



## Strategies for Welcoming Students

When students first enter the classroom, either in the morning or during a transition, you have an opportunity to welcome them and set a positive tone for learning and connection.

### WELCOMING STUDENTS INDIVIDUALLY

Regarding each student individually in a caring and positive manner as they come through the door establishes a sense of connection 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.



### FEELINGS CHECK

As students enter the classroom, teachers may also use the opportunity to get a sense of the emotional state of each student. One strategy is to encourage each student as they enter the classroom to identify their feelings with a card on their desk or by posting their name to a feelings poster. With older students, a simple thumbs-up, thumbs-down, or in between can be a standard check-in to gauge their emotional state. Teachers can use the information to support students who are experiencing distress at the start of class. Teachers can also repeat this technique at the end of the class to see if there are changes in how students are feeling.

### DAILY MEETINGS

You can also create a sense of community at the beginning of class by facilitating activities that build rapport and connection. Some teachers use opening circles in which students and teachers greet one another by name, share information about important events in their lives, participate in brief, lively activities to foster group cohesion, and prepare for the day's learning.

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