Classroom Routines and Procedures

Establishing clear classroom routines and procedures is necessary for ensuring that your classroom runs smoothly. Students need to know what is expected of them in your classroom. To ensure that you have smooth transitions throughout the day, think carefully about the routines for which you must plan. Clarify them in your mind. It may be helpful to make a list of transitional times throughout the day (see the list below to help you get started!). Other teachers or your mentor can serve as resources by sharing their own classroom procedures and routines.

Before establishing specific procedures or routines, it is necessary to have a discussion with students about their importance. During this discussion, you should be able to talk about the rationale behind various routines. When possible, invite students to create procedures with you. This process can nurture a sense of ownership and community in your classroom.

In establishing procedures or routines, it is important to:

- Ensure that students understand the reason for the routine.
- Clarify the procedure through modeling.
- Re-teach and reinforce frequently until the expected behavior is established and automatic.
- Allow students opportunities to practice the routine through rehearsal.
- Try not to overwhelm students by teaching too many routines at once. The process of establishing routines and procedures may take several days.
- Remember that it will probably be necessary to revisit this process as you see the need.

The following list may help you get started in thinking about times during the day for which you may want to establish procedures and routines:

- Beginning the day
- Entering and exiting the classroom
- Labeling papers
- Collection and distribution of papers
- Signaling for quiet and attention
- Appropriate times for moving around the room
- Emergency drills and procedures
- Going to the restroom
- Moving throughout the school
- Late arrival
- Grading and homework policies (including make-up work)
- Asking questions
- Finishing an assignment early
- Dismissal

Resource:
The University of North Carolina’s Education Department and the Learn NC website at: http://www.learnnc.org/