



11123 South Towne Square  
St. Louis, MO 63123  
314.200.0798  
lesaSTL.org

# Mentor Handbook

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A resource for teachers assisting new teachers

Rev. 2019



# **Mentor Handbook**

## **Purpose Statement**

This collaborative support system is designed to foster successful adjustment and continued growth for new teachers and experienced faculty members in the Lutheran teaching profession.

## **Philosophy**

The Mentor Program promotes a sharing of information and expertise between a *mentor* and those new to the school, the *mentee*.

However, the formation of the new teacher is of special importance. From the perspective of spiritual formation, undertaking the responsibility of teaching in a Lutheran school for the first time is a critical time for coming to understand and value teaching as a vocation and ministry. The focus of the program is the new teacher; its purpose is to improve instruction in the classroom through a shared experience and a help-oriented relationship; the outcome is quality student learning.

Whether the mentee is new to teaching or experienced and new to your school, establishing a mentoring relationship will be a benefit to the mentee and his/her acclimation into a new environment. If the teacher is experienced, the mentor will find the suggested activities a helpful guide in assisting the mentee get settled. We hope that in developing this “partnership in education,” communication, commitment, and competence will be promoted among the teachers whose ministry is nurturing God’s children in the Word of the Lord.

## **Objectives**

1. To develop a working knowledge of the beliefs, principles, and purposes of a Lutheran school
2. To nurture the new teacher’s understanding of and commitment to teaching in a Lutheran school as a ministry and vocation
3. To provide support, encouragement, and guidance for the new teacher
4. To establish a professional working relationship which fosters open dialogue and a sense of trust
5. To provide safe avenues for advice, constructive criticism, and feedback
6. To encourage a healthy exchange of innovative ideas and best practices
7. To offer opportunities for intellectual, emotional, and spiritual growth for the new teacher and the mentor as life-long learners
8. To gain a knowledge of the school organization and the functional relationships of the school personnel
9. To be aware of the policies, regulations, and operating procedures in the school
10. To be aware of general and specific duties related to teaching (i.e., reports to parents, parent conferences)
11. To develop a working knowledge of equipment, materials, and facilities available
12. To gain information about students and the community
13. To encourage participation in professional growth opportunities and in professional organizations
14. To further develop and refine instructional and classroom management skills
15. To provide in-classroom assistance from experienced teachers to solve problems that typically confront new teachers
16. To provide assistance in:
  - Organizing content knowledge for student learning

- Creating an environment for student learning
- Teaching for student learning
- Teacher professionalism

### **Qualifications of the Mentor**

Criteria for mentors:

- Hold a valid teaching certificate
- Have a minimum of three years of successful teaching experience
- Have a minimum of one year of experience with present school
- Demonstrate a commitment to professional development and professional and Christian ethics
- Demonstrate strong interpersonal skills and ability to communicate and listen effectively (Comes across as understanding and non-judgmental)
- Has empathy. Shows that s/he understands the struggles of the new teacher and at the same time acknowledges one's capability to solve his/her own problems
- Offers encouragement without assuming responsibility for the results. (Mentoring requires objectivity and distance. The new teacher remains accountable for his/her professional actions and growth.)
- Is able to maintain confidentiality
- Be capable of identifying, describing, and modeling sound instructional techniques and classroom management strategies
- Demonstrate competence and professionalism as reflected by performance evaluations and by the recommendation of the principal
- Willing to pray for their mentee

### **Responsibilities of Mentors to New Teachers**

It is the mentor's responsibility to:

- Provide time (scheduled and unscheduled) for listening
- Give help in small, organized chunks
- Watch for danger signs and be ready to respond to calls for help
- Provide timely, descriptive, and specific feedback without appearing judgmental
- Be ready to decrease in the role of mentor as the new teacher increases in the independent acquisition of the knowledge, skills, and experiences necessary to be effective at facilitating student learning
- Lift the new teacher regularly in prayer

### **The Needs of New Teachers**

New teachers need assistance in a variety of categories. Specific needs vary from teacher to teacher. Their needs may focus on applying what they learned in their teacher training to their actual classroom situations, and/or their needs may arise from gaps in their training.

#### ***Religious needs:***

- Understanding the philosophy of Lutheran education
- Understanding the teacher's role in the religious life of the school
- Feeling comfortable participating in the worship & Bible study life of the parish
- Identifying and practicing an active personal faith life

#### ***Instructional needs:***

- Planning and implementing units and lessons
- Designing and implementing learning activities

- Using a variety of teaching methods, materials, and media
- Using student cues to alter instruction
- Demonstrating subject matter knowledge
- Grouping students appropriately for learning activities
- Addressing students' special learning needs
- Assessing and reporting on student progress
- Involving students in classroom activities

***School needs:***

- Understanding the school's philosophy, mission statement, vision statement, etc.
- Understanding expectations
- Learning school policies and procedures
- Becoming acquainted with the school community
- Becoming acquainted with traditions

***Resource needs:***

- Identifying resources, materials, and media for teaching
- Learning about resources available in the broader community
- Obtaining materials, equipment, and supplies

***Collegial and professional needs:***

- Overcoming feelings of isolation
- Interacting with colleagues using effective communication and human relations skills
- Feeling comfortable with formal observation and evaluation
- Participating in the life of the school beyond the classroom
- Identify areas of need for professional development and opportunities to address those needs
- Collaborating with other professionals regarding individual student needs

***Management needs:***

- Classroom management
  - Classroom structure and organization
  - Record keeping
  - Physical arrangements of the classroom
- Time and stress management

***Parental needs:***

- Communicating with and relating to parents
- Preparing for parent conferences

***Student needs:***

- Creating a classroom climate that promotes learning
- Establishing expectations
- Motivating students
- Disciplining students
- Helping students develop positive self-esteem
- Conferencing with students

## **Characteristics of Effective Mentoring**

### ***Establishing and Developing the Mentor – Mentee Relationship***

Many of the specifics and details regarding the interactions that will establish and nurture a positive relationship between the mentor and the new teacher will depend on the people involved, the new teacher's needs, the mentor's areas of expertise, the time schedule and building layout of their school, the ability of both to communicate well, and other factors unique to the individual mentor and mentee. However, the following general principles are applicable to all situations.

- In almost all cases, most or all of the mentor's experience has been in teaching students of elementary school age. However, in the mentoring process, the mentor is a teacher of an adult. Therefore, it is important to be aware of the characteristics of adult learners. Adults prefer learning situations that:
  - Are practical and problem centered rather than theoretical.
  - Promote positive self-esteem by helping them become more effective and successful.
  - Integrate new ideas with existing knowledge.
  - Show respect for them as learners and do not make them feel as if the teacher is talking down to them.
  - Capitalize on their experience.
  - Allow levels of choice commensurate with their development.
- Get to know one another through informal conversation. Both mentor and mentee could discuss such topics as professional and educational background, interests outside of school, and appropriate personal background. They could go on to discuss topics such as teachers who have been influential in their lives, things they are particularly proud of, and beliefs about education.
- Understand the roles of the mentor and mentee.
  - The mentor's role is to guide and support the new teacher in his/her on-the-job study of the teaching/learning process and development as an effective teacher. *Evaluation is the function of the principal, not the mentor.* To be effective in guiding and supporting the new teacher, the mentor will need to appreciate and respect the viewpoints of the new teacher, recognize the new teacher's strengths, and help the new teacher identify needs for him/herself.
  - Conversely, it is essential that the new teacher develop respect for the competency, caring, and wisdom of the mentor. This respect develops over time as the mentor's guidance, feedback, support, and advice helps the new teacher be successful.
- Establish a safe and confidential climate in the relationship so that the new teacher will be able to candidly express needs, concerns, and deficiencies. Respect the privacy of the new teacher by not discussing failures or shortcomings with other staff.

### ***Mentor – Mentee communication***

Effective communication is essential to the mentor-mentee relationship and to the quality of the guidance and support provided by the mentor to the new teacher. It is important to remember that the ultimate goal of mentoring is to help the new teacher become an independent, reflective professional who can grow and solve problems on his/her own. This section summarizes some important aspects of communication in the mentoring process.

### ***Questions that Prompt Reflection***

The mentor may be tempted to respond to a mentee's concerns or to situations the mentor notices by telling the mentee what to do (or telling the mentee what the mentor would do). However, to achieve the goal of helping the beginning teacher develop into a professional who can mentor him/herself as a professional who engages in "reflective practice," it is necessary for the mentor to engage the mentee in frequent conversations

based on open-ended questions that involve the mentee in analyzing a variety of factors involved in his/her teaching. Examples of questions that prompt reflection are:

### ***Questions that help define***

- What evidence do you have of that?
- What do you want to happen?
- How did you arrive at that conclusion?
- Why did you decide to do it that way?
- What do you think the problem is?
- What were you thinking about when that happened?
- What were the students doing when that happened?
- What does this remind you of?
- What would be your criteria for ....?
- Why do you think that happens?
- Why do you think that did/did not work?
- What would it look like if ...?

### ***Questions that help determine action***

- What connection do you see between this and anything you have done before?
- How else could you accomplish that?
- What would you do the same/differently next time?
- What do you need?
- What have you tried before?
- What could be your next step?
- What do you think would happen if ...?
- How would you feel if ...?
- How might you be able to use this in other situations?

### **Mentoring Calendar**

The following list of items will help mentors identify some of the major areas of information and support that a new teacher will need. Your role here will be primarily that of information provider. This comprises another phase of mentoring which the new teacher will greatly appreciate. Some of these items may not be relevant in your situation and you will probably need to add items that are not listed here. Also included are questions to guide your discussions. Remember that the beginning teacher will not be able to absorb everything at once. You will most likely need to repeat some information a number of times.

### **August:**

- Informally introduce yourself as mentor
  - Explain your role
  - Put the mentee at ease
- Host the new teacher at the opening of school faculty meetings
- Give the new teacher a general orientation to the school
- Introduce people
  - Administrators
  - Faculty
  - Pastors
  - Support staff such as secretaries, custodians, cooks, extended care workers, etc.

- Identify roles of staff such as department heads, coaches, etc.
- The building/school layout and location of
  - Washrooms
  - Office
  - Supply room
  - Print room
  - Custodian
  - Library
  - Media and A.V. equipment
  - Teacher parking
  - Student drop-off and pick-up location
  - Rooms for specialists, nurse, music, art, P.E.
  - Cafeteria
  - Church
- Building Procedures
  - Hours for teachers
  - Teacher devotions expectations
  - Extra duties, bus, clubs, activities, chaperoning
  - Attendance procedure
  - Movement of children, entry/exit from building, washrooms, lunch, recess
  - Title services and intervention services, pull-out programs
  - Location of IEPs
  - Student and teacher dress code
  - Crisis plans--fire, tornado, earthquake, etc. procedures
  - Lunch supervision, eating policies
  - Homework and testing policies--required state testing in each grade
  - Student and teacher accident reports, emergency procedures
  - Assembly procedures
  - Substitute folders
  - Machine usage, copying and printing procedures, internet usage
  - Progress and report card procedures
  - How to fill out professional leave and absence forms
- Access to Resources
  - Classroom and teaching supply requisitions, budgeting process
  - A.V. equipment requests
  - Computer access for teacher use and student use
  - Shared equipment and materials (with other staff)
  - Textbook supplemental material
  - Set up email and voice mail accounts
  - Lutheran Elementary School Association functions
  - Discuss the use of student records as an information resource
  - Assist the teacher with interpreting standardized tests
- Student Discipline
  - Learn behavior expectations for hallway, lunch, washroom, playground
  - Establish classroom behavior expectations
  - Establish consequences for extreme behavior problems, including when to involve parents and when to involve the principal
  - Expected staff supervision outside of classroom

- Curriculum
  - School and state curriculum standards
  - Management of the curriculum “demands” and pacing of learning
  - School’s formative and summative (achievement) testing procedures
  - Lesson plan procedures and expectations
  - Subject matter experts on the staff
  - Teaching teams or shared responsibilities
  - Grading procedures for day-to-day records, grading scale, percentages for grading scale, other forms of evaluation
  - Opening day schedule, appropriate plans, administrative details
  - The curriculum “flow” overview of units throughout the year
  - A plan for the first week’s lessons
- Organizing the Classroom
  - Options for room management and effect on teaching and learning
  - Traffic patterns
  - Storage and access to materials
  - Student access to texts, equipment, learning and teaching centers
- Personal and Professional Decisions and Procedures
  - Discuss staff development programs for the year
  - Calling in sick, and personal and professional days
  - Collegiality, support, and resources
  - Offer a yearbook to help mentee recognize staff and students
  - Discuss responsibility of new teacher regarding in-school and district-wide committees and/or activities
  - Review procedures for field trips and assemblies
  - Review procedures for dealing with blood-borne pathogens/first aid
  - Review student and staff handbooks
  - Discuss school policies on sexual harassment, child abuse, and drugs
  - Discuss taking time for yourself while meeting the demands of your new position
  - Discuss social media expectations and professional guidelines

### ***First day of school***

- Talk through the teacher’s plan and procedures for the first day
- Do something special for the teacher on the first day
- Reflect with the teacher at the end of the day

### ***First week of school***

- Remind the teacher about schedules, events, etc.
- Assist the teacher with developing and implementing lesson plans
- Be available to listen and advise
- Discuss the teacher’s classroom expectations
- Discuss and suggest procedures for grading students’ work

### **September:**

- Support the new teacher at the installation/induction worship service
- Invite, accompany, and introduce the new teacher to Bible class, Parent/Teacher Association; introduce him/her to congregation members



- Review pertinent forms, procedures, deadlines, etc.
- Review locations of resources such as the media center, library, art supplies, etc.
- Discuss plans for monthly activities at grade level and at whole school level.
- Help the new teacher prepare for “Back to School Night”
  - Advise the teacher that this is a time to explain his/her program, not to confer with individual parents about their child’s progress
- Discuss the importance of parent contacts, both to commend and to express concern about student progress; role play parent phone calls
- Assist the new teacher in developing a system for recording student academic and behavioral information and parent contacts
- Assist the teacher with understanding and preparing for student standardized testing
- Be very accessible, offer help, but do not overwhelm

#### Questions for Reflection:

- Have you become familiar with congregational organizations and the schedule of congregational events?
- Have you become acquainted with the physical layout of the school and church? Are there any places or resources that you have not found?
- Do you like the way you’ve organized your classroom space? Are there any resources that you still need?
- Does your classroom management plan supplement the school’s discipline practices and procedures? Is your classroom arrangement conducive to this management plan?
- How are your classroom systems for beginning and ending classes, organizing and managing supplementary materials/labs, distributing and collecting papers, recording tardy students, conducting cooperative activities, etc. working out?
- Have you developed a system for recording student academic and behavioral information and parent contacts?
- How is your instructional planning (constructing a meaningful lesson, pacing lesson plans, transitioning between lessons and activities)?
- Review and discuss fall standardized testing preparation, procedure and interpretation of results.
- What have been the highlights of your teaching so far?
- What are your greatest challenges? How will you address these concerns?
- How have you budgeted your time for God, family and friends?

#### **October:**

- Assist the teacher with goal setting as part of the teacher self-evaluation process
- Discuss plans and procedures for special events (Reformation Day, Fall Festival, etc.)
- Discuss procedures for indoor recess, field trips, shortened class schedules, assemblies, tutoring, etc.
- Help the teacher prepare for the first report cards
- Help the teacher prepare for parent-teacher conferences (see tips on page 12); consider role playing a conference.
  - How do you plan to conduct parent-teacher conferences?
  - How will you encourage positive parental involvement with your class?
  - Discuss strategies for dealing with aggressive parents
  - Proper tactics for communicating with parents in constructive ways?
  - What approaches do you use to deal with irate parents?
  - How will you encourage communication between home and school on a regular basis?
  - How will you share your faith with your students’ parents?

- Review individual student needs and available resources to meet those needs
- Identify and explore duties and responsibilities outside the classroom
- Listen to and support the teacher on matters of concern
- Talk to the new teacher about the importance of personal time and stress reduction

### **November:**

- Discuss the importance of Advent in the faith life of your classroom and the school
- Discuss and assist with pacing of lessons
- Reflect with the teacher on the goals set as part of the teacher self-evaluation process
- Listen to and support the teacher on matters of concern
- Discuss instructional planning through the end of the semester, including relevant school expectations and alternate schedules to be expected
- Discuss the school community's traditions and expectations regarding the celebration of Thanksgiving, Advent, and Christmas, especially special worship services.
- Discuss inclement weather procedures
- Discuss the mentee's participation in professional staff development (workshops, in-service, state and national conferences)
- Discuss performance evaluation by the principal; consider role playing a classroom observation and pre and post conferences; explore the mentee's feelings and concerns about the formal evaluation process
- If possible, observe the teacher in the classroom for an extended period of time
  - Assist the mentee in identifying an area about which he/she wants or needs feedback
  - Together decide what data would be helpful in determining what changes or adjustments the teacher needs to or would like to make
  - Determine an effective way to collect that information during an observation
  - Observe the class, focusing on the area and data previously identified
  - Give your notes to the teacher; avoid judgmental comments
  - Solicit the mentee's reactions and reflections about the lesson in a follow up conference
  - Focus the mentee on thinking through the issues and alternatives and using the data from the observation in his/her thinking
  - Focus on teaching vs. the teacher
- Offer suggestions and your assessment only after the mentee has verbalized his/her thinking, and offer them only if requested; be as positive as possible
- Focus on long term adjustments in routines and strategies rather than short term solutions
- Discuss the mentee's reaction to the conferences and observation—
  - What was useful? --difficult?
  - How will it be the same/different when the principal observes? Be sure to note the difference between the mentor's coaching/advising and the principal's evaluation

### **December:**

This is an intense period in the teaching calendar. Many new teachers get ill during this phase. Classroom management is a major source of stress. Self-esteem may decline during this period and compound the frustrations of a beginning teacher. The Christmas break allows time for rest and socializing. It also provides breathing time to organize materials and plan new lessons and units.

- Discuss plans and procedures for Christmas celebrations, break, travel
- Reflect on and assist with staff relationships
- Listen to and support the teacher on matters of concern

- Do decorations need to be taken down before you leave for the holidays?
- Will there be any special cleaning of your room over the holidays? If so, do you need to do anything special for it?
- Write thank you notes over the holidays for any gifts you receive
- Provide references to tax professionals. Get ready to file estimated taxes by January 15<sup>th</sup>

### **January:**

- Assist the teacher with identifying needs and priorities for the second semester
  - Explore areas in which the mentee feels the most confident and areas in which the mentee feels he/she most needs to grow
  - Explore available professional development opportunities; consider attending with the new teacher
  - Identify which students are struggling academically, what supports are being given to them, what additional supports are available, etc. Emphasize a team approach to meeting students' special learning needs. Emphasize student success as a goal.
- Review where the teacher is in terms of the curriculum for the year, reviewing what has been taught and what remains to be taught. Explore the concepts of curriculum sequencing and integration
- Review end of semester procedures, reports, etc.
- Listen to and support the teacher on matters of concern
- If possible, arrange for the new teacher to observe your class and conference with you about the observation
- Explore whether the mentee wants to share with you the results of the principal's observations and evaluations to date; help the mentee process the experience and his/her reactions to it.
- Consider joint planning so that the mentee can observe how you plan, how you teach, what you value, what you consider a priority, etc.
- Begin gathering what is needed to file taxes for the year. Find out if your state requires state income tax to be filed as well as federal. Is there a city income tax? What about personal property tax?
- Report cards: Before sending home report cards, make sure the principal is aware of any students that are struggling or in danger of retention. Find out how s/he wants the situation handled.
- Discuss how the school will celebrate National Lutheran Schools Week and any special responsibilities
- Valentine's party: Are they held? Who organizes them? Are valentines given? Who all receives valentines?
- Reflect on your mentoring relationship with your mentee
  - What milestones have been reached; what successes have been achieved?
  - What issues in the relationship need to be addressed?
- Consider a small celebration or gift for your mentee to celebrate his/her success and progress during the first semester

### **February:**

- Discuss the importance of Lent in personal and corporate faith life
- Is homework assigned during Lent?
- Assist the new teacher with evaluating appropriate school involvement outside the classroom; emphasize that the first priority needs to be his/her teaching. Be aware that the new teacher may observe other teachers' involvement and feel that he/she needs to be involved to the same extent.

- Share with your mentee any new materials or resources helpful to your own teaching and professional development which you have found or read
- Be aware that by this time your mentee may begin to feel awkward about asking questions and seeking help; reassure him/her that all teachers benefit from sharing with peers
- Realize that your mentee may have become quite independent; continue to be available and provide assistance as needed
- Explore with your mentee his/her progress through the curriculum

### **March:**

This period has ups and downs, but generally the new teacher is relieved for having made it this far and continues to focus on curriculum, instruction, and classroom management. There is acceleration in concern for finishing everything by the end of the year. Teachers reflect on the successes and failures of the year and think about changes they want to make for next year. They develop a sense of what their next year will be like, which leads to a new period of anticipation.

- Continue checking with your mentee and offering assistance where needed
- Consider joint planning of some instructional unit, special activity or event with your mentee
- Discuss preparation and administration of standardized testing
- Take time to reflect on your mentoring skills and insights; consider what strengths you bring to the situation; explore in which aspects you might improve
- Remember to continue developing collegiality with your other peers
- Work with your mentee in gathering samples of student work for art festivals, etc.
- Assist the new teacher with preparations for celebrating Easter

### **April:**

- Discuss with your mentee how to handle calls, contracts, etc.
  - Be available to provide support if your mentee will not be retained on the faculty
  - Consider whether you can help the teacher find another position
  - Consider writing a letter of recommendation for the mentee
  - Provide emotional support and link your mentee with another teacher who has had the same experience
- Remind your mentee the need to file taxes by April 15<sup>th</sup>
- Be alert to situations with your class that may require a change in classroom management strategies as students' behavior changes with the change in weather and the end of the school year nearing
- Plan strategies designed to keep students actively involved in learning

### **May:**

- Discuss school or classroom picnics, end of the year field trips or parties, etc.
- Be alert to attitudes that permeate the school as vacation nears; model keeping students actively involved in learning
- Review expectations and procedures for the close of the school year including final assessments, final grades, student records, referrals to specialists, communication with parents of students who need special help, and graduation ceremonies. What is the policy on damaged or missing books, classroom clean-up, inventory, book and supplies ordering for the new school year, end of year meetings, summer expectations?
- Analyze the mentoring process with your mentee; focus on what was most important, what helped the most

- Engage the teacher in analyzing his/her progress this year with a goal of promoting his/her confidence and self-esteem by focusing on actual accomplishments not just positive feedback from another person
- Consider some recognition of the teacher at the final faculty meeting of the year; thank all faculty for their involvement in assisting the new teacher
- Review the details related to closing school for the summer such as inventories, book collection, room preparation, etc.
- Discuss spiritual, professional, and personal development activities for the summer for your mentee and for yourself

### **Suggestions Regarding Specific Topics:**

This section contains a number of suggestions which might be of help in addressing particular needs. It is not meant to be a comprehensive treatment of these topics, but rather a starting point consisting of basic principles.

### **Tips for Successful Parent Communication:**

- Make positive contacts with parents; don't merely contact parents when problems arise
- Plan what you are going to say; have necessary information on hand
- Exhibit care and concern for the student as a person and learner
- Contact parents sooner rather than later
- Begin and/or end meetings with prayer
- Always treat parents as parents rather than as adversaries. Remember, you both have the goal of what is best for the child, although you may have different viewpoints.
- Use terms like "tries to get attention" rather than "shows off", "usually" rather than "all the time", "needs to do neater work" rather than "is sloppy", "disturbs class rather than "is a troublemaker", "doesn't usually share with others" rather than "is selfish", etc.
- Describe what the student does or does not do and the effects of the student's actions on his/her and other students' learning; do not speculate on motives or impute personal qualities. Be descriptive rather than evaluative.
- Keep the focus on the student, not on other students or the teacher
- Give the parent suggestions about what can be done at home to enhance student success
- Listen attentively to parents for clues about why their son/daughter is having a problem
- Be open to parent suggestions that are feasible
- Avoid becoming defensive
- End the conference with agreement on goals and next steps; be practical and specific
- Decide and agree on how and when you will keep in contact with the parents

### **Characteristics of Effective Instruction:**

- Use a variety of teaching strategies, student groupings, materials, media resources, etc.
- Involve students actively in learning activities
- Draw all students into classroom activities
- Arrange the room to encourage students' involvement in class activities
- Move around the room
- Plan instruction in 15-20 minute segments
- Allow sufficient thinking time before expecting students to answer
- Help students know how to approach a particular subject
- Consider why something is being taught as well as what is being taught
- Be prepared for class; do not "wing it"
- Have clear, student-centered goals for units and lessons

- Assign meaningful homework
- Emphasize “real-world” uses and applications of what is being learned
- Keep a constant focus on student achievement
- Optimize the use of instructional time
- Use open-ended rather than leading questions
- Be available to students who need extra help

### **Motivating students:**

- Respect students as a person regardless of academic ability, ethnicity, economic status, gender, etc.
- Never use sarcasm or “put downs” in dealing with students
- Show interest in the students; use their names
- Give students opportunities to use their learning strengths as well as to work with areas needing improvement
- Give students specific feedback about their work rather than generic praise or criticism
- Recognize achievement and improvement
- Allow students to make decisions on appropriate topics
- Give students responsibility appropriate for their age level
- Give students appropriate opportunities to move around
- Build on what students already know about a subject
- Use bulletin boards, walls, etc. to convey positive messages
- Exhibit energy and a sense of purpose in your speech, gesture, posture, etc.
- Maintain eye contact with students
- Use appropriate humor
- Build on students’ ideas, comments, etc.
- Correct mistakes in a positive manner
- Return students’ work in a timely manner with constructive comments
- Be yourself; always be genuine and honest with students

### **Effective Classroom Management:**

- Set a tone in the classroom by how you speak
- State what should be done more than what should be avoided
- Be sure that temperature, light, and ventilation create a comfortable environment
- Keep learning materials well organized
- Develop efficient routines
- Teach students what is expected and be sure they understand
- Keep students on task with activities that are of sufficient variety, interest, and difficulty level to challenge but not frustrate them

### **Effectively Disciplining Students:**

- Maintain a calm and professional demeanor; do not display your temper
- Be consistent; interpret rules the same way all the time
- Tailor consequences to the situation
- Contact and involve parents at the beginning of a problem
- Confront problem students in private; provide a cooling-off period
- Use positive reinforcement when improvement is demonstrated
- Send students to the principal’s office as a last resort; it may be a more interesting place for a student to be than in the classroom and it sends the message that you cannot handle the problem

- Try to determine the underlying causes of problem behavior
- Be selective in deciding what battles to take on
- Allow students to save face; search for “win-win” rather than “win-lose” solutions
- Avoid punishing the entire class for the behavior of one or a few especially when you are not sure which specific students are causing the problem
- Use effective non-verbal communication, including proximity
- Seek always to discipline students rather than punishing them

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