Module Summary

In this module, teachers will:
- Define proactive classroom management.
- Define three proactive classroom management strategies and explain their purpose.
- Identify characteristics of successful strategy implementation.

Module activities:
Teachers will learn when and how to use three proactive management strategies. Teachers will work through three hypothetical scenarios in order to determine if a strategy was implemented correctly or not.

Key Takeaways

Essential knowledge:
Upon completion, teachers should be able to define proactive classroom management. Teachers should also be able to describe how each of the following strategies can help prevent misbehavior:
- **Proximity:** The use of one’s physical presence as a cue for students to begin or return to a desired task or behavior.
- **Opportunities to respond:** Engagement strategies that give students a chance to respond to academic prompts and interact with peers in a meaningful and structured way.
- **Checks for understanding:** An opportunity for students to verbalize upcoming expectations of clear directions the teacher has provided.

Essential skill:
The *Basic Proactive Classroom Management Strategies Guide* provides information about what each strategy is, when and how to use it, as well as missteps to avoid. Teachers can use this document to plan for how and when to apply a strategy. Teachers should then reflect on the effectiveness of the strategy before selecting a new one to apply.

Essential mindset:
In order to create a proactive classroom the teacher needs to believe that *preventing* misbehavior is more important than *responding* to it.

The Skill in Action

A teacher with a proactive classroom should have:
- An effective classroom management system
- Strong routines and procedures
- Well-planned lessons
- A system for organizing and distributing materials

A teacher who uses proactive management strategies effectively:
- Circulates purposefully to support behavioral expectations
- Asks students to verbalize an understanding of upcoming directions and expectations
- Provides multiple and meaningful opportunities for students to engage with the content

If a teacher does not have an effective classroom management system and well-established routines, consider working with him or her to develop these.
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.

- How do you believe the knowledge and skills highlighted in this module will benefit your growth as a teacher?
- What were your key takeaways from the module?
- What are important mindsets associated with proactive classroom management?
- What strategy or strategies would benefit your students most? Why?
- How can I support you in developing or maintaining a proactive classroom?
- Why is it important to be intentional about when you use opportunities to respond?

Coaching Moves

Situation: The teacher tries using some proactive strategies, but misbehavior is still common.

Ask:
- How do you check for understanding before cueing students to begin a task or activity?
- What attention-getting signals do you use?
- In a given lesson, how often do students have the opportunity to interact verbally, offer responses, or move their bodies?
- How much time do you spend in one location in the room, relative to moving throughout the room helping students?
- How often do you make positive comments to students, relative to negative ones?

Suggest:
- Videotape a lesson or portion of a lesson to observe how you use checks for understanding, opportunities to respond, or proximity.
- Also, examine the ratio of positive to negative comments you make toward students.
- Commit to focusing on a given strategy (e.g. checks for understanding) for a given period of time (e.g. a week). Post reminders to yourself (e.g. “Check for understanding of directions”) in a place where you’ll see them.
- Make it a point to give students positive, specific praise when they are following directions or behaving responsibly.

Standards

InTASC: 3(d) The teacher manages the learning environment to actively and equitably engage learners by organizing, allocating, and coordinating the resources of time, space, and the learners’ attention.