1.2: Creating a Social Contract

Student Objective
Students will develop a sense of relational capacity and group buy-in by collaborating to develop a social contract.

Overview
Social contracts are one of the foundational components of developing relational capacity. They outline the rights and responsibilities of each member of the group. A social contract should be developed early, referred to often, and refined as necessary throughout the year.

Materials/Set-Up
- Chart paper
- Markers

Instructional Steps
1. Divide the class into groups of three or four students.
2. Engage the class in a discussion about the purpose of your class. Consider reviewing the class mission statement during this discussion.
3. Tell the students, "In order for all of us to achieve our goals and adhere to our class mission statement, we will all have to live by an agreed-upon set of standards and expectations. We will call these agreed-upon standards our social contract."
4. Instruct students to individually create a list of possible standards and expectations for the class. Encourage them to use positive words to phrase their **statements**.
5. Direct students to share all of their ideas with their group. Students should take turns reading the norms (i.e., identified standards and expectations) from their lists, as one group member records them all. As students begin to repeat ideas, instruct the note-taker to put checkmarks next to an idea every time that idea is repeated.
6. Each group will then choose their two or three most important standards and expectations.
7. Have each group share their top two or three expectations aloud. Record these on chart paper, refining as necessary. The finished document will serve as the social contract of the class.
8. Place the social contract on the wall. Have each student sign the contract as evidence that they agree to the social contract and will abide by it throughout the year.

> ELL Integration: List a variety of words in a word bank and allow students to incorporate them into their social contract.