



# Catholic Schools Ethics Camp Santa Clara, University 2014



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# Welcome



- “If you listen first--- then you will be listened to.”
- What can I do to best facilitate your experience?
- **Rules of Engagement**
- **10-2 /** 10 Minutes Presentation, 2 Minutes Reflection/Process/Fill in Gaps/Unresolved ?
- **37-3/** Three Minutes of Reflection/Movement

Rowe, Mary Budd:Journal of Teacher Education/Harvard Principal's Center



# Catholic Schools-Our Uniqueness



- “At the heart of the Catholic school culture is its mission and purpose-the focus of what people do.”
- “Community is not the by-product of Catholic schools but at the core. Knowingly or unknowingly, our schools are rooted in the reality that we are at heart Trinitarian.”
- “A place of academic excellence in a caring community.”



# Core Beliefs –A Starting Point



Adults are the *primary learners* in a school—  
The growth and development of the **adults** in the school  
is the key to fostering a positive culture.

- Managing culture/climate is what effective teachers/leaders do well!
- Every classroom has its own unique culture.

***You will have the choice to make responsible and positive contributions to the culture and climate of the school.***



# Mission/Effective Schools



- Effectiveness cannot exist unless the school culture supports it- how will you contribute?
- It is the practice of values- not the programs- that make a Catholic school effective and successful.
- School personnel should be held accountable for performance **-and as important** – this accountability must include contributions to embracing the mission of a particular school.



# Pay Close Attention to What You Hear



Essential Beliefs about Intelligence:

Some prevailing attitudes will exist..

VS/KS/KD..attitudes most difficult to change

or

This is the way we do things around here! (others?)



# Qualities of Genius



- **Curiosity**-intrinsic to work and to curriculum
- **Playfulness**-reinvent the world, have fun
- **Imagination**-cognitive power, leads to personal growth
- **Creativity**-gives birth to new ideas and gets us out of “safe places”
- **Wonder**-out of wonder comes wisdom
- **Wisdom**-and both cannot really be measured as a skill
- **Inventiveness**-creates workplaces that are alive and vibrant



# Qualities of Genius



- **Vitality**-sense of life issues, engagement with all the other qualities
- **Sensitivity**-more vivid perspectives, care about your purpose and others
- **Flexibility**-broadens our intellect
- **HUMOR**-breaks us out of ruts and routines, an acquired skill
- **JOY**-core values, love of purpose, love of learning
- Are there others...? Pick your top five-discussion.....



# Activity



- **Curiosity-**
- **Playfulness**
- **Imagination**
- **Creativity**
- **Wonder**
- **Wisdom-**
- **Inventiveness**
- **Vitality-**
- **Sensitivity**
- **Flexibility**
- **HUMOR**
- **JOY**
- Others.....patience and passion

# ● Introduction to Components of Culture and Climate



- ❑ It is important **to understand** your school's culture and how it came to be.
- ❑ Culture: “*core values and beliefs*”
- ❑ They drive actions, behaviors and influences relationships”
  
- ❑ Imagining visiting your classroom/school as an outside observer. What “subtle spirit” do you pick up when you enter the environment? (reflection)
  
- ❑ How does your school culture contribute to the effectiveness of the school?



# Cultural Indicators



- Rituals/Traditions/Stories
- High Expectations
- Heroines/Heroes
- Rules/Rewards/Sanctions
- Physical Environment
- Priestess/Priests
- Cabals/Kingdoms
- Spies
- Whisperers-unseen Power
- Care/Celebrations/Humor
- Trust and Confidence in leadership

Others?



# Cultural Indicators



- Rituals-beliefs about the “way we do things”
- High expectations- for both staff and students
- Heroines/Heroes-create the history of the culture
- Rules/Rewards/Sanctions-set the tone (climate)
- Physical Environment-displays meaning



# Cultural Artifacts and Indicators



- Priestess/Priest- guardians of the values
- Cabals/Kingdoms- where do these exist? Are you in one?
- Stories- reinforce the values
- Whisperers/Spies-unseen power behind the scenes
- Care/Celebrations- indication of healthy culture
- Trust and Confidence in leadership- can be easily undermined by stories, rituals and other indicators.

# Ideal Culture and Climate



- A Place Where Students Learn ..and  
A Place Where Students Live...
- Remember: When looking at your school culture.
- “Change in inevitable, Growth is Optional”
- “Positive Expectations Lead to Positive Results”

# Acceptance Enthusiasm and Joy



- When doing anything....If you are not in the state of either
- Acceptance, Enthusiasm or Joy

Look closely and you will find that you are creating suffering/drama for yourself and others.

# Consider This?



- Someone who is relaxed and happy must not be a hard worker..(Seinfeld)
- Happy relaxed people love what they do!
- They are more motivated and are more willing to better themselves and their performance.
- They are creative, charismatic and easy to be around.....not defensive nor egotistical





# Correlates for Effective Schools/ Lezotte



- **Clear and Focused Mission-** practiced every day

**Climate of High Expectations-**what does that mean?

**Regular Monitoring of Student Progress-**both academic and personal!

**Safe and Orderly Environment-**how will you contribute?

- **Positive Home/School Relations-**how can I help you?

**Opportunity to Learn-** for every student

- **Instructional Leadership-**administration supports your efforts

- In Catholic schools these correlates exist -however they **must** be grounded in the religious values /charism of the school.

# Effectiveness and Culture



- “ The effective schools research, while interesting and somewhat helpful concerns me. The outcomes revealed in the observations of such schools give us little notion as to how schools go there...the way to school effectiveness and administrative sanity is only accomplished is by building healthy school cultures.”

Lambert; Open Letter to Principals

# Effective Schools



- High Expectations-dependent on attitudes of adults towards students and parents, core beliefs about “intelligence”, systematic program for measurement, systematic plan for growth must permeate the culture!
- Instructional Leadership-linked to high expectations...teachers become facilitators of learning...

# Some Suggested Artifacts



- Home/School- 24 hour rule,-parents will draw on their school experience of hospitality and welcome. And the ability to work together to solve problems.
- “ How can I help you”, respect confidentiality.
- Environment- **most important time is the first 30 seconds-**  
Do small things to create a nice spaces- treatment of workers-treatment of students and expectations of students.

# Activity- Fishbowl



- What is your understanding of a successful teacher in your school?
- What would be the best conditions for learning?
- Share a story about a student..
- Phone Call to the Principal-Story



# Healthy School Cultures



- Artifacts-visible representations of what your school stands for-what folks say-how they behave-how things look
- Beliefs-are understood from the reality of current practices
- People-should be more connected to the school's **value system** than to the management system..comments?
- Leadership-those who undermine the culture are confronted or counseled out of their positions
- The organization “*celebrates itself*” on a daily basis.



# Unhealthy School Cultures Relationship to Effectiveness



- Hostile relationships among staff-culture is mainly determined by teachers and their attitudes, underlying cynicism
- Commitment to a “way of doing things” that takes away from imagination and innovation
- Teachers do not have a belief that students can learn and students were blamed for the lack of success in the school. “these kids!”
- Relationships between leadership and staff are not collaborative, there is a lack of trust between them

# Negative School Cultures



- Toxic, Negative Values, Constant complaining
- Fragmented, Follow the Rules Culture
- Anti-Student Sentiments, Sub-Culture Membership Dominates
- 
- Isolated Silos, Fiefdoms, No Symbolic Glue,
- Cohorts of Similar Philosophies Gather and form Small Kingdoms
- Negaholics, Spiritual Fracture, Joyless Rituals.
- Baggage...
- We can't teach "these students"!!





# Antidotes for Toxic Cultures



- Confront negativity head on-it is not part of our culture...challenges are opportunities
- Shield and support positive cultural elements
- Recruit and retain the effective and the sane!
- Celebrate the Positive, Create Rituals, Heroes
- Connect with the community, service, parents, local organizations, school use for community functions, fine arts, events, athletics, etc...



# Changing Culture



- Use stories, lore, myths
- Base decisions on your best teachers.
- Autonomy and recognition help shape the culture.
- Allocate resources and time to your best employees
- Reward and recognition must be connected to the mission.
- Manage the communication network
- Hire, Promote, (create new heroes!), Dismiss
- Anoint new cultural icons
- Create new rituals and ceremonies
- Always talk about the Health of the school..what new plans are ahead
- Use Non-traditional incentives to reward staff/students



# Teaching –Climate and Culture



- Ask permission when dealing with a difficult issue..  
this may be uncomfortable but...
- What do you want to be remembered for? (activity)
- Make friends with the custodian, administrative assistants, cafeteria folks, and (your boss!)
- Always be on time or better yet, be early
- Start all classes with a teaser..(?) tickler..etc..
- Celebrate whenever you can, birthdays, events, good work...etc...



# What would it look like?



- Overall Climate/Environment
- Integrate mission Attitudes towards
- Function of prayer and services diversity
- Academic offerings
- Discipline
- Professional Development Opportunities
- Student involvement in leadership
- Decisions grounded in mission and charism
- Student mentoring/counseling



## Cultural Reflection



- Front Door- Entrance
- Environment-
- Main Office Hospitality-
- Hallways-
- Sites and Sounds-
- Faculty Room-
- Work Room-
- Celebrations-
- Meetings-
- Teamwork-
- Parent Talk-
- Student Talk-
- Stories-
- Rituals-
- Kingdoms/Cabals-
- Based on what you know now .... What else would you add...



# Most Important Factor



- Create a Sense of Belonging (Highest need!)
- Not only for your students but for yourself.

This ideal is imbedded in the Catholic tradition, rituals and mission. It is there to take full advantage of, even if your school culture needs help.

Catholic School=Community



# Teaching –Climate and Culture



- All of your work should reflect the mission of the school. All decisions regarding your actions must default back to “who we are” as a school.
- If that is not clearly evident -then check your cultural artifacts and see where the gaps are.
- Always “follow through” with promises.
- Do all you can to have students think you are “normal”
- Make a “big deal” when your staff/ students do something right.



# Factors Influencing Sense of Belonging



- Displays of student work
- Care of environment and property
- Religious /Mission evident displays
- Liturgy and Prayer
- Retreats
- #1 Orientation Programs! The first day!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

NCEA Living Mission



# #1 Factor to Catholic School Community



- Sense of Belonging.....
- “Don’t say OK and be Half Hearted.”
- Wholeheartedness includes the capacity to be Vulnerable.
- Watch carefully how students try to fit in..and react accordingly..



# School-wide practical advice



- Listen to your colleagues, but trust your gut!
- Stay far away from negativity and drama..create your own space.
- Think about how you look-dress?
- Respect confidentiality at all times...avoid negative student talk
- Always remember, you are the ADULT (repeat three times!) It is not about control, you already have it.
- Watch other teachers teach! On a regular basis....



# Teaching Culture and Climate



- Remember we don't "cover" material, we "teach" students.
- Set aside time for YOURSELF to plan but always have a Plan B ready..If you have a rough day, admit it and move on!
- Challenging students provide opportunity...
- What you resist persists..take advantage of the challenge



# Teaching –Climate and Culture



- Students, for the most part want to be on your good side. They want you to like them!
- Most student fail – because -  
Lack of Effort...
- Expect to make mistakes, however remember, sometimes, no one else notices but- YOU



# Summary



- What do you know now that you did not know before?
- Have any unanswered questions?