EPISODE 318

Planning For Interruptions & Establishing Clarity With Office Staff

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP SHOW

Essential Question

How can I get on the same page with my office staff about interruptions, and develop a plan to handle them without preventing me from getting into classrooms?

The "Protect" Myth

- Classroom walkthroughs are important, but not urgent—we can be flexible
- It is better to handle important, urgent matters first
- We still need some gatekeeping on our time
- Professional judgment should inform interruptions

THE EISENHOWER MATRIX

IMPORTANT

URGENT

PLAN IT

DO IT NOW

DROP IT
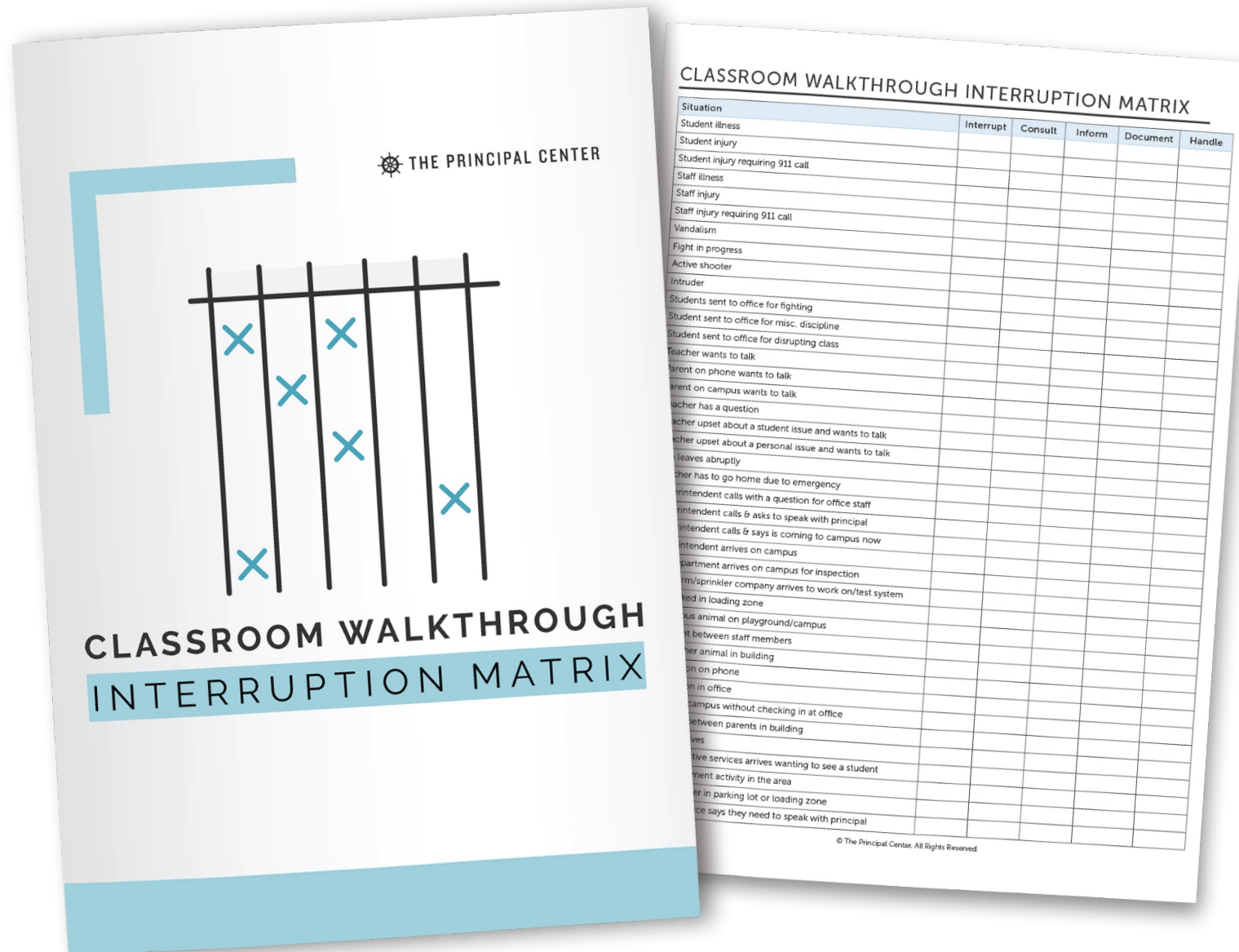
DELEGATE IT

Establishing Clarity

- Talk about the recurring types of interruptions
- Choose one of 5 responses for each
- Identify special cases
- Revisit any time you're misaligned

Response Categories

- **Interrupt**—take immediate action and call me to the office by any means necessary

- **Consult**—let me know about the issue right away, so I can decide if I should interrupt my classroom visits

- **Inform**—let me know about the issue as soon as I'm free

- **Document**—handle the issue and document it, but don't bother informing me directly

- **Handle**—take care of the issue yourself, and don't bother informing me

THE PRINCIPAL CENTER

CLASSROOM WALKTHROUGH
INTERRUPTION MATRIX

CLASSROOM WALKTHROUGH INTERRUPTION MATRIX

Situation	Interrupt	Consult	Inform	Document	Handle
Student illness					
Student injury					
Student injury requiring 911 call					
Staff illness					
Staff injury					
Staff injury requiring 911 call					
Vandalism					
Fight in progress					
Active shooter					
Intruder					
Students sent to office for fighting					
Student sent to office for misc. discipline					
Student sent to office for disrupting class					
Teacher wants to talk					
Parent on phone wants to talk					
Parent on campus wants to talk					
Teacher has a question					
Teacher upset about a student issue and wants to talk					
Teacher upset about a personal issue and wants to talk					
...leaves abruptly					
...her has to go home due to emergency					
...rintendent calls with a question for office staff					
...rintendent calls & asks to speak with principal					
...rintendent calls & says is coming to campus now					
...rintendent arrives on campus					
...partment arrives on campus for inspection					
...rm/sprinkler company arrives to work on/test system					
...ked in loading zone					
...us animal on playground/campus					
...t between staff members					
...her animal in building					
...on on phone					
...n in office					
...campus without checking in at office					
...between parents in building					
...ves					
...tive services arrives wanting to see a student					
...ment activity in the area					
...er in parking lot or loading zone					
...ce says they need to speak with principal					

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP SHOW

PrincipalCenter.com/matrix-pdf

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP SHOW

How Should These Issues Be Handled?

CLASSROOM WALKTHROUGH INTERRUPTION MATRIX

Situation	Interrupt	Consult	Inform	Document	Handle
Student illness					
Student injury					
Student injury requiring 911 call					
Staff illness					
Staff injury					
Staff injury requiring 911 call					
Vandalism					
Fight in progress					
Active shooter					
Intruder					
Students sent to office for fighting					

Interruption Matrix

a) Interrupt

b) Consult

c) Inform

d) Document

e) Handle

- Fight?
- Staff workplace injury?
- Minor student injury?
- Misc. discipline referral?
- Superintendent visit?

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP SHOW

Ensuring Staff Feel Supported

- Let people know how to reach you
- Don't be gone from the office for hours
- Be visible in hallways
- Be responsive to email
- Let people close your door to chat