



Education E-Newsletter



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Knowing Your School's Culture: How it can Improve Your School's Performance



As more studies are conducted on the culture within a school district, research points to the strong correlation between school culture and school performance. The concept is simple; improve your school's culture and your school's performance will also improve.

What is school culture and why is it so important? According to Dr. Christopher R. Wagner, co-director of the Center for Improving School Culture, school culture "is shared experiences both in and out of school, such as traditions and celebrations, a sense of community, of family, and team." In order to motivate employees in healthy organizations, employees must agree on what is important, how to do things, and what is worth doing. School culture can influence everything from staff member satisfaction, to parent engagement, and community support.

According to Wagner, there are distinct signs of a positive school culture. They include:

- Staff stability and common school goals
- Curricular and instructional components are well defined
- Open and honest communication is encouraged, and staff members demonstrate humor and trust
- Stakeholders are recognized in school-wide celebrations
- Staff members are recognized as well in those celebrations
- School leaders and district leaders provide tangible support

How can schools develop a positive culture? Wagner suggests that positive school cultures can be developed through assessment, analysis, improving and strengthening a school's identity, and then monitoring progress. Surveys can serve as an excellent benchmarking tool for schools to evaluate current school

Featured Article

[Enlisting Students To Make the Internet Safer](#)

The potential dangers to young people become more real-- yet so do the opportunities for enrichment.

Useful Links

[Teacher-to-Teacher](#)

[InitiativeAllThingsPLC](#)

[The Teachers Netork: Action Research Projects](#)

[More On Us](#)

Did You Know?

• More than 40 states have official K-12 online learning programs

• Of those online learning programs, almost half of the enrollments are growing at 25 percent annually

• 59 percent of online learning programs operate in most of the school districts within the state

Source: Education Week,

culture. Research can significantly impact a school's future based on data received and information learned. Perspectives Consulting Group, Inc. provides information and services, which allow school districts to plan and make informed decisions based on benchmarking data. For more information please visit our website: www.perspec.com, or e-mail msears@perspec.com.

To read the article, "Improving School Culture," [click here](#).

Communicating with Parents and the Community: Why it is so Important

In a recent article, "School-Community Relations is Great PR and Then Some," author George Pawlas discusses the importance of establishing school-community relations in order to communicate with the community and parents. Whether it be through a website or newsletters, parents and the community are interested in what the school has been up to. How do you keep them informed?



Pawlas is the author of the [The Administrator's Guide to School-Community Relations](#); the second edition has just been released. As an advocate for school communication habits, Pawlas mentions that he has always been a believer that you will never know if a strategy works unless you try it. "Public relations is a process used by schools and other organizations to influence public opinion in an attempt to gain support for the organization," says Pawlas.

Communicating with parents and the community is a great way to gain support for your school. Do you know if the communication methods you are using are working? You might be surprised by the different information that interests parents and the community. Administering a survey to gather feedback from parents and the community is a great way to start answering those questions. "Principals must be proactive if they want to get the word out about their schools" success stories. It pays to dare to be different, and to do the things that others talk about doing but never do," says Pawlas.

Perspectives Consulting Group, Inc. has worked with school districts surveying parents and the community for 20 years. These surveys provide an excellent opportunity for parents and community members to express their needs and concerns to the administration. By asking parents and community members for their opinion, the schools reinforce its accountability and responsiveness to the community. For more information please visit our website: www.perspec.com, or e-mail msears@perspec.com.

Tech Lesson of the Week:



From the Land, of the Land:
An Interdisciplinary Lesson on
Indigenous People

[Click here](#)

Featured Blog

[Exploring Cell Phones as
Learning Tool](#)

An inside look at one school's
efforts to use cell phones as
learning tools.

Posted Feb. 05, 2008

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Education is an ornament in
prosperity and a refuge in
adversity.

-Aristotle

Education CD-ROM



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