

## Connect Before Correct

Research has shown that a connection at school is the primary factor for academic achievement. Students who feel "felt" are much more likely to be able to work with you instead of against you. Small connections make a difference! Small investments = big change.

Here's how to CONNECT before you CORRECT:

Example. 1. CONNECT: Validate feelings, "I see you are frustrated."

CORRECT: It's okay to feel what you feel, but it's not okay to slam your book.

2. CONNECT: Verbalize caring, "I care about what you have to say."

CORRECT: "Let's find some time after class to come up with some ideas that will work for you. We need to get back to this project."

Connect by acknowledging feelings: "It seems like you feel \_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_ and you wish \_\_\_\_."

- Connect by meeting the student calmly and at eye level: "I notice(d) that \_\_\_\_ and it is time to \_\_\_\_."
- Connect by sharing what you heard first, then offering choices: "I hear that you don't like this assignment \_\_\_\_ and feel \_\_\_\_\_. You can \_\_\_\_\_ or you could \_\_\_\_\_. (Note that for this to be effective the choices must be respectful to you and the student.)"
- Connect by appreciating: "I enjoy having you in my class. Why do you think I asked you to step out in the hall? What is your plan for taking care of this?"

Other ways to increase CONNECTION:

- Put "money in the bank:" Make sure you connect with your students as they enter the room. Greet them by name. If you know or notice something unique to them on that day include it in your greeting.
- Collaborate: Is there one student in particular, you find hard to reach? Enlist the help of five other adults in the school who are willing to greet that student by name at least once a day.
- Try the 2 x 10 Rule

### 2 x 10 Rule

- Do 2 encouraging things for 10 days in a row. (2 weeks of school).

It could be:

- A simple post it note.
- A warm welcome into the classroom.
- Asking a question about their game last night.
- Descriptive or appreciative encouragement.
- Listening to his or her story.
- Letting your student teach you something.
- Give your student a meaningful job.

Start with one student. Observe. What changes do you see in 2 weeks?