

Why Teacher-Student Mediation Should Be in Every School

1 Enhances student achievement. Mediation strengthens teacher-student bonds, and students perform best when they feel their teacher cares about them. In busy classrooms, however, teachers don't always have the time or space to develop personal relationships with each student—particularly in a secondary school.

2 Boosts mutual understanding. One bad day, one mistake, or one misunderstanding can derail a teacher-student relationship and create obstacles to student learning. A trained mediator structures mediation so that in one 50-minute meeting, a teacher and student fully listen to one another, obtain greater insights, restore goodwill, and create a positive plan to move forward.

3 Breaks negative cycles. National data show that African American males and students with disabilities have the highest rates of disciplinary consequences that remove them from the classroom. When students reenter the class, they may exhibit frustration, withdrawal, or more disruptive behavior, which may result in more removal. Mediation offers a positive way to break this cycle.

4 Promotes social-emotional learning. There is a national call to help teachers and students broaden their understanding of one another and for schools to model restorative practices that teach social, communication, and problem-solving skills.

5 Provides an individualized intervention. Because there is no “one-size-fits-all” solution to improve relationships, mediation allows the teacher and student to explore the unique features of how the classroom, the subject matter, and even the time of day may affect their relationship. It also provides a safe way to identify deeper root causes for problematic behavior.

6 Is efficient and free of charge. Mediation can be embedded as a Tier II intervention within a multi-tiered system of supports or as a standalone intervention. Existing school staff members may be trained as impartial mediators.

7 Fosters understanding, trust, and empathy. Mediation helps the teacher and student reestablish trust and rapport. The goal of teacher-student mediation is to restore the respect so that teachers can teach and students can learn!

8 Benefits all members of a school community. Parents/guardians, teachers, students, and school administrators are grateful for positive, skill-building solutions. Mediation can also be an effective intervention to stop student-student conflict/bullying, and to resolve adult conflicts.



Restore the Respect: How to Mediate School Conflicts and Keep Students Learning by School Psychologist Ondine Gross, M.S., Ed.M. guides you through an easy, effective, and evidence-based mediation technique for teachers and students in Grades K-12. This common-sense solution to conflict resolution will help you reduce suspensions and keep students in the classroom and ready to learn.

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