

# Advocacy Ideas

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## Building Relationships

- Greet at the door every day or at the school bus
- Bringing up student's interests
- Call students by their name regularly (this can make them feel noticed and supported)
- Give students positive nicknames (for instance, a Spanish teacher I knew called all the girls "chicas bonitas" or beautiful girls to instill confidence and worth)
- Check-In with students if you notice changes in behavior or if they are by alone
- If you see a student who has their head down or is late to class, not penalizing them but giving space and then checking in with them later
- Discipline is not goal, instead ask why the child is acting the way they are and see if you can assist them in calming down or completing the cycle of emotions they are feeling. The penalizing discipline could cause them to react worse.

## Minor Adjustments

- Marking papers with the number of questions they got right, instead of what they got wrong.
- Engage students in a daily check-in for mood: could use zones of regulation, Popsicle sticks in colored buckets, color cards, etc.
- "Calm interruptions": have breathing sessions before tests or have a calm moment everyday where students can center themselves
- Social emotional learning: lessons about understanding one's emotions and ways they can calm themselves down and recognizing emotion in others could help students take charge of their own emotions.
- Create a corner in the room where students can go to calm themselves down: allow them to do this whenever necessary so long as they are not overusing it.
- Have a stuffed animal buddy available in class: a student is able to hold onto the calming buddy and they may feel more comforted and soothed.
- Fill bags with sand students can use as a weighting comfort if they are anxious.

## Collaboration & Coordination

- Talk with other teachers about how you had a breakthrough with a student or what you have noticed that leads them to be more successful.
- Talk positively about your students, using a mindset of what happened to them instead of blaming them for their behaviors.
- If you have time and ability to do so, refer students to outside help, like CCS (Comprehensive Community Services) in your county, counseling, or even a mentoring program like Big Brothers, Big Sisters.
- Be actively involved with your student's parents to give yourself a greater understanding of the stressors the child may be facing at home.
- Talk with administration and ask them if they are willing to support you in your advocacy by designating a room in the school or calm, or if the nurse or principal is willing to help students who need a break during the day.
- Educate your colleagues about what you have learned so they can build advocacy into their classrooms