

# 10 Common Mistakes: Perspectives from Newer Teachers and a Principal

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# Let's talk about YOU!

1. Go to kahoot.it
2. Type in the PIN shown on screen
3. Type in your nickname

# Objectives

1. Understand common mistakes new teachers make
2. Learn strategies to proactively avoid these pitfalls
3. Think critically about your practice
4. Understand the importance of building relationships



# #10: Not Knowing About Your School

## Key Personnel

- Secretary
- Custodians
- Association Leadership

## Community

- Demographics
- Parent Involvement
- Transportation to School



# #10: Not Knowing About Your School

## Available Programs & Resources

- PD Opportunities
- Response to Intervention/Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)
- English Learner Support
- Special Education Support



# Remedy:

- **Ask questions.**
- **Introduce yourself.**
- **Get a list of personnel.**
- **Take a tour of your community. See where your students live.**

# #9: Not Knowing Your School Culture

- “Behind-the-scenes” context
- Influences how people think and act
- Types
  - Bureaucratic
  - Collegial
  - Toxic




# Remedy:

- Listen carefully.
- Closely examine the "big picture".
- Be aware of choosing sides.
- Find aspects of the school culture that align with your own goals and values.
- Find "wiggle room" and use it.
- Find out how decisions are made — and get involved.



# #8: Not Being Professional

- Absenteeism
  - Tardiness
  - Dress Code
  - Phone Usage
  - Inappropriate Language
  - Forgetting Meetings/Commitments
    - Staff
    - Parents
    - Students
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# Remedy:

- **Read the personnel handbook and know what it says!**
- **Be on time and ready to work!**
- **Dress for school, not the bar!**
- **Put your phone away when you are working with students and staff!**
- **Use language you would want students to use.**
- **Use a calendar to keep track of meetings/commitments.**

**Remember, someone is watching you at all times!**

# #7: Lack of Structure & Consistency

## Classroom Management

- Single biggest downfall of most new teachers!
- Starts on Day 1!
- Students will test, recognize a weakness, and take over before you can say “Day 2”.

## Discipline Plan

- School’s plan
  - Classroom Plan
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# Remedy:

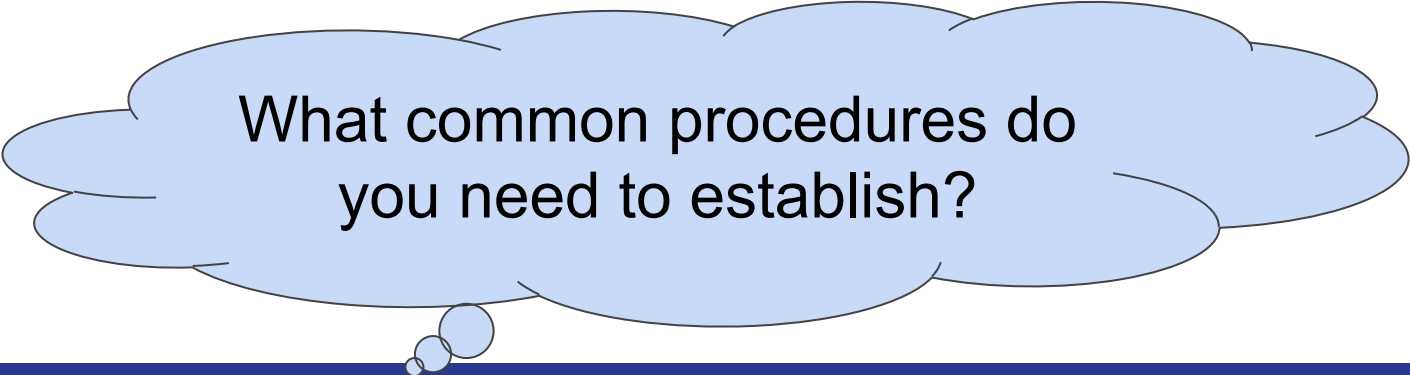
- **Establish procedures and expectations & teach them.**
- **Be consistent.**
- **Don't play favorites.**
- **Follow through on consequences.**
- **Share discipline plan with administrator, students, and parents ahead of time.**
- **Treat your students as you would want to be treated!**

## Pencil Sharpening

1. Make sure you have sharp pencils in your table bin every day in the morning.
2. If you do not have a sharp pencil put it in the dull pencil bin and grab a sharp one from the fresh pencil bin.



# Think & Talk Time!



What common procedures do  
you need to establish?

## #6: Fearing Your Principal



# Remedy:

- **Get to know them and let them get to know you**
- **Give a “heads up”**
- **Use their experience - students, parents, families**
- **Value their guidance**
- **Partner and collaborator**
- **Your success is their success!**



## #5: Playing It Safe

- Close-mindedness
  - Not sharing ideas
  - Not being open to others' ideas/suggestions
- Lack of flexibility
- Not asking for help when you need it
- Pretending everything's fine when it's really not



# Remedy:

- **Ask for help when you are unsure**
- **Don't be afraid to admit you are wrong**
- **Be open to new ideas and suggestions (This benefits you and your students!)**
- **Remember, everyone has bad days (including students, parents, co-workers, administrators)**
- **We expect our students to take risks; we need to as well!**

## #4: Not Having a Plan

- Lessons
- Behavior
- Communication
- Emergencies
- What is Plan B, C, D, etc?



# Remedy:

- **Think and plan ahead**
  - **What will early finishers do?**
  - **What will you do with struggling students?**
  - **Have emergency substitute plans and copies of all necessary materials for at least four days**
- **Folder with student/parent contact information for emergencies**
- **Determine ways to best communicate with parents and do it!**

## #3: Forgetting Students Come First!

- Lots of distractions and “administrivia”
  - Evaluations/Growth Plans
  - Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)
  - Lesson plans
  - Testing
  - Parents
  - Budgets
  - Curriculum materials



# Remedy:

- **Advocate for your students**
  - **Share your observations, not your opinions**
  - **Back up your observations with data**
- **Prioritize what needs to be done**
- **Remember, it's not all about you! Your students are the reason you are a teacher!**

## #2: Forgetting Parents Are Partners

- Your student is the parents' prized treasure!
- You don't want to be the bearer of bad news
  - Fear parents' reactions
  - Don't want to disappoint the parent
  - Don't want parent to blame you
  - Don't want parent to question your competence



# Remedy:

- **Be proactive! Parents can be your best advocate!**
  - **Communicate frequently**
  - **Use “I” statements**
  - **Discuss what works at home to build a bridge between home and school**
- **Set and respect boundaries**
  - **Do not give out cell phone number unless admin. approved**
  - **No Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc. friends**
- **Remember, you all have the same goal in mind...to help the student be successful!**



# #1: Setting Unrealistic Expectations

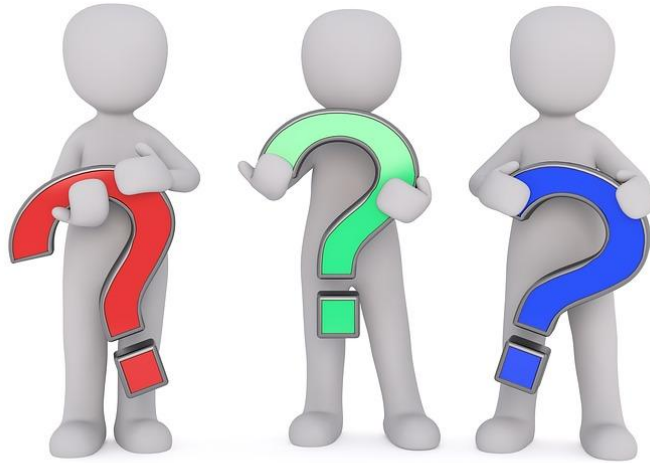
- For your students
  - Fine balance between high expectations and realistic expectations
- For yourself
  - Unbalanced work and personal life
  - Comparing yourself to others
  - Saying “yes” to everything



# Remedy:

- **Students**
  - **Know your students!**
  - **Realize learning takes time**
  - **Normal is relative (not every student grew up the way you did)**
- **You**
  - **Take time for yourself!**
  - **Seek out a mentor**
  - **Remember, you can't take your students home with you! You can only give them 100% during the day!**

# Questions?



# Thank you for attending!

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