Critical Questions for *Inspiring Classroom Excellence*  
(*The Teacher 50*)

*Principal Baruti Kafele*

PrincipalKafele.com  
Twitter: @principalkafele  
facebook: Principal Kafele

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In what ways does my practice *inspire* classroom excellence?
Toward *inspiring* classroom excellence

What drives my practice as a classroom teacher?

How do I keep my students enthusiastic about learning?

Is my classroom's climate and culture consistent with what I conceptualized it to be prior to the first day of school?

Do the relationships in my classroom allow my students to be emotionally safe and secure?

Are my instructional strategies conducive to my students having a willingness to soar?

Do my lessons consider all of my students?

In what ways do I hold myself accountable for the academic success of my students?

How are we going to reach our destination?

What is the evidence that I am growing as a classroom teacher?

Is parental engagement a priority within my practice of teaching?

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What drives my practice as a classroom teacher?  
*The Attitude of the Teacher*

Are my students at an advantage *because* I am their teacher?

Why do I teach, anyway?

How badly do I want to see my students succeed?

Where will my students be ten years from now as a result of having me as their teacher?

Do my students see me as an example of who and what they can become?
How do I keep my students enthusiastic about learning?  
(Student Motivation)

1. What is my signature classroom move?
2. Do I bring the fire into my classroom every day?
3. Do I believe that my students can fly?
4. Have I helped my students to put a “definition” next to their names?
5. How do I prevent my students from wearing blindfolds in my classroom?

Is my classroom’s climate and culture consistent with what I conceptualized it to be prior to the first day of school?  
(Classroom Climate and Culture)

1. Is my classroom a BAM classroom?
2. What is my classroom’s way of life?
3. What is it about my classroom that my students can’t wait to come back every morning?
4. Do I teach “Math” or do I teach “Mathew?”
5. Is my classroom’s brand identity conducive to learning at the highest levels?
Do the relationships in my classroom allow my students to be emotionally safe and secure?  
*(Building Relationships)*

- Do I know my students beyond the dismissal bell?  
- Am I intimidated by any of my students, their parents or the community in which they reside?  
- How do my students perceive me and my treatment of them?  
- To what extent am I involved in my students’ lives?"  
- How often do my students and I “break bread” together?

Are my instructional strategies conducive to my students having a willingness to soar?  
*(Classroom Instruction)*

- How do I know which instructional strategies work best with each of my students?  
- Who are the true “stars of the show” in my classroom?  
- How do I connect learning across the content areas?  
- Do I take into account that no two of my students are alike?  
- Does my teaching reflect the 21st Century student?
Do my lessons consider all of my students?  
(Cultural Responsiveness)

Do I consider my students’ cultural backgrounds when I plan instruction?  
How do I infuse my lessons with the history and culture of my students?  
Do I ensure that my students identify culturally with the lessons I teach?  
How do I demonstrate my sensitivity to the racial and ethnic diversity of my students?  
Am I willing to learn all that I can about my students’ cultures?

In what ways do I hold myself accountable for the academic success of my students?  
(Teacher Accountability)

Do my students have the option of failing in my classroom?  
Do I hold myself accountable for student failure?  
Am I willing to accept responsibility and accountability for my students’ successes AND failures?  
Do I reject poverty as a legitimate excuse for student failure?  
What does my mirror say about my effectiveness as a teacher?
How are we going to reach our destination?
(Planning and Organization)

To what extent do I prepare beyond my lesson plan?
How does data drive my practice?
Have I developed an expertise in my content area?
What role does child development theory play in my overall planning?
Am I highly organized as a teacher?

What is the evidence that I am growing as a classroom teacher?
(Professional Development)

To what extent does professional literature enhance my practice?
How often do I seek out my own professional development?
In what ways do I benefit from the knowledge and experience of my colleagues?
Am I open to accepting constructive feedback from my colleagues and administrators?
Am I willing to act upon suggestions from my colleagues and administrators for improvement?
Is parental engagement a priority within my practice of teaching?
(Parental Engagement)

How strong and productive are my relationships with my students’ parents?
How often do I notify my students’ parents about their children’s successes in my classroom?
Do my students’ parents have access to me?
Does the input I receive from my students’ parents matter to me?
Have I made any home visits lately?

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