Schools That Matter™

"Let us put our minds together to see what kind of life we can build for our children."   Lakota leader Sitting Bull

Well-being happens when fundamental needs are met – to be loved, capable, powerful, loving, safe and adventurous. These needs are met through experiences of belonging, mastery, independence and generosity and environments of safety and adventure.

How can schools encourage well-being?

- **<u>Focus on the well-being of the adults as well as the students.</u>**

  "In our rush to reform education, we have forgotten a simple truth: reform will never be achieved by appropriations, restructuring schools, rewriting curricula, and revising texts if we continue to demean and dishearten the human resource called the teacher on whom so much depends." Parker Palmer

  Teachers' needs are nurtured through personal and professional development. Schools That Matter encourage emotional and social intelligence as well as instructional competence.

- **<u>Create experiences of belonging, mastery, independence and generosity in environments of safety and adventure.</u>**

  The best experiences ultimately affirm that "I am loved" (belonging); "I can succeed" (mastery); "I have power to make decisions" (independence); and "I have a purpose" (generosity).

  Use these questions to help you critique planned experiences.
  1. Does the experience generate mostly positive emotions?
  2. Does the experience engage in ways that seems to make time fly by?
  3. For the social experiences, does it build positive relationships?
  4. Is the experience meaningful?
  5. Are you achieving or learning?

"The spirit" of belonging, mastery, independence and generosity shared in Reclaiming Youth at Risk: Our Hope for the Future by Larry Brendtro, Martin Brokenleg and Steve Van Bockern with suggested goals to live out that spirit.

Spirit of Belonging
- A larger circle of significant adults serve as teachers of younger persons, not just the biological parents.
- Each child belonged; wherever it strayed, it was at home, for all claimed relationship.
- The ultimate test of kinship was behavior, not blood. Relationships were manufactured for persons left out.
- The use of quiet, soft-spoken manner of dealing with others which results from a world view that all belong to one another and should be treated accordingly.
- Sense of belonging extended to nature. Stories taught that if harmony was upset, tragedies resulted. Ecological balance is a way of ensuring balance in one's own life.
- Belonging can be expressed in cross-generational relationships and telling of stories.
- Community leaders are not isolated.
- Group influence is important.
- Seem to live out the ideal that "living with and loving other human beings who return that love is the mot strengthening and salubrious emotional experience in the world."

   Suggested Goals for belonging:
   - ✓ *I am kind to my classmates and younger children in the school.*
   - ✓ *I act like a good relative to everyone in my school.*
   - ✓ *I follow rules to help make our school a good place for everyone.*
   - ✓ *When someone doesn't have a friend, I find ways to be friendly to that person.*
   - ✓ *I don't yell or scream or demand to get my way.*
   - ✓ *I treat the school in ways that keep it attractive and working for everyone.*
   - ✓ *I balance my listening and talking.*
   - ✓ *I contribute to group work and help others in my group belong.*

Spirit of Mastery
- Purpose of native education was to develop cognitive, physical, social and spiritual competence.
- Self-control and self-restraint were important to learn.
- Wisdom came from listening to and observing elders.
- Ceremonies and oral legends transmitted ideals.
- Stories were used to teach ways of living and perceiving the world. Stories are compatible with the way the brain works.
- Cultivated by games and creative play which simulated adult responsibilities.
- Games challenged, were fun, enhanced skills.
- Art was about making articles of utility and adornment; it was an integral part of everything that was created.
- Play was encouraged.
- Older children were given responsibility caring for younger children.
- Mastery produced social recognition and inner satisfaction. You accept recognition with humility; you are generous in your praise of others' accomplishments. Striving was for attainment of a personal goal, not being superior to one's opponent.
- The overall simple wisdom… all need to feel competent so all must be encouraged in their competency. Success became a possession of the many, not the privileged few.

Suggested goals for mastery:
- ✓ *I want my body to be stronger, quicker and lighter.*
- ✓ *I want my mind to get smart in _____.*
- ✓ *I can get along with others.*
- ✓ *I consider important things in life.*
- ✓ *I have self-control and self-restraint.*
- ✓ *I listen and learn from my teachers and other elders.*
- ✓ *I participate in school rituals and activities so that I can learn from them.*
- ✓ *I can tell a good story.*
- ✓ *I play games fairly.*
- ✓ *I am getting better at games.*
- ✓ *I express myself creatively.*
- ✓ *I teach my classmates and young children the things that I can do well.*
- ✓ *I feel good when I learn something new.*
- ✓ *I encourage others to do well.*

Spirit of Independence
- Playing a meaningful role in the tribe created personal power. Without it, people resort to various labels of "learned helplessness", absent of an internal locus of control, or lack intrinsic motivation.
- The child must first have opportunities to be dependent in order to become independent. Autonomy is always balanced with social demands.
- A high value was placed on individual freedom.
- Training in self-management began in early childhood.
- Persons answered to self-imposed goals and not to the demands of others.
- Instead of obedience training, native children was influenced by the concept of guidance without interference.
- Elders teach values and provide models, but the child is given increasing opportunities to learn to make choices without coercion.
- Any external discipline had the purpose of building internal discipline.
- You can not make a child responsible by imposing one's own will on them.
- Children need to be allowed to work things out for themselves.
- Children must be approached with maturity and dignity.
- The main strategy of behavior control was kindly lectures; not a pedantic or preaching lecture.
- The lecture often explains how the behavior would hurt or disappoint others or how cruel or cowardly ways would result in no friends (inductive discipline).
- Children were not offered prizes or rewards for doing something well. The achievement itself was the appropriate reward.
- In place of rewards and punishments were modeling, group influence, discussion and positive expectations.
- Discipline never really succeeds if it does not recognize the universal need of all persons to be free, to be in control of themselves, and to be able to influence others.
- It is necessary to blend autonomy with belonging.

Suggested goals for independence:
- ✓ *I make good decisions and choices.*
- ✓ *I will do things that I know are good for me even when I don't want to do them.*
- ✓ *I'm in charge of myself.*
- ✓ *I am my own boss but I pay attention to what others think is good for me.*
- ✓ *I can brush my teeth, wash my body, clean-up after myself and do what is necessary to take care of myself.*
- ✓ *I have goals that I want to meet.*
- ✓ *I have mentors who guide me as I grow older.*
- ✓ *I know that when I follow good rules that help me become that person I want to be.*
- ✓ *I am able to work out my problems by myself; sometimes I have to ask for help.*
- ✓ *I treat others with dignity and kindness.*
- ✓ *I listen to wise people.*
- ✓ *I act in ways not to hurt others.*
- ✓ *I don't need rewards like candy to do my work. I do it because I know it is important.*
- ✓ *I like to influence others in healthy ways.*

Spirit of Generosity
- Children were taught in circles often by elders telling them what to expect in life and how to lead good lives.
- The highest virtue was to be generous and unselfish.
- Training in altruism began in earliest life.
- Prestige was accorded those who gave unreservedly.
- Those who had nothing to give were pitied.
- To accumulate property for its own sake was disgraceful.
- Material goods were acquired to better help others.
- Core values of sharing and community responsibility were deeply ingrained.
- Valued simplicity, generosity and nonmaterialism.
- A fundamental tenet is a responsibility for the welfare of all others.

Suggested goals for generosity:
- ✓ *I am a good person.*
- ✓ *I have something important to do in my school or classroom.*
- ✓ *I am unselfish.*
- ✓ *I have gifts to share and I do share them.*
- ✓ *When I have extra things, I share them because it helps others.*
- ✓ *I know it is my responsibility to help my school, my teacher and my classmates.*
- ✓ *The most important gift I have to share is myself, not my toys or my possessions.*
- ✓ *I share what I know, a helping hand and my spirit of caring.*
- ✓ *I volunteer on projects that I know will help others.*

Circle of Courage Goal Setting
Adapted from the Ruth Buck Elementary School, Regina School District

Generosity: A student who is generous:
- Does something good and does not expect anything in return
- Recognizes that everyone has a story to tell
- Helps or teaches others

Belonging: A student who demonstrates belonging
- Includes others
- Helps people feel safe
- Respects people for who they are

Student's name
_____

Goal

Strength

Goal

Strength

Strength

Goal

Goal

Strength
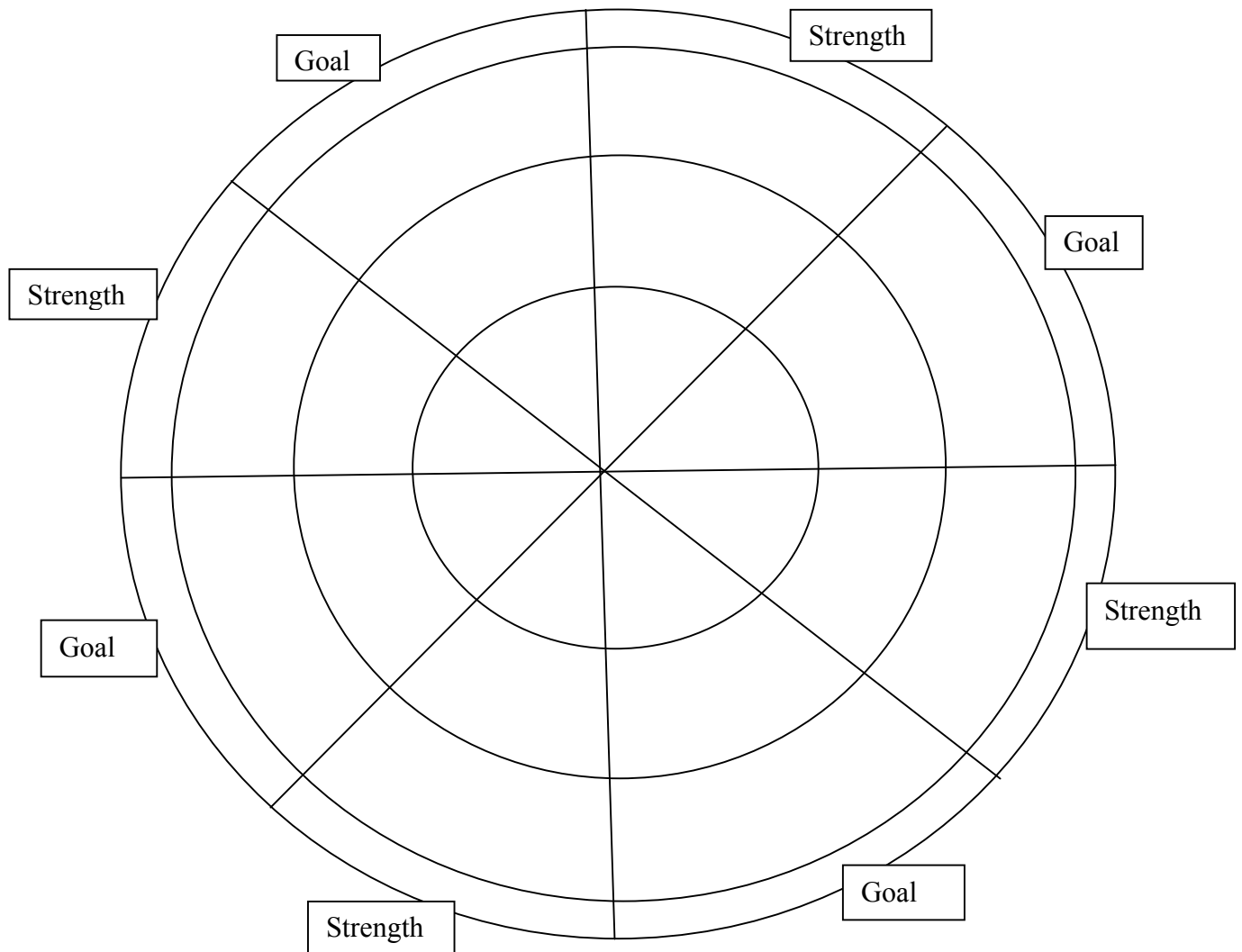
Independence: A student who is independent:
- Takes responsibility for your actions
- Knows how your actions impact you and your environment
- Is a responsible and positive leader

Mastery: A student who demonstrates mastery:
- Completes a task without giving up
- Believes that practice makes perfect
- Sets goals and strives to achieve them

Schools That Matter Assessment Instrument

This assessment can be used both pre-and post professional development. It contains an abbreviated list of the indicators that could be used to identify a school that promotes well-being. Respondents indicate their perceptions related to how the school is meeting the mission. It will guide schools in determining their action plans and goals for the coming year.

Circle 1 if the statement is always true. Circle 2 if it is almost always true; 3 if the statement is sometimes true or 4 if you perceive the statement to be almost never true. Circle 5 if the statement is never true.	Always True	Almost Always True	Sometimes	Almost Never True	Never True	School_____ Date_____ Gender_____ Years of employment _____ Position or grade _____
I. Belonging (attachment)						
The school meets the belonging needs of all students.	1	2	3	4	5	
1. The school is a warm, friendly and welcoming place for all	1	2	3	4	5	
2. The school is a safe and secure place	1	2	3	4	5	
3. The school connects children in positive relationships with healthy, loving adults and other youth	1	2	3	4	5	
4. The school has input from all constituents	1	2	3	4	5	
The school meets the mastery needs of all students	1	2	3	4	5	
1. The school meets rigorous academic standards for all children in order that they may reach their capacities	1	2	3	4	5	
2. The school teaches emotional and social skills that are developmentally appropriate	1	2	3	4	5	
3. The school honors multiple ways of knowing and learning	1	2	3	4	5	
4. The school makes sure students experience success	1	2	3	4	5	

Circle 1 if the statement is always true. Circle 2 if it is almost always true; 3 if the statement is sometimes true or 4 if you perceive the statement to be almost never true. Circle 5 if the statement is never true.	Always True	Almost Always True	Sometimes	Almost Never True	Never True	Comments
III. Independence (autonomy)						
The school meets the independence needs of all students	1	2	3	4	5	
1. The school ensures ongoing assistance, support and encouragement to and from the home	1	2	3	4	5	
2. The school gives and asks students for developmentally appropriate freedom and responsibility	1	2	3	4	5	
3. The school promotes regulating behavior through teaching and not punishment	1	2	3	4	5	
4. The school emphasizes "strength-discovering" assessments	1	2	3	4	5	
IV. Generosity (altruism)						
The school meets the generosity needs of all students	1	2	3	4	5	
1. The school provides opportunities for students to serve in satisfying ways	1	2	3	4	5	
2. The school promotes hope and optimism through rituals and ceremony	1	2	3	4	5	
3. The school is a place of caring, compassion, empathy and kindness	1	2	3	4	5	
4. The school promotes wellness of body, mind and spirit	1	2	3	4	5	

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Thrive and Flourish

Martin Seligman's five elements necessary for well-being:
Positive Emotion (happiness and life satisfaction)
Engagement (Were you completely absorbed in the task?)
Positive **R**elationships (other people are important)
Meaning (serving something bigger than self)
Accomplishment (achievement)

The Kindness Exercise: Find one wholly unexpected kind thing to do tomorrow and just do it.

The Gratitude Visit: Write a letter of gratitude to an individual and deliver it in person. The letter should be concrete and about three hundred words: be specific about what she did for you and how it affected your life. Let her know what you are doing now, and mention how you often remember what she did. Make it sing! Once written, meet with the person and surprise them with your letter. Take your time reading it. Note the reactions. Don't let them interrupt. Discuss when done.

What-Went-Well Exercise (or Three Blessings): For a week, set aside ten minutes and write down three things that went well today and why they went well. You may journal or use a computer but it is important to have a physical record of what you wrote. The ideas can be important ("My sister just gave birth to a healthy baby boy") or not ("My husband picked up my favorite dessert on the way home from work"). Next to each positive event, answer the question "Why did this happen?" (i.e. "My husband was thoughtful" or "I reminded him").

Active, Constructive Responding

A person shares a positive event	Type of response	Your response
I received a promotion at work!	*Active and Constructive*	Great! I am proud of you. Tell me all about it! Where were you when the boss told you? What did he say? How did you react! We should celebrate. Nonverbal: maintain eye contact, positive emotions, genuine smiling, touching, laughing
	Passive and Constructive	"That is nice". Nonverbal: little to no active emotional expression.
	Active and Destructive	"Sounds like a lot responsibility to take on. Are you going to spend fewer nights at home? Nonverbal: furrowed brow, frowning
	Passive and Destructive	"What's for dinner?" Nonverbal: no eye contact, turn away.

Breath: Teach children to take three breaths to self-regulate

Encourage children to: smile, be curious, relax, yawn, exercise, talk to others, hope

Teach emotional intelligence:

- Knowing one's emotions, self-awareness, recognizing a feeling as it happens
- Ability to manage our emotions
- Being able to motivate one's self
- Being able to recognize emotions in others; empathy
- Being able to create healthy relationships
  - Adapted from Peter Salovey

The Conflict Cycle
Learning how to deal with troubled children can become a way of life not a bag of tricks. That way of life recognizes fair play, goodness, concern, respect for others and property and a sense that I can help a child grow.

How the Conflict Cycle works
1. A stressful situation occurs.
2. The stress creates feelings and thoughts in a child that are affected by the child's sense of self and possible irrational thinking patterns - "adults are always picking on me."
3. The feelings and thoughts often lead to coping behaviors that are seen as negative: lying, cheating, hitting, swearing, and rationalizing.
4. The child's behavior creates stress in an adult.
5. A stressed and untrained adult begins to mirror the child's feelings and thoughts and eventually many of the child's behavior: demanding, scolding, yelling, swearing, and displaying rancor.
6. The adult's behavior creates additional stress for the child.
7. The cycle begins again but increases in intensity. Eventually there may be a "blow-up".

   Breaking the conflict cycle
- Know that adults are the ones who should take the responsibility to disengage
- Be in touch with your own feelings
- Understand how the child's feelings and behavior can be mirrored by the adult
- Verbalize your feelings with *I messages* rather than *you messages*
- Decode and affirm the student's feelings, not the inappropriate behavior
- Know something about the psychological defenses that humans use
- Know the child
- Know yourself
- Get help when needed
             Feelings are OK when you have them.   Don't be had by them.

Managing Behavior
Remember, managing behavior is not the same as changing behavior but sometimes we can do simple things just to keep things sane in the classroom:

- Planned ignoring: don't pay attention to those things that don't matter
- Proximity control: move into the child's space in respectful ways
- Signal interference: cue the child
- Redirection: find something new to focus on
- Support from routine: security in routine
- Support from restructuring: motivation through creative effort
- Direct appeal to values: state the value; ask the child for cooperation
- Support through humor: laughter is good medicine
                                        From Life Space Crisis Intervention, Nick Long and others

Classroom Rules (Values)
Everyone has the right to live safely.
Everyone has the right to learn.
Everyone has the responsibility to be polite.
Everyone has the responsibility to be honest.
Everyone has the responsibility to use time wisely.

from J. M. Woodbury, University of Southern Mississippi

Restorative Justice in our Schools

Restorative Justice is…	Restorative Justice isn't…
Maximizing a learning opportunity	attacking a child for mistakes and failures
A healing response	punishment
A purpose driven response	reactive
Victim centered	offender centered
Focus on making things right	focus on the offense
Creating & fostering relationships	alienation or isolation
Empowering	humiliating
Individualized	one size fits all
Healing	hurting
Social and emotional growth	coercive
Respectful	disrespectful
Teaching and learning	doing time
Motivating	intimidating
Long-term	short-term

Restorative Justice Center as developed by Hawthorne Elementary Staff, Sioux Falls, SD; a program of caring for K-5 students

3:00 Preparation for staff (art supplies in place, display ground rules, review the students Circle of Courage action plans in each student's folder)

3:15 Students report to the RJC room; hang up books, and coats, enter quietly and check in with the facilitator. Before arriving, an adult has assisted the child in filling out a from that provides information about the action that was destructive or dangerous and the victim's statement (if there was one)

3:20 Opening the Circle. Students and the facilitators sit in a circle on the floor and introduce each other. For example, "Hi, I'm Lisa". Next person says, "Hi, I'm Jordan and this is Lisa" and so on.
The goal is stated: To make things better for others, myself and the school.
State the ground rules: This is a safe place; What is said here stays here; listen respectfully; you only share if you want to; we work to fix things that were broken through destructive, frightening or dangerous behavior.
Sign confidentiality waivers (if the person is there for the first time)
Receive instructions: Students are grouped according to the type of behavior that occurred; either destructive or dangerous so that they can work together to develop solutions

3:30 Expressions. Students may use art materials to assist in expressing what happened in the event, to explore their feelings and to work out ways to fix the problems

3:40 Group Work & Action Plan. Within small groups, students show/tell what they have determined will prevent future dangerous or destructive behaviors. The groups will generate ideas for "actions of apology" that will help restore the community (i.e. community service, expression of remorse, self-education). This plan is implemented the next day if possible.

3:55 Celebrations & Closing the Circle. Students may share success "of new beginnings" with the whole group. Facilitators and students stand in a circle and say for example: Lisa turns to Jordan and says, "I see you Jordan and I'm here to support you". Jordan returns the saying to Lisa, then turns to LeeAnna… "LeeAnna, I see you and I'm here to support you."

4:00 The room is put back in order, students line up and are escorted to the exit.

<u>**Best Practice Instruction**</u>

A place to begin in "doing" best practice instruction
- Reading materials should be at the child's reading level
- Use questioning strategies that improve learning
  Stay away from questions that:
  > "Guess what is in my head"
  > "Did you do your assignment?"
  > "Give me the right answer, quickly!"

  Guide discussion rather than take turns:

  Turn taking
  Defined: teacher talk is mostly closed ended question asking; student talk is mostly short answer response to teacher only
  Sometimes legitimate: quiz students, review
  Classroom atmosphere: passive, short wait and think time, low level questions, students dependent on teacher

  Guided Discussion
  > Defined: careful use of open-ended questions; interaction among students
  > Purpose: develop concepts, clarify meaning
  > Classroom environment: active, longer wait and think time, high level
  > Questions, good listening, students are interdependent

  Increase wait and think time. When you wait, these good things happen:
  - ✓ Length of responses increase
  - ✓ Unsolicited responses increase
  - ✓ Decrease in a failure to respond
  - ✓ Increase in speculative thinking
  - ✓ Increase of questions by students
  - ✓ Increase in the "thoughtful" pupil's contributions
  - ✓ Increase in student interactions

- Research suggests a number of instructional techniques that can help motivate and encourage learning. Marzano and his colleagues (<u>Classroom Instruction that Works</u> by Robert Marzano, Debra Pickering and Jane Pollock, Association for Curriculum Development, 2001) have identified nine instructional strategies that effective teachers use. Effective teachers help students:
  - ✓ identify similarities and differences
  - ✓ summarize and learn how to take notes
  - ✓ reinforce efforts and provide appropriate recognition
  - ✓ give helpful homework and practice
  - ✓ use nonlinguistic representations
  - ✓ use cooperative learning
  - ✓ set objectives and provide feedback
  - ✓ generate and test hypotheses
  - ✓ and they use cues, quality questions and advance organizers

- Cooperative tests. Students work on some tests together, debating and determining a consensus on the right answer.
- Jigsaw puzzle method. One form of the jigsaw method happens when an article is cut in pieces. Students, in groups of five, are randomly given the pieces. They read and understand their section and teach it to the others. Finally, the pieces are taped back together in the right order.
- Whole class drama. Students can act out the content of some subject.
- Open and closed sorts. Students are asked to organize lists of information. Sometimes the categories are given (closed sort) and other times they get to make the categories (open sort). For example, students are given a list of twenty "famous" people. A closed sort would ask them to

sort under given categories (i.e. living or deceased, politics or entertainment) while an open sort would leave it up to the students to determine the categories.
- Call on students randomly not just those with raised hands
- Utilize "think-pair-share"
- Ask follow up questions: Why? Do you agree? Can you elaborate? Tell me more.
- Withhold judgment
- Ask for a summary from others to promote active listening
- Survey the class (How many people agree with Debra's interpretation… thumbs up, or thumbs down)
- Allow for student calling: "Richard, will you please call on someone else to respond?"
- Ask students to "unpack their thinking". When students unpack their thinking, they learn to share aloud the thoughts, feelings and perceptions that are going on in their heads.

Classroom meetings

- create opportunities for real student involvement
- search for win/win solutions to problems
- promote listening in non-judgmental ways
- build community
- are based on democratic values
- help moral development

  When holding classroom meetings:

- always provide positive acknowledgments, compliments, appreciations
- the agenda can be pre-prepared or you can go into the meeting with an open agenda
- the intent can be to share feelings, a particular incident, consequences of behavior, thoughts without fixing a problem or all of the above
- if problem solving is required:
  - o Clear statement of problem
  - o Brainstorm solutions (non-judgmental)
  - o Discuss pros/cons of possible solutions
  - o Decide on best solution through consensus building

End your classroom meeting with an understanding of what happened or is going to happen/change