# The Classroom Check-Up | **Values Card Sort**

**Values Card Sort Steps:**

1. Use the value list below to generate a pack of individual cards. You can do this by printing each value on a separate index card or by printing each on a label and then putting each label on an index card. There is also an "Other" card that teachers can use if they find an important value missing.

   Some people laminate the cards for repeated use.

2. During the *Getting to Know You Interview*, tell the teacher you will be using an exercise to help you learn more about what is most important to them in life. Give the teacher the cards and ask them to sort them into those three piles based on their values and their goals for their classroom. Have the teacher sort the cards into three side-by-side piles that are labeled Very Important, Important, and Less Important:

   | **Pile 1** = *Very Important* | **Pile 2** = *Important* | **Pile 3** = *Less Important* |

3. Once finished, pick up the *Very Important* pile and ask the teacher to re-sort, pulling out the top five cards in that stack. Do not be concerned if the teacher cannot further edit the *Very Important* stack or ends up with more than five cards, or fewer.

4. Ask the teacher to pick out their <u>three most important values from the *Very Important* pile.</u>

5. Invite the teacher to discuss why the final three values are their most important values. Discuss at least the top three values in detail.

   ***Goals of Top Three Values Discussion:***

   - The goal is to facilitate a discussion in which the teacher's values are affirmed, linked to current versus ideal classroom behaviors, and linked to current versus ideal classroom management practices.

   - Use the cards to ask open-ended questions about why the teacher picked the card, what it means to them personally, how they know they have this value or goal (e.g., what do they see in their life that convinces them this is important), and how this relates to the target behavior (effective classroom management).

   - Listen for examples of classroom practices that do not fit with their stated values and ideals. Reflect these examples by validating their struggles, affirming their commitment to their values, and evoking arguments for change.

   - Facilitate a conversation that directly links the identified values to the teacher's ideals of self and life, generally, and to experiences and exceptions of school and teaching, specifically.

   - This exercise will facilitate a discussion of values and goals between you and the teacher. It is intended to develop a discrepancy between a deeply held belief and a current behavior.

**Field Notes:**

Please do not be overly concerned or meticulous about procedural details. The content of the cards selected by the teacher does not really matter either, and can be expected to change from time to time in any case.

We do not recommend bypassing the cards in favor of using the values and goals as a list. There is something about the sorting itself that is very powerful in this exercise.

The Values Card Sort is conducted during the *Getting to Know You Interview* of the Classroom Check-Up. The activity description was adapted from Frey et al.'s (2013) Enhancements for the First Step to Success, and based on the work of Theresa B. Moyers and Steve Martino (2006). The original card sort activity was developed by W. R. Miller, J. C'de Baca, D. B. Matthews, & P. L. Wilbourne (2001).

| | |
|---|---|
| **Accepting Differences in People** | **Being a Good Teacher** |
| **Working Hard** | **Taking Time for Myself** |
| **Being Organized** | **Being Happy** |
| **Not Giving Up** | **Being Healthy** |
| **Being Honest** | **Being Responsible** |
| **Being Liked by Everyone** | **Being a Leader** |
| **Being Respected by Others** | **Doing the Right Thing** |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Being a Life-Long Learner** | **Being a Role Model** |
| **Having Fun** | **Having a Safe Classroom** |
| **Feeling Good About Myself** | **Being a Good Colleague** |
| **Other** | **Communicating Effectively** |
| **Being Aware of Personal Biases** | **Being Self-Reflective** |
| **Relating to Students** | **Understanding Others** |
| **Being a Good Listener** | **Being Fair** |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Taking Care of My Family** | **Helping Others** |
| **Staying in Control** | **Making a Difference in the World** |
| **Being Real/Genuine** | **Being Patient** |
| **Being Kind** | **Being Flexible** |
| **Important** | **Very Important** |
| **Less Important** | |
| | |