Student Suggestions for How Teachers Can React to Difficult Circumstances

Embracing the struggle: effectively building relationships in high schools

**Being Aware/Sensitive To Problems Outside of School**

* Teachers shouldn’t underestimate students. There are more things we deal with outside of school.
* Be sensitive to a student’s needs. Be understanding if they have problems at home that incapacitate them.
* Teachers should not put their personal feelings towards students and should take into consideration the student’s life outside of the classroom.
* Teachers shouldn’t always think that a student is being rude or disrespectful. They could be having problems at home so they could be feeling sad or angry.
* Instead of putting the student out there, they should step out of class with them so that the outcome can be different.
* Teachers don’t know what happens or goes on in our lives so saying that it’s the student’s fault for not completing work is a false accusation.
* What needs to be focused on is the students experiencing real problems. Violence of any kind, drug abuse, death of friends or loved ones.

**Responding to a Disruptive Situation**

* Teachers should talk calmly and not yell. Although students can start yelling there are other ways to solve the issue.
* Pull the student aside and ask the student what the problem is. Don’t jump to conclusions and understand what the student is saying.
* If a kid is angry, you should try to calm them down right away - give them a quick break and talk to them later.
* Listen to students. Give students a chance before you call discipline. Don’t target one student if it involves more than one.
* Hold them back after school and talk to them instead of calling them out in class.
* Before trying to call people because you can’t handle the class, talk to the student one on one. If that doesn’t work and the student actually is a jerk, get help, but don’t do things that are going to make the situation worse.
* Just stop yelling at students.
* The teacher’s reactions shouldn’t be based on how the students act.
* Teachers should communicate with the student about the situation. Both sides should have the opportunity to express what they have to say about the situation.

**Relating and Talking to Students**

* Teachers need to be real and stop covering situations. If a student isn’t doing well, they aren’t doing well. Schools fail at telling students the truth.
* Teachers should be more open and less showy, and, in general, allow students some time to work and think on their own.
* Teachers should try to understand where the student is coming from and try to be open minded about their feelings as well.
* Teachers shouldn’t favor anyone.
* Perhaps instead of having that “it’s my way or the highway” attitude, ask the class what might work best for them to make the class run smoother.
* Many students struggle in class and feel as though teachers don’t “help” them enough to understand. I think students would feel more comfortable in the classroom if there was a shared respect between teachers and students.
* Do not manage your class different than everyone else in the school.