Module Summary

In this module, teachers will:
• Explain the purpose of teaching a procedure.
• Identify the steps of an effective plan to teach a procedure.

Module activities:
Teachers will learn four steps for teaching a procedure: provide the rationale, explain the steps, practice, and reinforce.

*This module is part of a series that includes “Identifying Necessary Procedures” and “Designing Effective Procedures”.

Key Takeaways

Essential knowledge: In order for a classroom to function efficiently, procedures need to be explicitly taught, practiced, and reinforced. When teachers know how to teach a procedure it will help create a more productive classroom (Hensley et al., 2007).

Essential skill: Explicitly teaching procedures will help ensure that all students know the expectations for regular tasks or occurrences in the classroom. Merely having a procedure is not enough; teachers should plan to teach procedures in the same way they plan to teach content (Smith, 2004). Each procedure should have its own plan with carefully prepared teacher actions and checks for understanding. Students should have multiple opportunities to practice the procedure and the teacher should consistently reinforce the procedure. Here are four steps teachers can follow when teaching procedures:
1. Provide the rationale – Teacher explains why the procedure is needed.
2. Explain the steps – Teacher explains what students will do (and how they will do it) when performing the procedure.
3. Practice – Teacher models (or has students model) the procedure and gives students time to practice.
4. Reinforce – Teacher periodically evaluates (or has students evaluate) the performance of a procedure, and re-teaches as necessary.

Essential mindset: It’s not just enough to have a procedure. It is a teacher’s responsibility to effectively plan, teach, practice, and reinforce all procedures in his or her classroom. Teachers should approach teaching procedures just as they would approach teaching content. There should be a clear objective and logical steps to reach the objective.
When observing the teaching of a procedure, consider these questions:

- Does the teacher provide students with a clear rationale for the procedure?
- Does the teacher clearly explain each step and justify its purpose?
- How is the procedure practiced? How are practice opportunities scaffolded?
- Is feedback positive and specific?
- Does the teacher provide opportunities for student reflection?

To teach a procedure effectively, the teacher must have an effective plan. This plan includes a clear explanation of the purpose and the steps of the procedure. Once the teacher has clarified the rationale, explained the steps, and checked for understanding, students are ready to practice. First, teachers should model the procedure while doing a think-aloud of each step, then invite a student to model. While students are practicing the teacher should provide specific feedback to students. Effective practice and reinforcement will help a procedure evolve into a self-sustaining routine.

If a teacher struggles with teaching, practicing, or reinforcing a procedure, it may be beneficial for him or her to observe how another teacher does it. The resource that accompanies this module also provides helpful guidance for planning to teach procedures.

**Questions for Discussion**

The following is a list of suggested questions for engaging in a reflective dialogue with the teacher, either before or after he or she attempts to implement the skill.

- What were your key takeaways from the module?
- Based on what you learned in this module, why is it important to explicitly teach procedures?
- What are the steps for explicitly teaching a procedure?
- How can I support you in creating a plan to teach a procedure?

**Coaching Moves**

**Situation:**

The teacher tries teaching procedures, but students are still unsure of what to do or how to do it.

**Ask:**

- When teaching the procedure, how did you justify its purpose to students? How did students show that they understood the rationale for the procedure?
- Explain the steps to the procedure. How will students show you that they understand the steps?
- What opportunities do you have planned for students to practice the procedure?
- How will you ask students to re-do the procedure if it is not done correctly?
- What positive and specific reinforcement statements will you share with students when they complete the procedure correctly?

**Suggest:**

- Videotape a lesson where you teach a procedure in order to identify strengths and areas for improvement.
- Invite a colleague in to observe students completing a specific procedure, then get feedback on what went well and what could improve.
- Commit to planning and teaching lessons for all procedures to help ensure a smooth-running classroom.
- Make it a point to give students positive, specific praise when they complete a procedure correctly.

**Standards**

**InTASC: 3a** – The teacher collaborates with learners, families, and colleagues to build a safe, positive learning climate of openness, mutual respect, support, and inquiry.