

BEFORE-SCHOOL CHECKLIST: QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

Assistance from Other Teachers	Notes
1. Do I have a buddy teacher and/or a mentor I can ask for help?	
2. Do I have the phone numbers of teachers I can call for help?	
Schoolwide Management Policies	Notes
3. What are the school policies about rules and consequences?	
4. How should I present these to students?	
5. What are the school policies about suspensions, detentions, referrals, and keeping students after school? Are teachers encouraged or discouraged to make use of these options?	
6. What are the school policies about student use of cell phones in classes and on campus?	
7. What are the school rules about notifying parents about inappropriate student behavior?	
8. How do I get assistance from the office for emergencies, illness, or discipline problems?	
9. Is there a schoolwide management plan?	
10. Is there a policy concerning the number and types of warnings given before sending a student to the office or counselor?	
11. What are the expectations about behavior during transitions such as going to lunch or recess?	
12. What are yard and lunch duty rules? How do I enforce them?	

13. What should I do if there's a fight in my classroom? On the playground? In the parking lot?	
14. What should I do if a student reports another student's misbehavior?	
15. What is the emergency plan for violence on campus and natural disasters, such as fires, earthquakes, tornados, or floods?	
Schoolwide Issues and Concerns	Notes
16. When is the principal available? About what should s/he be contacted?	
17. When is the school nurse available and what are appropriate reasons for making a referral?	
18. Is a counselor available? What types of referrals are appropriate?	
19. How can the school or district help with diagnosing or working with students who have severe learning or behavior challenges?	
20. What janitorial services are available for my room? How do I make requests?	
21. Do I know the bell schedule? Is it posted?	
22. Do I have a district and school calendar?	
23. What is the procedure for taking roll?	
24. What is the procedure for using hall passes?	
25. What are all the different pieces of paper that go back and forth among the office, the counselors, the attendance staff, the students, and the teachers?	
In the Classroom	Notes
26. Have I determined the class rules, or will I include students in deciding those rules? If so, how?	
27. What is my policy for cell phones in the class?	

28. Have I anticipated worst-case management scenarios, and determined what to do in each case?	
29. Have I prepared a handout and/or visual chart to display rules/consequences, major class procedures, and course requirements?	
30. How will I document interactions with students and parents?	
31. Are aides available, and if so, on what schedule?	
32. Do I have keys to my classroom or other rooms to which I may need access?	
33. Do I have the necessary furniture for my room? To whom should I communicate if I need something?	
34. How will I arrange student desks?	
35. What is the procedure for the arrival of students in the morning?	
36. How do students leave at the end of the day? Do I have any bus riders, and do they leave early?	
37. Do I know if any of my students have a disability or a special need that should be accommodated in the room arrangement?	
38. How can I ensure that these students are fully included in classroom culture and activities? If they leave my classroom during the day, what are their schedules?	
39. What is the daily schedule for music, recess, P.E., lunch, library, and the computer lab?	
40. Where are these rooms, and what procedures should I follow to send or take students to them?	
41. What is the procedure for late arrivals and early dismissals?	
42. Do I have a substitute-teacher folder prepared, in case I am ill? Does it include class procedures and requirements, a seating chart, and emergency lessons?	

Assignments	Notes
43. Where and how will I post assignments?	
44. What will be my standards for form and neatness (pencil, pen, type of paper, heading, due dates, erasures)?	
45. How will students who return from being absent know what to make up?	
46. Will I post a “Finished Early?” chart? (See Chapter 12, “Lesson Design.”)	
Monitoring Progress	Notes
47. Will I look at students’ test scores and reports from previous years? If so, how will I locate them?	
48. What will be the consequences of late or incomplete work?	
49. What procedures will I use to monitor work in progress?	
50. When and how will my students and I monitor projects or longer assignments?	
51. How will I collect completed assignments?	
52. What records of student work will I retain?	
53. Does the school use a specific grading program or am I free to choose my own? If mandated by the school, how and when do I get training to use it?	
54. Will I use a computer grading system that has Internet access, so that students and/or parents can type in a password to see their progress online?	
55. How will I easily add or delete student names in the first weeks, as enrollment changes? Suggestion: if you use a paper gradebook, one way is to use a photocopy of the first two or three weeks of the gradebook, and then transfer the grades to the actual book once the class roster is more stable.	

56. Will I assign numbers for my students, to help collate homework and enter grades?	
Feedback	Notes
57. What are my grading policies? Points? Letter grades? Tests? Homework?	
58. Will class participation count toward student grades?	
59. What kinds of feedback will I provide, and when? Will I set up regular times to conference with students and their parents?	
60. What procedure will I follow to send materials home to parents?	
61. Where will I display student work?	
62. What records of their own work, if any, will students maintain?	
63. How will I handle grading disputes with students? With parents?	
Supplies and Materials	Notes
64. What are the procedures for obtaining classroom books?	
65. How do I check them out to students?	
66. Where do I get daily supplies: markers, paper, pencils, staples?	
67. Do I get money to spend on supplies for my room? If so, how do I procure it?	
68. What digital materials are available? How do I check them out?	
69. What technology will be provided? Computers? Projector? Document Reader? SmartBoard? iPads? And whom do I ask for tech support and training?	
70. What are the policies and procedures for making copies?	

The First Days	Notes
71. Have I prepared a letter home to parents to introduce myself and what I teach, offering them ways they can connect with me and support their child’s success in my class?	
72. What is the required paperwork for the first day of school, including attendance, school announcements, and the lunch program?	
73. Are my lesson plans prepared for the first few days for each class? Am I prepared with extra ones in case things go faster than I planned?	
74. What warm-up activities will I use? (Several are described in Chapter 11, “The First Week of School.”)	
75. Have I prepared short activities — “supplemental lesson ideas” — to use in case my lesson ends early? (These are described in more detail in Chapter 12, “Lesson Design.”)	
76. What is the special procedure for the arrival of students on the first day of school?	
77. How will I welcome students? What will we do as a class to introduce ourselves and get to know one another? (See Chapter 11, “The First Days of School.”)	
78. What special assemblies or schedules are happening in the first week?	
79. How and when will I receive my class roster(s)?	
80. Will I use a seating chart? How will I design it for the first day?	