

## Specific Techniques to Establish an Appropriate Level of Dominance in the Classroom \*

### I. Exhibiting Assertive Behavior

1. use of assertive body language (eye contact, posture, distance, facial expressions)
2. appropriate tone of voice (clear and deliberate, pitch, no emotions)
3. persisting until appropriate behavior is displayed (not ignoring, being diverted by argument, listening to legitimate explanations)

During the lecture portion of her class, Mrs. Chambers expects all of her students to be quiet and attentive. If any students begin to talk, she pauses and looks in their direction. She does not resume her lecture until those students have stopped talking.

Though Ms. Patel is a petite woman, she is not intimidated by her students. She makes sure to circulate around the room, addresses students clear and deliberately and always exhibits an upright posture.

Mr. Khan enjoys students working in group in his 9<sup>th</sup> grade class even though they can get noisy at times. To combat this problem his physical cue is to raise his hand until students stop talking and listen for their next instruction.

A student in Mr. Edwards' class shouts out answers to questions before being called on. He asked the student to stop several times. The student begins to argue with him, saying "you never call on me!" He asks the student to join him in the hallway to discuss the situation in private. He listens to the student explain his view of what happened, but lets him know that his behavior is inappropriate and he will call on him only when he raises his hand first.

### II. Establishing Clear Learning Goals, Rubrics

- ✓ establish learning goals at the beginning of a unit
- ✓ continually revisit the goals
- ✓ provide summative feedback regarding the goals

At the beginning of every school year Mrs. Joyce posts a grading system for assignments on the wall of her classroom. She makes sure to include expectations for things like do now's and homework's and the corresponding points that meet those expectations.

Ms. Garcia uses rubrics for daily assignments that are counted towards a student's final average. She uses the rubric to track progress and allows for movement from one level to the next through work revisions.

Mr. Ortega uses detailed, self-evaluation rubrics at the beginning, middle and

end of a unit. Students evaluate where they see their progress based on the point scale which is incorporated into their class-work average.

Mrs. Peters creates a syllabus for her students every semester. Included in this syllabus are the learning goals for each unit. She gets student input to make sure they understand each goal and posts them in the classroom. Throughout the semester she revisits the goals with the class when the content is taught. This process is repeated every semester.

### III. Providing Flexible Learning Goals

Allow students to set some of their own learning goals at the beginning of a unit or ask students what they would like to learn conveys a sense of cooperation.

Mr. Franklin has divided his classroom into four sections. Each is a learning station where the content is presented in different ways. Students choose which station they want to visit for the day's lesson. After a set time, students from the different stations come together and share what they learned and complete an assessment of the material.

At the beginning of every unit, Ms. Quim gives her students a list of topics that will be covered. Students create K-W-L charts about the new topics, which allows Ms. Quim to see what her students already know about these topics and what they are interested in learning about. She then can design her lessons appropriately.

At the end of his unit on statistics, Mr. Gupta asks students to complete a research project and present it to class. His students are allowed to select their own topics. It can be statistics on sports, music, or whatever interests them.

Mrs. Phillips uses a tiered unit strategy to assess student progress. She uses a detailed criteria chart that explains what assignments are to be completed, what points are to be awarded and time-frames for completion divided into three tiers. Students work at their own pace and their grades are determined by how many points they earned and how many tiers they worked through.

### IV. Taking a Personal Interest in Students

- ✓ Talking informally with students before, during and after class about their interests
- ✓ Greeting students outside of school
- ✓ Talking to a few students a day in the lunchroom
- ✓ Being aware of and commenting on important events in students' lives (sports, drama, extracurricular)
- ✓ Complimenting students on important achievements in and outside of school
- ✓ Meeting students at the door and saying hello to each of them by their first name

At the beginning of each season Mr. Simms meets with the coaches at his school to find out which of his students are on a sports team. Throughout the year he periodically asks these students how their seasons are going and makes sure to attend some games.

Every morning Miss Abrams makes a point to stop and talk to her students who are standing outside on her way into the building. She asks them how they are doing, if they need help with any homework or schoolwork and if they have had a healthy breakfast.

Miss Chan gives all of her students an interest survey. She makes it a point to include examples and make connections in class that reflect the responses to the survey.

Mr. Myers stands at the doorway before students enter his class. As they walk in he greets them each by name, asks them how they are doing today, and welcomes them to his classroom.

#### V. Using equitable and Positive Classroom Behavior

- ✓ Making eye contact with every student in the classroom, moving about all sections of the room
- ✓ Throughout call, deliberately moving toward and being close to each student
- ✓ Attributing ownership of ideas to the students who initiated them
- ✓ Allowing and encouraging all students to be part of class discussions and calling on students who do not commonly participate
- ✓ Providing appropriate “wait time” for all students, regardless of their past performances or your perception of their abilities

Ms. Tirimani knows that she tends to face one side to the room during lectures and when posing questions to her class. Because of this, she makes a conscious effort to move about all sections of the room, being close to each student during lectures and making eye contact with every student during question time.

Ms. Burns uses a seating chart to record which students participate in class. She uses this information to call on specific students to answer questions or to go to the board to increase their class participation. She will ask them to answer questions that they are capable of answering correctly.

Mr. West has a parking lot in his classroom where students write down and post their questions and suggestions. When he answers one of the questions or implements a suggestion in class he refers to the student who brought it to his

attention by thanking them for their ideas.

Mr. Carter provides appropriate “wait-time” for all students. When he poses a question he lets the class know they have some time to think about it before he calls on someone to share. After the think time has passed he selects a student to answer.

#### VI. Responding Appropriately to Students’ Incorrect Responses

- ✓ Emphasizing what was right. Identifying question that incorrect answered
- ✓ Encourage collaboration. Give time to seek help from peers
- ✓ Restating the question and allowing time
- ✓ Rephrasing, paraphrasing the question, or from a different perspective
- ✓ Giving hints or cues
- ✓ Providing the answer and asking for elaboration. To say it in his own words or provide another example of an answer
- ✓ Respecting the students option to pass, when appropriate

When Ms. Ward asks a question of her chemistry class and notices that her students do not understand, she often restates or paraphrases it and allows for appropriate wait time.

Mr. Silver encourages collaboration in his class. If a student does not know the answer to a question he allows them to seek help from peers or take a “pass” when appropriate.

When one of Mrs. Maldonado’s students gives an incorrect answer, she emphasizes what was right about it (maybe even identifying the question that the incorrect answered), instead of telling them that they are wrong.

Mr. Flanagan often gives hints or clues when his students are struggling with a question. Sometimes he will provide the answer and ask them to elaborate, say in their own words, or provide another example of an answer.

\* Marzano, R.J. (2003). Classroom management that works: Research-based strategies for every teacher. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

