



Strategies for Engagement

Engagement refers to feelings of connection and a sense of belonging within a larger group. When students are engaged, they are more likely to meaningfully participate and demonstrate on-task behaviors. Student engagement requires positive relationships and connections among people in the classroom, school, and community.



WELCOMING STUDENTS

Regarding each student individually in a caring and positive manner, as they come through the door, establishes a sense of connection with the teacher and of being valued as part of the class. Welcoming students at the door with a smile, by name, or with a greeting helps increase academic engagement and decrease disruptive behavior.

LEARNING AND INCORPORATING STUDENT INTEREST

Learning and incorporating student interests and backgrounds is central to showing them that you recognize the individuality of each student in your classroom. Giving students interest inventories to complete is a quick way to learn a wide range of things about everyone in your class. Once you know more about your students' interests, simply recalling a favorite hobby or activity as part of a class discussion or in conversation can remind them you are listening.

BEING AVAILABLE FOR STUDENTS

Being available for students, both academically and emotionally, can show you care about more than their performance in your classroom. You can show that you are actively listening when your students are talking by paraphrasing to show your concern and using nonverbal cues, like eye contact and leaning forward. It's not always easy for students to reach out, but checking in on individual students can make a big impact in helping build relationships with students who may feel isolated or lonely.

USING POSITIVE LANGUAGE

When you use positive language with students, even when providing corrective feedback, you show that you believe in their ability and intention to do well. Behavior-specific praise is a quick way to reinforce the specific, desired behaviors of students while also helping to encourage the bonds of positive relationships. By describing the desired behavior, either social or academic, of a specific student or the class followed by a positive praise statement, you're telling the student the exact behavior you like to see while also praising them for it.

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