Working with Students Who are Difficult

Summary of Presentation
Every year we encounter a few students who somehow manage to “get under our skin.” They seem to know intuitively our buttons that trigger frustration and discouragement—and they are willing to push all of them. Learn strategies to work with hard-to-reach students—those who are acting out as well as those who may be quiet and unengaged.

These button-pushing students who choose to act out do so for a reason. Their misbehavior is a plea for affection and care—for someone who will believe in them. The presenters will discuss strategies for making connections with students, maintaining consistency and structure, and confronting inappropriate behaviors. Through the use of proven strategies, along with a sense of care, the classroom can become a place of order as well as a place of hope.

Speaker Biography
Dr. Joshua L. Patterson is an assistant principal at Boiling Springs Intermediate School in Spartanburg, SC. He is a graduate of Furman University and a member of KDP’s Xi Epsilon chapter. He was a fourth grade teacher.

Lauren E. Peters is a National Board Certified eighth-grade science teacher at Fairforest Middle School in Spartanburg, SC. She has a master’s degree in special education and is pursuing a second master’s in administration from Converse College. Ms. Peters also is a member of the Xi Epsilon chapter. She is qualified in K-8.

Time of Webcast: – 1 hr. 5 min.

Intended Audience: all teachers

Objectives:
• Gain practical strategies for dealing with difficult students.
• Learn to deal with “inclusion” students and students who have IEPs.
• Find ways to deal with students proactively in a way that joins your classroom together in one whole unit where every student feels appreciated and students don’t feel they need to act out to get attention.

Pre-Questions on the Topic:
1. What are three ways that you can start early and set the tone with your students and their parents?
2. Do you know your students’ stories? How do the stories affect their learning?
3. How do you connect with your students?

Questions to Answer During the Podcast:
1. How do you praise positively? Who can you do this with in the next week?
2. How can you use your students’ stories to positively train your students rather than reinforcing bad habits acquired at home?
3. How are expectations, promises, threats, rewards, and consequences interwoven? How will you follow through on your expectations?
4. Are your expectations realistic? What particular behavior is most critical for you to work on for each student? How will you reward the steps the students take in the right direction?
5. How do you or will you create promising opportunities for your difficult students?

Questions for Further Exploration:
As a new teacher, how will you be able to use the strategies from this webinar to create a safe and caring environment for your students?
Create a list of strategies you want to try when you encounter a difficult student. Put in enough detail you will be able to implement the strategy.

Additional Recommended KDP Resources:

Articles
Patterson, Joshua, & Peters, Lauren E. “Working with Students Who are Difficult.” New Teacher Advocate, Fall 2008.

Other Webcasts:
Combs, Eric. “Classroom Management for Secondary Teachers: Take Your Classroom Back”
Kyriakides, Mindy. “Unmuted: Using Student Feedback to Create an Effective Secondary Learning Environment”
Robinson, Andrea. “Let the Fun Begin: Classroom Management for Grades 3–6”
Robinson, Andrea. “Welcome to My Class: Classroom Management for PreK–2”
Rose, Richard. “Stress Management for Educators”
Schroeder, Cindy. “Your Students’ Mental Health Team Includes You”
Tusken, Vicky. “Classroom Management in the Middle School”
Tusken, Vicky. “Nitty Gritty Daily Methods: Classroom Management for Middle School”

Video
Conard, Norm. “Changing the World, One Person at a Time”

Check the KDP website (www.kdp.org) for additional and updated resources.