# Relationship Centered Classrooms

**Learning Starts with Relationships.** Students of color across California have identified relationships with their teachers and school staff as the #1 factor in closing the belief gap so that all students can reach their full potential, regardless of race or zip code.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How Do I...</th>
<th>Self-Rating and Comments</th>
<th>For students of color, a Relationship Centered Teacher...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **1. Notice** | Rating (circle): 1-emerging 2-developing 3-modeling Comments: | • Greets us at the door by name, makes eye contact and smiles.  
• Notices our emotions and theirs—the good, the bad, and everything in between.  
• Pays attention to what’s said and unsaid—to our tone and body language. |
| **2. Listen** | Rating (circle): 1-emerging 2-developing 3-modeling Comments: | • Is curious about our stories, asks for our opinions, and reflects back what they hear.  
• Reaches out to us when we’re feeling disconnected: “How are you doing today—really?” |
| **3. Connect** | Rating (circle): 1-emerging 2-developing 3-modeling Comments: | • Uses a short welcoming routine like journaling, reflection questions, or circles, and optimistic closures to build connections.  
• Looks for daily opportunities to connect in small ways about what’s going on in our lives, and to share what’s going on with them. |
| **4. Care** | Rating (circle): 1-emerging 2-developing 3-modeling Comments: | • Shows concern when we’re having a bad day and affirms us when we’re having a good one.  
• Asks about things outside of school, attends games or events outside of class time, or makes positive calls home.  
• Remembers things we’ve shared with them and inquires about them regularly. |
| **5. Interrupt Bias** | Rating (circle): 1-emerging 2-developing 3-modeling Comments: | • Notices when negative or biased thoughts pop up and asks: “Why am I reacting to this student in this way? What more might there be to this story?”  
• Reflects our identities on classroom walls and in the curriculum.  
• Creates space to talk about identity (race, class, gender, etc.), and builds lessons that are culturally relevant. |
| **6. Empower** | Rating (circle): 1-emerging 2-developing 3-modeling Comments: | • Structures projects and lessons to give us more ownership of the topics or process.  
• Draws from our lived experience and asks us what we already know and what we want to learn.  
• Seeks our feedback on classroom practices, instruction, or content—and then shows us how they’re using that input. |

For more CFJ resources and training opportunities visit [caljustice.org](http://caljustice.org)