



Mr. Barge's Instructional Tip of the Week!

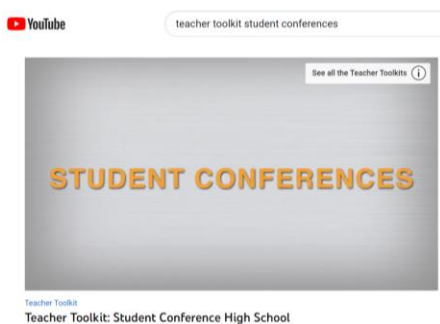
Conferencing and Small Group Instruction

It's hard to believe that in addition to starting the third marking period, we are already starting the month of December. Over the last 12 weeks, we have learned so much from our students – their needs, their interests, their creativity and passions, and how they react to challenges as well as life's trials and tribulations. I strongly believe that our community has done amazing work in supporting our students, creating a welcoming and affirming environment and "Knowing Every Student Well."

Over the last few weeks I have observed many teachers take what they know about their students and apply it to their lesson planning and supports in their classrooms. One of the strategies to support students is conferencing. Conferencing is a great way to connect with students to discuss academic performance, address missing work or attendance concerns, gather information on specific academic and behavioral trends that they can also share with guidance counselors and/or social workers, as well as addressing skill development such as literacy. In my classroom (both currently and in years past), I have found conferencing with students to be incredibly effective. Here are just a few conferencing strategies that I have both observed and implemented:

- Speaking with students after class about assignments that they need to make up or tutoring opportunities.
- I have also observed several team-teaching pairings teaching in the suites utilize the open space in the suite area (210, 240, 310, 340) to conference with students or provide small group instruction when needed.
- Some teachers have utilized the 20 minutes they have at the beginning or end of the day to meet with students.
- Calling students up for one on one conferences when needed as the class is working on essay writing, literacy based tasks or arts based projects. Of course, this is more manageable in an ICT class but it could also be effective by briefly meeting with a student while having a good view of the classroom so that you can keep an eye on the class as a whole while still having those private conversations.

Here is a video of a teacher sharing conferencing strategies:



As we begin the last marking period (six weeks left in the semester) it is important that we keep up our efforts to support our struggling students and conferencing is just one of the many ways that can be done. I want to thank you all for your continued efforts to put the necessary supports and modifications in your planning to provide the **CARE** that our students need and deserve.

*... because at Edward R. Murrow High School, we **CARE** about our students!*