CORE FUNCTION	EFFECTIVE PRACTICE	INDICATOR
Classroom Instruction	Expect and monitor sound instruction in a variety of modes	**All teachers interact socially with students (noticing and attending to an ill student, asking about the weekend, inquiring about the family). (142)**

Explanation: Very simply, students do best when they think their teacher knows them and cares about them. Noticing each student and interacting socially with each student is essential in establishing a teacher-student relationship most conducive to learning. Typically, these interactions consume little time but make a big difference.

Questions: You know what good teacher-student social interaction looks like in the classroom. How do you ensure that all of your teachers are expert in this kind of interaction? What training do you provide them? How do their share their practices with each other? What do you look for in classroom observations?

Teachers and students interact every school day. Students spend approximately 7 hours at school—a fairly significant chunk of their day. Students, in order to do their best, need to feel a part of the "community" which is their school, and more importantly, their classroom. Brendtro, Brokenleg, and Bockern (2002) write, "Throughout the history of the human race, almost all worthwhile learning has taken place in a social setting. The human brain has developed so that it functions better in social interaction than in isolation" (p. 99). This idea is also illustrated in Maslow's hierarchy of needs-- Physiological needs, safety and security, love and belonging, self-esteem, self-actualization—where one cannot reach the high levels unless the needs of the lower levels are met. For students, this means that feeling a part of the community of the classroom and believing that his teacher knows him by name and genuinely cares about him allows the student to put his energies toward learning. Parett and Budge (2012) write, "Becoming a safe school requires not only structures and processes that immediately and decisively address physical, emotional, and psychological well-being, but also those that create a bond between school and students, such as a caring relationship with teachers or other adults in the school and interventions that ensure individual learning needs are met" (p. 100 & 102).

Redding (2007) states that:

> Teacher-student interactions include teacher praise for and reinforcement of positive student behavior and demonstration of learning as well as questioning techniques and discussion methods. Teacher-student interactions are social, instructional, and managerial. Social interaction has been found to be a particularly strong correlate of academic learning (Wang, Haertel, & Walberg, 1993), as

it facilitates a bond of connection between the teacher and the students and increases each student's sense of belonging to the classroom group. (p. 105)

Creating that sense of belonging means that teachers are aware of each student in her classroom and how that student is interacting or not interacting both with other students and with the content being taught. These teachers are aware of students who have "disengaged" from the learning process or from class activities. They purposely seek out and interact with students are withdrawn, depressed, or resistant to classroom work. Furlong and Christenseon (2008) state that "interventions address engagement comprehensively, not only focusing on academic or behavioral skill deficits, but also on the social, interpersonal aspects of schools, particularly the need for supportive connections to other adults and peers (p. 365).

Social and emotional research tells us that belonging is an aspect of engagement and illustrates a social and emotional factor necessary for academic learning. This engagement comes about through positive adult-student and peer relationships (Zin et al., 2004). Elias (2003) elaborates that "effective, lasting academic and social-emotional learning is built upon caring relationships and warm but challenging classroom and school environments" (p. 8). He gives several practical ways to address creating a caring environment, but two very simple suggestions are 1) Greet all students by name when they enter the school or classroom, and 2) Show interest in their personal lives outside the school. Parett and Budge (2012) state that "establishing daily contact and demonstrating concern for each child provides a comfort zone for communication between teacher and student" (p. 133).

Boyton and Boyton (2005) give reasons for creating that bond with students:

When your actions and words communicate that you sincerely care for your students, they are more likely to want to perform well for you and enjoy coming to school. Caring also fosters a preventive approach to discipline, as students who feel cared for are more likely to want to please you by complying with your wishes and policies. It is a tragedy when a student mistakenly believes that his teacher does not care for or like him. In most cases, teachers do care but fail to do the things that directly communicate this valuable message.... *Inquiring about aspects of students' personal lives* is a powerful way to communicate that the students are important and cared for. You can do this by asking about a recent trip, a hobby, or a sports activity. Some teachers make it a point to watch sporting events that their students are involved in, which is a wonderful way to show students you care about them beyond the classroom walls." (para. 31).

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