

In My Rear View Mirror: Reflections of a First-Year Assistant Principal (continued)

- I am so glad social media did not exist when I was in school. Our children need so much help navigating the online landscape.
- I have memorized the bus numbers of a huge number of children.
- TDT counselors provide incredible support to our students. We could all use ten more of them for each school.
- I may have earned a level 3 detective's merit badge this year.
- If you want some perspective, go to a DSS family team meeting. Then go home and hug your family.
- Ninety-eight percent of the students who told me that something was "stolen" actually left their stuff in one of their classrooms or at home. One of our PE teachers and I developed a common language to use with students: "Currently, your Chromebook charger is missing. If, after searching your classrooms, locker, and your room you do not find it, we may need to upgrade its status to stolen."
- Even the toughest kids will make a connection with you if you try.
- Consistency is a virtue. Every single person in a school wants to be treated with consistency. Consistency is also respectful.
- Do not ever assume a student knows how to act. You must teach them.
- You can never have enough adults on lunch duty.
- Parents are often much more confused by and frustrated with their students' behaviors than we can ever be. They need our help as well.
- There is a beauty to the routine and rhythm of buses arriving at and leaving a school.

Since I just "cut the tags off" of my first year, I am reluctant to give advice to others. However, the greatest takeaway for me from this year is that nurturing relationships is hugely important. Whether you are collaborating with a student on goals and incentives for a behavior plan, working with a parent on an appropriate course placement for their child, or meeting with a teacher about a new team planning initiative, collaboration is the avenue through which effective change occurs. Nothing happens in isolation, they say. Decisions regarding the education and well being of children certainly should not. Thank you to my Bulldog family for welcoming me so warmly and supporting me this year. I am forever grateful.

Have a rejuvenating summer!

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