

Preface

I have worked with some phenomenal teachers, and I have worked with some who struggled with classroom management. I was one of those who struggled. My first year I would go home exhausted, my tongue swollen from talking so much, and frustrated because I had been reacting to student behavior all day. I wasn't enjoying myself, and I was sure my students held the same sentiment.

That summer I was determined to make a change. My ultimate goal was to have a calm, peaceful classroom. I worked long hours creating a plan. I noticed a couple of tendencies where I was reactive in addressing student behavior, and my challenges often centered on breakdowns in communication. The next year I was prepared. I developed and implemented my strategies with great success. Teachers began to notice a change, particularly in how calm I was throughout the day. New teachers wanted to know my secret.

This was the beginning of the CALM Management techniques. CALM stands for Communication, Accountability, Leadership, and Motivation. Communication because I wanted to develop my skills and my students' skills in communicating in a more clear, concise, and respectful manner. Accountability because I needed a system that would develop students as independent thinkers and that would make them accountable for their behavior and academic success. Leadership because it's important for teachers and students to develop respectful relationships and to cocreate a culture of support, encouragement, and empowerment. And finally, motivation is key to inspiring a calm classroom where innovation and creativity flourish.

When I developed CALM, it did not mean all students would be quiet, sitting in rows and being compliant. Compliance does not equal engagement. A CALM classroom may look and sound different every day. Yes, there may be days when students are quiet while working in groups or independently. But there also may be times when the classroom appears chaotic. However, the students are engaged in group activities. Their voices

are raised because they are talking about their projects, exchanging ideas, and able to work as a team. Both examples are appropriate. Quiet and chaotic are part of CALM; the key element is *engagement*.

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This book isn't just about why it's important to have a well-managed classroom. It gives the *how*. As educators, we are fairly well versed in the importance of having good classroom management skills; this book gives you actual strategies and tools you can implement the next day. They apply to any level for Grades K–12. There are communication models for teachers and students, models for collaborative work groups, and models that teach students how to be respectful to themselves and their classmates.

Developing classroom management skills and techniques that work can be extremely challenging for classroom teachers, especially new teachers. The purpose for this book is to provide educators with *proactive* strategies that address behavior management with all students. The proactive strategies consist of teaching behavior expectations that are primarily addressed within the first month of school.

CALM is centered on creating a culture of community, of developing relationships, respect, and trust by engaging in respectful conversations. The communication models for teachers and students are shown throughout the book and are in response to the frequently asked question: *What do you say when ____* [insert inappropriate behavior]? All student and teacher names have been changed to protect their privacy.

It is my hope that the CALM Management strategies offered in this book will provide a solid reference for teachers in developing a classroom that centers on positive behavior expectations, respect, building relationships, and trust.

FIGURE 0.1 CALM Management

