

## Reimagining “Classroom Management” for Equity Q&A

**Q: How do you get buy in from teachers that behaviors do not need to be punished, but rather given logical consequences? How do you help shift the mindset to define safety?**

**A:** I believe the charge is to get teachers to work towards development and discipline over punishment. The work of supporting student learning is about giving students multiple opportunities to build the type of environment needed for them to learn. Helping teachers understand that they are building a learning environment – not a prison or correctional facility is essential. This means that the mindset has to be about building a climate of mutual respect, care, and learning. Indeed, the classroom is not only a teacher’s space but the space of all.

Safety has to be considered beyond the physical. Too many students experience psychological, emotional, social danger and harm as a result of how schools are structured.

**Q: How could we involve parents that had a bad experience with school on their children education?**

**A:** First, we must broaden our talk and definition from parents to families. Families/Parents have to feel respected and cared about just as teachers/educators and students. Because parents/families who have had negative experiences in schools themselves likely did not feel cared about and did not have the kinds of relationships necessary for success, it is essential for educators to shift that by recognizing that parents have so many assets to offer. This means that educators defer to parents on decisions, call and text parents/families with positive updates about their children, visit outside of school spaces where they are likely to see parents and families to demonstrate community and solidarity, and invite families into the school to help co-create the spaces. Perhaps most importantly, explicitly stating to families/parents how much they are valued and needed is important.

**Q: What could we do as educators of students from low socioeconomic status to deliver on the promise that education and hard effort will deliver a better life opportunity for them? There are so many elements beyond our control. I do not want to give up on this idea, but reality shows more barriers every day for my students and their families.**

**A:** I believe we have to be honest with students that everyone will struggle in society and that for some they will experience more discrimination and obstacles due to their race, religion, SES, language, sexual orientation and/or gender for instance. I don’t believe we should ever stop pushing, supporting or advancing a hard work narrative, but we do need to be honest with students about the obstacles we will face. This honesty, I believe, will help students/people remain sane when they experience discrimination.

**Q: I have some preservice teachers here listening to your talk. Any advice as they go into their after school practicum with a large ELL population. What are some great ways to engage students from the beginning? You have an audience of 11 students at Western Washington University**

**A:** I believe your teachers will want first and foremost to recognize and verbalize the importance of language with identity. In other words, ELL populations are deeply connected to their language. Educators should see language diversity as an asset and build on – add to students' first language. The idea is to use students' first language as the primary source of instruction and then build out as appropriate.