Mentoring Scenario

Jenny

Last year a new teacher, Jenny, joined my team. As team leader, I agreed to provide mentoring support for her. Jenny was a career changer. She had worked in the field of real estate and had managed an office and sales team. She had also taught real estate classes for adults pursuing a real estate license.

Jenny was hired just before school started and her year started out with a rush and never seemed to slow down. I left a note on her desk the first day she arrived at school to let her know I could help with whatever she needed. She seemed in a hurry to get her classroom together so I did not bug her about meeting with me.

The next week I popped into her room to see if she needed anything. She asked about materials for the first science unit and I showed her where the closet was. She thanked me and got some materials for her class.

Once school started, I noticed that she was having trouble with classroom management. On one particularly noisy day I walked into her room during my planning time and read the kids the riot act to get them to settle down. They got quiet. Jenny never thanked me for that but I’m sure she appreciated it.

I followed up with an email asking to meet with her to talk about classroom management. She responded that she was OK and did not need to meet. She was spending all her non-teaching time on lesson planning.

A month into school my principal asked me how things were going with Jenny. I told her about all the supports I had offered. She asked me to follow up with Jenny on classroom management based on some student behaviors the principal had observed in Jenny’s class.

I stopped by Jenny’s class after school and told Jenny I had talked with the principal. I let her know that I could get coverage and come into her class to observe her and give her ways to get the students under control. She seemed annoyed, declined the offer, and said she was fine.

She continued to brush off my attempts to help her, and struggled throughout the year. I can say one thing, she always seemed to be working hard and spent long hours after school and at home working on lessons and grading papers. She was no slacker.

But, she was one hard nut to crack!