Focus Schools Critical Success
# 6: School Climate
Webinar
Warming Up The Classroom

Caryn L. Sawlis, Ph.D.
Consultant for School Climate/School Improvement
• I am not an expert.
• I am sharing ideas, experience, my own research.
• Please question my thinking.
• We are all experts here! We all bring something to support school climate.
• I am here to help remind you to stay positive about life and how that translates to a positive school climate.
Talking Points

• School Climate
• Dimensions of School Climate
  – Leadership
  – Professional Development
    • Warming Up the Classroom Tool
7 in 10 Teachers Are Not Emotionally Connected

• For people who have a heavy influence on the engagement of young people, you'd think teachers would be more engaged in their jobs. Yet nearly 7 in 10 are not emotionally connected to or are dissatisfied with their workplaces, according to a new Gallup report.

Critical Success Factor
School Climate
Center for Social and Emotional Education States

“School climate matters. Positive and sustained school climate is associated with and/or predictive of positive youth development, effective risk prevention and health promotion efforts, student learning and academic achievement, increased student graduation rates, and teacher retention.”

-School Climate Brief Vol. 1 No. 1 January 2010
“SCHOOL CLIMATE IS BASED ON PATTERNS OF PEOPLE’S EXPERIENCES OF SCHOOL LIFE AND REFLECTS NORMS, GOALS, VALUES, INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS, TEACHING AND LEARNING PRACTICES, AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES.”
Positive School Climate

Characterized by:

• Communication and respect among and between students and staff.

• Discipline using formative (not punitive) consequences.

• Engagement, recognition, and leadership opportunities for students in a wide variety of activities.
### The 12 Dimensions of School Climate Measured

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<thead>
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Five Components to School Climate

- Interpersonal Relationships
- Safety
- Teaching and Learning
- Institutional Environment
- Staff Only
Five Components to School Climate

- Interpersonal Relationships
- Safety
- Teaching and Learning
- Institutional Environment
- Staff Only
  - Leadership
  - Professional Relationships
Leadership

Administration that creates and communicates a clear vision, and is accessible to and supportive of school staff and staff development.
Leadership Matters

Leaders not only means administrators but teachers too.

The original principal in small schools was a principal teacher. The principal teacher was the one with most experience teaching....and would guide others on how to teach.
Leadership Matters

• How can we guide everyone to be a leader in positive school climate?
Working on the Why

As a leader:

• What is your vision for your school?
• What is your vision for students?
• What is your vision for your school climate?
WHY?
WHAT
HOW?
SOLUTION
Develop a Fleet of Positive Buses

• Individual conversations should also take place between the principal and teachers and teachers and their students.

• Each person needs to understand the school vision and identify how their personal vision, job and effort contribute to the overall vision.
Develop a Fleet of Positivity

• When this happens, instead of one bus with one driver, you now have a fleet of bus drivers all moving in the same direction.

• This generates a tremendous amount of power and momentum in the school.
THE ENERGY BUS

10 Rules to Fuel Your Life, Work, and Team with Positive Energy

JON GORDON

Foreword by Ken Blanchard

Wall Street Journal Bestseller
Are you riding the Adams Energy Bus?!
Three C’s

1. Communicate
2. Coach
3. Caring
Communicate

“With the right people on your bus you want to make sure you communicate consistently and effectively with them so they always know where the bus is going.” – Jon Gordon

“60% of management problems are the result of faulty communication.” – Peter Drucker
Leaders (Teachers are Leaders Too)

• Far too many leaders believe that what they do and why they do it must be obvious to everyone in the organization.

• It never is!!!!!!
Leaders (Teachers are Leaders Too)

• Far too many believe that when they (leaders) announce things, everyone understands.
• No one does, as a general rule.
• Yet, very often one cannot bring in people before the decision; there is just not enough time for discussion or participation.
Leaders (Teachers are Leaders Too)

• Having said this, effective leaders have to spend a little time on making themselves understood. What do they do?

• They sit down with their people and say, “This is what we are faced with. These are the alternatives we saw; these are the alternatives we considered.”
Practice the Secret to Winning

• In a world driven by test scores, budgets and short term results building a positive, successful school requires leaders to have a long term vision and an understanding that too many of their counterparts focus on the outcome rather than the process. They focus on what is urgent rather than what matters. They focus on the fruit of the tree and ignore the root—the culture, trust, people and positive energy of the school.
Practice the Secret to Winning

• Leaders who run successful, positive schools over a long period of time know that when you take care of the root of the tree you will always be pleased with the fruit it supplies. However, if you ignore the root, eventually the tree will dry up and so will the fruit. Of course you have to measure outcomes. You have to measure results. But you do so with the knowledge that the outcome is simply a by-product of your culture, teamwork, vision, talent, innovation, execution and commitment to your people and process.
Perceptions of School Climate

Comparing teachers’ perceptions to students’ perceptions is also an important aspect to consider with regard to teaching and learning.
Coaching
COACH

• C- Care
• O-Observe
• A- Act
• C-Communicate
• H-Help
Start With Yourself

“When we are no longer able to change a situation, we are challenged to change ourselves.”

~Victor Frankl
Personal Action Plan

• Day 1: Monitor Your Thoughts and Words
• Day 2: Make a Gratitude List
• Day 3: Take a Thank-You Walk
• Day 4: Focus on the Good Stuff
• Day 5: Start a Success Journal
• Day 6: Let Go
• Day 7: Breathe
“Don’t choose where you will be happiest—Choose where you will learn the most. Choose where you can grow to your full potential” (p. 83).

- The Seed by Jon Gordon
Happiness Factor
VIP

Values_____________________
Interests___________________
Passion_____________________

Who inspires you?
How can you use VIP concept to touch the lives of our students?
Caring
Make Sure Everyone Matters . . . And That Everyone Knows It.
Reach Out and Thank Someone

Never underestimate the power of a post-it note.

Thank you note. When was the last time you wrote one?

Grab a note and thank someone today.
Leaders need to ask teachers....
Maya Angelou
How Can Schools Support Kids...

“I would ask the teacher to be sure that this is the program-this is the job-that he or she is called to do. Don’t just teach because that’s all you can do. Teach because it is your calling. And once you realize that, you have a responsibility to the young people....
Maya Angelou
How Can Schools Support Kids...

...And it’s not a responsibility to teach them by rote and by threat and even by promise. Your responsibility is to care about what you’re saying to them, to care about what they’re getting from what you’re saying. If you care about the child and care about the information, you handle both with care, and maybe prayer. Handle them both with prayer.”
Every good conversation starts with good listening.
Everyone is Important

RAVE-
• Respect
• Appreciate
• Value
• Everyone
Dimension of School Climate =
Professional Relationships

Positive attitudes and relationships among school staff that support effectively working and learning together.

Check

• Do people say hi in the hallway?
• Are staff members mad because in 1972 you parked in their parking spot?
• How do office staff treat visitors?
• How to staff members street office staff?
How Would You Measure
Your Joy at Your School?
In the Spring of 2012, Region 10 conducted student forums. These forums disclosed that students felt that their teachers don’t know enough about them to be effectively teaching them and didn’t care about them.

Students felt teachers wanted to make students clones of themselves.
Additionally

- The forums also divulged that students were bored, disengaged and felt that their opinions were not valued or that the teachers were only looking for the right answer.
Forums Provided

• Valuable information that demonstrated the importance of positive classroom relationships to foster school connectedness and of building a structure where student voice is heard and respected.
Safe School Survey

• Region 10’s Safe School Survey indicated that teacher behavior contributed to the students’ overall sense of safety resulting from bullying and other peer threats. Teacher presence and knowledge of routines and norms allowed students to feel more secure that “hot spots” of threatening behavior such as the playground, hallways, and restrooms would be well monitored.
Student Climate Focus Groups

• Conducted student focus group with high school students.
• Sent questions and directions for focus group input to be used in health classes on pilot campus to obtain student feedback.
• Conducted 2nd focus group with high school students.
• Received feedback from principal of 1st focus group on the survey and impact of responses.
Project Objectives

To provide an observation tool to identify teacher behaviors in the classroom that contribute to a positive classroom climate

To provide online training for teachers specific to actions that support a positive climate in the classroom

To provide an online guidebook to assist in the implementation of student focus groups about school climate
Students Want Teachers and Staff Members to:

• Know their names.
• Smile at them.
• Know them outside of the school.
• Know their dreams.
• Care about them.
• Not be so mean.
• Love their job.
Student Voices

Caring Culture: Look like?
• “Happiness, Joy, Love”
• “Like we are a family.”
• “Classmates supporting classmates (prompted by teacher).”
• “Friendly, caring”

Feel like? Sound like?
• “Everyone is free to give their opinion.”
• “Everyone is friends with each other.”
• “Feels like home, as if you are completely comfortable in that room.”
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Four Components to School Climate

- Interpersonal Relationships
- Safety
- Teaching and Learning
- Institutional Environment
Teacher Peer Observation Checklist

20 Observable Teacher Behaviors to Promote Positive Classroom Climate
Observation Checklist

Warming Up the Classroom: Teacher Peer-Observation Checklist
29 Observable Teacher Behaviors to Promote Positive Classroom Climate

Teaching and Learning - Check behaviors you observe.

The teacher:

1. Gains students' attention, establishes an expectation for behavior and effectively teaches new concepts.
2. Encourages and supports student participation and cross-talk.
3. Checks for understanding before moving on.
4. Monitors and accommodates student progress in a timely manner.

Safety - Check behaviors you observe.

The teacher:

1. Clearly displays and/or verbalizes rules to communicate expected behavior in regards to respecting others.
2. Provides regular and frequent acknowledgment of positive behavior.
3. Intervenes to correct and redirect unacceptable behavior using strategies such as proximity and direct eye contact.
4. Supervises students while monitoring surroundings.
5. Uses respectful language in a calm tone of voice.

Interpersonal Relationships - Check behaviors you observe.

The teacher:

1. Grows students as they enter the room with a smile and a welcoming comment and provides a parting comment to students as they leave.
2. Knows and uses students' names when speaking to or about others.
3. Uses positive manners and consistently uses "thank you" and "you're welcome" while using the other person's name.
4. Gives specific and descriptive feedback to support and encourage students' positive actions.
5. Treats all students fairly, and acknowledges each student's successes, no matter how small.

Observations:
1. The teacher will invite a peer teacher to observe in the classroom as the Teacher Peer Observer.

2. The Teacher Peer Observer will download and copy the Observation Checklist from the website.

3. The Teacher Peer Observer will mark behaviors on the Observation Checklist.
“NA” – The behavior was not observed. It does not mean that this behavior is absent from the repertoire of the teacher; however, it means that during the peer observation, it was not seen.

“Yes” – The behavior was observed in the teacher’s actions.

“Yes +” – The behavior was observed and a real strength of the teacher.
Warming Up the Classroom: Teacher Peer-Observation Checklist
20 Observable Teacher Behaviors to Promote Positive Classroom Climate

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<th>Yes+ 2</th>
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<td>The teacher:</td>
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<td>1.1 Greets students as they enter the room with a smile and/or welcoming comment and provides a parting comment to students as they leave.</td>
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<td>1.2 Knows and uses students' names when speaking to or about others.</td>
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<td>1.3 Uses polite manners and consistently says “thank you” and “you’re welcome” while using the other person's name.</td>
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<td>1.4 Gives specific and descriptive feedback to support and encourage a student’s positive actions.</td>
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<td>The teacher:</td>
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<td>2.1 Clearly displays 3-4 well-defined rules to communicate expected behavior including student-to-student behavior in regard to respecting others.</td>
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<td>2.2 Provides regular and frequent acknowledgement of positive behavior.</td>
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<td>2.3 Intervenes to correct and redirect unacceptable behavior using such strategies as proximity and direct eye contact.</td>
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<td>2.4 Supervises students diligently and notices surrounding events.</td>
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<td>2.5 Uses respectful language in a calm tone of voice.</td>
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Observations:
## Teaching and Learning - Check behaviors you observe.

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<td>3.1 Demonstrates knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject.</td>
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<td>3.2 Listens intently to each student and acknowledges the student was heard by a verbal and/or non-verbal response.</td>
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<td>3.3 Encourages students to express their voice/opinions through collaboration and problem-solving opportunities.</td>
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<td>3.4 Checks frequently for student understanding.</td>
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<td>3.5 Communicates high expectations for students to successfully reach their goals.</td>
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### Observations:
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<td>4.1 Maintains a clean and inviting room with a visible system in place to reflect classroom routines and organization that promote a positive learning environment.</td>
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<td>4.2 Prominently displays student work, photos and interesting items to create connections in the learning environment.</td>
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<td>4.3 Moves about the room supervising and monitoring student engagement.</td>
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<td>4.4 Provides students with opportunities to make choices regarding their learning.</td>
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<td>4.5 Calls on and addresses all students in an equitable manner including both boys and girls.</td>
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**Observations:**
Post Observation

• Teacher Peer-Observer gives the completed form to the observed teacher

• Observed teacher will use the checklist findings to select an appropriate training vignette from the Warming Up the Classroom website.

• Observed teacher may view the additional training vignettes to complete the review of teacher behaviors.
Training Vignettes

Interpersonal Relationship; Safety
Teaching and Learning; Institutional Environment
4 Instructional Vignettes

- Interpersonal Relationships
- Safety
- Teaching and Learning
- Institutional Environment
Training Vignette #1 – Interpersonal Relationships

• Respect for Diversity

• Social Support for Adults

• Social Support for Students
Interpersonal Relationships
Training Vignette #2 – Safety

- Rules and Norms
- Sense of Physical Security
- Sense of Social-Emotional Security
Safety

Behavior 1 - Displays Well-Defined Rules
Behavior 2 - Acknowledges Positive Behavior
Behavior 3 - Intervenes and Redirects
Behavior 4 - Supervises Diligently
Behavior 5 - Uses Respectful Language in a Calm Voice
Training Vignette #3: Teaching and Learning

- Support for Learning
- Social and Civic Learning
Training Vignette #4 – Institutional Environment

- School Connectedness/Engagement
- Physical Surroundings
Guide for Using Student Focus Groups

Student Voice to Improve Climate
Online Guide and Resources

Warming Up the Classroom: A Guide for Using Student Focus Groups to Improve Climate
Format of a Student Focus Group

- Introductions
  - Introduce the facilitator
  - Introduce teachers/administrators
  - Background information/purpose of classroom climate focus study
  - Rules of focus group
  - Ice breaker
  - Start focus group
Directions for Climate Questions in a Focus Group.

1. Give each student a survey of questions.
2. Ask each student to record responses on survey.
3. Facilitate discussion on each question.
4. Record responses on a flip chart in the front of the room.
5. Collect responses
6. Present findings to Campus Climate Team.
Sample Questions

1. What does a caring culture in the classroom look like?
   • Feel like?
   • Sound like?

2. What do teachers do in the classroom to create a caring culture?
And Now What

- Campus leadership reviews the information and shares with administrative team
- Campus leadership decides which teachers or teams will participate
- The campus leadership meets with participants and disseminates information about tool
And Now What

• Teachers decide which dates they will participate in peer observation.
• Teachers will invite or be assigned peer observers
• Teachers begin peer observations.
• Teachers share findings between colleagues.
• Information may be used to plan future staff development.
“We can all remember childhood moments when we felt particularly safe (or unsafe) in school, when we felt particularly connected to a caring adult (or frighteningly alone), when we felt particularly engaged in meaningful learning (or not).

These are the school memories that we all tend to vividly remember: good and/or bad. It is not surprising that these kinds of experiences shape learning and development.”

• http://olc.region10.org/course_assets/warmin
gup/
Resources

We encourage you to take some time to browse additional websites for valuable asset-building information and more school-friendly resources!

• Search Institute http://www.search-institute.org
• CASEL. Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning http://www.casel.org/
The School Climate Community Scale and the School-Community Partnership Process

• NSCC’s Community Scale (Scale) and School-Community Partnership Process (Process) engages middle and high school students to take a leadership role taking a very short survey to fifteen sectors of the larger school community (from the faith based, local media and law enforcement to local political and other civic leaders, arts organizations and more) to ask them two sets of questions: (1) What is your perception of current school-community partnerships; and (2) to what extent would you be interested in learning about and actively supporting the schools improvement efforts?

• http://www.schoolclimate.org/climate/community-scale.php
The School Climate Community Scale and the School-Community Partnership Process

• The Scale can be accessed on-line and a Guide for Students as well as a Guide for Educators who supervise and support the process supports the Process. In addition, schools that elect to use these resources to build helpful school-community partnership that support your school or districts improvement goals, will have access to a series of short videos about the process by students and an educator.

http://www.schoolclimate.org/climate/community-scale.php
This outstanding motivational workshop/workbook exposes elementary school students to five character building principles that will help them to mold and shape their character at an early age. Through combining fundamental Philosophical principles with supporting examples and stimulating activities, the authors have created an excellent resource for students that will spur excitement, enjoyment and encouragement to begin working towards improving their lives.

**ONLY 50 registrations will be taken**

Audience: All Staff
Contact Information

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