

Core Motive Inventory



Jacob Russell's Core Motives Revealed



*For Elementary Teachers
(Christian School Version)*

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TEMPERAMENT SCALES

Temperament	Intensity (% of max)	Mix %	Rank
Choleric	78%	27%	Dominant
Sanguine	69%	24%	Co-Secondary
Melancholic	69%	24%	Co-Secondary
Phlegmatic	69%	25%	Co-Secondary

TEMPERAMENT INTENSITY

Percentage of maximum possible score



HOW TO READ THIS REPORT

Jacob, each section that follows breaks down your daily responsibilities into specific domains of practice, interprets how your temperament mix shapes your behavior in those areas, and offers concrete virtue practices to help you grow toward excellence. The goal is to translate your temperament insights into actionable habits that integrate professional skill with spiritual formation.

What is offered in the Core Motive Inventory is meant to be a support, not a prescription. Not everything here will be perfectly on target or immediately relevant to your situation. Enter this inventory with an open mind and a prayerful heart, asking the Lord to guide and direct both your reading and your follow-through.

Core Motive Inventory

for Jacob Russell

The Four Temperaments

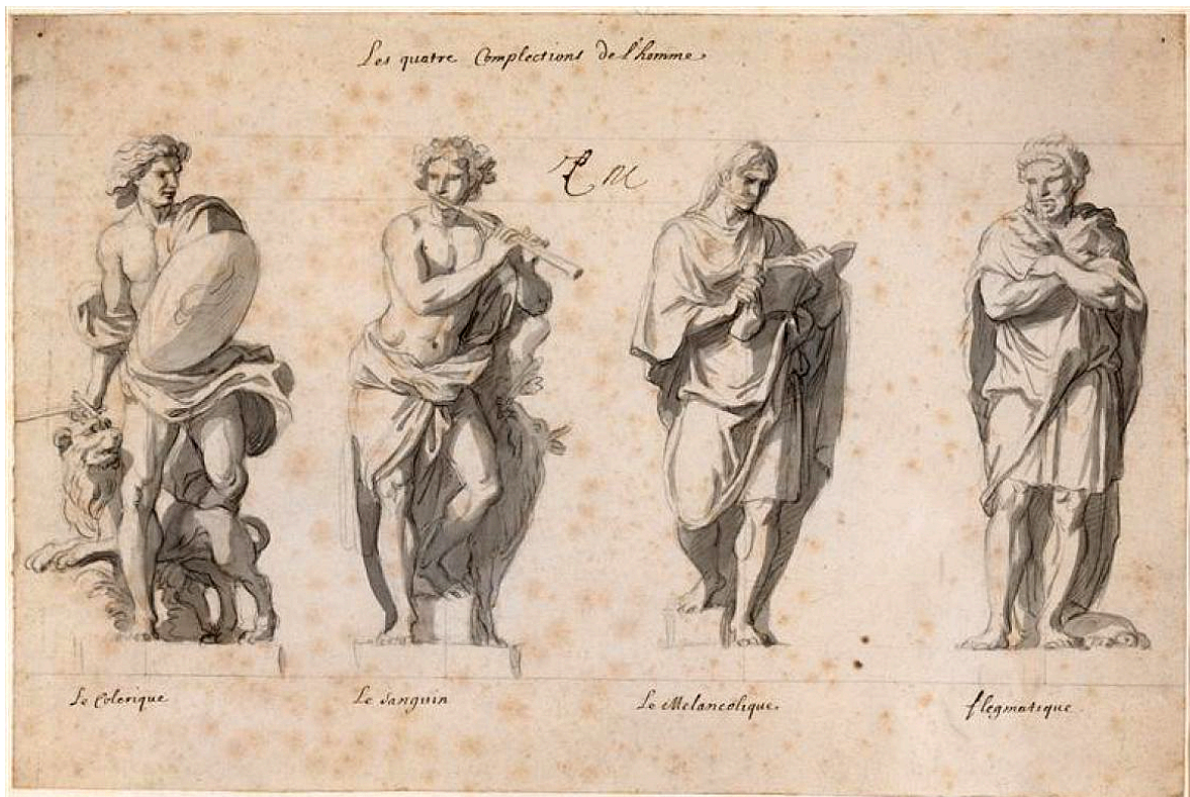
The four temperaments—**Sanguine**, **Choleric**, **Melancholic**, and **Phlegmatic**—originated with the ancient Greek physician and philosopher Hippocrates. Over centuries, this framework has developed into a simple way of describing our natural tendencies in action, thought, and emotion.

Properly understood, temperaments are not labels that trap us. They are starting points. They describe the kind of “default settings” we bring into our relationships, our decisions, and our work. And because they are natural dispositions, not moral judgments, there is no good or bad temperament—and no ideal mix you are supposed to have.

What this report aims to offer is clarity, not criticism. When you recognize your temperament mix, you begin to see your strengths with sharper definition: the gifts you reliably bring into a room, the instincts you lean on under pressure, and the ways you tend to serve others without even trying. But that same clarity also helps you notice something we all experience: our strengths can cast a shadow. The very impulses that make us effective can, when unchecked, show up as impatience, avoidance, over-control, over-analysis, or people-pleasing—often without us intending it, and sometimes without us even seeing it.

That is why temperament awareness is so valuable for a teacher. It gives you a more honest read on yourself. It helps you anticipate where your wiring may trip you up—especially when you are tired, under stress, or carrying conflict. And it keeps your growth focused on the right target: not changing who you are but learning how to steward who you are.

In the Christian life, self-knowledge is meant to serve sanctification. When we can name our patterns with humility, we can pursue concrete habits and practices that strengthen virtue, restrain vice, and make room for grace to do its steady work. The goal is not self-improvement for its own sake. The goal is that your best self—formed by virtue, animated by charity, and marked by steadiness—shows up more consistently in your teaching and your working relationships, for the good of those entrusted to your care.



A Quick Overview of the Temperaments

Temperament	Core Traits	Strengths	Blind Spots
Sanguine	Warm, expressive, people-centered, fast rapport with children; thrives on variety and interaction; often “feels the room” quickly.	Builds joyful classroom culture; connects easily with students and parents; motivates through encouragement; brings creativity and energy; helps teams stay hopeful.	Can drift toward inconsistency or weak follow-through; may avoid hard conversations; can overpromise to please; may struggle with detail, planning, or quiet focus; classroom management can become “too loose.”
Choleric	Direct, decisive, action-oriented; comfortable leading; wants clear outcomes; moves quickly to solutions and accountability.	Establishes strong routines and clear expectations; drives progress and execution; handles conflict with courage; protects learning time; advocates well for students and standards.	Can become impatient, sharp, or overly controlling; may talk more than listen; can unintentionally intimidate children or colleagues; may push change faster than trust can bear; can value efficiency over formation.
Melancholic	Thoughtful, analytical, conscientious; attentive to nuance; values excellence and meaning; tends toward careful preparation and reflection.	Plans deeply and teaches with clarity; notices individual student needs and learning gaps; maintains high standards; communicates carefully; brings wisdom and depth to curriculum and assessment.	Can become overly critical (self or others), anxious, or perfectionistic; may struggle to adapt quickly; can overcorrect or overexplain; may interpret feedback personally; can withhold warmth when stressed.
Phlegmatic	Calm, steady, patient, relationally loyal; prefers harmony and predictability; grounded presence; often a stabilizing force.	Creates a peaceful, secure learning environment; patient with developing skills and repeated practice; listens well; de-escalates tense parent situations; reliable teammate who sustains morale quietly.	Can avoid conflict and delay necessary action; may tolerate misbehavior too long; can under-communicate expectations; may resist change or initiative; can become passive when leadership and urgency are needed.

How Our Temperament Impacts Our Role

Temperament is one of God’s ordinary instruments for shaping who we are. It is not a verdict on our character, nor a shortcut excuse for sin. It is a map of our default instincts: what we naturally notice, what we move toward, what drains us, and how we tend to react when we are tired, stretched, or misunderstood. When you understand your temperament mix, you gain a kind of mercy and precision. Mercy, because you can name your pressures without shame. Precision, because you can choose habits and virtues that steady your weaknesses and strengthen your gifts.

In the classroom, temperament matters because teaching is not merely delivering content. It is a web of relationships that requires presence, authority, patience, clarity, and love. Your blend of temperaments will make certain duties feel almost effortless and others feel disproportionately heavy. The aim of this guide is not to make you “less yourself,” but to help you become your best self, more faithful and more effective. Virtue is how your natural temperament becomes mature character. It is how your strengths become dependable and your weaknesses become governable.

WORKING WITH COLLEAGUES

Your colleagues are your co-laborers in a shared mission, and your temperament will shape how you collaborate, communicate, and handle friction. Some teachers instinctively build rapport, energize meetings, and keep morale high. Others bring crisp decisions, accountability, and forward motion. Some offer thoughtful analysis, careful planning, and high standards that raise the quality of the work. Others stabilize the team with calm, steadiness, and a long view when emotions run hot.

Those same strengths can become predictable liabilities if left untrained. A relationally driven teacher can avoid hard conversations or overcommit to please. A forceful teacher can unintentionally dominate the room or move faster than consensus can bear. A highly conscientious teacher can become critical, anxious, or difficult to satisfy. A peaceable teacher can stay silent when clarity is needed or delay action to keep things comfortable. Temperament awareness helps you contribute your best while practicing the virtues that make teamwork healthy: humility, courage, honesty, and charity.

WORKING WITH STUDENTS

With students, temperament shapes both the atmosphere you create and the way you exercise authority. Some teachers naturally generate warmth, delight, and a sense that learning is an adventure. Others create security through structure, strong direction, and clear expectations. Some notice the quiet student, the subtle misunderstanding, and the deeper meaning in a text. Others bring patience, steadiness, and an unflappable presence that calms anxious hearts.

Under stress, these instincts can misfire. Warmth can slide into inconsistency. Strong direction can become sharpness or control. Precision can become impatience or discouragement when students do not “get it” quickly. Calmness can become passivity when a room needs decisive leadership. Knowing your temperament helps you anticipate your pressure points, especially when fatigue and noise are high. It also helps you choose practices that keep your authority both firm and loving, your tone both clear and kind, and your discipline aimed at formation rather than mere compliance.

WORKING WITH PARENTS

Parents are not an audience to manage; they are partners to honor. Temperament influences how you communicate, how you receive concerns, and how you hold boundaries with grace. Some teachers naturally build trust through warmth, availability, and encouragement. Others communicate with clarity, directness, and confident leadership. Some offer careful detail, thorough explanations, and thoughtful documentation that reassures anxious families. Others bring patience, gentleness, and a steady tone that lowers the temperature when emotions rise.

The shadow side appears quickly when misunderstandings occur. Warmth can turn into over-accommodation, leading to blurred expectations. Directness can sound defensive or dismissive. Detail can become overwhelming or perfectionistic. Calmness can become vague or unresponsive. Temperament awareness helps you speak with both truth and love, to listen without fear, and to respond with measured clarity. It also helps you remember the goal: not to win a conversation, but to strengthen trust so that together you can serve the child with wisdom, consistency, and hope.

Executive Summary

Your Core Motive Inventory

Temperament	Intensity (% of max)	Mix %	Rank
Choleric	78%	27%	Dominant
Sanguine	69%	24%	Co-Secondary
Melancholic	69%	24%	Co-Secondary
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Your Temperament Profile

Jacob, your temperament profile is remarkably balanced and complex, distinguished by a dominant Choleric (78%) drive, coupled with strong, nearly equal intensities in the Sanguine (69%), Melancholic (69%), and Phlegmatic (69%) temperaments. This rare equilibrium produces a dynamic disposition: you possess decisive, action-oriented leadership energy thanks to your Choleric core, yet you are also equipped with the warmth and relational ease of the Sanguine, the analytical depth and conscientiousness of the Melancholic, and the stabilizing calm and patience of the Phlegmatic. Such a profile grants you the ability to wear many hats—energizing a classroom, forging clarity in faculty meetings, shepherding students with care, and partnering thoughtfully with parents. Your headline strength is your capacity to integrate structure and vision with sincere compassion, enabling you to bring momentum without losing hearts along the way. However, your headline vulnerability is the innate tension between your drive for decisive action and your sensitivity to details, relationships, and harmony—which, under pressure, may lead to oscillating between impatience and over-analysis or hesitation.

This blend means you move fluidly between roles: at times assertive and clear, at other times warm, reflective, or quietly reassuring. In your teaching context at School of the Ozarks—a classical, Protestant K-12 school—your strengths position you to lead with both clarity and care. However, complexity brings its challenges: when your decisive side outpaces your reflective or relational instincts, you may become controlling or appear abrupt to others; when you lean into your sensitivity or desire for harmony, you risk indecision or inconsistent follow-through. In all of this, the virtue most urgent for your growth is prudence: the careful discernment of both timing and proportion, so that your strengths harmonize rather than compete or cancel one another.

The pages that follow will help you reflect, recalibrate, and act with greater intentionality. Here you will find a clear-eyed account of your signature strengths and predictable vulnerabilities, concrete virtues to pursue, and practical rhythms to ground your teaching in Christian wisdom. May these insights serve you as you seek to be a teacher whose authority is gentle, whose energy is purposeful, and whose presence is marked by the fruit of the Spirit.

Signature Strengths

1 Integrative Leadership

Your Choleric drive equips you to set vision, establish robust routines, and make decisions confidently, while your Sanguine warmth draws people into your initiatives, your Melancholic conscientiousness ensures quality, and your Phlegmatic side brings calm steadiness. This makes you a reliable leader among colleagues and a trustworthy authority for students—able to give direction without forsaking relationship.

2 Relational Sensitivity and Rapport

With Sanguine, Melancholic, and Phlegmatic each at 69%, you excel at reading people, affirming strengths, and building rapport with students and parents alike. You can personalize encouragement, notice subtle needs, and shepherd discouraged or anxious hearts with grace—making your classroom and conferences places of both safety and growth.

3 Analytical Depth with Practical Follow-through

Your strong Melancholic bent means you naturally analyze problems, spot inconsistencies, and prepare with care; paired with your Choleric decisiveness, you not only design thorough plans but also have the will to implement them, avoiding the drift that often sidelines good intentions in schools.

Predictable Vulnerabilities

1 Oscillation Between Decisiveness and Overanalysis

Your interplay of Choleric and Melancholic can make you drive hard for immediate solutions at first, but then get stuck in second-guessing, perfectionism, or overcomplicated planning—slowing momentum and increasing stress. **If unaddressed, this may lead to missed deadlines, unclear priorities, or misunderstandings with colleagues and students.**

2 Tension Between Assertiveness and Relational Softness

The mix of Choleric force and Sanguine-Phlegmatic warmth can cause swing: you may move quickly and directly one moment, then hesitate or soften your stance to preserve peace or morale. **If unaddressed, this may result in inconsistency, confusion about expectations, or reluctance to hold clear boundaries, especially in discipline or parent conversations.**

3 Tendency Toward Internal Fatigue and Diffusion

Carrying so many strong temperaments, you may disperse your focus, juggling competing impulses for action, perfection, affirmation, and peace—eventually leading to burnout or avoidance of hard but necessary conversations. **If unaddressed, this may undermine your long-term presence, sap your joy, or erode your team's trust in your consistency.**

Priority Virtues for the Next 12 Months

1. Prudence

Prudence is right reason applied to action—a disciplined habit of judging rightly about what to do, when, and with what proportion.

Your unique temperament composition—combining drive, reflection, warmth, and peace—means that well-ordered wisdom is your touchstone. Prudence helps you pause before reacting with force, reflect before over-complicating, and act before drifting in ambiguity. With prudence, your leadership becomes not just energetic, but harmoniously effective, and your relationships become consistently trustworthy.

STARTER PRACTICE

At the close of each school day, take ten minutes to review one decision you made quickly, one moment you hesitated, and one thing you left undone. Ask: What would wise timing and proportion look like if I faced it again? Note patterns—then use these insights to adjust your planning and conversations in the week ahead.

2. Fortitude (Courage)

Fortitude is firmness in difficulties and constancy in pursuit of the good, even when it is uncomfortable or costly.

Your temperament blend sometimes resists or delays the uncomfortable (driven by Phlegmatic harmony and Sanguine affirmation), or presses too hard when pressure rises (Choleric). Fortitude helps you address issues early, hold boundaries gently yet firmly, and persevere through the inevitable messiness of formation, feedback, and discipline.

STARTER PRACTICE

Each week, proactively schedule one conversation you are tempted to avoid—whether with a student, colleague, or parent. Approach it prayerfully, name your purpose, and follow through within forty-eight hours, resisting delay or over-processing.

3. Temperance

Temperance is self-mastery; the rule of reason over impulse, emotion, or excessive reaction.

Given your strong passions and sensitivities, temperance helps you remain calm and measured, especially in moments of discipline, disagreement, or administrative stress. This virtue guards against both overreach (imposing decisions abruptly) and indulgence (avoiding firmness), so your presence is a stabilizing source of peace.

STARTER PRACTICE

Whenever emotion runs high, practice a “gentle pause” before speaking or acting—three deep breaths, then a prayerful check: “Am I about to overreact or underreact?” This split-second discipline can infuse even tense moments with grace and clarity.

Working with Colleagues

Jacob, in the context of your faculty relationships, your dominant Choleric energy fuels initiative and keeps teams moving; you are often the one setting clear direction or proposing solutions when others stall. The Sanguine in you means faculty gatherings rarely feel cold or transactional when you are present—you infuse meetings and collaborations with a genuine sense of warmth and optimism. Meanwhile, your Melancholic streak is evident in your attention to detail and your insistence that work be thorough and thoughtful; you have a keen eye for quality and a readiness to analyze practices or decisions for improvement. However, the presence of both strong Choleric and Melancholic means you may feel compelled to critique or correct what falls short—sometimes risking impatience or unintended sharpness. Your Phlegmatic side is a gift here, often prompting you to “read the room,” mediate between strong opinions, or de-escalate rising tensions. Yet, it is precisely this balance of forces that can yield confusion for peers: you might alternate between enthusiastic leadership and sudden withdrawal, passionate advocacy and quiet reluctance, confident assertion and apologetic backtracking.

This pattern means you naturally set a high bar for both productivity and collegial trust, excelling in settings where spirited debate and constructive feedback are welcome. You strengthen the faculty by initiating important conversations, voicing concerns others might avoid, and infusing interactions with just enough hope that discouragement rarely sets in. At the same time, your voice can dominate dialogue if unchecked, or else withdraw too quickly if relationships feel threatened. You may also find yourself carrying silent frustrations about inconsistent standards or lack of follow-through, sometimes leading to indirect communication or impatience. The virtues that will most fortify your work among colleagues are prudence—to discern when and how to press versus when to yield—charity, to ground all correction in goodwill; and humility, to invite other perspectives before acting. Attend especially to the temptation to oscillate between outspoken critique and “let-it-slide” silence; unity and clarity are your aims, not reaction or retreat.



Engaging Students

You bring to your classroom a rare combination of dynamism, clarity, and care. Your Choleric intensity sets a tone of order and expectation: students understand quickly that you value their time and effort, and that mediocrity is not an option. Sanguine warmth tempers this authority with encouragement and a palpable delight in learning, motivating students to participate, ask questions, and seek your affirmation. The Melancholic's depth means your lessons are well-structured, your content thoughtfully prepared, and your feedback sensitive to both strengths and gaps—a gift to students who need clarity and individual affirmation. Phlegmatic calm helps you anchor the room through changes, disruptions, or academic anxiety; you rarely “lose your cool,” and tend to listen well even as you lead decisively. Your overall effectiveness with students is rooted in your capacity to hold high standards while remaining approachable, attentive, and humane.

However, you are not immune to the dangers that come with your profile. When grappling with classroom disruptions, you may act decisively on some days yet hesitate on others, depending on whether your Choleric or Phlegmatic side prevails. The drive for perfection (Melancholic) could cause you to dwell on flaws or miss appreciating small gains, while the Sanguine's tendency to improvise may contend with your Melancholic urge for detailed plans. As a result, you can experience inner friction—fiery direction one moment, soft encouragement the next, and sometimes indecisiveness or exhaustion at week's end. The virtues of fortitude and temperance will help you lead with both courage and self-mastery, enabling you to stay far-sighted during discipline, keep joy alive within rigor, and model Christian formation that weaves grace and truth in all things. The more you integrate these virtues into your routines, the more your students experience authority as an invitation to grow, rather than an imposition to endure.



Partnering with Parents

Your temperament equips you to build parent partnership marked by clarity, warmth, and stability. Parents experience your leadership—the Choleric mark—in proactive communication and a willingness to state clearly what is needed for their child to thrive. They sense your Sanguine friendly approachability in both conversation and written updates, and many find your conferences dignified and hopeful because of your Melancholic attentiveness and Phlegmatic steadiness. You have a strong sense for both what should be communicated and how it should best be received.

Yet, the same strengths can sometimes collide: you may deliver strong messages more bluntly than intended, or overthink disclosures and delay hard conversations out of concern for family harmony or sheer fatigue; you may start with vibrant transparency but then lose steam on follow-up details, as your multiple temperament pulls vie for control. The essential virtues here—prudence, justice, and fortitude—will steady your communication, remind you to check both tone and timing, and give you the courage to address uncomfortable realities before anxiety grows. The pages ahead will equip you to lead parent partnerships marked by trust, timely truth-telling, and peace, modeling the very unity and fairness you seek to foster in your classroom and among your colleagues.



Working with Colleagues

Your colleagues are not just fellow employees; they are co-laborers in the mission of forming students in wisdom and virtue. How you work with them—whether through collaboration, communication, or accountability—shapes the professional culture of your school. When teachers share openly, coordinate faithfully, and speak the truth in love, clarity spreads and burdens lighten. Lesson plans improve through shared ideas, grade-level alignment strengthens consistency for students, and difficult issues are addressed before they fester.

But when collaboration is weak, communication sloppy, or accountability avoided, the whole community feels the wobble: parents receive mixed messages, students see inconsistent expectations, and administrators are left managing preventable conflicts. In a Christian school, this is not a small matter; collegial life is part of the witness we give to our students. They will imitate how we speak to one another, how we bear with differences, and how we unite around a shared mission.

Your temperament mix shapes how you naturally engage with colleagues—when you lean in, when you withdraw, and how you respond under stress. The pages that follow will show you likely pitfalls, a virtue to cultivate in each area, and practical steps you can put into your weekly rhythm. Attending to this work will make your classroom stronger, your team more cohesive, and your school a more joyful witness to the Gospel.



A. Peer-to-Peer Communication

SNAPSHOT

Peer-to-peer communication among teachers is the circulatory system of a healthy school. When information flows promptly, accurately, and charitably—across grade levels, disciplines, and support teams—students receive consistent formation, and colleagues are able to support, adjust, and coordinate without friction. Effective teamwork depends on routine updates, transparent sharing about student needs and behavior (delivered in a spirit of justice and care), and deliberate collaboration that prevents fragmentation. This includes practical logistics—classroom resources, schedules, and shared events—as well as the critical transmission of information about student struggles or emergent issues that require unified action. When communication is practiced as a ministry of love and order, the faculty remains cohesive and classrooms flourish.

TEMPERAMENT STRUGGLE

Jacob, with your Choleric (78%) dominance supported by balanced Sanguine (69%), Melancholic (69%), and Phlegmatic (69%) temperaments, your communication with peers is rich in both possibilities and pitfalls. You likely excel at naming issues, proposing solutions, and moving discussion forward with clarity. Your warmth and humor (Sanguine) help others feel at ease entering conversations, while your Melancholic side ensures you attend to important details and strive for fairness. The Phlegmatic brings steadiness, making you a source of comfort in tense moments. However, these competing impulses can create whiplash for peers: you might drive forceful dialogue about alignment or logistics, but then soften your tone to avoid hurting feelings or, alternately, retreat into silence if conflict looms too large. You may overdo speed and confidence in your communications, occasionally skipping needed details or consensus for the sake of momentum, while underdoing confirmation and follow-through—assuming shared understanding when it's not yet achieved, or allowing difficult updates (especially about discipline or organizational shortcomings) to be softened, postponed, or fumbled. When under stress, the oscillation between critique and avoidance can disrupt cadence, clarity, and collaboration, and if left unchecked, leads to repeat misunderstandings, duplicated work, and eroded trust.

Virtue to Cultivate: Prudence

Prudence is your keystone virtue for peer communication. It governs both the when and how of speech, balancing your instinct for quick, decisive sharing with the humility to ask clarifying questions, confirm understanding, and adapt your delivery to the needs and styles of your colleagues. Prudence tempers action with foresight, ensuring that the details needed for unity are not lost in efficiency and that difficult truths are delivered with tact and purpose. Practiced well, it harmonizes momentum and relationship, so your many gifts serve faculty unity rather than destabilizing it.

PRACTICES TO CONSIDER

- 1 Send concise, solution-oriented updates to your team every week, confirming key decisions and roles in writing. (This maintains clarity amid your drive for action.)
- 2 Before major meetings, prepare a one-minute “headline” summary of your main point(s), and a question for input, to ensure both speed and inclusivity.
- 3 Ask for explicit confirmation when delegating tasks (“Can I confirm you’ll take this by next Thursday?”) to avoid assumptions about follow-through.
- 4 Schedule a brief, recurring check-in with grade-level or departmental colleagues to surface minor issues before they become urgent.
- 5 Practice summarizing the outcome of any difficult or emotionally charged conversation in writing—sending a follow-up email so expectations are clear.
- 6 Track recurring logistical or resource coordination issues in a shared document, inviting others to contribute before suggestions become directives.
- 7 Set a “pause and review” habit before responding to emails or verbal requests, especially under stress—does this need immediate resolution, or would a measured reply serve unity better?

B. Communication Upward to Administration

SNAPSHOT

Upward communication is an act of faithful stewardship—one that honors both the responsibilities of administration and the expertise of classroom faculty. When teachers seek clarity early, report emerging issues promptly, and close loops on feedback or guidance, the entire school benefits: decisions are made in light of true context, messaging is unified, and small problems are addressed before they escalate. Communication with administrators is not mere reporting, but a partnership of shared governance in which teachers help shape the school's culture as much by their candor and timing as by their words. The tone and discretion of such communication matter deeply, especially when confidential, urgent, or sensitive matters are at stake. The goal is neither to burden leaders unnecessarily nor to delay until confusion multiplies, but to protect the mission through wise, timely, and measured dialogue.

TEMPERAMENT STRUGGLE

Your Choleric dominance (78%) helps you speak up promptly and assertively, often bringing solutions as well as concerns. Yet, the combined influences of Sanguine, Melancholic, and Phlegmatic temperaments (all 69%) create a complex interplay: you might initiate important conversations quickly, especially when urgency is clear, but may frame messages with a confident certainty (Choleric), possibly missing nuances or the emotional implications others need. Your Sanguine side encourages openness and may add warmth or informal cues but can risk oversharing or emotional emphasis in the name of connection. Your Melancholic tendency brings needed accuracy and documentation, but if unchecked, you may delay escalation looking for the perfect context or become heavy-handed with detail, which could overwhelm leaders and complicate the process. The Phlegmatic pull can lead to hesitation, particularly around contentious or complicated issues—especially if you sense administrative fatigue, or worry about stirring conflict—which sometimes results in “waiting to see” or leaving loops unclosed. In ordinary matters, this mix may cause you to communicate with great energy one week, then retreat the next; in high-stakes situations, you might oscillate between blunt urgency and cautious over-preparation. If not managed, these tendencies leave leaders without actionable information or flood them with overly elaborate updates, while trust can erode over missed details or perceived inconsistency.

Virtue to Cultivate: Prudence

Prudence is once again the keystone in upward communication, as it directs you to choose the right information, tone, and timing for each situation. Prudence prompts you to contribute context and clarity without overburdening administration with raw details, and protects you from letting urgency occlude necessary sensitivity. By developing prudent habits, you ensure your voice remains a reliable thread—neither absent nor overwhelming, always aimed at institutional unity and wise governance.

PRACTICES TO CONSIDER

- 1 Before initiating a conversation with leadership, summarize your concern in three clear sentences—headline, supporting fact, next step needed.
- 2 When in doubt, err on the side of early communication about sensitive issues, asking: “Is this something leadership should know now, or soon?”
- 3 For feedback requests, follow up within forty-eight hours—even if just to acknowledge you are considering a longer response.
- 4 Review major messages for tone and proportion: Is it urgent, or important? Does it invite partnership, or issue demands?
- 5 Document key facts in writing when dealing with urgent or confidential matters, but avoid attaching exhaustive commentary unless specifically requested.
- 6 Request clarification on protocol whenever you sense ambiguity; this models teachable stewardship, not weakness.
- 7 Close every cycle—if you bring a concern, circle back once it's resolved, thanking administration for action or communication taken, so trust and partnership grow over time.

C. Culture of Support & Accountability

SNAPSHOT

A culture of support and accountability in a Christian faculty is the daily expression of shared commitment to the school's mission, to student flourishing, and to one another's growth in virtue. Here, encouragement is not flattery but a conscious practice of affirming faithfulness and excellence as they emerge. Feedback is routine, offered with directness and care, and received without fear or defensiveness; concerns are addressed head-on, and conflict is repaired quickly and honestly. Accountability is not suspicion or rivalry but reverence for shared stewardship—helping colleagues remain faithful even in what is difficult or unnoticed. Leadership's role is folded into this through transparent evaluation, targeted coaching, goal-setting, and, as needed, corrective guidance. In this ecosystem, trust and peace thrive, and gossip—a corrosive threat to unity—is actively resisted. Charity governs all speech; concerns move through proper channels, never sideways. Such a culture produces faculty who are not only excellent teachers but reliable models of Christian love and integrity.

TEMPERAMENT STRUGGLE

Jacob, your Choleric energy equips you to name problems and confront patterns of mediocrity boldly, while your Sanguine and Phlegmatic impulses draw you toward keeping relationships smooth and positive. Melancholic depth can make you an insightful critic and a thoughtful analyst of instructional practice, but may also carry a tendency to ruminate or replay tensions. Combined, these traits heighten the core tensions of truth versus comfort, directness versus sideways talk, and action versus drift. You likely move quickly to encourage or to correct, but may—especially under fatigue or relational stress—alternate between delivering hard feedback bluntly (Choleric), avoiding it out of deference to peace or rapport (Sanguine, Phlegmatic), or quietly accumulating frustrations (Melancholic) until they become burdensome. This disposition can also lead you, at times, to participate in venting or “problem-sharing” that skirts the edge of gossip, particularly if you sense there is no immediate avenue for just action. When you receive feedback, you may initially defend your practices (Choleric/Melancholic), yet subsequently take it deeply to heart and resolve to improve, occasionally allowing discouragement to color your view. Your follow-through with support for colleagues is strong when aligned with a clear system or concrete need; otherwise, it may slip into good intentions. Left untrained, the sum of these patterns risks undermining trust, diluting clarity, and perpetuating cycles of unspoken grievance or unresolved tension—none of which serve the peace and witness of your community.

Virtue to Cultivate: Charity

Charity—truth spoken for another's good—is paramount for your temperament in this realm. It guards your boldness from becoming harsh, ensures encouragement goes beyond flattery, trains your speech away from gossip or grumbling, and helps you receive correction as a gift rather than a threat. Practicing charity keeps both your action and your restraint aimed at the restoration and upbuilding of your colleagues, not at self-justification or group comfort.

PRACTICES TO CONSIDER

- 1 Begin every feedback exchange with a prayer for goodwill and clarity, whether you are giving or receiving input.
- 2 Make it a discipline to address concerns directly with the person involved, using “I noticed...” language, before raising with leadership or others.
- 3 After any troubling conversation—or if you find yourself tempted to share a frustration laterally—stop and ask: “Is my sharing aimed at helping, or at venting?” Then act accordingly.
- 4 Schedule regular “affirmation” moments for colleagues, but ground each praise in specific behaviors or concrete growth, not just positive sentiment.
- 5 Invite colleagues to observe your class or practice, framing feedback as a partnership in growth, not as evaluation.
- 6 When you receive critical feedback, write down one way it might be true and what next step you might take—then communicate your intention to the person who gave it, closing the loop.
- 7 Resist any conversation that involves a third colleague unless your purpose is specific restoration and you are committed to right channels; redirect “hallway talk” toward prayer or direct action as needed.

Engaging Students

Your students are at the heart of your vocation. The way you prepare, teach, and form them has eternal significance, because in a Christian school every lesson is not only about knowledge but also about shaping souls. A well-prepared teacher creates an ordered classroom where learning can flourish; a joyful but firm presence helps children experience truth as both beautiful and demanding. When preparation is weak or classroom culture drifts, students learn mixed messages: that excellence is optional, rules are negotiable, and authority cannot be trusted.

In contrast, when you come to class organized, teach with clarity, hold students accountable, and cultivate a culture of joy and reverence, you form habits of mind and heart that last far beyond your classroom walls. Your temperament has an impact—whether you tend to inspire easily, demand rigor, overcomplicate tasks, or avoid conflict, your natural style will set the tone for the classroom. The following pages will show you how to harness your temperament's gifts, resist its weaknesses, and build the virtues that let you love your students best: patiently, consistently, and with authority ordered toward their good.



A. Preparation & Organization

SNAPSHOT

Preparation and organization in your classroom is a ministry of order: shaping a space and a rhythm where every child is free to attend, wonder, and grow. This discipline provides structure for the week, readiness for each day, and an atmosphere of peace rather than confusion. It includes long-term planning—pacing units wisely—and daily decisions about physical setup, smooth transitions, and fairly distributed attention. Assessment, feedback, reliable records, materials at hand, and classroom routines are all facets of one system that signals, “You are safe here, and you matter.” Even more, preparation is a spiritual discipline, as you seek God’s help for wisdom, gratitude, and steadiness before students ever arrive. The effect is a classroom where children can risk, recover, and delight in learning because the teacher’s order is dependable and their care is evident.

TEMPERAMENT STRUGGLE

Your temperament blend—Choleric (78% dominant); Sanguine, Melancholic, and Phlegmatic (all 69%)—creates rewarding synergy and palpable tension in your approach to organization. Choleric energy drives you to plan boldly, set ambitious timelines, and expect discipline; Sanguine inclination enjoys flexibility and spontaneity, which can disrupt structures for the sake of “just one more story” or conversation. Melancholic rigor steers you toward thorough, even perfectionist, preparation, sometimes consuming time in over-detailing or overthinking. Phlegmatic desire for calm may prompt you to delay or downplay routines that could feel stressful, or to drop less urgent tasks as fatigue rises. The resulting tension means you often start with clear, decisive plans, but may drift into improvisation if energy lags, or bog down in details if uncertain. At times, classroom materials or grading might pile up as you shift focus from execution to relational or reflective tasks. Inconsistency in routines or recordkeeping may emerge—not from neglect, but from juggling many priorities or avoiding friction. Over time, fatigue and complexity can erode your capacity for order, reducing joy and increasing unsustainable effort.

Virtue to Cultivate: Prudence

Prudence is essential for you in planning and organization, as it governs both your drive for action and your desire for excellence, helping you prioritize “what is best for these students, today.” It allows you to recognize when “good enough” is sufficient, when to adapt or to hold firm, and how to shape systems that support your calling without exhausting your spirit. Prudence makes your energy and preparation sustainable, not just impressive.

PRACTICES TO CONSIDER

- 1 End each week by outlining the following week’s goals and “must-do” routines—then check for balance between ambition and simplicity.
- 2 Prepare classroom materials and tech the day before, reserving final checklists for the morning—to avoid last-minute rushes.
- 3 Stagger assessment and grading cycles so no single week is overloaded, and assign grading “windows” you protect on your calendar.
- 4 Use a simple, visible system (whiteboard tracker or planner app) to log responses to student needs, supply restocking, or individual follow-ups.
- 5 Embed a short prayer of gratitude and request for wisdom in your daily setup routine—rooting your preparation in purposeful calm rather than anxiety.
- 6 Invite a trusted colleague to review your classroom systems monthly, asking where complexity could be simplified for the sake of learning and peace.
- 7 Set aside one block per week for both personal reflection and logistical review—identifying where drift is occurring, naming adjustments, and celebrating small wins for order and clarity.

B. Pedagogy & Instruction

SNAPSHOT

Pedagogy and instruction are the crafts by which you make truth accessible, memorable, and formative for your students. In your Christian classroom, clear explanations, careful lesson design, wise questioning, and active engagement are all ordered to shape not only minds but also hearts and habits. Your presence and pacing set the classroom tempo; your tone teaches as much as your words. Whether modeling careful reasoning or sparking wonder, you guide your students to love what is true and beautiful, work diligently, and receive correction with hope. Good pedagogy respects both the group and the individual, holds the bar high while offering varied paths to mastery, integrates faith and virtue as part of the subject matter, and offers feedback that builds rather than shames. Ultimately, effective instruction is inseparable from the way you love and lead students, offering them wisdom, encouragement, and meaningful challenge.

TEMPERAMENT STRUGGLE

Your combination of Choleric (78%), Sanguine (69%), Melancholic (69%), and Phlegmatic (69%) means you can move between crisp, directive instruction and joyful, interactive engagement—yet may also find yourself caught between the desire for clarity and the temptation to over-explain or wander. Choleric energy helps you frame lessons with purpose and authority, but can become rush or overly controlling, sometimes curtailing meaningful discussion or adjustment for diverse learners. Sanguine inclination fosters enthusiasm and engagement but may distract structure with tangents or excessive focus on a few eager students. Melancholic strength ensures careful organization and high expectations, but might complicate content beyond accessibility or delay lesson progression for the sake of perfection. Phlegmatic steadiness helps cultivate patience and gentle presence, but risks lowering urgency or failing to redirect lack of attention strongly enough. Reflective practices may be inconsistent—sometimes yielding valuable insight, other times neglected in the press of tasks. If your energies are not integrated, students experience instruction alternately as clear and confusing, firm and permissive, or rigorous and discouraging, depending on how internal tension is resolved in the moment.

Virtue to Cultivate: Justice

Justice—in classroom teaching—means giving each child and each lesson its due: clear expectations, balanced opportunities, fair assessment, and structured support. Your temperament blend needs justice to anchor both your rigor and your warmth, ensuring all students are engaged, seen, and fairly challenged. Justice also protects against favoritism, excessive correction, or drift into unclear standards, fostering an environment where growth and trust flourish side by side.

PRACTICES TO CONSIDER

- 1 Start each lesson with a concise “big idea” statement and align all activities to that focus; review at lesson’s end to anchor retention.
- 2 Create a rotation list for questioning, ensuring that both eager and reserved students are engaged and checked for understanding.
- 3 Use frequent, low-stakes formative checks (“quick quizzes,” exit tickets, or thumbs up/down) to gauge mastery and adjust pacing.
- 4 Limit explanations to three minutes, then pause for student processing and questions—this tempers both over-talking and over-control.
- 5 Integrate virtue language purposefully (“Today we are practicing diligence in our work by...”) so that faith is both woven and specific.
- 6 After significant lessons or units, reflect briefly: “Who struggled, and why? Did my delivery overcomplicate or skip necessary steps?”
- 7 Seek feedback from a colleague or mentor on lesson flow at least once per quarter, especially about balancing authority and approachability.

C. Classroom Culture & Formation

SNAPSHOT

The culture of your classroom is the hidden curriculum—establishing the moral and spiritual “weather” in which all learning takes root. As a Christian teacher, you set a tone of joy, reverence, and principled love, where clear routines liberate attention for wonder and diligent work is exalted as an act of worship, not mere compliance. Your every interaction, word of encouragement, act of correction, and moment of forgiveness models virtue for your students. Formation happens as the gospel is woven into daily expectations, peer relationships are continually guided and restored, and character is taught explicitly and lived implicitly by you. In such an atmosphere, mistakes become opportunities for growth, hard work is motivated by love, and each child’s dignity is protected by both your standards and your hope.

TEMPERAMENT STRUGGLE

The balanced but strong interplay of Choleric, Sanguine, Melancholic, and Phlegmatic (all at or near 70%) means you possess deep resources for classroom culture, but must manage internal opposing pulls. Choleric instincts help you set boundaries, enforce expectations, and correct behavior directly; yet this can become sharpness or heaviness, especially if Melancholic perfectionism is triggered by repeated lapses. Sanguine presence brings humor and enthusiasm, but may drift toward inconsistency, lax enforcement, or excessive affirmation at the expense of formation. Phlegmatic steadiness is a gift when classroom conflict or anxiety rises, but risks slowing corrective action or tolerating subtle disrespect for too long. Melancholic focus on virtue and craftsmanship creates a principled culture, but if unchecked, may lead to excessive correction or under-communication of joy and hope. If you oscillate between these tendencies, students may receive mixed signals: some feel safe and known, others feel lost in a shifting atmosphere of firmness, anxiety, or permissiveness; routines may alternately be strict or ignored, and peer culture may drift without explicit intentionality.

Virtue to Cultivate: Temperance

Temperance is your crucial virtue for culture-building, as it brings self-mastery and moderation to your instincts for both enforcement and affirmation. Temperance helps you “set the thermostat” of the room—gentle in authority, measured in correction, consistent in joy—and prevents emotional overreaction or underreaction in the daily press of classroom life. By practicing temperance, you create a climate of stable love and reliable order, in which formation can happen deeply.

PRACTICES TO CONSIDER

- 1 Begin and end each day with predictable ritual prayers or songs, anchoring joy and reverence as non-negotiable for all.
- 2 Post and review class expectations and routines regularly, tying each to a virtue—rotate which one is emphasized to avoid drift.
- 3 Practice “private before public” correction: when possible, address missteps quietly so dignity is preserved.
- 4 When strong emotions arise—either in students or yourself—pause before responding, modeling calm for the room and reinforcing that big feelings are neither ignored nor indulged.
- 5 Celebrate small acts of diligence, kindness, or self-control with specific, quiet affirmation rather than general praise.
- 6 Proactively monitor peer interactions and step in early with guided language (“How could we show charity here?”) rather than waiting for patterns to worsen.
- 7 Keep reflection on classroom atmosphere part of your weekly review: Was I steadier than the room, or did I mirror the students? What needs to be recalibrated for peace and order?

D. Accountability & Discipline

SNAPSHOT

Accountability and discipline are ministries of conscience formation. In your classroom, discipline is less about control and more about loving children toward maturity, self-governance, and hope. Standards are made clear and tied to concrete virtues: respect, honesty, self-control, and diligence. You actively teach procedures and expectations, enforcing them consistently and fairly, with correction offered in a manner that preserves a child's dignity. Consequences are aligned to restore order rather than seek retribution, using both firmness and mercy. You partner with parents and school leadership to ensure consistency and clarity. Ultimately, a healthy discipline system teaches that mistakes offer a path for both correction and restoration—training habits that last far beyond your walls.

TEMPERAMENT STRUGGLE

In discipline moments, your dominant Choleric drive ensures you are rarely afraid to clarify or correct behavior swiftly, but your strong Sanguine and Phlegmatic sides may temper your urgency or lead you to soften enforcement to protect rapport. Your Melancholic tendency, meanwhile, orients you toward fairness and accuracy, but may result in lengthy explanations, hesitation before acting, or delayed follow-through if you fear being too harsh. The competing pulls mean that some infractions are met with decisiveness, while others are given too many chances, and occasionally, standards “move” for reasons that aren't entirely clear to students. You may sometimes correct behavior publicly in the rush of the moment (Choleric), but regret the tone afterward (Melancholic/Sanguine), or else postpone necessary consequences to keep order on the surface (Phlegmatic)—only to have disrespect or chaos return. If not stabilized, your patterns may swing between strictness and leniency, undermining students' sense of justice and your authority in the process.

Virtue to Cultivate: Fortitude

Fortitude is your stabilizing virtue for discipline, giving you the courage and constancy to hold lines, deliver consequences calmly, and endure students' or parents' discomfort for the sake of their long-term good. Fortitude ensures that you do not shrink from necessary correction or retreat into avoidance when conflicts arise, anchoring your discipline in hope and patient repetition.

PRACTICES TO CONSIDER

- 1 Teach, model, and rehearse routines for common group behaviors (lining up, transitions, group work) until they become muscle memory—not moving on until they are achieved.
- 2 State consequences clearly and calmly in advance, then enforce them as stated—resisting both escalation and quiet indulgence.
- 3 Keep discipline records (brief, factual) for recurring misbehavior, both for accountability and for parent partnership.
- 4 Address repeated patterns early, scheduling one-on-one conversations as soon as you observe trends, rather than letting issues accumulate.
- 5 Use private correction whenever possible, but do not delay in the hope that a problem will resolve itself—act before your own emotion rises.
- 6 After discipline, invite students into brief reflection: “What happened? What could you do next time?”—cultivating both ownership and reconciliation.
- 7 Partner with parents and administration as soon as repeated patterns emerge, presenting both facts and hope for growth.

Partnering with Parents

Parents remain the primary educators of their children, and your role as a Christian school teacher is to support, not supplant, their responsibility. How you communicate, build trust, and address concerns with parents directly affects their confidence in the school—and their willingness to entrust you with their child’s growth. When communication is timely and clear, parents feel respected and included. When trust is strong, they become allies in forming their children. But when updates are inconsistent, problems are hidden, or concerns are brushed off, suspicion and frustration grow quickly.

Your temperament mix shapes how you relate to parents—whether you tend to overpromise, speak too bluntly, offer too many details, or hold back from hard conversations. The task before you is to communicate with truth and charity, balancing transparency with professional judgment. The following pages will give you practical tools to use your natural strengths, correct for your defaults, and cultivate virtues necessary for healthy parent relationships. Done well, your partnership with parents will not only support each child’s flourishing but also model the community’s deeper unity in forming souls for God.



A. Communication & Transparency

SNAPSHOT

Communication with parents is a ministry of trust. It entails appropriate transparency—providing visibility into classroom life, students' progress, key events, and challenges in a way that enables families to become partners in their child's formation. Effective communication means regular classroom updates, clear assignment calendars, and prompt responses to inquiries; conferences and progress reports that tell the truth with hope; calm explanations of school policies and expectations; and, above all, early communication when significant concerns arise. Transparency does not mean oversharing every detail, but ensuring parents do not feel left out, surprised, or left in the dark. Celebration is proactive and specific, reinforcing a shared joy in each child's growth. Consistency across channels guards against mixed messages or unnecessary anxiety. In all of this, genuine partnership replaces mere performance, and parents experience both respect and clarity.

TEMPERAMENT STRUGGLE

With your well-balanced Choleric (78%), Sanguine (69%), Melancholic (69%), and Phlegmatic (69%) temperaments, your approach to parent communication is dynamic but potentially inconsistent. The Choleric in you may push for efficiency and clarity, which can result in concise but sometimes abrupt updates or explanations. Sanguine strength encourages warmth and enthusiasm, especially in celebration, but may lead to initial overcommitment to communicating—then losing regularity when other priorities arise. Melancholic focus imparts thoroughness in progress reporting or policy clarification, but can drift toward too much detail or overly formal language that overwhelms or confuses. Your Phlegmatic side leans toward gentle, courtly tone, and helps avoid reactive or heated responses, but may also cause you to delay addressing challenging topics or inquiries in hopes they resolve quietly. When your temperaments become divided, you may send mixed signals—friendly but vague, clear but cold, or hopeful but light on practical action—leaving parents confused about what is really needed or what is actually happening. The result, if not addressed, is a pattern of promising clarity but delivering inconsistency; parents become anxious or disengaged, and trust erodes.

Virtue to Cultivate: Prudence

Prudence is central to communication and transparency with families. It directs you to choose the right channel, the right tone, and the right timing for each message; to give enough information without overburdening parents; and to know when to share difficult truths early in the process. Practicing prudence makes your communication trustworthy, balanced, and predictably helpful to families in your care.

PRACTICES TO CONSIDER

- 1 Develop a weekly communication rhythm (email or app) outlining assignments, key dates, and small celebrations for all families.
- 2 Respond to all parent inquiries within twenty-four hours, at least to acknowledge receipt and offer a window for a thorough response.
- 3 Use concise checklists and summaries in longer progress reports or conference notes—making areas of growth and challenge clear without overwhelming detail.
- 4 When communicating concerns, do so early, with factual observations and avoid speculation or emotional language.
- 5 Schedule at least one positive outreach per family each quarter, celebrating a specific act, progress, or virtue.
- 6 Clarify policy or grade questions with reference to both classroom expectations and school-wide norms, maintaining tone—even if you must disagree.
- 7 Maintain a running log of communication (dates, summary of issue, promised follow-up) to ensure consistency and reliability of your outreach.

B. Trust & Respect

SNAPSHOT

Trust and respect are the “moral capital” of your relationship with parents. Strong trust is built when parents encounter a teacher who is approachable, principled, and attentive to both child and family context, yet unwavering in moral and academic standards. Respect grows as you clearly affirm parents’ primary roles, maintain professional boundaries, protect confidentiality, and convey consistent alignment with the school’s mission and administration. It is expressed by truly listening to parental perspective, integrating parent insights where appropriate, and leading clearly—especially when difference or difficult news arises. In all things, the teacher’s respect for parents coexists with the call to protect classroom authority and to avoid both appeasement and rigidity. Unity with the school and authenticity with parents together anchor this partnership for the child’s benefit.

TEMPERAMENT STRUGGLE

Your broad temperament blend (Choleric 78%, Sanguine 69%, Melancholic 69%, Phlegmatic 69%) gives you both strong presence and the drive for warm connection, but also carries the risk of misapplied boundaries. Choleric confidence can make you forthright in disagreement, sometimes brusquely asserting policy or your own judgment and risking the impression you override parent input. Sanguine impulse may invite friendly, informal conversation that unintentionally spills into over-accommodation or blurred formality, potentially promising more flexibility than you can deliver. Melancholic caution may cause you to withhold necessary information for fear of upsetting, or keep parent relationships distant out of reluctance to enter messier conversations. Phlegmatic steadiness appears as patience and discretion, but can slip into delay or noncommittal responses, especially under pressure. When these impulses compete, parents might feel sometimes handled, sometimes cajoled, sometimes left out, or sometimes met with cool formality. When boundaries, role clarity, or institutional unity is inconsistent, the experience for families can be disorienting—and trust quickly erodes.

Virtue to Cultivate: Justice

Justice is the keystone virtue you need here: it ensures every family receives the same dignity, clarity, and fairness—regardless of social comfort, history, or circumstances. Justice means honoring the rightful primacy of parents, maintaining professional boundaries that protect both authority and transparency, and always representing your classroom as part of the wider reality of your school. With justice, you both affirm and lead, creating a partnership that is trusting, predictable, and grounded in truth.

PRACTICES TO CONSIDER

- 1 Explicitly affirm in conversation or writing: “You are your child’s most important teacher; our partnership is crucial.”
- 2 Hold clear office hours and commitment boundaries, so parents know when to reach you and when to expect a response.
- 3 In every sensitive conversation, begin with listening—repeat back the essence of the parent’s concern before offering guidance.
- 4 When presenting difficult news or policy, reference school-wide standards to clarify alignment and to avoid the appearance of isolation.
- 5 Respect confidentiality: share only information it is right for families to have, never including details about other students or teachers outside proper context.
- 6 Invite administrators into especially complex or sensitive parent meetings and communicate this as normal protocol, not escalation.
- 7 When asked to make exceptions, respond with both empathy and a clear explanation for boundaries, maintaining fairness for all children and families.

C. Handling Concerns & Difficult Conversations

SNAPSHOT

Difficult conversations with parents are vital opportunities for truth and charity. Whether addressing academic struggles, behavioral incidents, special needs, or disagreements, your task is to speak early, plainly, and kindly—protecting dignity while naming what is required for the good of the child. These moments call for wise timing, empathy for parental emotions, factual clarity, and a hope-filled vision for growth. You recommend supports or outside evaluations without intrusion or blame; clarify confusion about grades or expectations calmly; and respond to social or discipline conflicts by prioritizing reconciliation and fairness, not blame. When disagreements or mistakes occur, you move swiftly toward repair. In all, these interactions build the “muscle” of school-family partnership and bear powerful witness to Christian unity in hope, courage, and humility.

TEMPERAMENT STRUGGLE

Jacob, your temperament composition (Choleric 78%, Sanguine/Melancholic/Phlegmatic 69%) gives you both the courage to initiate difficult conversations and the impulse to cushion or delay them in hope of protecting relationships or yourself from discomfort. Choleric directness enables you to name challenges without embellishment, but if untempered, can sound urgent, directive, or even impersonal—especially if you’re pressed for time. Sanguine energy can soften these edges with warmth and reassurance, but sometimes pulls you toward telling positive stories or avoiding hard truths just a little longer. Melancholic conscientiousness ensures you bring evidence and attentiveness, but risks either overwhelming parents with detail or delaying the conversation while gathering “enough proof.” Phlegmatic patience is a gift for remaining calm, but can prompt delays or noncommittal responses if conflict feels threatening. The result under pressure may be procrastinating on hard calls, offering too much or too little information, or attempting to solve everything in one meeting. If follow-up lacks clarity or courage, issues might resurface larger later, or families leave conversations unclear about the next steps and your partnership aim.

Virtue to Cultivate: Fortitude

Fortitude is essential for handling concerns and hard conversations. It empowers you to address issues early, speak with clarity and hope, and hold boundaries even in the face of discomfort or pushback. Fortitude helps you persist through messy encounters and see correction—and reconciliation—as part of loving the child and family, not as threats to be avoided or battles to be won.

PRACTICES TO CONSIDER

- 1 Contact parents about concerns while they are small, using concrete, specific observations free from judgment or interpretation.
- 2 Before a scheduled difficult conversation, script key facts and hopeful points—then practice aloud for tone and clarity.
- 3 Open meetings with a prayer for wisdom, humility, and unity, setting a tone of peace from the outset.
- 4 When discussing criticism or disagreement, listen fully before responding—repeat back parent’s point to ensure understanding and lower defensiveness.
- 5 Be honest about what you do not know or are still investigating; offer a clear next action and timeline for follow-up.
- 6 After any hard conversation, send a brief follow-up communication summarizing what was agreed upon, invitations for further questions, and an affirmation of partnership.
- 7 If misunderstanding or distance remains, reach out after a few days to check in, reaffirm hope, and signal your continued investment in the child’s flourishing.