



PBIS UPDATE

KEEPING IT POSITIVELY POSITIVE

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Classroom Observations and Consultations

Do you work with a student who frequently struggles to meet expectations? Do you feel like you've tried appropriate interventions but still haven't seen the changes you had hoped for?

Sometimes it helps to invite a fellow teacher or other colleague to observe a lesson and provide feedback on what works and what doesn't. In that spirit, I offering all MCS teachers another set of eyes and ears to observe and work through what is going on with those tough-to-reach kids, of all ages.

If you are interested in me coming to your class to observe, or would just like to meet to discuss a difficult situation, send me an e-mail and we will make it happen!

Practical Classroom Strategies for Working with Traumatized and Oppositional Students

In recent years, researchers, mental and behavioral health providers, and educators have become more attuned to the impact that trauma can have on children and adolescents' ability to function in the school environment. Some students who have experienced trauma exhibit behaviors that can interfere with classroom learning, for themselves and others, and can present significant challenges to teachers working at all levels. Here are some strategies that teachers can use to help with these students:

I. FOSTER SAFETY AND SECURITY: By doing the following, teachers can create safe and secure environments for all students:

- ◆ Be calm and confident: Students are more likely to reflect calm if that is what they see from adults.
- ◆ Build in structure and routine: This provides students with a sense of control over their environment; some students may benefit from a visual schedule.
- ◆ Give frequent but brief positive attention: Avoid hovering or lecturing, and just "drop" some verbal reinforcement.; remember to

be specific with praise whenever possible.

- ◆ Chunk assignments: Break work into manageable segments.
- ◆ Allow flexibility in seating: Some students may feel safer at the back of the room, or at the end of a line of desks.
- ◆ Build in movement and rhythm: Throw a nerf ball to students during discussion, or incorporate music and poetry when possible.
- ◆ Provide choices whenever possible: Traumatized students seek opportunities to control themselves and others; plan for times when students can choose between two or three acceptable options.

II. RESPONDING TO OPPOSITIONAL BEHAVIOR:

Students who respond impulsively are often times more likely to escalate their behavior when traditional disciplinary measures are invoked in the moment. In the midst of a challenging episode, try these strategies; remember, solving the problem can come later.

- ◆ Check your own adrenaline levels: Pause and take a deep breath to ensure that you are not being driven by your emotions.
- ◆ Make a brief suggestion and walk away: In response, say "I wonder why you'd do that" rather than engaging in back and forth.
- ◆ Non-punitive natural consequences are preferable: For example, the student gets free time on their Chromebook only after the assignment is completed. Using "if...then" planning to have preferred tasks follow non-preferred tasks.
- ◆ Validate emotions and give time for regulation: Acknowledge the students' emotions and try to create time and space for them to work through those feelings. Only then can they engage the thinking part of their brain.

Click [here](#) to read the full article on which this information is based.

Positive Non-Verbal Responses to Misbehavior

Withitness: Know what is happening at all times in the classroom.	Walk around the room. Make sure you spend time in each quadrant. Scan the faces of the students, making eye contact with as many as possible. Look for behaviors that can turn into problems—make eye contact, move toward student, and/or say something.
Signaling: eye contact and facial expressions	Look at the student in a way that it sends the message: “I know what you are doing.” Use your teacher look.
Signaling: gestures	Gestures include: pointing to the rules posted in the room, holding up your hand, shaking your head, leaning in toward a student, placing your index finger to your lips, placing hands on hips and folding arms.
Proximity	Move around the classroom. Stand next to a student who is misbehaving. Arrange seats so that you can get to any student quickly.
Planned Positioning	Stand next to the classroom door. Sit between two students. Never turn your back on the students.
Waiting	Stop talking. Stand quietly and wait. Wait until all students are doing what they are suppose to be doing.
Behavior Records	Look at the student to get their attention or move to the student. Say nothing. Record the behavior.

Positive Verbal Responses to Misbehavior

Name: Using a student’s name in a positive way	Whole Class Assessment: “Let’s review our rules and assess how we did today.”	Pre-emptive: “Remember that during work time you are to do your paper only.”
Reminders, prompts, and cues: State them quietly/privatey.	Redirection: “What are you supposed to be doing right now?”	Appropriate-Inappropriate: “We respect others; that means not calling names.”
Descriptive statements: “Papers are due in 10 minutes.”	Problem Solving: “What will you do to make sure you get here on time?”	Alternative Response: “How can you show respect and still make your point?”
Enforceable statements: “When everyone is quiet, we will begin.”	Seating: “Michael, please select a seat where you can focus better.”	Premacking: “You can play the game after you finish your math problems.”
Questions: “Jen, are you aware that you’re tapping your pencil?”	Offer Assistance: “John, what can I do to help you be successful today?”	Hurdle Help: “Nina, you seem stuck. Let’s see if we can figure out what to do.”
Choices: “Feel free to do the first ten problems or the last ten.”	Reflective Listening: “So you are upset because...”	Antiseptic Bouncing: “Please take a water break; we’ll talk when you get back.”
Remove Distractions: “Put that away until we are done reading.”	Verbal Praise: “Group three is reading the directions as a group using inside voices.”	Logical consequences: “If you slide down the rails, you might hurt your hand.”
But Why?: Explain the rationale for the rule.	Differential reinforcement: “I like the way you are paying attention in class.”	Appeal to Values: “I know you value friends; this could cost you a friendship.”