Structure and Systems

Classroom Systems

Rate yourself from 1 to 4 on how effective your systems are in each of the following areas.

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<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Evident</td>
<td>Some Evidence of Development</td>
<td>Evident</td>
<td>Strongly Evident</td>
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Be sure and make notes on areas in which you need to improve your systems.

_____ Entering your Classroom: There is a clear system for how students enter your room. In middle or high school (or elementary departmentalized grades), do they come in ahead of you? Should they wait in the hall for you? Do you want them to stand against the wall? What are your expectations for them as they wait? Talking quietly? Hands to oneself?

_____ Greeting Students: I am at my door as each student enters. I can see both the hallway and my classroom. I greet every student (hand shake, fist bump, whatever) as students enter.

_____ Hall Expectations: Students in my hallway are staying to the right, continuing to move, and keeping hands and feet to themselves.
____ Do Now or Bell Work: Students have an assignment immediately upon entering the class. Students know and quietly follow the exact procedure for entering the class, getting materials, and beginning bell work.

____ Classroom Procedures: Students know and follow the procedure for when attendance is taken. Students know and follow the procedure for what to do when the bell work is completed. Students read a book or sit quietly. Students are never allowed to sit idle or do activities that are nonproductive.

____ Bell Work Procedure: Students know and follow the procedure for how to turn in bell work.

____ Call to Attention: I have a specific “call to attention” that I consistently use.

____ Student Participation: There is an effective procedure for how students are to speak in class. If a choral response is wanted, there is a system for this. If hands are required, this system is enforced. Students are not allowed to just speak out at random and create a chaotic environment.

____ Passing Out Papers: There is an effective procedure in place for distributing papers.

____ Passing In Papers: There is an effective procedure for passing in papers.

____ Leaving the Seat: There are effective systems in place for when students can leave their seats, when they can sharpen pencils, as well as bathroom or water procedures.

____ Guided Practice: There are clear expectations in place for when we do guided practice. Every student is expected to follow along and write what the teacher writes. The teacher has a deliberate and intentional system of checking to see that students are following along.

____ Independent Practice: There are clear expectations in place for when students do independent practice. Can they talk? Can
they get help from each other? If so, how? How do they get help from the teacher?

_____ Dismissal: There is a clear and effective system for how we dismiss. The teacher determines this system. In other words, just because the bell rings does not mean that students are dismissed. The teacher is in control.

_____ Walking in Line Part One: There are clear expectations for how the students are expected to walk in the hall when in line.

_____ Walking in Line Part Two: When students are walking in line in the hall, the teacher is able to view all students to enforce expectations.

_____ Walking in Line Part Three: When you pick your students up from some area in the school (lunch, PE, playground, etc.), you have systems for how you get their attention and get them in line to be ready to return to the classroom.

_____ Materials: There are clear expectations for how we get materials, how we handle materials, what we can do with materials, and how we return materials.

_____ Personal Areas: There are clear expectations for how we police our desk and the area around us before we leave.

These only represent the major areas in which systems must be in place. Each individual activity must have its own list of systems.

Here is a checklist for any activity or class project that you do. This also helps in setting up your classroom.
What materials will I need?
Where will I store the materials for easy access?
How will I label the materials?
How will I ensure that the materials are maintained and ready for use each time?
How will the materials be distributed? Will I choose one student? One student from each table or row? How do I choose these? Ahead of time? Randomly? By merit?
What are my expectations for how the materials are distributed? What will I do if one of my helpers does not meet these expectations?
What are my expectations for the students when they have received the materials?
How will I deal with their very natural inclination to want to “play” with the materials? Will I give them a set time in which they can explore? If so, what is my signal to them that this exploration time is over?
What are my exact rules for using the materials? How will I convey these rules?
I must be sure that I have reviewed these rules with each student to the point that all students can repeat the rules back to me.
What are things that absolutely are unacceptable in using the materials? How do I convey these in a manner that will be effective?
If movement is required in the activity, for instance, from one station to the next, what are my expectations for this? How will kids know when to move? Are there times when movement is not acceptable? How will we practice this movement?
When I need to speak to the class during this activity, how will I gain the attention of the entire class, especially if the noise
level goes up? I will need to practice this with the students ahead of time.

_____If one student or group of students finishes the activity ahead of time, how will I handle this? What do I expect these students to do?

_____What is my signal to the class that time for the activity is over?

_____What are my expectations for each student and each group when I give the signal that time is up? What are the steps that each student should take to ensure proper cleanup? How will we practice this?

_____How will the materials be returned to the proper storage facilities? Will I use the same students who passed them out? Different students?

_____What are my expectations for how all students will return to their table or desk? What exactly do I want them to do upon their return? How will we practice this?