



CULTISTS & CLASSROOMS

BRANDON SLIGH

IN DEDICATION TO ALL OF THE
EDUCATORS, STAFF, AND
ADMINISTRATORS OUT THERE THAT
HAVE NOT LOST THEIR HEART NOR
THEIR SOUL TO THE JOB; YOU ARE
THE HERO THE WORLD NEEDS, BUT
NOT THE ONE IT DESERVES.

STAY STRONG AND KNOW THAT YOU
MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THEIR LIVES
AND THE WORLD.



PLAYER HANDBOOK







IDEAS, TEXT & ART BRANDON SLIGH

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IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE A NORMAL DAY AT SCHOOL

The coffee was ordinary. The students' conversations were ordinary. Even the 'Morning' from the Admin was ordinary.

Second period had ended, the hallway noise had briefly surged and collapsed as break commenced, and you were finally at your desk trying to enter attendance before the system locked you out. The copier was jammed in the main office. Again. The district had sent another email with the subject line: URGENT: Mandatory Professional Learning Community Meetings at Sites.

Then your teacher neighbor popped their head in your room and asked:
"Has anyone seen the admin around? They were supposed to be monitoring the students at break five minutes ago."

You had not noticed. You were too busy grading, answering emails, trying to eat a snack, and wondering why you never seem to have time to go to the bathroom before the bell rings.

But now that someone mentioned it, the campus feels wrong.

The halls are quieter than they should be. The LED lights pulse in patterns that almost resemble language. The motivational posters in the counseling office have changed somehow. A red substance is smeared beneath the locked door of Conference Room B, where the district consultants have been meeting with administration since dawn.

Maybe the signs were always there.

The chanting after late staff meetings (Be Chalant, Be Chalant, Be Chalant). The sudden obsession with "measurable outcomes," "vertical alignment," and "sacrifice for student success at all costs." The principal's new habit of referring to teachers as "instructional units" and students at "stakeholders."

Something has infiltrated the school.

You and your exhausted, underpaid, overqualified faculty team are the only people left who can stop it before the final bell rings, the gates lock, and the changed on campus become permanent.

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CORE RULES



CHARACTER CREATION

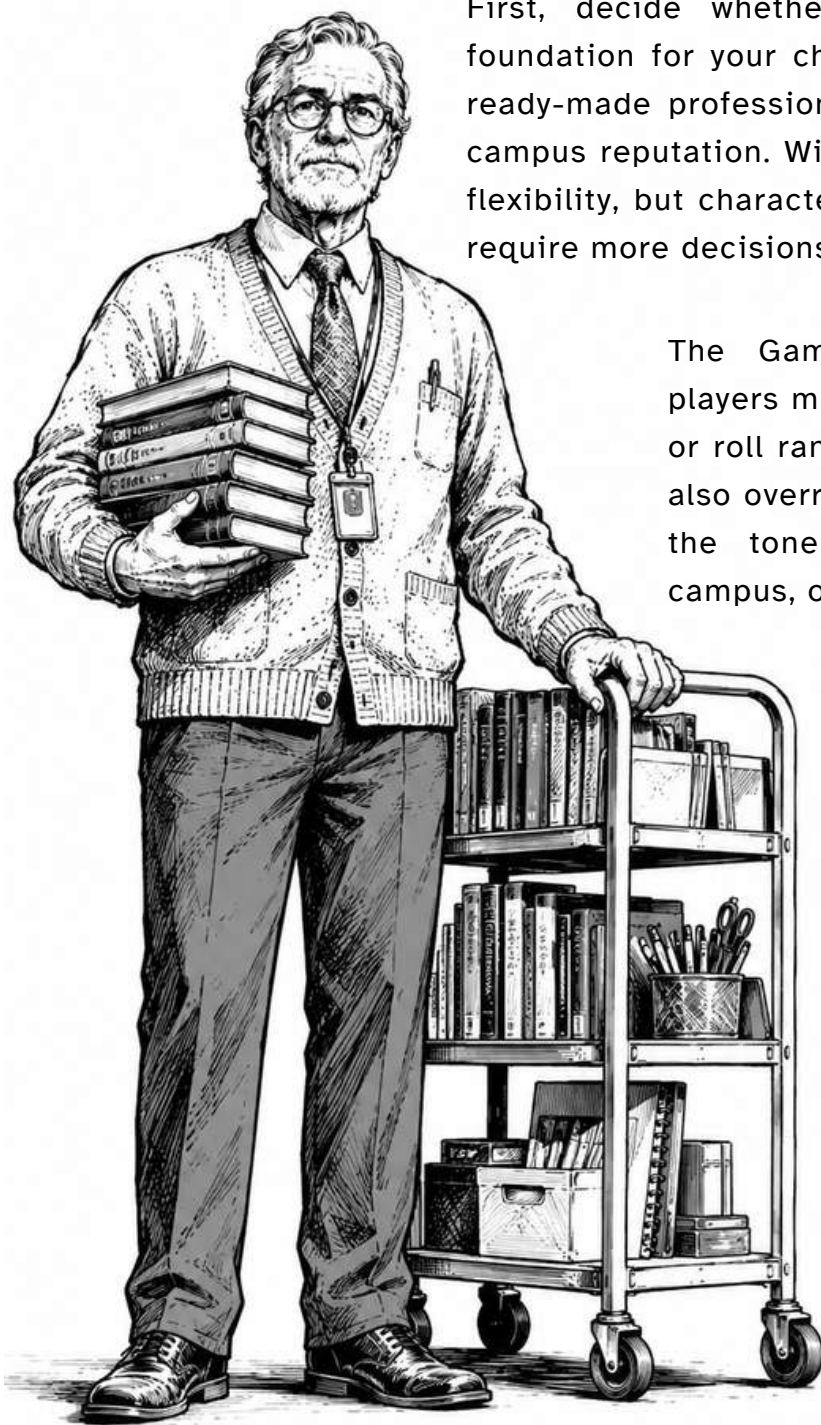
To create your campus employee, complete the required fields on the Character Sheet. This is your personnel file, emergency contact record, evaluation profile, and possibly your last surviving evidence that you were ever employed here.

First, decide whether to use a Persona as the foundation for your character. A Persona gives you a ready-made professional identity, teaching style, and campus reputation. Without a Persona, you have more flexibility, but character creation may take longer and require more decisions.

The Game Manager decides whether players may choose freely from the tables or roll randomly. The Game Manager may also overrule combinations that do not fit the tone of the game, the fictional campus, or basic common sense.

Contradictions are allowed. Teachers are complicated people.

A character might be deeply cynical but strangely loyal to their department. A coach might be a brilliant historian. A counselor might be calm with students but openly terrified of district spreadsheets. Use contradictions when they make the character more interesting.



FULL NAME

Pick an appropriate name or use the table below.

D20	Names	D20	Names
1	Ali	11	Kylee
2	Brad	12	Luke
3	Cassidy	13	Mathew
4	Delany	14	Natalie
5	Edward	15	Peter
6	Frank	16	Riley
7	Greg	17	Steven
8	Heather	18	Violet
9	Isabella	19	Xaiver
10	Jay	20	Zack



PRONOUNS

What pronouns do you prefer to be used when referring to you? E.g. “she/her”, “he/him”, “they/them”.

EMPLOYER

You are employed by the District, see the section “Your Employer”

DISTRICT ALIGNMENT

How loyal are you to the District?

Alignment	Description
Loyal	You’ve drank the school spirit Kool-Aid and asked for more.
Neutral	You just go to your job and keep your head down most days.
Disloyal	You bite the hand that feeds you by secretly or overtly opposing the District

DEPARTMENT

The name of the department to which you belong.

PERSONA

If you base your profile on a Persona, note which one. See the section “Personas”.

JOB TITLE

Select a suitable job title from the section “Careers and Job Titles”. Keep in mind that a well balanced team consists of a diverse mix of roles.

EDUCATION

What is your education/background? Roll a D6 or consult with the GM.



D8	Description
1	Skills Certificate
2	Bachelor's Degree
3	Master's Degree
4	Master's in Education
5	PhD in Subject
6	PhD in Education



STAFF CONNECTIONS

What are your feelings towards of your fellow staff members? Use the table below if needed.

D8	Relationship
1	Professional Admiration
2	Deep Respect
3	Competative Envy
4-5	Casual Collegial Indifference
6	Quiet Fear
7	Mild Dislike
8	Contempt Masked with Professional Language



DESCRIPTION

Describe your personality and physical appearance. See the sections “Clothing Styles” and “Background and Personality Traits”.

YOUR EMPLOYER



You work at a large public high school governed by an ambitious, underfunded, acronym-obsessed District. The campus has history, pride, dysfunction, traditions, rumors, and at least one building everyone agrees is haunted but no one wants to put in writing.

The District is a public education bureaucracy responsible for several campuses, thousands of students, hundreds of employees, and an unknowable number of initiatives.

ATTRIBUTES, HIT POINTS, SKILLS, AND SANITY

First determine the primary attributes Strength, Agility, Intelligence and Resilience, then Hit Points and Sanity; see the section “Attributes”. For Story Points, see the section “Experience and Story Points”.

SKILLS AND ABILITIES

Some Personas, Campus Roles, and Backgrounds provide special abilities. Record them here.

ATTRIBUTES

Just like everyone else, you can be described by the four attributes listed below. For each of the attributes, roll 3D6 and determine the attribute value in table below.

STRENGTH

Physical power, hauling classroom furniture, forcing open stuck doors, holding back whatever came out of the auditorium.

INTELLIGENCE

Knowledge, perception, analysis, lesson design, pattern recognition, decoding district jargon, noticing occult symbols hidden in rubrics.

AGILITY

Speed, reflexes, dodging hallway chaos, climbing bleachers, escaping a rolling cart full of cursed Chromebooks.

RESILIENCE

Endurance, composure, stress tolerance, surviving back-to-back meetings, remaining functional after the copier jams during finals week.

HIT POINTS

Hit Points (HP) is a measure of how much physical harm you can withstand without fainting or dying. Start with Resilience+D8 Hit Points, but not lower than 1. You can never have more Hit Points than this.

You are rendered unconscious when you reach 0 Hit Points, and below that, you are dead. Rest, food and healing will help you recover Hit Points.

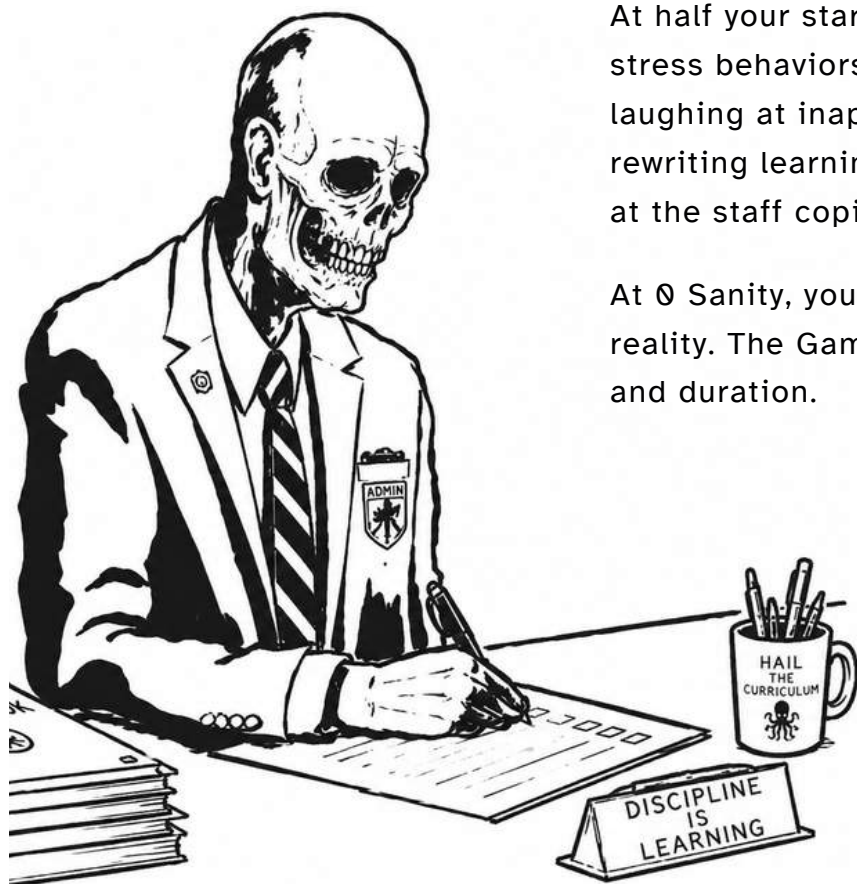
SANITY

Sanity measures your ability to endure supernatural horror, institutional absurdity, and the realization that the district's five-year strategic plan may be an actual ritual diagram. Traumatic experiences and psionic attacks may lower your Sanity. Start with a Sanity level of Intelligence +D8, but not lower than 1.

At half your starting Sanity, you begin showing stress behaviors: muttering about bell schedules, laughing at inappropriate acronyms, obsessively rewriting learning objectives, or staring too long at the staff copier.

At 0 Sanity, you suffer a temporary break from reality. The Game Manager decides the symptoms and duration.

Below 0 Sanity, your character can no longer function as a player character. They may become an NPC, require immediate help, or be absorbed into the district's leadership pipeline.



PERSONAS & CAMPUS ROLES

Personas are an optional way to create a character quickly. They provide the broad outline of your campus identity: your teaching style, professional reputation, emotional damage, and likelihood of surviving a district initiative.

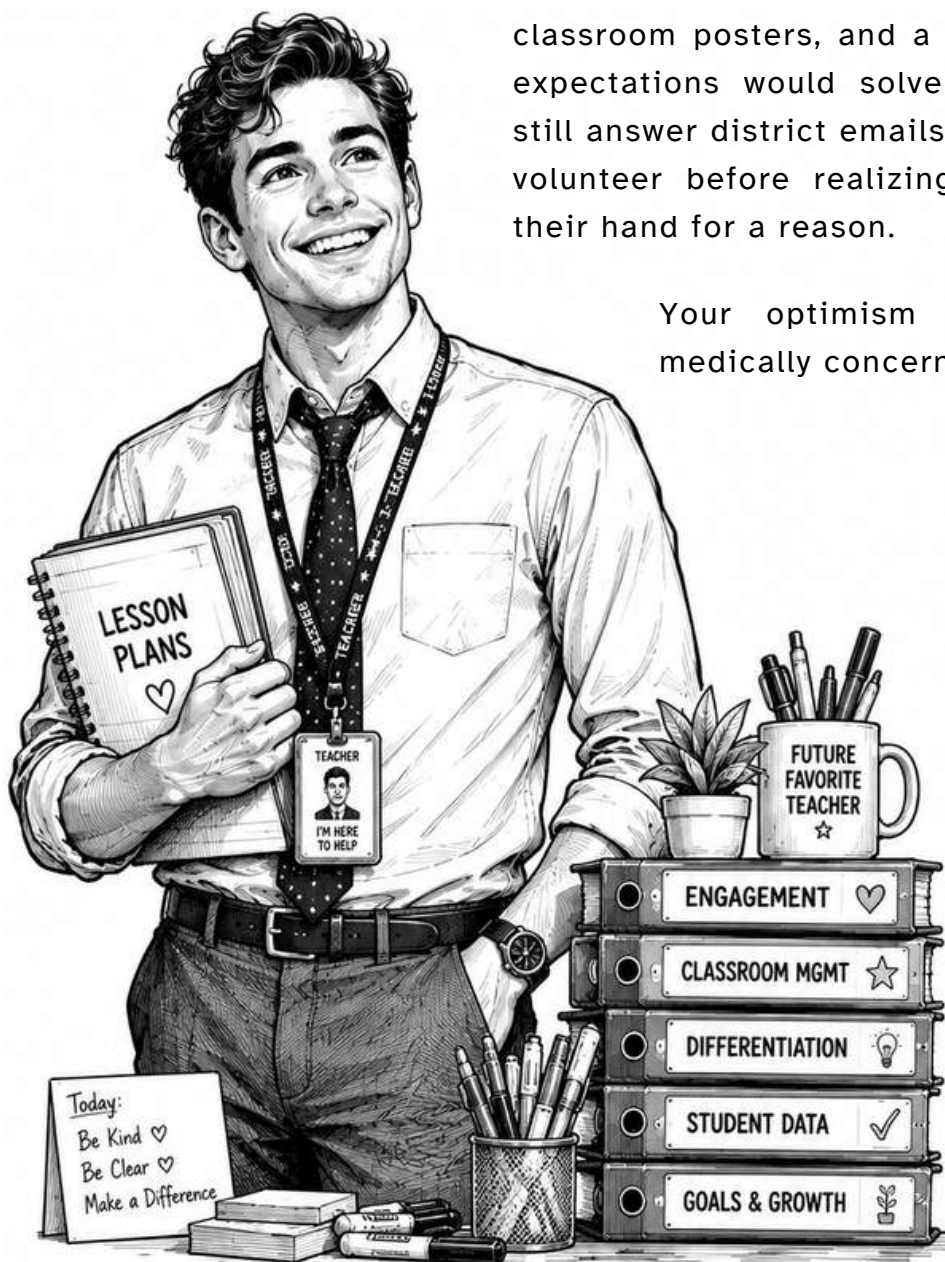
A Persona may suggest which Campus Roles make the most sense, but it does not have to limit you completely. A Jaded Veteran might be a history teacher, counselor, librarian, or coach. A True Believer might be a brand-new teacher or a district consultant who has not yet seen what happens when theory touches reality.

Some Personas grant a special skill in addition to the skill provided by your Campus Role.



THE EAGER NEW HIRE

"I just want to make a difference."



You are new to the profession, new to the campus, or new enough that you still believe the staff handbook describes how the school actually functions. You still reference it once a day. At least.

You came in with color-coded binders, fresh classroom posters, and a deep belief that clear expectations would solve most problems. You still answer district emails immediately. You still volunteer before realizing no one else raised their hand for a reason.

Your optimism is either heroic or medically concerning.

Suggested Role:

New Teacher, Veteran Teacher, CTE Teacher, Department Chair, Counselor, Coach, Special Education Case Manager, Librarian / Office Staff

Skill: Still Has Hope

Once per session, recover D4 Sanity after witnessing something horrifying. You may also grant +1 Sanity to one nearby ally by saying something painfully sincere.

THE EAGER NEW HIRE

Still believes the handbook is real.

THE INSPIRING TRYHARD

*"Relationships before rigor,
but also rigor, because I
made a slideshow."*



You believe in bell-to-bell instruction, student engagement, restorative conversations, growth mindset, and probably at least one educational acronym no one else remembers or has heard of.

You decorate. You theme. You write objectives in student-friendly language. Your handwriting is perfect and your use of grammar is flawless

Your curriculum is organized and updated yearly. You have strong opinions about seating charts and homework. You may be annoying, but you are also disturbingly effective.

The darkness hates you because you burned out a long time ago, but learned to fight fire with fire.

Suggested Campus Role:

Veteran Teacher, CTE Teacher, Department Chair, Counselor, Special Education Case Manager, Librarian / Office Staff, Substitute Teacher

Skill: Mandatory Enthusiasm

Once per session, give a short motivational speech. Every ally who can hear you gains a +1 modifier on their next test. If the speech includes a school-safe metaphor, one ally also recovers 1 Sanity.

THE INSPIRATIONAL TRYHARD

Sets the bar high and lifts
everyone to meet it.

THE CLASSROOM HERMIT

"My door is closed for a reason."



THE CLASSROOM HERMIT

Protects the room, the routine,
and everyone's sanity.

You have perfected the sacred art of solitude. You say "No" a lot. Your default position is "Absolutely not." When asked if available, you are already out the door and halfway down the hallway. You attend meetings physically but not spiritually.

You know which emails matter, which emails can be ignored, and which emails are bait. Students like you. Admin cannot quite explain why your test scores are decent.

Your classroom is a self-contained ecosystem with its own rules, supplies, emergency snacks, and mysterious cabinet no one else is allowed to open.

You are not antisocial. You are professionally fortified against annoying people and unnecessary demands.

Suggested Campus Role:

New Teacher, Veteran Teacher, Special Education Case Manager, Librarian / Office Staff

Skill: Fortified Classroom

Once per session, when you are inside a classroom, office, library, shop, or similar workspace, you may declare that you prepared for this exact nonsense. Gain a +2 modifier to find, improvise, barricade, repair, or repurpose something in that room.

THE CLIPBOARD CRUSADER

"Actually, the policy says..."



THE CLIPBOARD CRUSADER

Procedures. Policies.
Protects learning time.

You know the rules. You know the forms. You know the safety plan, the emergency binder, the supervision schedule, and the subsection of the subsection that everyone else skipped in the Board policies.

You may be a department chair, office staff member, campus supervisor, or teacher who has simply seen too much chaos and have chosen paperwork as a weapon against it. Students fear you, Admin respect you, and your colleges don't always know how to feel.

People mock procedure until the doors lock, the phones die, and you are the only one who knows where the emergency supplies are supposed to be on campus.

Suggested Campus Role:

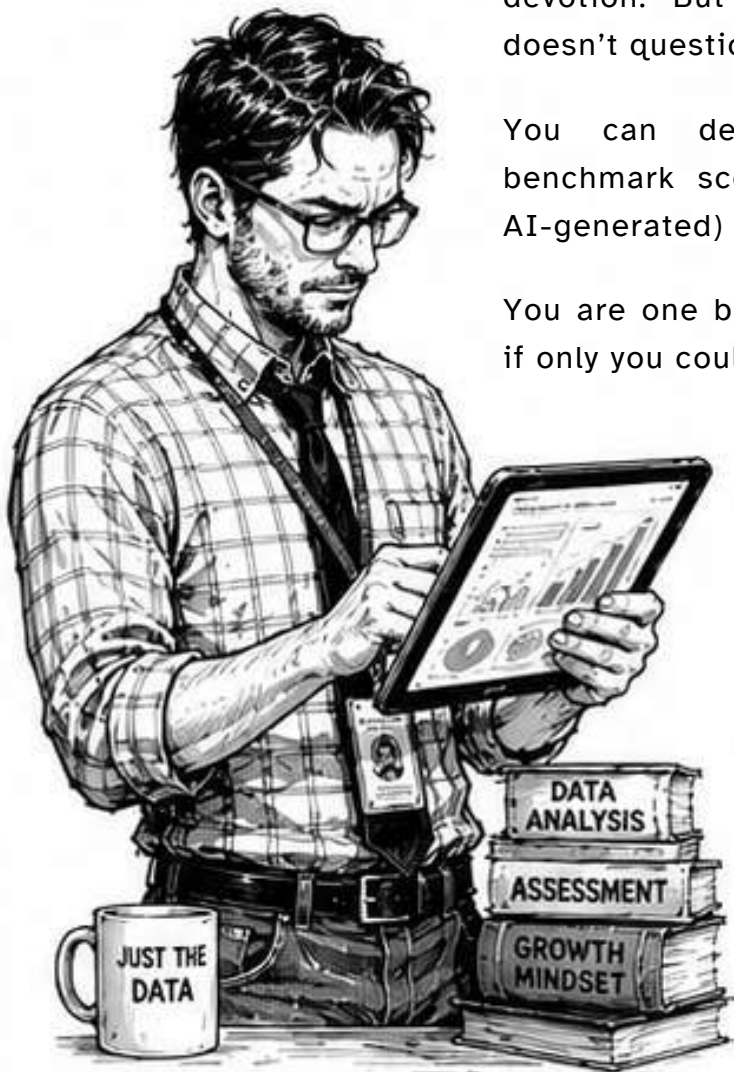
Veteran Teacher, Department Chair, Counselor, Coach, Special Education Case Manager, Librarian / Office Staff

Skill: Policy as a Blunt Instrument

Once per session, cite a rule, form, procedure, or safety protocol with absolute confidence. Gain +2 on a test involving access, authority, logistics, evacuation, de-escalation, or making someone hesitate long enough to act.

THE DATA-DRIVEN ZEALOT

"The spreadsheet reveals patterns the human mind cannot comprehend."



THE DATA-DRIVEN ZEALOT

Measures what matters and improves what doesn't.

You believe numbers tell the truth. Or at least a truth. Or at least something that can be placed into a color-coded chart and presented during a PLC meeting.

You track attendance, assessment trends, intervention lists, behavior logs, and student progress with a focus that borders on occult devotion. But you get best results, so Admin doesn't question your methods or even ask how.

You can detect anomalies in gradebooks, benchmark scores, and suspiciously perfect (or AI-generated) student essays.

You are one bad pivot table away from prophecy, if only you could understand the numbers.

Suggested Campus Role:

Veteran Teacher, Department Chair, Counselor, Special Education Case Manager

Skill: The Numbers Are Screaming

Once per session, study records, rosters, schedules, dashboards, grades, attendance reports, or other institutional data. Ask the GM one question about a hidden pattern, inconsistency, or suspicious connection. The GM must answer truthfully, though not necessarily completely.

THE STUDENT ADVOCATE

"No, we are not ignoring what is happening to them."



THE STUDENT ADVOCATE

Sees the whole student.
Fights for their future.

You remember that schools are supposed to serve human beings, not dashboards. You notice who is hungry, who is scared, who has gone quiet, who is missing, and who is being treated like a number.

You are often frustrated. You are often right. You know the official system and the unofficial system, and you know which one actually gets people help.

You may be a counselor, special education teacher, teacher, coach, librarian, or staff member who has become the person everyone finds when something is wrong.

Suggested Campus Role:

New Teacher, Veteran Teacher, Department Chair, Counselor, Coach, Special Education Case Manager, Librarian / Office Staff

Skill: Read the Room

Test Intelligence to understand the emotional state, fear, motive, or immediate need of another character. This can only be used for protective, investigative, or de-escalating purposes. If used to help someone directly, gain +1 on the related follow-up test.

THE CREATIVE CHAOS ENGINE

"I have a great idea. It is probably not approved."



THE CREATIVE CHAOS ENGINE

Turns ideas, duct tape, and
deadline into magic.

You are the rogue campus employee who can turn trash into instructional materials and a locked storage room into a functioning command center. You were always considered to be 'inspired', but now you are a creative force to be reckoned with.

Your classroom may be inspiring, terrifying, or a clear fire code violation (the Admin have learned not to ask questions or visit your room). You do not follow procedure, but you often produce results. Students love the projects. Admin loves the photos. Facilities does not love you. At all.

When reality gets turned upside-down, you start looking for tape, extension cords, butcher paper, and something heavy. You've just been inspired.

Suggested Campus Role:

New Teacher, Veteran Teacher, CTE Teacher

Skill: Improvised Lesson Plan

Once per session, create a useful tool, distraction, barricade, decoy, map, disguise, ritual diagram, or morale-boosting visual aid from available school supplies. Gain +2 on the test if the supplies include tape, markers, cardboard, or a cart no one claims to own.

THE DEPARTMENT DIPLOMAT

*"Let's not get bogged-down
in the negative and stay on
topic."*



THE DEPARTMENT DIPLOMAT

Builds bridges, smooths egos,
and gets things done.

You are the person who keeps adults from turning every minor inconvenience into a permanent grudge. You mediate between admin, teachers, counselors, coaches, classified staff, and whichever department is currently furious. Everyone knows you and respects you. The students, the staff, even the Admin find that they can trust and confide in you.

You know the campus secret and rumors. You know who hates whom, who owes whom, and who will help if asked correctly. If something needs to get done, you're the one that everyone goes to first to see that it gets handled the right way.

In a crisis, you're the solution-oriented escape plan that everyone else was hoping would end up on their team for the end of the world.

Suggested Campus Role:

Veteran Teacher, CTE Teacher, Department Chair, Counselor, Office Staff

Skill: Professional Language

Once per session, reframe conflict in calm institutional language. Gain +2 on a test to negotiate, redirect blame, calm staff, stall an authority figure, or make a terrible idea sound like a pilot program.

THE SUBSTITUTE

*"I am only here on Tuesdays
and Thursdays."*

You are a substitute, a consultant, curriculum specialist, an outside contractor, district support person, grant-funded coach, mental health provider, ed-tech trainer, or other semi-attached professional whose badge opens some doors but not others.

People have seen you around campus, but no one really knows you. You are part of the system, but not fully. You know enough to be useful and detached enough to be dangerous. You have seen multiple campuses, which means you know this one is not uniquely dysfunctional.



Suggested Campus Role:

CTE Teacher, Counselor, Coach, Special Education Case Manager, Librarian / Office Staff

Skill: Just My Day-Job

You receive +2 on tests involving campus politics, blame avoidance, plausible deniability, or resisting pressure from authority figures. Once per session, you may also know a useful detail from another campus that applies here.

THE SUBSTITUTE

Follows the plans. Avoids the weirdness.

THE JADED VETERAN

"You don't scare me, you little shit."



THE JADED VETERAN

Seen it all. Still shows up.
That's the hero part.

You have been here long enough to remember old slang, old scandals, old administrators, old reforms, and old promises that have been repackaged as new initiatives multiple times.

You have seen every educational trend arrive with a binder and leave without an apology. You are tired, blunt, and nearly impossible to impress. You terrify the students, the parents, and even HR. You may complain constantly, but when the crisis becomes real, everyone looks to you cause you've seen it all before.

You know where the bodies are buried. You buried them.

Figuratively speaking.

Probably.

Stop asking questions.

Suggested Campus Role:

Veteran Teacher, CTE Teacher, Department Chair, Coach, Librarian, Office Staff

Skill: Institutional Scar Tissue

Gain +1 on tests against fear, psychological trauma, manipulation, or bureaucratic intimidation. Once per session, ask the GM whether something like this has happened on campus before. The GM must provide a useful rumor, precedent, or warning.

CAMPUS ROLES



Campus Roles represent what your character officially does at the school. Your Persona explains who you are. Your Campus Role explains what the district thinks it is paying you to do.

D8	Relationship
1	New Teacher
2	Veteran Teacher
3	CTE Teacher
4	Department Chair
5	Counselor
6	Coach
7	SPED Case Manager
8	Librarian / Office Staff / Castodian

NEW TEACHER



You are new, hopeful, overwhelmed, or all three. You are still learning the unwritten rules: which copier works, which administrator answers emails, which bathroom is safest between periods, and which veteran teacher has the good supplies.

You may not know how the campus works, but you are adaptable because nothing has gone according to plan since August.

Skill: Beginner's Adaptability

Once per session, reroll a failed test caused by confusion, lack of experience, or being thrown into a situation without adequate support. You must keep the second result.

VETERAN TEACHER



You have taught long enough to develop instincts that look supernatural to outsiders. You can tell when a class period will go badly before the bell rings. You know the sound of a fake hall pass from thirty feet away.

You have survived enough reforms to know that panic wastes energy.

Skill: Seen It Before

Gain +2 on tests involving classroom management, campus memory, recognizing patterns, detecting nonsense, or remaining calm during institutional absurdity.

DEPARTMENT CHAIR



You are the unofficial middle manager of people who did not want a middle manager. You attend leadership meetings, relay information no one wants, and try to keep your department functional with inadequate time and partial authority.

You have access, context, and enemies.

Skill: Leadership Meeting Clearance

Once per session, declare that you know something because it came up in a meeting, agenda, email thread, or hallway conversation. Ask the GM for one useful piece of information about campus operations, admin plans, staff conflict, or current danger.

COUNSELOR



You manage crises, schedules, student needs, parent concerns, college panic, emotional breakdowns, and impossible caseloads. You know more about the campus than most administrators because people tell you things when they are desperate.

You are trained to listen. You are also trained to document.

Skill: Crisis Protocol

Gain +2 on tests to calm, assess, redirect, comfort, or de-escalate another character. Once per session, you may help an ally recover D4 Sanity if you can speak with them safely for a few minutes.

COACH



You understand motivation, discipline, physical movement, and the strange power of yelling “let’s go” at the correct volume. You are used to managing groups under pressure and making fast decisions when everyone is watching.

You probably have keys to places no one else thinks about.

Skill: Run the Drill

Gain +2 on tests involving movement, coordination, athletics, group action, or physical teamwork. Once per session, you may give the team a simple command that lets every ally gain +1 on their next Agility or Strength test.

SPED CASE MANAGER

You understand systems inside systems: accommodations, services, timelines, meetings, compliance, documentation, parent communication, and legal obligations that everyone else suddenly cares about when something goes wrong.



You are overworked, underestimated, and extremely dangerous to anyone who failed to document properly.

Skill: Compliance Shield

Gain +2 on tests involving documentation, procedure, student support systems, legal requirements, or bureaucratic resistance. Once per session, you may force an authority figure, human or otherwise, to pause and respond to a procedural challenge.

CTE TEACHER



You teach practical skills in a room full of tools, materials, machines, half-finished projects, and objects that can become weapons if the GM is not paying attention.

You know how to fix things, build things, improvise things, and tell when someone has touched your equipment.

Skill: Shop Logic

Gain +2 on tests to repair, construct, dismantle, reinforce, or safely operate equipment. Once per session, you may produce a plausible tool, fastener, cord, scrap material, measuring device, or protective item from your workspace.

LIBRARIAN / OFFICE STAFF / CUSTODIAN /



You control information, databases, textbooks, quiet spaces, forgotten archives, and probably the only printer that still works. Students think you help them find books. Staff know you help them find everything.

You know who is absent, who is angry, who has keys, who called, who lied, which forms matter, and which administrator is hiding in a meeting.

Skill: Administrative Omniscience

Once per session, gain +2 on tests involving campus records, schedules, communications, visitors, keys, attendance, logistics, archived information, media systems, digital access, or locating people.

PERSONA

ATTIRE

What type of clothing do you usually wear to work?
Write your own description or use the tables below for inspiration.

D8	Professional Attire
1	Staff Meeting Formal: Button-down shirt, blouse, slacks, dress shoes, cardigan, blazer, or other clothing that suggests you might be presenting to the board later.
2	Teacher Casual: Jeans, comfortable shoes, school shirt, lanyard, practical layers, and the faint aura of someone who had bus duty in the wind.
3	Spirit Wear Loyalist: School hoodie, staff shirt, team jacket, mascot colors, rally day accessories, and possibly a drawer full of outdated campus shirts.
4	Coach Mode: Polo, shorts, athletic shoes, whistle, sunglasses, hat, and the posture of someone who can turn any hallway into a conditioning drill.
5	Creative Department Chaos: Paint stains, marker smudges, tool belt, theater blacks, handmade jewelry, weird socks, or something that may technically violate the staff handbook.
6	Burned-Out Minimalist: Same reliable outfit rotation every week. No one knows if this is efficiency, exhaustion, or a philosophical statement.
7	Student Confusion Fit: You are frequently mistaken for a senior, a college student, a student teacher, or someone who should be wearing a visitor badge.
8	Subculture of Your Choice: Goth teacher, punk teacher, cowboy teacher, metalhead teacher, vintage academic, Disney adult, retro gamer, Star Wars scholar, or another clear personal aesthetic.

PERSONA

ATTIRE

What type of clothing do you usually wear to work?
Write your own description or use the tables
below for inspiration.



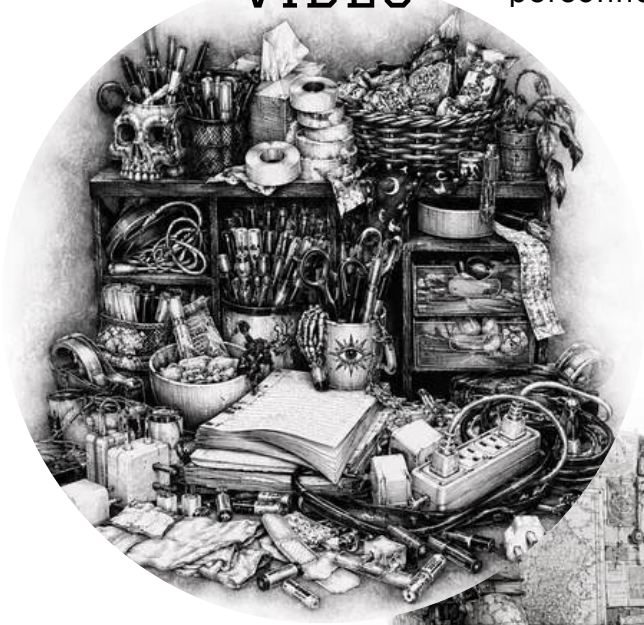
CLASSROOM VIBES

Your classroom, office, workspace, or assigned area says more about your character than their personnel file ever could.

D8	Classroom Style
1	Organized Command Center: Labeled bins, clean board, emergency sub plans, posted objectives, seating chart, working timer, and supplies exactly where they belong.
2	Academic Cave: Books, papers, maps, posters, outdated curriculum binders, strange artifacts, and one chair no one else is allowed to use.
3	Controlled Chaos: Students think it is messy. You know where everything is. Usually.
4	Inspirational Overload: Posters, quotes, affirmations, college pennants, student work, growth mindset signage, and at least one laminated phrase that has lost all meaning.
5	Coach Classroom: Practice schedules, trophies, team photos, motivational slogans, athletic gear, and a whiteboard that has both assignments and game strategy on it.
6	Counseling Refuge: Soft lighting, tissues, calming objects, college posters, confidential files, snacks, and a chair positioned for difficult conversations.
7	Tech-Dependent Ecosystem: Multiple monitors, chargers, adapters, projector remotes, Chromebook carts, and one device that only works when threatened.
8	The Room Everyone Borrows From: Tape, scissors, chargers, paper, bandages, snacks, tools, extension cords, markers, batteries, and no memory of ever being reimbursed.

CLASSROOM VIBES

Your classroom, office, workspace, or assigned area says more about your character than their personnel file ever could.



BACKGROUND

Most school employees have a past, a secret, a reputation, or a professional wound that explains why they are like this.

D8	Background
1	Perfectly Average Educator: Nothing about you stands out. You blend into meetings, hallways, trainings, and group emails. Gain +2 when trying to go unnoticed in a school setting.
2	Former Athlete: You still move like someone who once cared about competition. Gain +1 Strength or +1 Agility.
3	Career Changer: You had a whole professional life before teaching. Once per session, declare a practical skill from that old career and gain +2 on a related test.
4	Former Troublemaker: You recognize student nonsense because you used to be excellent at it. Gain +2 on tests to detect lying, hiding, cheating, sneaking, or forged passes.
5	Local Legend: You went to school in this area, taught someone's older sibling, coached someone's cousin, or know every family name. Gain +2 on tests involving local memory, community connections, or campus rumors.
6	Secret Softie: You pretend to be cold, cynical, or severe, but you care deeply. Gain +2 when protecting someone vulnerable.
7	Burned by Admin: You trusted leadership once. Never again. Gain +2 on tests to detect hidden motives, vague directives, or institutional betrayal.
8	Too Many Side Duties: Clubs, committees, coaching, supervision, event planning, testing, detention, dances, senior activities. Gain +2 on tests involving logistics, multitasking, or knowing who is supposed to be where.

TEACHER QUIRKS

Teacher Quirks are behavioral habits, professional tics, obsessions, or minor absurdities. They should make the character more playable, not derail the game.

D10	Teacher Quirks
1	You have a signature phrase students imitate behind your back.
2	You never sit with your back to the door and distrust any acronym created after 2015.
3	You say “quick question” before asking something devastating.
4	You keep snacks in your room and deny it badly.
5	You carry a water bottle large enough to be used as a blunt weapon.
6	You say you are “not getting involved,” then immediately get involved.
7	You have a preferred dry-erase marker brand and strong feelings about inferior markers.
8	You have a personal feud with one specific printer, projector, hallway, or office procedure.
9	You can identify which administrator wrote an email based on the subject line alone.
10	Something of your own creation, per GM approval.

GAME PLAY

The game mechanics of Cultists & Classrooms are based on the best practices put forth in the seminal paper Mörk Borg by Nilsson et al. (2019)*.

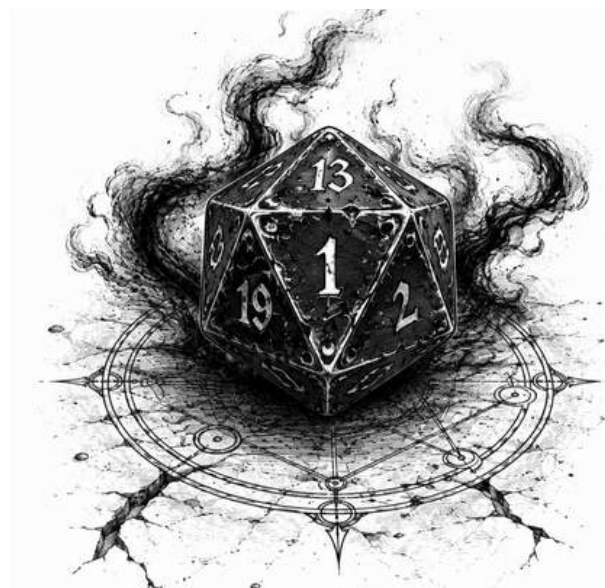
The Game Manager is invited to break the rules whenever they see fit, for example to avoid inconsistencies and contradictions, or to achieve a better playing experience.

TESTS & ATTRIBUTES

Every Player Character has four attributes, *Agility*, *Intelligence*, *Strength* and *Resilience* (see section Attributes, above). Each is represented by a value between -3 and +3. When a Player Character attempts to complete a task where success is not obvious, follow the following process:

DIFFICULTY RATING

1. The Game Manager decides on the Difficulty Rating (DR) of the task at hand.
2. Decide which attribute is relevant.
3. Roll a D20 and modify the result by the value of the attribute.
4. Compare this sum with the Difficulty Rating, if the sum is greater than or equal to the DR, the task succeeds.



DR	Difficulty
6	Easy
8	Normal
12	Difficulut
16	Really Hard
20	Absurdly Difficult

LEVEL-UP STATS

GAINING EXPERIENCE

Given enough time and the right mindset, anyone can improve their skills and attributes. All it takes is experience. The experience you accumulate is represented by Contract Credits (CC) which are awarded for solving work-related tasks or overcoming story-driven challenges. Unused Contract Credits (CC) are saved.

Grinding away at problems results in D4 Contract Credits (CC) for each completed task.

When winning a fight (by incapacitating your opponents or causing them to flee) you gain Contract Credits (CC) equal to the Hit Points of the NPCs that were defeated.

IMPROVING STATS

Between gaming sessions, you may use the acquired Contract Credits (CC) to improve your attributes and skills. It is also possible to spend Contract Credits (CC) to recover Hit Points and Sanity up to the original value (cost 1 Contract Credit per recovered HP or Sanity).

Increasing an attribute one step costs 10 Contract Credits (CC), except if the resulting modifier is +2 or +3, in which case the cost is 20 and 30 Contract Credits (CC) respectively. Experience can never result in an attribute that is higher than +3. Improving skills work in a similar fashion.

Value	Cost Per Step
+1	10 CC
+2	20 CC
+3	30 CC



OFFENSIVE, DEFENSIVE, & UTILITY EQUIPMENT

No one came to school expecting to fight demons, cultists, cursed administrators, or whatever crawled out of the staff development slideshow.

You are not armed. You are at work.

Fortunately, schools are full of objects that can become useful with some applied critical thinking.

Offensive Equipment	DMG
Unarmed	D2
Clipboard	D2
Heavy Textbook	D4
Scissors	D4
Lab Stool	D6
Fire Extinguisher	D6
Paper Cutter Blade	D6
Baseball Bat	D8
Golf Club	D8
CTE Shop Tool	D8

Defensive Equipment	DMG
Backpack	-1
Lob Goggles	-1
Binder	-1
Swim Parka	-2
Catcher's Gear	-3

Utility Equipment	Description
Master Keys	Open most standard classroom, office, and storage doors. May not work on District-restricted areas.
Walkie-Talkie	Allows short-range communication with another staff member. Works even when cell service is unreliable.
Duct Tape	Repairs, restrains, seals, reinforces, or improvises nearly anything. Classic utility item.
Laser Pointer	Point, distract, mark targets, annoy monsters, or guide allies from a distance.
Traffic Cone	Does nothing, except for somehow cause hesitation in enemies when encountered.
Nitrile Gloves	Handle suspicious substances, evidence, cursed objects, or gross biological material.
Flashlight	Basic exploration gear; essential for power outages, basements, closets, and maintenance tunnels.
Batteries	Power flashlights, remotes, radios, calculators, or improvised devices.
Doorstop	Hold a door open or closed. Extremely useful in school-based horror.

OFFENSIVE EQUIPMENT

These are just examples of the types of improvised weapons that may be utilized. There is no limit to your creativity and imagination, only what your GM will allow.



CLIPBOARD

D2



SCISSORS

D4



HEAVY TEXTBOOK

D4



FIRE EXTINGUISHER

D6



LAB STOOL

D6



PAPER CUTTER BLADE

D6



BASEBALL BAT

D8



CTE SHOP TOOL

D8

DEFESSIVE EQUIPMENT

These are just examples of the types of improvised equipment that may be utilized. There is no limit to your creativity and imagination, only what your GM will allow.



BACKPACK
-1



LAB GOGGLES
-1



CAFETERIA TRAY



BACKPACK
-1



SWIM PARKA
-2



CATCHER'S GEAR
-3



FOOTBALL PADS



EAGLE MASCOT SUIT

UTILITY EQUIPMENT

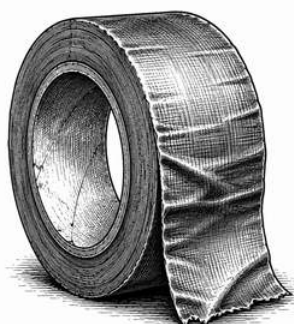
These are just examples of the types of improvised equipment that may be utilized. There is no limit to your creativity and imagination, only what your GM will allow.



MASTER KEYS



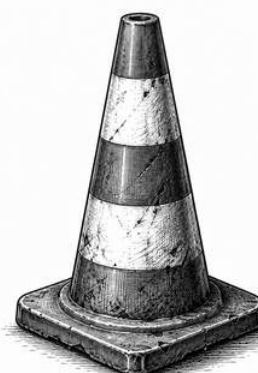
WALKIE-TALKIE



DUCT TAPE



LASER POINTER



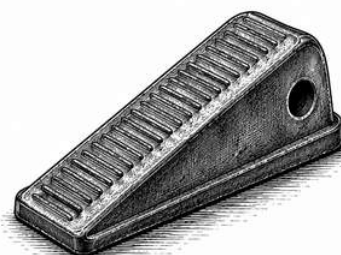
TRAFFIC CONE



NITRILE GLOVES



FLASHLIGHT



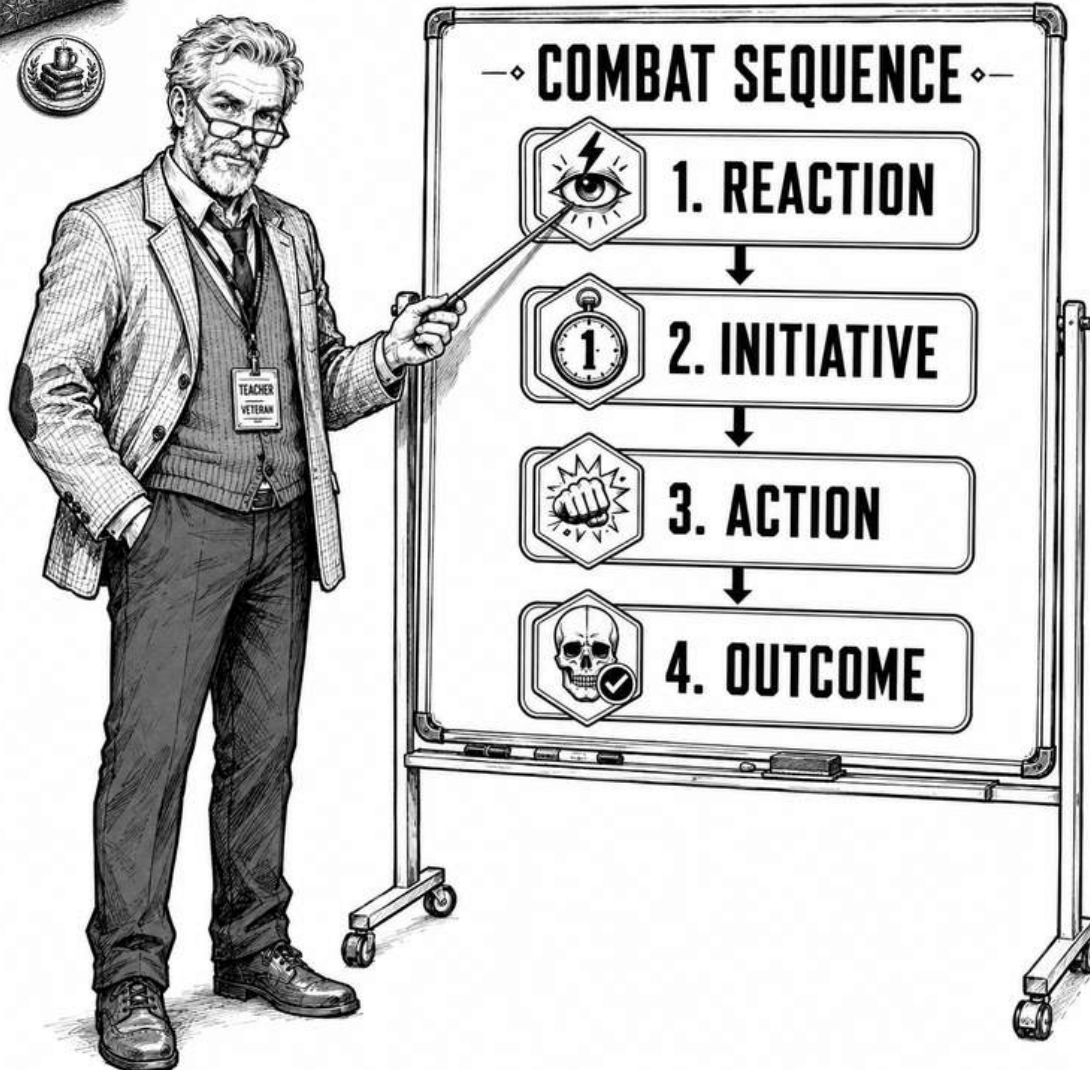
DOORSTOP

COMBAT, HEALING, & SANITY



The Player Characters are at school to educate young minds, document interventions, attend mandatory meetings, and pretend the copier is not a spiritual trial. Combat is not included in the employee handbook, the union contract, or the emergency sub plans. Still, under extreme circumstances, a teacher may be required to defend themselves against mindless hallway drones, corrupted administrators, cursed mascots, or horrors that definitely were not covered during professional development.

This section describes the rules for encounters, conflict, and fighting.



REACTION



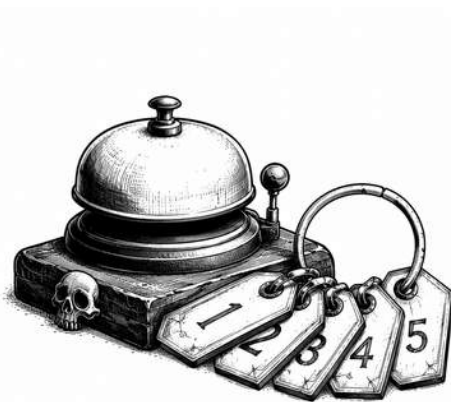
Before combat begins, the GM determines how each side reacts to the situation. A Reaction check may be used when there is uncertainty about awareness, surprise, hesitation, fear, confusion, or readiness.

A successful Reaction means the character understands the danger quickly and may respond normally. A failed Reaction may mean the character is startled, caught off guard, delayed, or placed in a worse position when Initiative begins.

Reaction is most useful when:

- A threat appears suddenly
- One side is ambushed
- Characters enter a dangerous area
- An enemy reveals itself unexpectedly
- The situation is chaotic, loud, dark, crowded, or confusing

INITIATIVE



Once the encounter begins, determine Initiative. Initiative establishes the order in which characters, enemies, and important NPCs act.

The GM may resolve Initiative individually, by group, or by whatever method best fits the speed of the scene. For most encounters, a simple roll or group-based order is enough.

Characters who succeeded on Reaction should usually act normally. Characters who failed Reaction may act later, lose their first opportunity, or begin the encounter at a disadvantage, depending on the situation.

ACTION

On their turn, each character may take an Action. An Action represents the meaningful thing a character does during that moment of conflict.

Common Actions include:

- Attack an enemy
- Defend themselves or another character
- Move to a new position
- Use gear
- Help an ally
- Create a distraction
- Barricade a door
- Investigate something important
- Attempt to escape
- Cast a spell or use a special ability
- Improvise a solution



The GM determines whether an Action requires a test. Simple Actions may succeed automatically. Risky, contested, or uncertain Actions require a roll.

OUTCOME

After an Action is resolved, determine the Outcome. The Outcome describes what changed because of the Action.

An Outcome may include:

- Damage dealt
- A condition applied
- Gear used, broken, lost, or improved
- An enemy weakened, driven back, or defeated
- A complication introduced



The Outcome also covers serious consequences such as Incapacitated, Dead, and Morale.

INJURY & DEATH



A character may become Incapacitated when they can no longer act effectively due to injury, exhaustion, fear, supernatural influence, or overwhelming stress.

A character may become Dead when the fiction, damage, and rules clearly establish that survival is no longer possible.

D6	Injury Levels
1	Unconscious for D4 rounds
2-3	Broken or severed arm/leg
4	Lost an eye
5	Bleeding out (Heal or death in D20 minutes)
6	Dead

TRAUMA & INSANITY



Not every fight causes lasting trauma. Teachers may be exhausted, frightened, or injured without immediately losing their grip on reality. A Trauma Test is only required when an encounter becomes especially horrifying, personal, or psychologically overwhelming.

The GM may call for a Resilience Test against DR 12 when a character experiences a serious traumatic event.

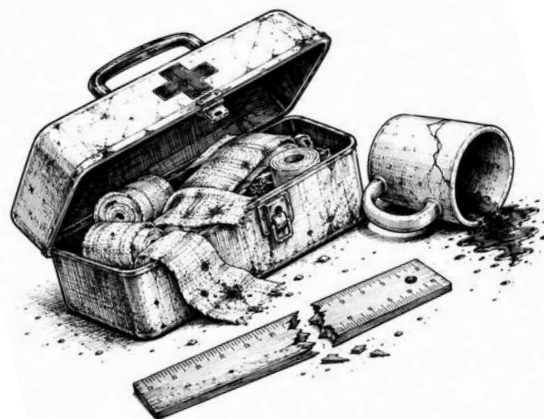
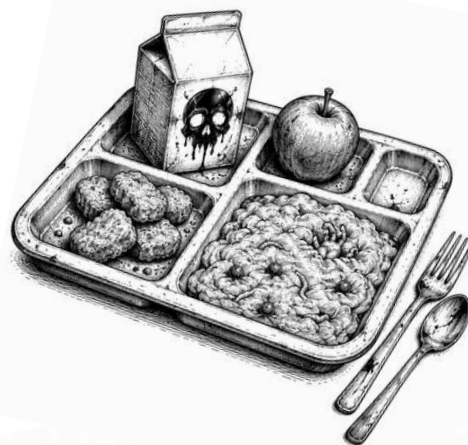
D8	Trauma & Insanity Levels
1	Shaken: Disadvantage on their next Test.
2-3	Frozen: Lose their next Action.
4-5	Panic: Must move away from the source of fear.
6	Breakdown: Incapacitated for D4 rounds unless helped by another character.

RECOVERING

A one hour rest will help the Player Characters recover D4 HP and a whole night's sleep will heal D6 HP, but who has time for such luxuries?

Certain snacks and drinks that the Players may find will have a restorative effect,

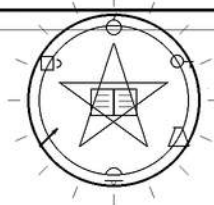
Item	Recovery (HP)	Item	Recovery (Sanity)
Popcorn	D4	Fresh Coffee	D4
Water	D4	Trail Mix	D4
Trail Mix	D4	Donuts	D4
Sports Drink	D6	Emergency Chocolate	D6
Beef Jerky	D6	Herbal Tea	D6
Energy Drink	D6	Homemade Baked Goods	D6



CULTISTS & CLASSROOMS

CHARACTER SHEET

District personnel file, emergency record, and last surviving proof of employment.



PERSONNEL FILE

PLAYER		DISTRICT ALIGNMENT	
FULL NAME		CAMPUS ROLE	
PRONOUNS		PERSONA (OPTIONAL)	
EMPLOYER		JOB TITLE	
DEPARTMENT		EDUCATION	

ATTRIBUTES

STRENGTH	AGILITY	INTELLIGENCE	RESILIENCE
MOD -3 to +3	MOD -3 to +3	MOD -3 to +3	MOD -3 to +3

HP: Resilience + DB. Sanity: Intelligence + DB. Minimum 1.

VITAL SIGNS

HIT POINTS	
CURRENT	TOTAL
SANITY	
CURRENT	TOTAL
STORY POINTS	CONTRACT CREDITS

DESCRIPTION: APPEARANCE AND PERSONALITY	STAFF CONNECTIONS	BACKGROUND / QUIRK / VIBES

SKILLS AND ABILITIES	SIGNIFICANT ITEMS / META MAGIC
	Item 1: Effect / notes: Item 2: Effect / notes: Practical Magic: Meta test DR12 using Intelligence.

WEAPONS	EQUIPMENT

NOTES: INJURIES, TRAUMA, CONDITIONS, CONTACTS, CLUES

FURTHER READING



The following excellent works have inspired the world of Cultists & Classrooms:

- *Shaun of the Dead* by Edgar Wright and Simon Pegg
- *Teachers* by The Katydids
- *Community* by Dan Harmon
- *The Breakfast Club* by John Hughes
- *Stranger Things* by the Duffer Brothers
- *Doom Eternal* by Hugo Martin, Adam Gascoine, Jon Lane, and Chad Mossholder
- *The First Days of School* by Harry K. Wong and Rosemary T. Wong
- *Real Rap* with Reynolds by CJ Reynolds
- *Heimler's History* by Steve Heimler
- *Cultists & Cubicles* by Adam Boman
- *Mörk Borg* by Pelle Nilsson and Johan Nohr

THANK YOU

Thank you US Public Education system for inspiring me to create this game.

Play testing: Various and unnamed educators of a district that inspired this revision of the popular game Cultists & Classrooms. Proofreading: Brandon Sligh and ChatGPT.

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