

## **Difficult Conversations with Lauren Rodriguez-Gregg**

I once had a chat with a mentee about following through on some goals we had developed together. We had reflected multiple times and determined that transitions and timing were an area for improvement. I provided a number of strategies for the mentee to try out, yet when it came time to implement them, the mentee forgot. Before having the chat, I made sure to remember what it was like to be in the mentee's shoes. Being a new teacher is tough. There's so much to remember before, during, and after teaching, and I really wanted to bring that empathy and understanding with me into the conversation. We've all been new teachers, and the only way we can grow is to be supported. During the conversation, I was mindful of my word choice and body language, and I wanted to be sure that the mentee felt like we were on the same team. It was really difficult, but in the end, it not only strengthened our relationship, but it also made a world's difference for the students. It opened up the door for future conversations and made it easier for both of us to have a positive, collaborative relationship.