

# 4 Tips for Managing Reentry Anxiety

Opening the doors is step one in returning students to the classroom. The next steps involve addressing trauma and anxiety associated with the pandemic's inconsistent learning environment. Here are some tips to help students manage the reentry process as they head back to school.

## 1 Create a good learning environment

- **Set up classrooms** to be warm and welcoming.
- **Minimize distractions** and obstructions to effective learning.
- **Establish routines** that place students in a consistent, familiar structure.

## 2 Listen empathically

- **Give them your undivided attention** and show that you're prepared to hear them.
- **Don't trivialize or pass judgement** on what they perceive as a major life moment.
- **Focus on feelings, not just facts** to possibly uncover a different, underlying issue.
- **Allow silence for reflection** and they may share additional information or insight.
- **Restate what you heard** to give them an opportunity to clarify or expand their message.

## 3 Rebuild trust

- **Set expectations** and communicate them clearly and consistently.
- **Find opportunities to connect** with students to show they are cared for and appreciated.
- **Encourage students to share** their feelings and concerns, and be open to sharing your own.

## 4 Acknowledge your own anxiety

- **Watch for changes in behavior:** pacing, clicking a pen, holding your breath, withdrawing.
- **Listen carefully to your anxiety,** reflect, and restate what your anxiety is telling you.
- **Engage in a positive outlet** that you have committed to yourself.