PREP: PAUSE, RESET, ESTABLISH EXPECTATIONS, AND PROCEED. A PRACTICAL APPROACH FOR CLASSROOM TRANSITIONS

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Abstract - Teachers across grade levels and content areas face a myriad of challenges in the classroom. From inconsistent attendance to disruptive behaviors, these challenges can have dire impact on the educational space, untimely leading to a loss of instructional time and student disenfranchisement from learning. While these challenges are not new to the educational landscape, the post-COVID classroom has, in many instances, been more severely impacted by behaviors that are not conducive to learning. Despite the mounting challenges, the role of the teacher remains unchanged - that is, to create and maintain a safe environment that is conducive to learning, and promote successful learning outcomes. Accomplishing this feat is no easy task. Yet, there are steps teachers can - indeed, must - take to better set themselves and their students up for success. Key to achieving this success is effective classroom transitions. This paper presents a four-step approach for teachers to engage in successful classroom transitions to promote meaningful student engagement and active positive learning outcomes.

The transition strategy I will explore is called PREP (Pause, Reset, Establish Expectations, and Proceed). I developed this strategy in my work as a Residency Director for my university's teacher residency program. In this role, I am tasked with coaching emerging teachers and their in-service teaching mentors in the field, as well as providing mentorship to special education resident teachers pursuing teaching degrees in the program. As a teacher educator, being in Middle and High school classrooms provides an intricate and critical understanding of the challenges, opportunities, and possibilities in the classroom. For this paper, I will explore how teachers can optimize the opportunities PREP provides to keep students engaged and, thus, improving student achievement. I will describe the approach, explain its use, and provide case-study examples of its classroom application.

Keywords - Classroom Management, Transition Strategies, Classroom Transition, Student Engagement, Teaching Strategies