Critical Questions for New and Novice Teachers

If you are a first-year teacher or an experienced teacher new to a particular school, use the following list of questions as a guide to finding out critical information regarding school policies. You should be able to answer all the questions below before the students arrive for the first day of school.

- Do you have a copy of the school discipline policy?
- Are you expected to discuss these policies with students?
- What are the procedures for referring a misbehaving student to the office?
- What behaviors do the administrators feel should be referred to the office as opposed to those handled in the classroom?
- Do the administrators have expectations regarding student behavior in the classroom?
- To what extent are you expected to monitor the halls and restrooms?
- What are you expected to do if a student you do not know is misbehaving in the halls or in the restrooms?
- What sort of records are you expected to keep regarding student behavior, attendance, tardiness, and so on?
- What are the procedures for allowing students to use the library or computer center during class time?
- What are you expected to do regarding parental contacts?
- What behaviors are unacceptable to you, and what are the consequences for inappropriate behavior?