If students in one group were doing a good job of staying on task, she would slip each of them a Will Bill, quietly telling them why they received it. She used the paper money to reward students for any number of positive behaviors, and did so sporadically so that students never knew when the rewards were coming. At the end of the period, students could cash in their bills for a treat in her closet (a candy bar, pen, pencil, large eraser, etc.). They could also save their bills and purchase a more substantial item at a later date. These items were probably donated by friends or local merchants… or Ms. Will herself. This program worked well for her. Students were eager to cooperate. Ms. Will had clearly explained the reward
process to students, and criteria for earning bills had been made crystal clear, so there was no whining when some students received bills while others did not. (Will Bills idea from Kristen Will of Chicago Public Schools)

**Note:** You should determine when you will allow students to cash in their reward money; make it a time that works best for you. That might be after class, before class, the next day, etc.

**Tip:** You could try a system like this one. You could place a four-leaf-clover in the center of your bills and call them “Lucky Bucks.” If your last name begins with “M,” you could issue moola (Miller Moola); if your last name begins with “C” you could give students cash (Carson Cash). The possibilities for creativity are many. You could spend some time during the summer collecting items that others would probably willingly donate to your cause. Be sure to store them in a **locked** closet. Just an idea...one that worked well. (See sample in appendix.)
- “Caught You” slips – A similar idea that does not involve purchases of any kind was used by a TDS teacher in Hawaii. She created slips of paper that had “Busted!” “Caught You!” or “Way to Go!” at the top. Below the title on each slip was a list of positive behaviors that could be observed and checked off. The back of each slip listed rewards. The student checked the desired reward, signed the slip and returned it to the teacher at the end of the class period. The teacher tucked several of each type of slip under the clasp of a clipboard making writing on the slips an easier task. These slips were quietly placed on a student’s desk while he/she was working. No words were exchanged, as the reason for the reward had been checked. Examples appear below:

Consider creating some organized method of rewarding good behavior. Positive attention trumps negative attention every time. (“Caught You” slip idea from Lorna Baniaga-Lee of Hawaii Public Schools)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Front of Slip</th>
<th>Caused you!</th>
<th>Way to go!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Busted!</td>
<td>I saw you...</td>
<td>Today, you managed to...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You have been caught doing the right thing...</td>
<td>... reading</td>
<td>... stay in your seat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>◊ ... listening</td>
<td>◊ ... engaged</td>
<td>◊ ... not curse/use profanity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>◊ ... participating</td>
<td>◊ ... discussing</td>
<td>◊ ... stay on task/focused</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>◊ ... leading</td>
<td>◊ ... cooperating</td>
<td>◊ ... respect the learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>◊ ... questioning</td>
<td>◊ ... writing</td>
<td>◊ ...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>◊ ... thinking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Back of Slip</th>
<th>As a Reward...</th>
<th>As a Reward...</th>
<th>As a Reward...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>◊ ... 10 extra credit points</td>
<td>◊ ... 10 extra credit points</td>
<td>◊ ... 10 extra credit points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>◊ ... 10 points added to a quiz</td>
<td>◊ ... 10 points added to a quiz</td>
<td>◊ ... 10 points added to a quiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>◊ ... homework pass</td>
<td>◊ ... homework pass</td>
<td>◊ ... homework pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your Signature</td>
<td>Your Signature</td>
<td>Your Signature</td>
<td>Your Signature</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
h. Managing student movement

There will be times during some class periods that will require student movement. Organizing and making plans ahead of time will save you much stress on these days. Some suggestions below:

- Movement necessitated by the lesson – If students must move as part of a lesson activity, write the movement strategy into your lesson plan. If you want students to go stand under signs you have created around the room that represent different views on a particular topic, don’t just tell students to head to the sign that represents how they feel about the topic. Everyone will jump up, you’ll have wanderers, and you may have chaos. Instead have an organized plan. Stand by one sign and ask students who agree with that view to come stand next to the sign. Move to the next sign, and proceed in the same way. Do this until every sign has a group of students. This way, you control the movement. Each activity may need a different strategy.

- Movement to centers – TDS courses include learning centers that are used at specific times during each class period. You are advised to organize movement to centers to avoid traffic jams and arguments. First, teach students how centers work. Many teachers create instruction sheets for each center with assignment directions. Often students are required to complete forms that keep them accountable for center work. Students should be familiarized with each center and should practice using each before being sent on their own. Students can be sent to centers by group/team, or, for a while, they can be assigned to centers. One teacher uses the assigning method at the beginning of each year. She writes team names or numbers in large characters on strips of paper and places one strip on the wall next to each center. When students enter the room, they do not have to ask her anything; they know to which center they have been assigned by simply looking around the room to find the strip with their team name/number on it. No confusion. No unnecessary conversation. As the year moves on, self-selection becomes possible because students know how to conduct themselves when moving to centers. (Center movement idea from Rowena Pilapil-Murphy of Hawaii Public Schools)

i. Checking homework

Collecting and grading homework every night can be overwhelming, yet students are more likely to complete home assignments if they know that they will be checked. Consider using a method for checking home assignments that can be implemented while students are working on an individual or team assignment. On the back board create a five column rectangle with one day of the week designated for each column (M, T, W, Th, F). In each column, write directions for the daily home assignment. Have students copy this assignment each day onto a form in their notebooks that looks much like the columns you have created on the board. You can have them copy assignments one day at a time, or, if you are a super
planner who creates lesson plans well in advance, you can have them copy their assignments for the entire week. While students work independently at their desks or are involved in a team activity, tell them to open their notebooks to the home assignment that they completed and to have the assignment sheet open, as well. Circulate through the room, stopping at each desk to check to see that the assignment was completed. If completed, place your initials, or a star or a stamp at the bottom of the appropriate column. (Try to use something different each day to keep students from producing the completion check themselves.) At the end of the week, have students write their names on the assignment sheets and deposit them in a tray on their way out the door. Grading is now easy. If a student has five checked assignments, the weekly homework grade would be 100%. If only four assignments were completed, a grade of 80% would be assigned. A student would receive 60% for three assignments, etc. See sample 80% assignment below. Note that Thursday’s assignment was not completed. (Homework sheets idea from Helen DeVinney, formally of Baltimore City Public Schools)

**Sample Home Assignment Sheet**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday Date:</th>
<th>Tuesday Date:</th>
<th>Wednesday Date:</th>
<th>Thursday Date:</th>
<th>Friday Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Read pp. 62-80 of your text. Write a brief summary of the reading.</td>
<td>Create a character sketch of your favorite character in the novel. Use the form that you received this morning as a guide.</td>
<td>Create five meaningful sentences using your five new vocabulary terms.</td>
<td>Answer the four questions on the homework handout. Write your answers in complete sentences.</td>
<td>Create a final draft of the writing assignment that was edited in class today.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note #1: Some assignments will need your careful attention. When this is the case, have students place them in the appropriate tray on the way out the door. Check the assignments and return them the following day. Immediate feedback is crucial.

Note #2: In TDS schools, students are given opportunities to make up missed work. Develop a plan for providing this homework grade recovery. (See the appendix for ideas for handling late assignments.)
Note #3: Some teachers use technology to good effect in the classroom. If you have developed a way to check home assignments using an iPad, for example, just be sure that you are giving students feedback. They should know where they stand at the end of each week… no surprises at grade time.

3. Instructional Practice

Though some teachers may not see the connection between instructional practice and classroom management, there definitely is one. A strong one, in fact. And, as you may have guessed, organization and consistency have major roles here, as well. Below find some elements related to instructional practice that can impact the tone and tenor of your classroom environment.

a. Daily planning

If you have developed long-range and unit plans with members of your content team, good for you. Now it’s important to use those plans to create detailed daily lesson plans. Some might say, “I know what I’m doing. Why must I write it down?” If you’ve been around long enough, you’ve probably heard this question any number of times. To answer the question, let’s discuss the reasons for creating detailed lesson plans now. Lesson plans keep you organized. They help you to address curriculum in a logical, meaningful way. They allow you to consider various ways of bringing concepts and ideas to students and they keep you focused - which, in turn, keeps students focused. They help to ensure that materials needed for the lesson are on hand when needed. They help you to pace activities and transition from one activity to the next. They become important documentation of where you’ve been, which will ultimately help you to determine where you need to go. In short, they are essential, so don’t leave home without them. (See sample lesson plan template in appendix)

b. Lesson variety

We have all attended lectures that have seemed interminable. If you glance around the room during one of these tedious events, you might spy stifled yawns, watch-checking, closed eyes, or doodling. Mature adults usually manage to handle themselves professionally and politely in a circumstance such as this, but adolescents may have a tougher time. Lacking the social skills of adults, they are more likely to let their displeasure be known... sometimes in anti-social ways. Incorporating various activities into your lesson plans can help to prevent mutiny in your classroom; it is also sound instructional practice. There is need for direct instruction, of course, but there should also be opportunities for guided practice, modeling, team activities, etc. (i.e. explicit instruction). TDS courses provide these elements, but plans you design yourself should include them as well. Your coach will help you with this planning, and will also help you as you learn to transition from one activity to the next. Again, your detailed lesson plan will be invaluable for cuing you to pace each segment of your lesson. The handling of cooperative learning activities will be discussed later in this chapter.
c. **Modeling**
An essential component of explicit instruction, modeling can actually help you to reduce classroom disturbances. Nothing is more frustrating to students than listening to an explanation of a concept or process, but not being able to comprehend the shared information. When you model or demonstrate a process, many more students will understand, thereby lowering the risk of having frustrated students acting out. Be sure to have all materials needed for the demonstration ready to go prior to class. Scurrying around the room to gather things at the last minute defeats your purpose. Be prepared... we’re back to that lesson plan, again.

d. **Guided practice**
Students should be given the opportunity to practice skills before they are tested for mastery of them. This seems so obvious, but some teachers still cling to the “teach and test” method of instruction. It only makes sense, though, that students will be more likely to master skills if they are able to practice using them (in groups or as individuals) prior to being tested. This allows the teacher time to make formative assessment decisions to determine if additional or different instruction is needed. It also sends a signal to students that you care more about their learning than you do about covering material. This helps to build trust.

e. **Teacher demeanor**
A common mistake made by some teachers involves the urge to be “buddies” with students. This may come in the form of playful punches, allowing students to call you by your first name, using generational expressions, etc. A note of caution: Students should see you as a caring adult who looks out for their best interests and is there when they need you, but they look to you to be their guide, not their “buddy.” Students already have buddies: people their own age. From you they need mature guidance – encouraging, stable and consistent guidance. Try to learn as much as possible about the students you teach. Carefully develop appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication by observing them in different settings. For example, some students will not take kindly to having you stand too close to the m when you are talking to them. Their need for personal space should be honored. Some students appreciate a gently placed hand on their shoulders as you lean in to check their work; others do not like to be touched without permission. Pay attention to your students to learn the best ways to communicate nonverbally with them. Verbal communication is equally important; your verbal communication should always be professional, free of sarcasm, nonjudgmental and nonthreatening. Remember, if you want the respect of students, they must feel that you respect them in return. It is possible to be firm, fair and consistent. Darcy Miller addresses effective communication for developing positive relationships in her book *Enhancing Adolescent Competence: Strategies for Classroom Management*. In the chapter “Developing Trust,” she makes suggestions about how to stand, when to remain silent, how
to attend to voice intonation, etc. She also presents strategies for discovering a student’s cultural communication style. If you are interested in improving student-teacher communication in your classroom, her book would definitely be worth a look (Miller, 1998). See suggested reading list.

f. **Teacher instructional positioning**

As you work to develop classroom management, there are many things to consider, as we have seen. Add to that list your physical position in the classroom as you teach or confer with students. Where do you stand? Where do you sit? Well, a few suggestions. When you are giving direct instruction or directions for an activity, always stand facing the entire class. During class discussions, you may want to move around the room. Do this by walking around the perimeter; this way you are able to see all students at all times. If you head to the middle of the room, there will be some students behind you. This not only makes it difficult for those students to hear you, it also gives them an opportunity to get off-task. When you need to sit in a group to confer with students, try to sit along the periphery, also. (See sample in appendix.) Remember as you are developing your classroom management, that it is important to have all students in your sight line at all times, whether standing or sitting.

4. **Cooperative learning teams**

Don’t shy away from creating cooperative learning teams because you fear you won’t be able to manage the talk and activity. If you have put much of what has already been discussed into place, you are more than ready to get students working and learning together. First, be sure to create teams of students with differing achievement levels (in a four-student team, one high achiever, two medium achievers, and one low achiever works well). Also consider having a mix of genders and temperaments on each team. Ask your instructional coach to move through the class list with you to devise a teaming plan. After decisions have been made and students have been re-seated with their new teammates (see “Seating students” earlier in this chapter), allow time for team members to get to know one another by creating structured activities that will make that happen. Here are some suggestions for getting your team building off the ground.

a. **Have students select a team name, logo and slogan/motto**

If students are to work well with one another, you must put some things in place. Students need to start seeing their team as a unit, not just four individuals who happen to sit near each other. Start the team building process by having each team determine a team name, logo and slogan. This activity allows students to get to know one another in a non-threatening way. There is no grade involved. There are no right or wrong answers. There should be some guidelines set for the activity, however. Robert Slavin, author of *Using Student Team Learning* (Slavin, 1994) suggests three rules for this activity:

- Each team member must have a say.
• No decision can be reached unless everyone consents.
• No member consents to the group decision if he or she has a serious objection.

Some teachers add to these rules. For some, appropriateness is important. If so, teachers must clearly explain that obscenities are off-limits, as are references to violence or sexual activity. Other teachers may stipulate that names, slogans and logos must be positive in nature (Name: the A-Team, not the We Couldn’t Care Less Team; Slogan: “All for one and one for all,” not “Don’t make us hurt you”; Logo: A star, not a swastika).

Once each team has selected a name, logo and slogan, consider having them create small posters which display this information. The posters can be affixed to the wall or bulletin board. Remember, if you have three classes, and in each class you have six teams, you will be displaying eighteen posters… so best not to have huge posters.

b. Have students take part in team building activities

Before students begin to work cooperatively on class assignments, have them practice the process by taking part in additional team building activities. Provide clear guidelines for each of these activities, just as you will provide structured guidelines when they are operating as learning teams. Some activities that students could engage in to build team unity would be:

• Interview (Slavin, 1994) – Within teams, students interview each other, and then report what they have learned about each other to the class. Interview topics such as hobbies, unusual experiences, favorite movies, and life goals may be suggested.

• Group Brainstorming (Slavin, 1994) – Any task that has many possible solutions may be set up for group brainstorming. The instructions are simply that the team members put their heads together to come up with as many correct or interesting solutions as they can.

• Let’s Agree – Hopefully, you have already established some rules/routines for team activities. Why not now allow some time for each team to determine some additional rules of behavior that they would like to see in place. Some examples might be: Don’t “put down” your teammates, all team members must participate, raise your hand if you’d like to respond to a teammate’s contribution, etc. Have team members write these new rules in their notebooks for easy reference/reminder.
c. Cooperative learning routines

If you have not already established previously discussed routines for handling texts and materials, movement among teams, responding to signals to return attention to you, submitting assignments, etc., now would be the time to teach students these routines and allow them to practice. If you have routines in place, good for you. There are several other routines that you might want to consider as students begin working in teams:

- Voice level – Establishing appropriate voice levels for group work will save you headaches down the road. Some teachers tell students to use their “inside voices,” but not every student will understand what is meant by that. You might need to model voice control and then have students practice keeping the voice levels down. You can also establish a signal that lets students know that the voice levels are too high (ring a bell, tap a spoon on a glass, display a card that indicates a level that is too high, etc.). You might also create a poster that indicates appropriate levels for different activities (See sample in appendix).

- Review of previously taught skills – If yours is a TDS school, students will probably be enrolled in Mastering the Middle Grades or Freshman Seminar, or will have been enrolled in one of those courses in previous years. You might want to review some of the social skills that students learned in these courses to help to ensure that communication among student team members remains civil and productive. Some possibilities: disagreeing without being disagreeable, avoiding and handling conflict, respecting the opinions of others, listening to peers, etc.

- Your decision – You may need to create routines based on observed needs. In fact, some routines may be needed in one class, while something entirely different will be necessary for other classes. Be observant and get to know your students to better determine what they need to focus and cooperate.

5. Report Card Conferences

Though teacher teams usually plan and organize report card conferences, as an individual teacher you can benefit from addressing noted student needs. Students will be asked to complete forms noting problems that they are having in particular classes. If you receive this feedback from students, act on it. Confer with students and develop a plan with them that is designed to get them back on track. When students see that you are sincerely concerned about their progress in your class, they are more likely to cooperate. Trust is built this way.
6. Coaching Cycle

The coaching cycle is clearly explained in the *TDS Transformation Manual*. Refer to that document for a description of the process. You will see that regular planning, implementing, and debriefing with your instructional coach can help improve and strengthen your instructional practice. If you are struggling with classroom management, plan with your coach to collect data on students’ responses to your present practices. Using your data collection tool as a guide, work with your coach during your planning and debriefing sessions to develop methods for improving the classroom environment. Below, find examples:

a. **Students consistently talking and off-task**

You and your coach may want to develop a data collection tool that captures: 1) most serious offenders, 2) what may be precipitating this behavior, and 3) what you do in response to the off-task behaviors. When you debrief, you can reflect on present practice and, with your coach, brainstorm ways to adjust that practice for better results.

b. **Students consistently arriving late and loud to class**

You and your coach may want to develop a data collection tool that captures: 1) most frequent offenders over a number of days, 2) your response to individual offenders, and 3) student reaction to your response. When you debrief, you can reflect on your practices, and the student responses that these practices elicit. You and your coach can devise methods for adjusting your practices for more positive results.

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**Chapter Summary**

Planning with members of your content team can result in richer, more meaningful learning experiences for students. Creating routines within your classroom provides students with the positive predictability needed to focus and cooperate. Varying lesson activities and consistently reflecting on your instructional practices helps to keep students on task and on track. Carefully planning for cooperative learning activity in your classroom prevents the problems that team discussion and movement might otherwise present.
Chapter 4

How Tiered Student Supports Help Prevent and Address Behavioral Issues

How are the children?
- Traditional Maasai Greeting
  East Africa

As the traditional Maasai greeting implies, a tribe is only as healthy as the individuals and children within it. The same could be said of schools. When we ask “How are the children?” we want all adults in the building to be able to respond, “The children are well; yes, all the children are doing well.”

The students are the most important people in the school equation, and the positive climate shift that can occur when the right supports are getting to the right students at the right time cannot be denied. If behavior issues can be improved by providing appropriate interventions, then, by all means, we should be providing those interventions. In Talent Development Secondary (TDS) schools, data-driven tiered student supports provide both preventive measures and special interventions inside and outside of the classroom. These preventive measures and interventions improve the general school climate, which ultimately helps improve the environment in each classroom.

An effective tiered support system is driven by the interdisciplinary teams, but needs the active support of everyone in the academy/grade house. In this chapter you will find suggestions for both academy/grade house personnel and interdisciplinary team members that will hopefully help you to implement an effective tiered student support system. For a detailed explanation of the tiered student support process, please consult Chapter 4 of the Talent Development Secondary Transformation Manual.

When we work within our academy/grade house communities to support students, it is with the hope that we can ultimately say with assurance, “The children are well; yes, all the children are doing well.” Let’s see how a tiered student support system can lead us there.
**Academy/Grade Houses**

The tone set by the academy or grade house impacts every classroom housed within it. So much can be done to prevent and address behavior, freeing teachers to spend class time addressing students’ academic needs. As we have seen, progress is made more quickly when the entire “village” gathers to support the effort. Academy leaders, school transformation facilitators, counselors, social workers, and partners such as City Year and Communities in Schools can do much to support teachers as they implement preventive interventions and determine other appropriate interventions for the most challenging students. Appropriate supports would include:

1. **Promoting distributed leadership**
   
   When many students need our attention for many different reasons, top-down micromanaging does not work well. Decision making by those who are closest to those in need is more efficient and more effective. Empowering teachers to take the lead on making decisions that will affect the students they share only makes sense, and supporting teachers as they try to implement selected interventions is crucial. Let teacher teams lead, and support them as they do.

2. **Making an updated data system accessible to teachers**
   
   Teachers will need updated attendance, behavior, and course performance data to ensure that the decisions they make for students are sound and appropriate. Your school should find a data system that can provide teacher-level access to comprehensive student data. Systems such as School Loop™, a partner in TDS schools, pull together student data in a comprehensive data dashboard (like a car dashboard, everything you need is right at hand) and combine this with an intervention-tracking and communication tool. Each teacher team should analyze the data connected to students they serve to identify areas where students need additional support.

3. **Creating academy plans for attendance, climate, achievement and communication**
   
   The school develops a school improvement plan, and each academy/grade house (including teacher teams) must create plans specifically for its small learning community. These plans are more group- and student- specific than the school plan. They should reflect the needs of the academy and the students housed within it. (See the appendix for sample plans and a sample group activity for creating a plan.)

4. **Ensuring that acceleration courses and extra-help labs are offered**
   
   Often considered a preventive measure (Tier I support), an acceleration course, while helping students to fill in learning gaps and get back on track, can also help to improve academy/grade house climate. How so? Well, students who feel lost and believe they have no hope of catching up are much more likely to act out. When these students start to experience some success in classes that they formerly failed, student-teacher cooperation often follows. Providing appropriate acceleration courses for students who are behind will pay dividends, then, in
improved student behavior as well as improved academic standing. TDS acceleration courses and extra-help labs are designed to speed up the process of filling the gaps in students’ learning. When the gaps are filled, students can get back on track toward earning a high school diploma and moving on.

5. **Planning Tier I, II, and III interventions**

As already stated, teacher teams will take the lead on planning and implementing interventions, but other academy/grade house staff can support by providing valuable information gleaned from observation of, and conversation with, identified students. This might include a “second shift of adults” such as City Year corps members, Communities in Schools site coordinators, or Big Brothers and Big Sisters volunteers who can provide supports before, during and after school. As members of the academy and partners identify trends in behavior, they can assist teacher teams by helping to plan preventive Tier I interventions. Students who are regularly exhibiting inappropriate behaviors will need additional supports. Tier II and III interventions will be determined to provide the support that these students need. Academy/grade house personnel should join the team meetings when tiered interventions are discussed and proposed, providing input to assist in the decision-making process. Some examples of team and academy tiered interventions appear below.

**Tier I**
- Sending a student to another teacher on the team to de-escalate a problem
- Creating and updating shared norms
- Meeting with parents as a team
- Teaching behavior lessons to work on specific team/academy issues: *Mastering the Middle Grades and Freshman Seminar* for social skill development; programs that teach expected behaviors
- Screening of students (reading and math assessments)
- Conducting report card conferences
- Offering acceleration courses or extra-help labs in English and math (double-dosing)
- Providing explicit, systematic instruction
- Consistent monitoring of student performance and growth

**Tier II**
- Creating and operating a late room
- Using a reflection room for “cooling off” as an alternative to suspension
- Assigning a peer tutor
- Providing a college student or volunteer tutoring service
- Providing a triple-dose in math and/or English (ALFA Lab, CATAMA Lab)
- Planning and implementing recovery options such as Twilight School
• Providing classroom help for groups of students with the help of City Year corps members or other partners
• Using behavior contracts
• Conducting lunchtime discussion groups on a particular issue (grief, foster care, self-esteem, etc.)

Tier III
• Providing special education support in a mainstreamed classroom
• Referring a student for special education eligibility
• Providing pull-out supports
• Arranging an individual meeting with a counselor or social worker
• Referring a student to a mental health agency for individual or family support
• Adjusting student class schedule to accommodate need

6. Updating the school resource map
As the year moves on, some new resources will be identified and some previously-used resources may no longer be available. The members of the academy/grade house can be of great help to the teacher teams by regularly checking the school resource map to see that needed changes have been made. Though the teachers on each team will attend to this as well, the “all hands on deck” approach will help to ensure that Early Warning Indicator (EWI) meeting time is used efficiently and that students receive appropriate assistance when they need it. (See sample resource maps in the appendix.)

7. Analyzing the effectiveness of interventions
Some interventions may not work well for some students. Others may not work well for any students. Careful monitoring is important to determine if an intervention should remain on the resource map because it has provided support for some students, or if it should be removed from the list because it is just a “clunker” intervention. Teacher teams will be monitoring as well, of course, but analyzing the data to determine the effectiveness of interventions is the job of everyone in the academy/grade house.
Interdisciplinary Teams

The interdisciplinary teams are the heart of any academy or grade house. During the EWI meetings conducted by members of the teacher teams, all of the tiered support “heavy lifting” gets done. Teacher teams lead the way; other academy staff members support their efforts by attending EWI meetings when appropriate, and by actively participating in data analysis, resource determination and intervention monitoring. You and your teammates can work to improve the general climate of the academy by doing the following:

1. **Identifying trends and addressing known challenges**

Who knows what is happening in the academy better than the teacher teams? When trends start to develop, teachers are likely to notice first. You and your teammates will know if many students are starting to arrive late to class from lunch. You are the ones who will take immediate note of the fact that most of your team’s office referrals are for class cutting. As you and your teammates identify developing trends, work with others in the academy to create some Tier I interventions to reverse the negative trends.

2. **Planning and coordinating with teammates and school partners**

Interdisciplinary team members should have designated time to plan and coordinate efforts together. Use this time wisely. Don’t find excuses not to meet. Make these meetings a high priority, and with established norms and protocols in place, you can accomplish what needs to be done. (See Chapter 2 of the TDS Transformation Manual for a list of possible team meeting activities.) Don’t forget to include school partners in these meetings as often as possible. City Year (CY) corps members or Communities In Schools (CIS) site coordinators will be working closely with students just as you are. Their input at meetings will be extremely valuable. They will bring another perspective and new ideas to the table that could prove to be just the thing needed to solve a problem or to help an individual student. All hands on deck!

3. **Creating team plans for attendance, climate, achievement and communication**

Creating your team game plan might be one of your first team meeting activities. Just as you would not want to get up in front of students without a lesson plan, you and your teammates should recognize the importance of having a plan for ensuring that you are communicating your expectations clearly, that students are attending school regularly, that they are behaving while with you, and that they are achieving success in all classrooms. Your students will benefit from this organized effort on their behalf, but so will you. Your unified approach and consistent adherence to the plans will help make the learning environment one that you can all live with.
4. Displaying aggregate team data

When students are able to see how their attendance, behavior and course performance are progressing or regressing, more substantive conversations can take place. Helping students understand that they are represented on each data chart can give them the incentive to make positive rather than negative contributions to the data. Talk it up. Make it a big deal. Tell them how proud you are when they’ve improved. Let them know how it concerns you when they lose ground. Encourage them to come to talk to you about obstacles that might be impeding their progress. Keep working to build the positive relationships that will make students want to spend part of each day with you.

5. Meeting regularly to analyze data and monitor student progress

If the data is updated regularly, interdisciplinary team members should be analyzing it and monitoring student progress to determine if intervention is needed. Students in need of help should be flagged for discussion at EWI meetings. Staying on top of the data will help the team quickly get the right support to the right student at the right time.

6. Conducting Early Warning Indicator (EWI) meetings

Please consult the Talent Development Secondary Transformation Manual for a complete description of the EWI process. Student support decisions are made at EWI meetings. Students who have been flagged as “in need” will be discussed and interventions that might help these students to get back on track will be determined. Interventions will be tracked and monitored. If interventions are found to be insufficient or ineffective for certain students, you and your teammates should revisit the resource map to see if other resources might be available. Consistently adding to the resource map as new resources become known and available is an important part of this team-led process.

Chapter Summary

The academy staff and the academy teacher teams should be making data-driven decisions to best support the students within the academy. Updating the data and resource map regularly is essential when determining appropriate interventions for identified students. Academies and teams should plan together to ensure a unity of purpose and a focused approach to student attendance, behavior and course performance (ABCs) challenges. All work to support students both inside and outside the classroom will ultimately help to create the positive climate that everyone in the academy desires.
Chapter 5

How a Can-Do Culture and Climate Is Developed: Everyone Works Together to Put the Pieces in Place

Believe you can and you’re halfway there.
- Theodore Roosevelt

When everyone in a school believes that it is possible to attain and maintain a positive culture and climate, more often than not, beliefs become reality. This is because people who focus on what can be done, rather than what can’t be done, make things happen. They work together and keep plugging away until they have created what is needed. If you and your co-workers have acted on the belief that a can-do culture and climate is possible in your school by putting many of the strategies discussed in the previous chapters into place, chances are that you are already reaping the benefits of your beliefs and efforts. Chances are also good your students are benefitting from these same beliefs and positive outcomes.

All kids need is a little help, a little hope, and someone who believes in them.
- Earvin “Magic” Johnson

If you and/or some of your co-workers are still skeptical, however, and think that a can-do culture and climate is so much “pie in the sky,” perhaps reading about what some of your peers around the country are doing will help to bring you on board. In other words, don’t take my word for it; see what folks who have actually done some of these things have to say. In fact, even if you have implemented successful strategies, why not learn some new ones from these contributors? Some of their stories follow. Perhaps you will have some stories to share when we publish a second edition!
Report Card Conferences

Andrea Campos,
School Transformation Facilitator
Manual Arts High School
Los Angeles, CA

Ms. Campos shares what the teachers and staff at Manual do to make report card conferences effective.

We are conducting report card conferences every five weeks at Manual Arts High School. The key to successful report card conferences (RCCs) is being creative and strategic in order to keep students from burning out. Students need to understand the multi-dimensional components of their lives as high school students. They need to understand their internal motivations, the impact of the actions they inadvertently or purposefully choose, the processes of the educational system, their relationships with peers and teachers, and what grades mean. In other words, a report card conference doesn’t simply cover grades. In order to make these conferences relevant for the students, we’ve found ways to align RCCs with the school-related topics or the transitions occurring during the year.

For the first marking period, we had our ninth graders reflect upon their habits of mind as well and provided them a way to contact their teacher for further support. The second round we had them look at their courses and align them with the college graduation requirements and calculate their GPA. They also filled out commitment cards that were later posted in the hallways. The commitment cards could say anything in relation to the improvements they wished to make. It was a constant reminder of their promise to themselves and their commitment to their school. The third round, we looped back and had students reflect on their habits of mind in advisory class with their teachers. At this point, we changed the teacher conference request form to indicate two items: 1. Students checked the habits they demonstrated that were impeding their learning. 2. Students identified clear objectives/ways that they were willing to improve their grade. This was done in order to provide a clear focus and goal for both teacher and student conferences. The final marking period will be addressed in Advisory class in January. Students will look at their transcripts and understand the credits they have actually earned, calculate their GPAs, as well as identify their goal for the end-of-the year matriculation to 10th grade.

As a Diplomas Now team, we realized the need to identify the ebb and flow of student grades. For semester two (and for next year), we will track grades so students are able to see how they do with each grading period and reflect on the changes and consistencies. We also intend to
incorporate goal setting for the California State Test (CTS). Students need to understand what their tests mean and the implications - specifically, how do my scores impact my schedule and my future? This will occur in the five week marking period for the second semester. The improvements made for each report card conference have been made through a post-reflection as a team. We write the ideas down for the next round and actively prepare in order to support the success of our students.

Jennifer Zeringue
School Transformation Facilitator
Capitol Middle School
East Baton Rouge, LA

Ms. Zeringue shares some strategies that are used at her school to plan and implement report card conferences. Some of the personal touches are as moving as they were motivating.

Diplomas Now (DN) has served as a catalyst for change in many of our practices and programs that address the individual needs of all students. Report card conferencing is one way to ensure that every student has the opportunity to reflect with a mentor on the current status of his/her academic and school efforts and to prepare a plan of action that supports or addresses his/her current student standing. The meat and bones of this experience is the one-on-one time with each and every student in the school or the targeted grades of the program. Many of our students have deficits in one-on-one interaction with adults in the school and home, and for a brief moment seven times a year at our school, we create the time and space for that positive interaction to occur. In our second year of implementation, students are 98% compliant and about 75% have chosen their champion for this academic review due to the strength of their relationships with City Year corps members and the DN executive and site team. We utilize Early Warning Indicator (EWI) focus list discussions and interventions, strong student/team relationships, teacher collaboration, and trust-building as multiple data points to drive these report card conversations. We strive as a team to leave every student with the knowledge that through personal efforts, supported by our team, positive change is at their fingertips.

To build strong relationships with students that can foster honest conversations to encourage their personal success, we also try to provide some tangible record of the report card conference experience. Students who are on-track academically and have not displayed EWI indicators are praised by the mentor and congratulated for their efforts. They are also given positive letters to take home or recognition certificates. On the other hand, for students who may have some successes and some struggles, we provide an opportunity to celebrate the joys and to look at the struggle areas as places for growth. This discussion leads to the development
of an action plan that addresses the specific problems that students need to work on to help ensure future success. The students fill out a checklist indicating where they are struggling in the content area or in a social situation in a class. There is a place provided on the form where students can suggest interventions that may work for him/her... a forum for the student’s voice in decision making. Students, teachers, and our team find the report card conference experience one that deepens the impact of Diplomas Now on our campus. In addition, it provides valuable insight into the REAL STORY of each of our students.

Oh, I can’t leave this without sharing how we paired some teacher recognition activities with our report card conferencing. Last year, we had monthly ballots available for students to select certain teachers for kindness awards. This year we gave students an opportunity to write a positive note to the teacher who impacts them the most. Those little stolen moments with students via report card conferencing brought a plethora of smiles to the faces of our students as they created works of the heart... and on the faces of the unsuspecting teacher who had just been slapped with the reality...THEY REALLY DO WANT TO BE SUCCESSFUL. OUR STUDENTS WANT TO BE A SUCCESS STORY. THEY JUST AREN'T SURE HOW TO WALK THAT PATH. AND THAT IS WHY DN’S TIME IS NOW!

Erica Nelson
School and Student Support Services Facilitator
Chicago, IL

Ms. Nelson shares her insights on report card conferencing.

At Chicago Talent Development High School, report card conferences (RCCs) include participants from outside the school community. Representatives of local organizations are invited to participate in the event and an intimate training is prepared for those selected. We have organized it so that students will have the same participant at each RCC. The goal of this format is to continue to expand our students’ professional and resource network.
Tiered Interventions and EWI Meetings

Monica Sorensen
School Transformation Facilitator
Miami Edison Middle School (MEMS)
Miami, FL

Ms. Sorensen provides helpful information about how the teachers, staff, and partners at MEMS identified negative trends in behavior and planned and implemented Tier I incentives to counter these trends.

Miami Edison Middle School houses a 7th and an 8th grade. As a relatively small school with a good fabric of teamwork and familiarity, the school transformation facilitator (STF) and administrative team were able to review historical behavior data to plan for the 2012/2013 school year in a collaborative setting. Working with the existing resource map, the team assessed the efficacy of Tier I supports in correlation with data trends for the behaviors each resource aimed to address. While the 2011/12 school year showed tremendous improvements across the ABCs (attendance, behavior, course performance), outdoor suspension days remained a concern. Prior to the opening of the school, it was decided that the MEMS administration would address this concern with the teachers. In that same collaborative vein, teachers were able to freely offer suggestions of what works and what doesn’t work. One glaring trend was the increase in student awareness around the previous years’ attendance and academic incentives. Through these planning discussions, it became clear that a positive behavior campaign was needed for increased student awareness and thus increased student accountability. From here, the MEMS team revamped posters, planned targeted daily announcements and refurbished the Positive Behavior Support “Raiders Lounge.” Teachers and staff hit the ground running with advertising “Student of the Month” and “Caught You Doing Something Good” incentives. Security staff had a clear movement plan that took into account the “trouble spots” identified from the previous years’ incident reports and referrals. Teachers were instructed to maintain their posts at their doors to minimize disruption in the hallways during the changing of classes. To pinpoint the outdoor suspension concerns, administration banded together to decide that MEMS would better utilize the indoor suspension option. The STF supported that resource with suggestions from expected behavior programs and behavioral modification curriculum, such as LEAPS and Success Highways [http://scholarcentric.com/solutions.html/].
As noted, student awareness was key; perhaps the most effective practice in increasing student awareness was the creation of a large "Consecutive Days of Excellent Behavior" poster that logged days with no incidents. We set the reward bar at 15 consecutive days. Through monitoring, the STF and the MEMS team noted that the 7th grade was consistently derailing the excellent behavior streaks. After identifying this trend, the team decided to display grade level data for consecutive days of excellent behavior. This small change has yielded big results through a visible reminder of competition and accountability. Last week, we celebrated both grade levels for 15 days of excellent behavior. More impressive is the over 5% increase in the percentage of students on track in behavior from last school year to this year.

Ms. Sorensen also shares how the teachers and staff at Miami Edison Middle School created Tier I, II and III initiatives/interventions/supports to improve student average daily attendance rates (ADA). Note how collaboration and teamwork helped to produce the increased attendance rates.

The school transformation facilitator (STF) and Miami Edison Middle School (MEMS) administration made attendance a priority for the 2012/13 school year, setting a goal of a 4% increase in ADA by the end of the 2012/13 school year. To accomplish this, we knew we needed an attendance action plan. The STF met with the 7th and 8th grade teacher teams to roll out several initiatives and incentives and to brainstorm further attendance support. Throughout our collaborative discussions, we determined the need for a constant Tier I initiative as well as an arsenal of Tier II and Tier III attendance supports to be executed in case of attendance fluctuations. The MEMS teachers and staff began the school year advertising the planned Quarterly Perfect Attendance Ceremony and Reception. Students knew that from day one, the only way they would be invited would be if they maintained perfect attendance for the entire quarter. Teachers and staff advertised the high-profile awards, which included several MP3 players and gift certificates and reiterated the criteria for attending. For Tier II support, the MEMS team developed two initiatives. In an effort to improve the lagging 7th grade attendance, the school executed a friendly daily attendance competition between the 7th and 8th grade. When one of the grade levels reaches perfect attendance for a day, they are rewarded with one of several well-advertised rewards. In addition to addressing student sub-groups, the MEMS team developed a plan for what we began to think of as Tier II Moments; short periods of time where attendance fluctuates due to an impending holiday. In these Tier II Moments, we execute a short term attendance blitz, a daily raffle for students who are present and punctual to temporarily bolster attendance rates. Finally, the STF and Diplomas Now team consulted with the on-site student support staff to determine Tier III attendance supports. Prior to the commencement of the 2012/13 school year, we identified our top 20 or 30 students in need of attendance support and conducted a series of "Parent Data Chats" where a familiar school
counselor presented parents/guardians with the students’ historic attendance data trends, described possible legal actions that might result, and informed them of a plethora of valuable support that was available. These students are then monitored on a weekly basis for attendance changes.

At the mid-year point, MEMS is proud of the changes we’ve seen. At our First Quarter Perfect Attendance Ceremony, we celebrated an astonishing 143 students, almost half of the student body. While we haven’t reached our 100% grade level ADA, on many occasions we’ve come as close as 99.6%. The attendance blitz was executed for the 2 weeks easing up to the winter holiday after we saw ADA numbers slipping. Within a day or two of rolling out the incentive, our ADA jumped back up 5%. The Tier III attendance support provided to those highest needs students has also proven effective; at the end of the first quarter, we had a gain of almost 15% over first quarter attendance the previous year.

Jennifer Zeringue  
Site Transformation Facilitator  
Capitol Middle School  
East Baton Rouge, LA

Ms. Zeringue’s description of a special Tier II intervention demonstrates how a team effort can positively impact identified groups of students in need of guidance.

Our Female Behavioral Focus Group has proven to be an effective Tier II intervention. This group was devised through the collaboration of the Diplomas Now site team, teacher teams, and school leadership in an effort to identify the most critical or habitual female discipline offenders at the school and to provide appropriate support for these young ladies. This group consists of twelve diverse personalities and discipline challenges, all of whom have accrued a long list of infractions. The school transformation facilitator (STF) and Communities in Schools (CIS) site coordinator teamed up to teach curriculum that merges curricular resources from Success Highways, Mastering the Middle Grades, and our own shared experiences, to focus on building resiliency skills. Most of these young ladies have been told a zillion times not to continue the actions that create problems for them, so we decided to approach them differently by creating a fluid 25-minute experience every day to discuss issues, work on activities to identify short/long term goals, identify supports for these goals, provide guided lessons on how to accomplish the goals, and address their need for a sense of self-worth. All of this was in an effort to help these young ladies build confidence to go out in the world and reach for the stars. Many of the focus group participants have been told repeatedly that they can’t, but for 25 minutes a day, they are shown that they can.
Monica Sorensen  
School Transformation Facilitator  
Miami Edison Middle School (MEMS)  
Miami, FL

Another effective “Best Practice” appears below. Ms. Sorensen shares what MEMS staff members do to ensure that Early Warning Indicator (EWI) meetings are collaborative and effective.

EWI meetings at Miami Edison Middle School are well-attended, collaborative and effective; in one year, the percentage of students with no EWIs has jumped almost 30%, and those students discussed at EWI meeting have shown dramatic improvement. I believe that several key factors contribute to the success of EWI meetings at MEMS: preparation, clear expectations, comprehensive data sharing and prompt and planned follow up. Preparation and organization are ensured through two templates; the EWI calendar, which is distributed monthly and indicates scheduled EWI meetings and follow-up days, and the EWI PowerPoint™ presentation template, which allows the STF to quickly but meticulously gather and display individual student data. Teachers and participants are provided with the EWI meeting PowerPoint™, complete with student data, at least 3 days prior to the meeting, giving the attendees time to prepare their contributions. Through EWI awareness and EWI protocol sessions, the STF has developed clear expectations for EWI meetings. All participants understand the simple norms and follow the golden rule: stay positive and focused on student success. While these students change each week, the protocol and agenda remain the same, allowing for a routine and systematic meeting. Comprehensive data sharing further enhances the EWI meetings at MEMS as it allows for deeper analysis and thus more meaningful participation; for example, the inclusion of benchmark data to pinpoint deficiencies allows math and ELA teachers to have more targeted input which in turn allows City Year corps members or tutors to have a clearer understanding of student needs. Displaying data trends over time provides counselors and teachers with a frame of reference.

At the end of the 2011/12 school year, the STF provided teacher feedback surveys to identify areas of strength and weakness in EWI meetings. Through analysis of these surveys, the STF determined a need for more intentional and planned follow-up sessions. Therefore, a newly introduced series of “follow-up days” have been inserted into the aforementioned EWI calendar. These sessions occur after the initial EWI meeting during the regularly scheduled teacher team meeting and act as an opportunity to touch base and ensure that interventions are being executed as planned. These scheduled sessions have allowed for more intentional and planned follow-up and have provided a greater system of organization for the STF.
While planning and follow-up provide a structure of success for MEMS EWI meetings, it would be an error to discredit the impact of dynamics. No planning or template can make up for neglecting the importance of relationship building. By taking time from the start to get to know each other and understand each team member’s strengths, we have been able to make EWI meetings at Miami Edison Middle School collaborative, enjoyable and productive.

Creating a Can-Do Culture and Climate

Jennifer Zeringue
Capitol Middle School
East Baton Rouge, LA

Ms. Zeringue speaks frankly and passionately about why she thinks it is so important for students to feel connected and for teachers to feel appreciated, and she offers strategies to accomplish these.

As a voice from the field, I have strong feelings about Pillar IV. My Diplomas Now team and our school community recognize that we are dealing with students who have been beaten down by a variety of life’s pressures, some too tragic to mention, but this component of the program addresses the root cause of our students’ struggles. Our students have not been shown, and have not had the opportunity to embrace the guidance and direction needed to cope with the stressors closing in on them. Many of our students live to make it through the night, and that replaces believing in a future. If tomorrow is not promised, then believing in one’s ability to overcome the odds fades. Let me stop myself before I go on my soapbox, and redirect. A can-do climate and culture is critical to the spirit of collaboration. It reminds our school’s Diplomas Now staff that our collective experience is enough to face the challenges of educating in our current circumstance. With our experience we can create solutions to real problems, show appreciation for the self-sacrificing work teachers do, and support school leadership by providing a program that addresses a critical need in schools today - human capital.

For the Capitol Middle School Baton Rouge Community

One of the most successful can-do climate and culture programs/activities that our Diplomas Now site team accomplished, with the support of the executive team, was planning, designing, and building partnerships for support, and implementing curricular programming for a community garden. This was done through our home economics elective and science classes and it provided a living, relevant experience for student learning. Fall and spring harvests are shared with families, students, staff, and visitors.
For the Capitol Middle School Staff

Another ace in the pocket for creating a can-do culture and climate is feeding our staff. I have had a mantra for meetings in the education community: “If you feed them, they will come.” Cooking breakfast for the staff has been a huge success, but it can be pricey, so our DN team members share the load equally. One person might make the muffins; someone else brings some fruit, etc. Teachers and others are especially appreciative when they see members of our DN team standing behind the griddle early in the morning making them hot pancakes. Some breakfast item suggestions:

- Pancakes and waffles with all the store bought fixin’ (one large box of pancake mix feeds the whole staff)
- Muffins and fruit variety
- Breakfast sausages wrapped as pigs in the blanket
- Donuts

For the Capitol Middle School Students

Every year we run a discipline incentive... a recognition party with the main attraction being a City Year corps-member-created haunted house. It’s great to see young, hip minds bubbling with ideas and excitement to create something to impress the students. It is by far one of my favorite sponsored events. In addition to the haunted house, we have areas set up for spooky foods, an age-appropriate horror movie, a “spirited” obstacle course with mummy races and a pumpkin seed extraction operation, to name just a few of the activities. This year we had to run the event for two days because last year’s buzz created enough interest to spark a decrease in discipline infractions for the month of October in both years of implementation. This is a time-consuming activity that requires cheerleading, direction, and a plan, but THE STUDENTS’ REACTION MAKES IT ALL WORTH IT.
Erica Nelson
School and Student Support Services Facilitator
Gage Park High School, Chicago, IL

The Diplomas Now site team at Gage Park High School has also recognized the importance of creating a “can-do” spirit. Ms. Nelson shares descriptions of two activities that were created to motivate enthusiasm and spirit in teachers, students, and parents.

School Climate

With a long academic term almost over and just shy of the holiday break at Gage Park, the Diplomas Now site team felt that teachers and staff needed an encouraging boost. We created a makeshift medicine bottle and filled it with strips of inspirational quotes. We placed the container next to the staff time-card machine with a piece of candy attached.

We then created a “you’re worth a mint to us” campaign for students during the same week. For this, leadership dressed in holiday attire and greeted each advisory period with a mint and note card with the aforementioned saying on it.

Family Literacy Engagement Night/Grade Incentive

This upcoming parent event will have a Hunger Games theme. City Year corps members and our 9th grade teacher team have collaborated to create a relay of station activities where families compete and students gain a chance to earn additional points for class assignments.

Jessica Sasko
Site Transformation Facilitator
Sheepshead Bay High School, Brooklyn, NY

When the Hurricane Sandy disaster struck the community, the staff shifted into gear. Ms. Sasko describes the creation and administration of a school-wide needs assessment and the formation of a Spirit Committee.

After Hurricane Sandy hit, school staff immediately made phone calls home to each of the school’s 1,700 students. When students returned to school, a needs assessment (organized by school administration, Diplomas Now, school counselors, teachers and school partners) was administered to the student body. In addition, Liz Belton, Communities in Schools Site Coordinator, who created the needs assessment document, put together a resource guide based on the city’s relief services. Students who were impacted were quickly identified which gave school counselors and partners the opportunity to refer students and families to relief services, as well as to collect and distribute needed donations.
The school community was eager to do more. Students approached their academy leaders/assistant principals about organizing a fundraising basketball tournament. School staff and partners jumped at the idea. Laura Izzo-Iannelli, assistant principal, started a Spirit Committee, and this committee planned the basketball tournament.

Teams of students played each other. The winning student team played a team of staff members and school partners. Everyone attending the game had to contribute to the relief fund. The collaborative nature of the event and the can-do spirit of all participants made this a successful endeavor.

The Spirit Committee also provides a forum for planning future school-wide, community-building events.

---

**Classroom Strategies**

**Erica Nelson**

S4

Gage Park High School and Chicago Talent Development High School in Chicago

Ms. Nelson shares a collaborative classroom activity and a classroom management strategy that others might like to replicate.

**Classroom Collaboration**

Teachers at Chicago Talent Development High School (CTDHS) decided to team the 9th grade *Freshman Seminar (FS)* and art class. Students began this term at Chicago Talent discussing their hopes, fears and goals for life through the various *FS* lessons. Each student was then asked to create an “I Am” poem with a visual to support it.

**Classroom Management**

SMART is an acronym for how to participate in class discussion

S- Sit up straight
M- Make eye contact
A- Ask questions
R- Raise your hand
T- Track the speaker
Academy Strategies

Jessica Sasko,
School Transformation Facilitator
Sheepshead Bay High School, Brooklyn, NY

Ms. Sasko shares how her school’s Diplomas Now team worked with others in the building to organize and implement an effective freshman academy orientation under difficult circumstances.

We planned for school opening this year while Sheepshead Bay was undergoing “turn-around.” It was an overwhelming process for the entire school community. Ninth grade teams had not yet been formed, so we relied on teacher leaders who were willing to volunteer their time to plan and facilitate the summer orientation. These teachers, along with the parent coordinator, the DN team, assistant principals, a new 9th grade assistant principal and our Counseling in Schools partners (at least 15 people) came to the table to plan a successful freshman academy orientation.

Despite the precarious “turn-around” situation that our school community was placed in, we worked collaboratively with many people. The newly formed team (committee) created an action plan which included “a phone blast” to invite parents and students to the orientation. The “We Want You” message sent to parents triggered a positive response... we had more parents in attendance than we had anticipated... a cool problem to have!

The orientation included a welcome session and a tour of the building with students as tour guides. Both parents and students filled out interest surveys and many parents got an opportunity to meet with our Counseling in Schools staff. In all, a very productive day.

Chapter Summary

As the school-based personnel above illustrate quite well, when we work together to solve problems, everyone benefits. Start a “Yes, we can” campaign in your school by being an active participant in positive change. Work with your team members to accomplish goals that will improve the climate for all of you. Beat the drum, toot the horn, and get it done. Your students deserve no less, and neither do you.
Bibliography

Works Cited


The books on this list run the gamut. Some are chock-full of practical solutions to classroom management problems. Some offer prescribed methods for creating an approach to classroom management. Still others offer insights and/or student profiles to help the reader understand cultural issues and economic challenges that influence the way educators view and treat some students. The insights gained from these books may move some to think differently about the standards they set for their students and the approach that they take to students who come from a culture or economic background different from their own.

The annotation below each title is included to help you make selections based on your personal needs. Your feedback will be welcome. Let your school transformation facilitator know if you find any of these particularly helpful, and also give them the titles of books that you’d like to see added to the list in the next edition of the manual.

1. *Classroom Management for Secondary Teachers* by Edmund T. Emmer, Carolyn Evertson, and Murray E. Worsham

   In this book some strategies are spelled out for easy application, and others are more generally stated, requiring you to determine applications that are appropriate. Chapter 6, “Managing Cooperative Learning Groups,” should prove particularly helpful to you if you are struggling with classroom management when students work together in groups. Most chapters are followed by case studies, which add authenticity, but require time for reading. This book should be a helpful resource for both new and veteran teachers.

2. *Classroom Management That Works* by Robert J. Marzano

   Though this book reads more like a textbook than some (you will plow through descriptions of the research and theory that motivated the recommended strategies), you will find valuable information on topics such as rules and procedures and disciplinary interventions. If you are only mildly interested in the research, skip that and head straight for the practical applications offered in what the author terms “action steps.” This book would provide material for interesting team discussions.

3. *Discipline in the Secondary Classroom* by Randall S. Sprick, Ph.D.

   This book has become popular in some TDS schools, primarily because of the success teachers have experienced using the CHAMP and ACHIEVE methods of defining behavioral expectations for classroom activities. The acronym CHAMP helps teachers to clarify when and how students may Converse, how students should ask for Help, what is involved in the Activity, when and how students may Move, and how students should Participate. The process is clearly spelled out in
the chapters of this book. Time will be needed to read and absorb the process information, but it would probably be time well-spent. This approach has proven particularly successful when all members of the team use it. For that reason, you and your teammates may want to spend several meetings planning how to use the approach.

4. **Enhancing Adolescent Competence: Strategies for Classroom Management** by Darcy Miller

This book definitely reads like a college course text, with lengthy passages about the general aspects of adolescent behavior. You’ll read about “locus of control” and “intrinsic vs. extrinsic” motivation types as they relate to “self-efficacy.” However, you will also find some practical and helpful information on topics such as meeting with parents (Chapter 3), building trusting relationships (Chapter 3), small group skills (Chapter 8) and more. A good book for helping you to better understand adolescent behavior, with practical information scattered throughout.

5. **First-Year Teacher’s Survival Kit** by Julia G. Thompson

Its 485 pages contain helpful advice, insider tips, easy-to-use checklists and rubrics, and handy forms. Information is nicely chunked and the formatting makes for easy reading. This book is a quick-reference tool that could be used one evening to get ideas for the following day. No dense text to plow through. No searching for what you need. Just straightforward and practical information that is easily accessible. First-year teachers should find it helpful.

6. **Other People’s Children: Cultural Conflict in the Classroom** by Lisa Delpit

The author discusses how power imbalances in the US have produced very negative effects in the classroom. She speaks of how people with power and privilege are reluctant “to perceive those different from themselves except through their own culturally clouded vision.” She maintains that in classrooms where teachers hail from the privileged class, minority and low-income students are often regarded as “other people’s children,” and their academic progress and success are impeded by this. This book is recommended for anyone teaching low-income children and children of color. It may heighten awareness of the need for truly embracing diversity.

7. **Pre-Referral Intervention Manual (PRIM)** by Stephen B. McCarney and Kathy Cummins Wunderlich

Designed as a tool to be used by a team of educators and/or counselors, this manual pinpoints learning and behavior problems and supplies lists (sometimes lengthy) of appropriate interventions to address the problems. The PRIM can be a valuable resource for individual teachers, and also for teacher teams as they search for appropriate Tier I and II interventions for students signaling early warning indicators.
8. **See Me after Class: Advice for Teachers by Teachers** by Roxanna Elden

This one will make you smile. Case in point: Dave Barry recommends it. It includes bits of advice on various topics (including classroom management, of course) from the author, as well as 60-some teachers who have no problem “telling it like it is.” You will probably relate to much of what you find in this book (especially if you are a new teacher) and I guarantee you will laugh out loud at some of what you read. You may not agree with all of the advice coming your way, but you will enjoy reading about it nonetheless. Do yourself a favor and add this one to your “must buy” list.

9. **The First Days of School** by Harry K. Wong and Rosemary T. Wong

This has been a “go to” guide for new teachers since the late 1990s. In fact, you may already have a copy that was given to you or that you purchased yourself. It is an invaluable resource, with ten chapters devoted to classroom management strategies. Though at first glance this may appear to be a guide for elementary and middle school teachers, the strategies work at the high school level as well. You may have to adapt some strategies for your older students, but the basic ideas found in this book should be helpful to teachers at all levels.

10. **The Key Elements of Classroom Management** by Joyce McLeod, Jan Fisher and Ginny Hoover

Though you might wish that the authors had included more “how to” guidance in this book, you will find that some strategies are spelled out, and that there are helpful charts (Elements of an Effective Lesson in Chapter 7) and sequencing of strategies. Chapter 9 covers behavior intervention strategies and gives guidance on how to create a behavior intervention plan for students in need. Your EWI team might find such information valuable.


This manual explains the Talent Development model of school transformation within four pillars of change. It would be a logical companion piece to *Taking the Mystery Out of Classroom Management: Every Student, Every Lesson, Every Day*. 
# Appendix

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"Opening Strong"

*Talent Development Secondary (TDS) School Transformation Facilitators* are responsible for working collaboratively with schools to ensure a strong opening. In Diplomas Now Schools, Talent Development Secondary also works with City Year (CY) and Communities in Schools (CIS) partners to ensure these items occur to facilitate a strong opening.

### Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Checklist</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Leadership Retreat</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
  - Establish weekly and monthly Diplomas Now (DN) meeting schedule with all four partners  
  - Review and analyze data to inform goal setting and planning with CY, CIS, TDS, and school leadership  
  - Develop opening plan – role of each person identified  
  - Schedule investigated and ready for cohorts of students who travel together for the majority of classes; share same teaching team and experience a double dose in ELA and Math |
| ✓ CIS parent consent form in registration packet |   
  - CIS Site Coordinator seeks consent from parents during orientation and registration events |
| ✓ Develop Starting Strong Expectations for students in collaboration with teachers, administration and DN partners. |   
  - Develop roles for DN partners to support school wide behavior and student expectations.  
  - Post shared behavior expectations and reinforce |
| ✓ Implement summer bridge, recruitment, and registration drives |   |
| ✓ Collect data and develop lateness program |   |
| ✓ Back to school retreat/professional development for all staff |   
  - Student behavior and intervention and plan in place for each academy  
  - Hall movement and class change plan in place  
  - Staff trained(plan for training in place (TDS Curriculum, DN awareness)  
  - Staff trained(plan for training in place (Extended Period)  
  - Initial and refresher professional development provided for teachers, administration and staff on how and why to refer to CIS.  
  - Attendance charts and baseline data developed  
  - Teacher teams review and agree on criteria for focus and watch lists  
  - List of all current interventions updated and shared with each faculty and staff member; develop a resource map for this school year  
  - Teacher team and DN team collaboratively plan and implement a system for CY corps member in-class support (in-class instructional support, pull-out individual and/or small group tutoring, mentoring, assisting with a disruptive student) |
| ✓ Walk-through with administrative team on opening procedures |   |
| ✓ Materials ready for teachers |   
  - Talent Development Secondary materials distributed to all teachers  
  - Plan for administering reading and math assessments, sharing and using results to drive instructional decisions |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Checklist</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✔ Initial decoration of entrances and halls</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Students caught doing good</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Data walls for each of the ABC’s (attendance, behavior, course</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>performance)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Space for student work</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>o Graduates: celebrating success of previous year’s graduates; 9th grade</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>move-up ceremony</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>✔ Attendance Recovery Plan in place</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Attendance goals posted</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Attendance incentive party advertised</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Students for first week/month posted</td>
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<tr>
<td>✔ Nagging and nurturing at the door – Every day by administrator, CY corps</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>members and staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Student’s academy specific ID cards used to enter the building,</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>cafeteria, etc.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>✔ 9th grade repeater strategy in place</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>o 9th grade repeater program focused on identifying and providing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interventions for repeaters</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Twilight School registration and start-up planned</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>o Procedures for placing students into Twilight School are in place</td>
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<tr>
<td>✔ Daily academy bulletins issued electronically with data electronically</td>
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<tr>
<td>✔ Academy-specific hall pass system in place</td>
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<tr>
<td>✔ Curriculum coaches working in classrooms with teachers</td>
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<tr>
<td>✔ Academy leadership teams start meeting regularly with facilitator and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coaches</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>✔ Lockers for every student to store hats, coats, and other items</td>
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<tr>
<td>✔ Weekly attendance certificates given to students and displayed</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>✔ Phone calls started to absent students by team</td>
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<tr>
<td>✔ Teams hold individual meetings with students on the focus list to share</td>
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<tr>
<td>concerns and interventions</td>
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<tr>
<td>✔ Teams in 9th grade start Career Action Plans for all 9th graders</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>✔ Business partners identified in a common database and engaged in</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>academies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✔ Plan and establish a schedule for teachers sharing lesson plans and</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>coordinating instructional support with CY corps members on a weekly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or bi-weekly basis</td>
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<tr>
<td>✔ Teacher team and DN partners develop system for tracking interventions,</td>
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<tr>
<td>receiving referrals and developing focus list for the first month of</td>
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<tr>
<td>school.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✔ Academy orientation plan developed for students entering throughout the</td>
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<tr>
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### Sample Schedule April 20XX

**Meeting every day**

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Sample - April 20XX—Meeting every other day

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</tbody>
</table>

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### James M. Campbell Freshman Orientation Day
#### Monday July 30

**Overview of Day**
- 7:30-8:00: Pick up Schedules in D Bldg. courtyard
- 8:00-8:10: Period 1 class (teachers go over overview of day)
- 8:10-8:15: Passing
- 8:15-8:50: Activity #1
- 8:50-8:55: Passing
- 8:55-9:30: Activity #2
- 9:30-9:35: Passing
- 9:35-10:10: Activity #3
- 10:10-10:15: Passing
- 10:15-10:50: Activity #4
- 10:50-11:30: Lunch
- 11:30-11:35: Passing
- 11:35-12:10: Activity #5
- 12:10-12:15: Passing
- 12:15-12:50: Activity #6
- 12:50-12:55: Passing
- 12:55-1:30: Activity #7
- 1:30-1:35: Passing
- 1:35-2:15: Activity #8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Overview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1        | Volunteer Needs: 10 Senior students | **Campus Tour**
|          |         | meet in D107/108/109 | **Students work together in groups to learn information and their way around the James Campbell High School campus.**
|          |         |         | -PE room (must go) – PE teacher must be there
|          |         |         | -O bldg (point out)
|          |         |         | -N bldg for Sat CC (must go)
|          |         |         | -Dress top room (must go)
|          |         |         | -D111 for counselor and VP room (must go in there)
|          |         |         | -to ask teachers who are in the room
|          |         |         | -Saber Hall (tour) – need to know who will be in the building |

| 2        | Volunteer needs: SA members | Freshmen Election D201, D202, D203 | Freshmen will vote on class color, mascot, officers, etc.. SA members will do energizers |

| 3        | Volunteer needs: 2 runners for water | Makahiki Games (Outdoor Hawaiian Games) | Behind portable | Establish relationship; learn to feel comfortable with healthy competition. |

| 4        | Admin Session | Humanities Room | Students learn Ch.19 rules
|          |         |         | -reserve the room
<p>|          |         |         | -remind Admin about session |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Volunteer needs:</strong></th>
<th><strong>Location</strong></th>
<th><strong>Activities</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>8 students who are willing and are not shy to encourage participation</td>
<td>K1 bldg</td>
<td>Ice Breaker: Provide opportunity for new students to interact and connect. Student volunteers need to be there by 7:45am for debriefing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>8 students who are willing and are not shy to encourage participation</td>
<td>Gym</td>
<td>Crossing the Line: To promote respect, understanding and compassion among students. Student volunteers need to be there by 7:45am for debriefing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Clubs+Sports</td>
<td>J Bldg courtyard</td>
<td>To learn about various sports and clubs on campus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>At least 1-2 students from each grade level to speak at each session</td>
<td>Saberhall</td>
<td>Alumni talk: Alumni to encourage and talk about their experiences at Campbell.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sample Procedures for Lavatory Use

These procedures are best when decided upon by the teacher team and faithfully followed by all members. Some ideas for your team to consider appear below:

1. Lavatory passes - Schools/academies/teams often adopt clever methods of providing hall passes that allow for easy identification of students. Two of these are:
   - Construction worker vests – These come in a variety of neon colors. They are light and large, so all students can slip into them easily. Select a vest in school or academy colors, and give one vest to each teacher. Using a garment marker, have each teacher write his/her name and classroom number in large, bold print on the back of the vest. When a student needs to leave the room, he/she must don the vest with bold print showing on the back. Hall monitors can quickly and easily see to which room this student belongs. If the student dallies in the hallway, or starts a commotion, everyone knows where to go to get the problem solved. When not in use, the vest can be placed on a wall hook near the sign-out book (see below).
   - Big paddles – These usually have large holes at one end so they can be hung on wall nails. The hole also provides the student with a handle for easy carrying. Each teacher has a paddle with his/her name and classroom number in dark, bold print.

2. Sign-out books – Teacher teams are wise to create a sign-out book and teach students how to use it. Once all students know the procedure, there is little cause for interruption when a student needs to use the lavatory. He/she simply signs out (have a pen tied to the book with string), dons the vest or grabs the paddle, and heads quietly out the door. Effectively created sign-out books would require the student to provide the following information:
   - First and last name
   - Date
   - Time: time left/time returned
   - Destination

A sign-out book provides useful information. It alerts the team members to possible problems. For example, if one student signs out during the same class period every day, it might be time for you and/or the team to sit down with the student to determine the reason for this daily need to use the lavatory. Is there a medical problem? Is he/she coming to the class from lunch? Is he/she meeting a friend in the hallway at the same time every day? Get to the bottom of it.
Sample Procedures for Latecomers

All team members should establish the classroom policy for students who arrive late to class. Remember that all procedures must be clearly explained to students and each team member must enforce them if they are to work effectively. Below find some strategies that your team might consider:

1. Create a book for late students to sign when they enter the room. This book, with pen attached with string, should be placed near the entry door. The late sign-in sheet in the book should require a student to supply the following information:
   - Student’s name
   - The date
   - The time the student entered
   - A briefly stated reason for lateness

   **Tip:** If you have not been provided with a wall clock, buy one, yourself. Students will have no need to interrupt you to ask for the time if there is a clock in the room. Inexpensive battery-operated wall clocks can be purchased at all discount department stores.

2. Some teacher teams prefer to create a reflection area for latecomers in each classroom. When the late student enters, he/she takes a seat in the reflection area (desks or table and chairs near entry door) and completes a reflection sheet (in folder) that includes the following:
   - Student’s name
   - The date
   - The time the student entered
   - Detailed reason for lateness
   - Thoughts for behavior changes that might prevent future lateness.
   - Actions the teacher might take to assist the student with his/her lateness problem

The completed reflection sheets are placed in another folder. You and your teammates should collect these from the folders at the end of each period and keep them on file, as they may provide data for future team or EWI meetings.

3. Place all assignments and handouts for each daily lesson in a folder near the classroom entry door (on a table or stapled to a bulletin board). Explain that a late student should take a copy of each item in the folder and quietly move to his/her seat. At an appropriate time during the class period – guided practice, team practice, etc. – the late student may ask a teammate or you to clarify what needs to be done. He/she is not to disturb ANYONE during a direct instruction activity. Consider posting the procedure above the late-assignment folder.
4. Some teachers have classrooms large enough to accommodate not only centers, but also a work area for latecomers. In these rooms, latecomers do not move to their regularly assigned seat until they have signed in and seated themselves in the work area to complete all work that was covered prior to their entry. Only after they have “caught up” with class activities may students move to their regular seats. Procedures must be clearly explained to all students to avoid having noisy disruptions. You and your teammates should plan carefully if you decide to have latecomers sit and work in an area separated from the rest of the class.
Sample “Time Out” Procedures

Sometimes a student simply has a bad day. His/her behavior may not warrant a trip to the administrator’s office, but it is distracting enough to warrant temporary removal. This temporary removal is often called a “time out.” Your team should plan its “time out” procedure before school begins. Some ideas for doing so follow:

1. Students needing time out are often sent to the team leader’s room. A strong team leader can set up a “time out” area in his/her room, an area where students can complete work quietly and where the team leader can keep a close eye on them. Teachers send students to the team leader with an assignment that requires no explanation. The students know that their job is to enter the team leader’s room quietly, seat themselves quietly and begin work quietly. Teacher team members must clearly explain “time out” procedures to all students on the team. Every student should receive the same message. When time allows, the student, teacher and team leader meet to resolve that day’s problem.

2. Some teams create areas in their own rooms to accommodate students in need of time out. Often these teachers have large classrooms where they can arrange comfortable reading chairs, floor lamps, desks that face the wall, etc. A student who needs to be isolated for a period of time is sent to this area to work on his/her assignment independently. When the rest of the class is working on a guided practice or team activity, the teacher can move to the “time out” area to confer with the student who is having problems. If the student has calmed down and seems ready to return, he/she is sent back to work with teammates. If the problem cannot be resolved, the student remains in the “time out” area for the entire period. Additional steps may be needed (team meeting with student, team meeting with student and parents, etc.) if the problem seems one that may persist.
Sample Procedures for Handling Returning Students and Late Assignments

Absenteism is a problem, and there is no doubt that it can play havoc with your hope of maintaining an orderly classroom – unless, of course, you and your team take measures to ensure that students who have been absent are able to return to the classroom without causing disruption. Returning students need to get back on track, and there are ways to help them do just that. A few of these appear below:

1. **Welcome back cards** - Though teacher teams work hard to improve student attendance, some students may still develop poor attendance patterns. The team must ensure not only that returning students have an opportunity to catch up, but also feel welcome upon return. Why not create welcome back cards that can serve several purposes? First, a welcome back card will make the student know that his/her presence in class was missed (“Hey, she noticed I was gone!”) Next, the card can invite the student to make up what he/she missed, thereby restoring hope for success in your class. Finally, the card allows you to control the situation in an organized way, reducing the possibility of class disruption due to off-topic questions. It’s a win-win-win strategy. Produce enough cards to supply each teacher on the team with what you anticipate will be needed for the quarter. Create a new card with a slightly different message each quarter. A sample appears on the following page.

2. **Assignment binder** – Some teams develop a policy of having a large binder of lesson assignments and handouts in each room. Dividers are used to separate assignments by date. Behind each dated divider, the teacher places several copies of each assignment/handout used during the lesson on that date. When a student returns to school, he/she retrieves the assignments missed from the binder. There is no need for questions or discussion. If the student has questions about a particular missed assignment, the welcome card (see above) will let him/her know when help will be available. **Tip:** Some teachers post their assignments on their web page where students can access them from a classroom computer, media center computer or home computer.

3. **A late box** - When students who have been absent submit their late assignments, things can get out of hand. A teacher with three classes can get inundated with assignments coming at them every period, every day. Assignments tend to get misplaced, which angers students who completed and submitted the work, and this can escalate into behavior problems. What to do? Create a procedure for submitting late assignments, of course. Some teachers collect late assignments on Fridays, only. If a student completes an assignment earlier in the week, he/she must hold the assignment until Friday. On Friday, students with late assignments submit their work by placing them in a box labeled “Late Assignments” as they exit the room. The box can be placed near the exit door for easy access. **Tip:** Some teachers allow students to send them electronic copies that can be placed in a “late assignments” folder.
4. **Peer tutors or tutoring center** – If your school has a peer tutoring program (some schools allow students to earn service learning credit), refer returning students to peer tutors to get a better understanding of missed work. A tutoring center (sometimes manned by college student volunteers, sometimes manned by a school partner such as City Year corps members) could be used for the same purpose.
We missed you!
Let’s talk about how we can work together to get you up to speed with the class.

Let’s meet on __/__/____ at ______.

Date       Time

Again, it’s good to see your smiling face again!

______________________________
Teacher Signature
WELCOME BACK CARD FOR STUDENT RE-ENTRY

We missed you!
Let's talk about how we can work together to get you up to speed with the class.

Let's meet on ___/___ at ___
Data Time

Again, it's good to see your smiling face again!

Teacher Signature

Welcome Back!
## Resource Map

### Attendance Interventions & Resources Tool Box

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Support</th>
<th>Strategies for Intervention (School-Based Resources)</th>
<th>Strategies for Intervention (Community Resources)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Tier 1**             | • Academy common planning time for whole Academy initiatives  
                        • Attendance challenges  
                        • Clubs  
                        • In-class support - City Year  
                        • Incentives  
                        • Letters home  
                        • Morning greetings - City Year  
                        • Phone calls home - teachers or guidance  
                        • Posting data publicly by Academy  
                        • Recognition awards  
                        • School climate initiatives |
| **Tier 2**             | • Athletics coach intervention  
                        • Attendance sheet - Attendance Office  
                        • City Year Attendance Focus List  
                        • Dean intervention  
                        • EWI meetings  
                        • Guidance intervention  
                        • Parent meeting  
                        • Phone calls home (documenting reason with follow up)  
                        • Mentoring - City Year |
| **Tier 3**             | • Meeting with parent and teacher team  
                        • Meeting with Communities In Schools Site Coordinator, Corps Member, and student  
                        • Meeting with student and teacher team  
                        • Attendance teacher home visit and follow-up with parent  
                        • Case management - Counseling in Schools/ SPARK/RAPP/Communities In Schools  
                        • Council for Unity - class and afterschool activities  
                        • Mayor’s Truancy Attendance Initiative (Counseling in Schools, City Year) |

- Field Trips  
- Performances and speakers for assemblies or classes - Communualities In Schools  

*(other resources to be determined)*
## Behavior Interventions & Resources Toolbox

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Support</th>
<th>Strategies for Intervention (School-Based Resources)</th>
<th>Strategies for Intervention (Community Resources)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tier 1</strong></td>
<td>• Academy common planning time</td>
<td>• Field Trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Assemblies/ Town Hall meetings</td>
<td>• Performance and speakers for classes or assemblies - Communities In Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Assigned seating/ moving seats</td>
<td><em>(other resources to be determined)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Behavior incentives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Clubs</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Consistent behavior expectations</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Freshman Seminar Lessons/ Success Highways</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• In-class support - City Year</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Interventions Toolbox - Communities in Schools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Letters home</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Phone calls home</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Posting data publicly by Academy</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Recognition awards</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• School climate initiatives</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• School Safety team intervention</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Field Trips</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Performance and speakers for classes or assemblies - Communities In Schools</td>
<td><em>(other resources to be determined)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tier 2</strong></td>
<td>• Athletics coach intervention</td>
<td>• Referrals to outside resource, examples: after school program, mentor/ mentoring program - Communities In Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Dean intervention</td>
<td>• Coordination of outside partners to address behavior issues - Communities In Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• EWI meetings</td>
<td><em>(other resources to be determined)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Guidance intervention</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>• Meeting with student and teacher team</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Mentoring - City Year</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Parent meeting (with teacher team)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Peer mediation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Phone calls home (documenting reason with follow up)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Reflection Room - re-admission process</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• School Safety team intervention</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 50 Acts of Leadership - City Year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tier 3</strong></td>
<td>• Case Management - SPARK/RAPP/Counseling in Schools/Communities In Schools</td>
<td>• Referral to outside resources, examples: The Door, CAMBA, individual or family counseling - Communities In Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Council for Unity- class and after-school activities Meeting with parent and teacher team</td>
<td>• Coordination of outside partners to address socio-emotional issues - Communities In Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Meeting with Communities In Schools site coordinator, corps member, and student</td>
<td><em>(other resources to be determined)</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Out-of-school suspension</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Referral by Guidance Counselor to school Social Worker/SPARK/Communities In Schools</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• School Safety team intervention</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Field Trips</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Performance and speakers for classes or assemblies - Communities In Schools</td>
<td><em>(other resources to be determined)</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Course Performance Interventions & Resource Toolbox

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Support</th>
<th>Strategies for Intervention (School-Based Resources)</th>
<th>Strategies for Intervention (Community Resources)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Tier 1** (Whole School Support) | • Academy assemblies  
 • Academy Tier 1 common planning time  
 • Clubs  
 • College Advisor  
 • Honor Roll  
 • Instructional Support - Talent Development’s Instructional Facilitators/coaches  
 • Phone calls home  
 • Posting data  
 • Progress reports  
 • Professional development  
 • In-class support - City Year  
 • Letters home  
 • Recognition awards  
 • Success Highways  
 • School Climate - Academy look and feel  
 • Teacher tutoring | • Field Trips  
 • Performances and speakers for classes or assemblies - Communities In Schools  
 *(other resources to be determined)* |
| **Tier 2** (Targeted Support) | • After-school coach intervention  
 • Clubs - Academic admissions requirement  
 • Guidance intervention  
 • EWI meetings  
 • Instructional support - Talent Development’s instructional facilitators/coaches  
 • Meeting with Student and teacher team  
 • Mentoring - City Year  
 • Move seat/group  
 • Parent meeting (with teacher team)  
 • Phone calls home (documenting reason with follow up)  
 • Peer tutoring with honors student  
 • Saturday Academy  
 • Tutoring - City Year  
 • TD Coaches (work with teacher) and lead teachers | • Referrals to outside resources including tutoring and mentoring programs - Communities In Schools  
 • Coordination of outside speakers or partners to support specific content areas or Academies - Communities In Schools  
 *(other resources to be determined)* |
| **Tier 3** (Intensive Support) | • Instructional support - Talent Development’s Instructional Facilitators/coaches (one-on-one work)  
 • Meeting with Communities In Schools site coordinator, corps member, and student  
 • Meeting with parent and teacher team  
 • Referral by Guidance Counselor to School Social Worker/SPARK/Communities In Schools | • Referrals to outside resources - Communities In Schools  
 *(other resources to be determined)*  

Revised September 24, 2012
Desk Arranged for Teaming
Horseshoe Arrangement for Seminar Discussion
Circle Arrangements for Seminar Discussion

BULLETIN BOARD  BOOKSHELVES  TEACHER’S DESK

CENTER  BOOKSHELVES  DOOR

DOOR  BULLETIN BOARD  CENTER

WHITE BOARD  BULLETIN BOARD  FRONT

WHITE BOARD  FRONT  CLOSET

LEDOGE – CENTER MATERIALS  WINDOWS  SHELVES
Sample Class Exit Pass

**Situation 1:** Your friend was absent from class today. Please write an email to him or her to explain what you learned today.

**Situation 2:** You are confused about what you learned in class today but you have my email address. Write me an email about what concept you are having a hard time understanding.

![Email interface](image)
Reproducible Class Exit Pass

Situation 1: Your friend was absent from class today. Please write an email to him or her to explain what you learned today.

Situation 2: You are confused about what you learned in class today but you have my email address. Write me an email about what concept you are having a hard time understanding.
Sample Student Award Idea

1 Lucky Buck

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## Sample Lesson Plan Template

Course Title: ____________________________________________________________

Unit Title: _____________________________________________________________

Lesson # ______________________________  Date ____________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential Question:</th>
<th>Date __________________________</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Core Standards addressed:</th>
<th>Date __________________________</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Materials/ Resources needed for lesson:</th>
<th>Date __________________________</th>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson Activities:</th>
<th>Date __________________________</th>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson Procedure:</th>
<th>Date __________________________</th>
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</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment/Notes/ Follow-up:</th>
<th>Date __________________________</th>
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</table>
Teacher Positioning for Conferring with Students
Sample Voice Level Poster

Classroom Voice Volume Levels

3 Too Loud
2 Low Tone / Whisper
1 Silence
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Events, activities, actions</th>
<th>Will this be implemented this year?</th>
<th>If yes, when, where, and how often?</th>
<th>Person(s) responsible?</th>
<th>Related topics, and areas of focus?</th>
<th>Evidence of completion and success?</th>
<th>Related notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Welcoming students and setting the tone</td>
<td>Yes, City Year will do the morning greeting daily as the students arrive to school.</td>
<td>Daily-morning</td>
<td>City Year</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet as leadership team</td>
<td>Yes, we will meet weekly with all school administrators and content area leaders.</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>School and district concerns and updates</td>
<td>Feedback from technical visit and CAP Team (Correction Action Plan), and ABC indicators</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet as a teaching team</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>Ninth grade academy principal, STF, curriculum coaches, and TD IFs</td>
<td>Student achievement, behavior, attendance, school and district concerns/updates</td>
<td>Student tests, ABC indicators, district benchmark scores, behavior data, and grades</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet as entire academy faculty</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>Ninth grade academy principal</td>
<td>Student achievement, behavior, attendance, school and district concerns/updates</td>
<td>Student tests, ABC indicators, district benchmark scores, behavior data, and grades</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet as a team with students</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Will begin meeting with Tier 2 and 3 students in September.</td>
<td>Diplomas Now team</td>
<td>Attendance, behavior, and course performance</td>
<td>Sign-in sheet and a folder for each student with copies of documents given to students.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meet with parents and stakeholders</td>
<td>Yes (parents)</td>
<td>Open house and report card conferences</td>
<td>Diplomas Now team and administration</td>
<td>Attendance, behavior, and course performance</td>
<td>Sign-in sheet</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academy bulletin</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>Diplomas Now team</td>
<td>Upcoming events</td>
<td>Received by all school staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celebrate the successes of our students</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Monthly/Quarterly</td>
<td>Diplomas Now team</td>
<td>Attendance, behavior, and course performance initiatives</td>
<td>Sign-in sheets, completion of events, and pictures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celebrate / recognize teachers</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Quarterly</td>
<td>School and Diplomas Now team</td>
<td>Teachers with perfect attendance and teachers with students who have the highest percentage of students passing the district assessment tests in a content area.</td>
<td>District assessment results and daily attendance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Academy Attendance Plan
Small Group Activity

Getting set up:

1. Pick a facilitator and a recorder for your group.

Activity:

Begin to create an attendance action plan for your academy. This plan should be as concrete and specific as possible. It also must include the following four elements—

I. A clear, shared, and identifiable goal

What will be your average daily attendance goal (% of students attending each day)?

95%

How will the goal be communicated to all faculty, staff and students in the academy?

The goal will be communicated to the faculty during the weekly academy meetings, EWI meetings and whole school faculty meetings.

How will the goal be made visible so that a person entering the academy would know what the attendance goal is and what progress you are making toward your goal?

The goal will be posted in the main hallway of the Ninth Grade Success Academy.

Will individual teams also set a daily attendance goal which they make visible in their team area?

There is only one team for the Ninth Grade Success Academy.

II. A plan for using data to monitor progress

How will you use data to monitor attendance on a regular basis?

This information is located in the EWI spreadsheet so all teachers have access to the information. We will analyze the data on a weekly basis. We are going to monitor students who have 3 or more absences and will ask parents to provide a note explaining the absences.

How will you clear the rolls of non-attending “ghost” students? What is your target date for getting this accomplished?

The Ninth Grade Success Academy teachers will report any non-attending “ghost” students to the ninth grade administrator. The ninth grade administrator will report the information to the data manager. The rolls must be cleaned up on or before September 30.
How will data on attendance be communicated to students, homeroom teachers, the remaining school staff, and visitors to the school?

We use our attendance bulletin board to communicate to students, faculty and visitors. We will communicate attendance concerns during our weekly academy and monthly faculty meetings.

III. Team- and academy-based efforts to improve attendance

How will teams have regular access to student team attendance data?

Teams will be provided access to the data via Google Docs.

What will team-level consequences be for poor attendees? Academy-level?

Communities in Schools and the school counselor assigned to ninth grade will coordinate to contact students. The Communities in Schools site coordinator will contact parents and attempt home visits.

What strategies will you use to improve attendance?

The Diplomas Now team will host monthly attendance initiatives for students (students receive a small token for their attendance). City Year will make calls home on a daily basis to students who are absent. We will also provide encouragement to students who have improved their attendance.

When will you begin implementing these strategies (i.e. after how many absences)?

These strategies will be implemented immediately. After a student accumulates 3 absences, City Year refers them to the CIS coordinator for follow-up.

IV. Incentives, rewards, and recognition

What are the academy standards for perfect and good attendance?

Our standards for perfect attendance are zero unexcused absences and zero tardies. The Diplomas Now team is in the process of identifying a plan for students with good attendance.

How will students be rewarded (at team and academy levels) for perfect, good, and improved attendance?

The Diplomas Now team will provide monthly attendance initiatives for students with perfect attendance. The Diplomas Now team is in the process of identifying a plan for students with good and improved attendance. Some of these initiatives include ice cream socials, game day, and movie day.

How will the academy celebrate progress toward and/or achievement of an attendance goal?

The school and Diplomas Now will host quarterly celebrations and will begin acknowledging students with good and improved attendance after the first quarter.
Academy Achievement and Promotion Plan  
Small Group Activity

Getting set up:

1. Select a facilitator, timekeeper, and a recorder for your group.

Activity:

Begin to create an achievement and promotion action plan for your academy. This plan should be as concrete and specific as possible. It also must address the following questions:

a) How will students learn about credits and other promotion requirements?

Students will learn about credits and other promotion requirements through the counselor assigned to the Ninth Grade Success Academy. This information will also be reiterated during the report card conferences.

b) How will academic achievement, excellence, and promotion to the next grade be made a visible priority in your academy?

This will be evident through school-wide celebrations and assemblies, guest speakers, PBIS and positive posters.

c) Will a uniform discipline policy be established for the academy?

John McDonough High School has a uniform policy in place for all students. Ninth grade students are required to wear white button down shirts and khaki pants.

d) How will the academy leadership team and individual teams provide extra help to students who need it?

The teachers will provide interventions for students on Tuesday and Thursday’s during their planning period and afterschool tutoring will be provided by the teachers and City Year.

e) How will you catch students who are failing and get them back on track? How will report cards be handed out so that students receive personalized encouragement and counseling?

We will do this through EWI meetings, report cards conferences, and student/parent conferences.
f) How will students who are on the path to promotion be recognized and rewarded throughout the year?

Students will be recognized during quarterly assemblies. In addition, students who demonstrate positive behavior are able to participate in extra-curricular activities (sports, dance team, student council, etc.)

g) Will repeating students have the chance to be promoted to the next grade at the end of the first term? If so, how will this be communicated to them? Will there be a “cross-over” ceremony to celebrate their success?

There are only first-time ninth graders in the academy.

h) Will you have a “move-up” ceremony at the end of the year for students passing on to the next grade?

At the end of the year, 9th grade students participate in a “rites to passage” ceremony acknowledging their promotion to 10th grade.

i) Will you have periodic recognitions for classroom teachers?

During the quarterly assemblies, teachers will be recognized for perfect attendance. Teachers will also be recognized for the highest benchmark assessment scores. Also, the Diplomas Now team will provide monthly appreciation initiatives for teachers.
Academy Climate Plan
Small Group Activity

Getting set up:

1. Select a facilitator and a recorder for your group.

Activity:

Begin to create/improve a climate action plan for your academy. This plan should be as concrete and specific as possible. It also must address the following questions:

a) What are the academy/schools’ expected behaviors?

PBIS

Be Respectful, Use Self-Control, Come Prepared and Strive for Excellence.

b) How will students and parents learn the expected behaviors for this school/academy?

The Ninth Grade Success Academy principal will provide each student with a district handbook outlining the expectations for positive behavior, reviewing the handbook with students. The PBIS team has had assemblies to demonstrate appropriate behavior, and lesson plans have been created and implemented based upon observed inappropriate behaviors.

c) What systems will be put in place to recognize and reinforce positive student behaviors on a daily basis?

PBIS team will continue to have assemblies to demonstrate appropriate behavior, lesson plans have been implemented based upon inappropriate behavior that is found among the students.

d) What types of discipline problems may be handled at the teacher and team level?

Students with non-violent behaviors, such as minor classroom infractions will be discussed and handled at the academy team level. Any major or violent infractions will be handled by the ninth grade academy administrator.

e) How will team leaders and teams handle these problems? What are team leaders expected to do? What time will they have to do these things?

We handle the problems according to the school policy. If the DN team agrees that a student needs additional support this can be provided by City Year or Communities in
Schools. The support provided by a particular party is contingent upon the student’s need.

f) What types of discipline problems will be handled at the academy principal level?

All major infractions in the Ninth Grade Success Academy are handled by the academy principal.

g) How will academy principals handle these problems?

The principals will handle these problems case by case.

h) How will the academy discipline approach/policies be communicated to teachers? To students?

The academy discipline policies and procedures will be communicated to teachers during the academy team meetings. Academy discipline procedures will be communicated to students during assemblies.

i) Explain how students will be recognized for positive behavior during monthly recognition assemblies.

Students will receive a small gift, certificate, and free dress pass at monthly celebrations.

j) How will student voice be included in climate initiatives and plans?

Students will use student council as a forum for expressing their views about initiatives and plans they would like to see implemented.

k) What role will school and community partners have in implementing the climate plan?

Our goal is to have the community provide in-kind resources or rewards, as well as donations to recognize student achievement. We will collaborate and strive to improve current initiatives, as well as create new ones to make a greater impact on student achievement.
Thanks to the following schools for their willingness to share practices:
Belaire High School, East Baton Rouge, Louisiana; Capitol Hill Middle School, East Baton Rouge, Louisiana; Chicago Talent Development High School, Chicago, Illinois; Gage Park High School, Chicago, Illinois; James Campbell High School, Ewa Beach, Hawaii; John McDonogh High School, New Orleans, Louisiana; Manual Arts High School, Los Angeles, California; Miami Edison Middle School, Miami, Florida; Sheepshead Bay High School, Brooklyn, New York

Thanks to Partners and Preferred Vendors:

Diplomas Now
Diplomas Now is a proven approach that helps the most challenged middle and high schools in America’s largest cities ensure that students graduate ready for college and career. It is the first fully integrated approach that improves a school’s curriculum and instruction while it provides the right students with the right supports at the right time.

Diplomas Now combines three experienced national non-profits:

- Johns Hopkins University’s Talent Development Secondary, a school reform model that improves instruction and performance
- City Year’s in-school, “near peer” AmeriCorps members who provide full-time academic and behavior support to students
- Communities in Schools’ in-school site coordinators who support the neediest students

SchoolLoop™
SchoolLoop™ is a private firm that connects district data banks to school sites. This connection allows school teams easy access to student attendance, behavior and course performance (ABC) data.

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Talent Development Secondary
Center for Social Organization of Schools
School of Education
The Johns Hopkins University
2701 N. Charles Street
Baltimore, Maryland
410-516-8800
Fax: 410-516-8890
www.TalentDevelopmentSecondary.com

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