

# EFFECTIVE, EFFICIENT, AND IMPACTFUL SCHOOL OPERATIONS

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# Introduction

## **Welcome and Introductions**

## **Today's Training Session Ground Rules**

- Be present and mindful.
- Take courage – this is intended to be a safe space.
- Please feel free to ask questions at any time or to share your experiences.
- Phones on silent. Please take a break to look at phones or step out to take calls.
- Lead with respect – listen while others are talking; respect everyone's privacy.

# Today's Topics

- Effective, Efficient, and Impactful School Operations
- Board Responsibilities
- Legal Duties of a School Board/Members:
- Managing Conflicts of Interest
- Consequences of Breaching Board Duties and Responsibilities to the School
- A Healthy Board Culture
- The Board as Supervisor: Effective Supervision
- Questions/Discussions

# Effective, Efficient, and Impactful School Operations

Leadership, School Culture, and Community Involvement and Resources

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# What Makes an Effective School?

- Strong leadership
  - Board effectiveness and governance,
  - Admin
  - High-quality teachers
- Effective teaching practices/teacher effectiveness
- Positive school culture
- Parent and community involvement
- Adequate school resources
- 2023 Literature Review Study in the European Journal of Investigation in Health, Psychology, and Education
  - Studies published within the 2016-2022 period retrieved through two databases: JSTOR and ERIC

# Strong Effective Leadership

- Creates a positive school culture that promotes learning and growth, fosters collaboration among staff and students and ensures resources are allocated effectively.
- Strong leadership in the following areas has a significant influence on the effectiveness of schools:
  - Instructional
  - School
  - Academic
  - Collaborative and collegial
- Nine process factors characterize effective schools:
  - Effective leadership, effective teaching, pervasive focus on learning, positive school culture, high expectations for all, student responsibilities and rights, progress monitoring, developing school staff skills, and involving parents.
- Professional development most predictive variable in the correlation with school effectiveness.

# Teacher Effectiveness

Teacher effectiveness impacts school and student effectiveness

- Quality of teaching and effective teaching practices – requires teachers having the necessary skills, knowledge and support to deliver high – quality instruction:
  - Evidence-based instructional strategies.
  - Effective curriculum and instruction.
- Fostering a supportive and collaborative environment for teachers:
  - Supervisor support vital in teachers' engagement and job satisfaction.
  - Operating with fair systems and teamwork.
  - Positive school climate affects teacher commitment.
- Involving teachers in decision-making:
  - Critical factor – inclusion in decision-making increases sense of agency.
  - Reduces organizational cynicism or lack of trust in the organization.
- Focusing on positive teacher-student interactions:
  - Affects student success – positive correlation between teacher experience and student achievement.
  - Quality student interactions – consistent and more than transactional.

# Positive School Culture

- One of the most important factors for school effectiveness:
  - Correlation between strong school culture and higher academic performance.
  - Higher-performing schools are noted to have a stronger school culture and spiritual leadership.
- Studies indicate the significance of school climate for teacher commitment.
- Must have an intentional, positive organizational climate strategy:
  - Begin with a school climate assessment
- Key stakeholder support – including government, policymakers, principals, teachers, parents, and others.
- Values professional development, collegiality, collaborative leadership and teamwork.

# Creating Cultural Shifts Among Staff

- Showing appreciation—Show ALL Staff that they matter
  - Handwritten notes of appreciation, shout-out staff in meetings, bulletin board of giving thanks and showing appreciation, highlighting staff members strengths
- Creating connection beyond the classroom—social events
- Potlucks, bingo nights, themed days, cultural events, fill your cup sessions (staff can engage in crafts together and chat)
- Support Staff and Professional Development
  - Staff training in areas that emphasize Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) & Well-Being
  - Peer Observation—encourage teachers and staff to observe and learn from one another
  - Leadership opportunities—provide staff opportunities to lead a meeting, be in charge of a club at school

# Parent and Community Involvement

- Linked to improved student achievement.
- Facilitated through strategies like:
  - Family engagement programs
  - Clear communication between families and schools
  - Community restorative circles
- Need community and parent stakeholder buy-in to support improving school climate and effectiveness.
- Community engagement strategy – includes specific engagement and outreach regarding school climate and culture improvements.

# Ways to Increase Parent & Community Engagement

- Building two-way communication that extends beyond in-person communication
  - Having more parent-teacher conferences in person or over zoom.
  - Using post-cards or letters to update parents and guardians in the community
  - Calling or texting parents
- Volunteering Opportunities for parents in person and online
  - Skill Sharing—parents who possess skills could lead a workshop on such skills, such as crafts, mechanics, and agriculture, for students and parents
  - Shared Harvesting—when parents harvest crops or other things, giving them the opportunity to share with the wider school community
  - Community and Parent Led Maintenance—parents and the community help with school upkeep, such as painting the school, repairing the playground, carpooling, etc.

# Ways to Increase Parent & Community Engagement

- Parent/Student Events at Schools and over Zoom
  - Hosting Talent Shows, town hall meetings,
- Family and Community Spaces in Schools or in Community Hubs
  - Resource Pooling—having local businesses donate or provide resources to families and schools
  - Local businesses and community centers provide space for parents and school staff to meet outside of school for parent chats

# Parent Involvement Text Based Programing through ParentPowered

- Text based programming—Partnering with ParentPowered
  - Involve parents without the parent having to have Internet or be present to be involved and support their student's education
  - Connects families with necessary resources in their communities
  - Partnering with ParentPowered, WCCUSD implemented a text-based program inviting parents and other family members to receive text messages weekly delivered straight to their phones. Each message included educational resources for families in the form of fun, easy at-home learning activities appropriate to their children's grade levels or age groups. Each tip only took parents minutes to do and fit well into existing daily routines in a family's life.

# Adequate School Resources

- Funding, facilities, and technology
- Must identify those supports and resources needed by the students and staff that may be particular to the community profile and circumstances.
- Technological resources and digital literacy are important factors that can be effective in providing positive effects on education
  - Teachers must receive more support and training on using digital resources
  - Digital sources seen as motivating for student engagement in education
  - Must have well-equipped facilities and stable internet connection
- Efficient schools:
  - Financial status (budget)
  - Number of staff
  - School's physical infrastructure
  - Use inputs optimally to achieve maximum possible outputs

# What can Schools do with gaps in funding

- Schools could apply for grants such as
  - Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP)
  - Indian Education Formula Grant Program

- Local Fundraising

- Bake Sells, Talent Show Tickets, Raffles

- Community Partnerships

Work with local businesses for resources the school needs such as school supplies, etc.

- Partnerships with Private Foundations

- First Nations Development Institute
  - American Indian Education Fund
  - Indigenous Peoples Education Fund

# Strong Effective Leadership: Legal Duties of the School Board

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# Legal Duties of a School Board

## Three legal duties of the School Board

- Duty of Loyalty
- Duty of Care
- Duty of Obedience

# Overall Fiduciary Responsibilities

- Generally, Board members must act in a manner that is consistent with their fiduciary responsibilities
- Reflects an understanding that their role is fundamentally strategic and not operational
- Three legal fiduciary duties required of School Board members:
  - Duty of Loyalty
  - Duty of Care
  - Duty of Obedience

# Duty of Loyalty

- All Board members have a fiduciary duty of loyalty to the Organization. The Board has a duty to make decisions and act in ways that are in the best interests of the organization and not in anyone else's best interests, whether personal or professional.
- Often the Duty of Loyalty is typically enforced through a Conflict of Interest Policy.
- The laws set an expectation of loyalty to the organization above all including preserving confidentiality of Board meetings and matters that come before the board.
- Board members should complete a Conflict of Interest Disclosure form each year to disclose conflicts and the Board, or a subcommittee of the Board, should review the forms and make a recommendation of how the Board should proceed.

# Examples of Conflicts of Interest

- When someone in a position of trust has competing professional and personal interests
- When someone makes a decision in an official capacity and they stand to profit personally
- When your interests have the potential to conflict with the best interest of the organization or those you represent
- These conflicts can be a conflict you directly have with your own interests, with your family's interests, or with you or your family's professional or financial interests.

# Confidentiality

- Board members must keep confidential information confidential.
- This means:
  - Not discussing the information in open public Board meetings
  - Not discussing the information outside of Board meetings with anyone
  - Not sharing confidential information with other people
    - employees, your family, community members
- What is Confidential?
  - Review School Policies on confidential information. The following are protected under applicable federal laws and sometimes tribal laws in addition to being protected under School Policy:
    - Student Personally identifiable information (FERPA)
    - Health information (HIPAA)
    - Personnel information specific to individual employees
    - Information on disabilities of students and personnel

# Managing Conflicts of Interest

- Recusal – declare yourself disqualified to participate in the decision making and leave the room.
- Ensure the Conflict of Interest Policy or Code of Conduct prohibits certain activities or conduct.
  - Example: No Board member or staff member may participate in decision making when the decision affects that employee or Board member or a member of their Immediate family which includes any parent, grandparent, child, grandchild, or member of the household, or in-laws of the same degree.
- Provide for a Mechanism to Make decisions on conflict of interest – example: The full Board will decide if one of its members has a conflict of interest.
- Disclosure – sharing information not previously known. Have a policy that requires all potential or apparent conflicts of interest to be disclosed before a decision is made.

# Duty of Loyalty: Breach

- Not disclosing or addressing a conflict of interest

# Scenario 1

- You as a board member are friends with an employee of the school you are a board member of. Your friend who has been having issues with the school and calls to vent with you about what has been occurring at the school. Your friend's situation escalates and it eventually goes before the Board for a grievance hearing.
- Does a conflict of interest exist?

# Scenario 2 Part 1

- A Board Member's second cousin who they chat with weekly has just submitted a bid for the Board to consider on improvements that need to be done to the locker room. The Board Member does not want to recuse themselves on the matter and states that they can be impartial.
- Does a Conflict of Interest Exist?
- Should the Board Member recuse themselves?

# Scenario 2 Part 2

- The Rest of the Board does not think the Board Member can be impartial and does not want them to present during the conversation.
- What are steps the Board can take to remove the Board Member from the conversation.

# Scenario 3

- You as a Board Member have a sibling who became teacher at the school before you became a board member. You are close with your sister, and she talks about her students and their families to you all the time. One of your sister's student's parent applies for an open paraprofessional position. You know this parent through your sister however, you do not have a personal relationship with the parent.
- Does a Conflict of Interest exist?
- Bonus Question: Is there a FERPA violation?

# Duty of Care

- The duty of care is a fiduciary duty requiring directors and/or officers of an organization to make decisions that pursue the organizations interest with reasonable diligence and prudence. This fiduciary duty is owed by director's and officers to the organization, not the organizations stakeholders or broader society.
- Duty of care requires the Board to pay attention to the organization's activities and operations – Board members are expected to make decisions with the organization's best interests in mind.
- Examples of the duty of care: providing and maintaining a safe school environment; hiring and retaining qualified staff; ensuring proper supervision during school activities; providing suitable curriculum and teaching methods; addressing concerns about student welfare; managing the School's budget responsibly and allocating funds appropriately; and complying with laws and guidelines.

# Duty of Care: Breach

- Excessive meeting absence.
- Failure to ask questions about a proposed action.
- Ignoring curriculum standards required by law.
- Approving expenditures that exceed, or are outside of, the approved School budget without proper justification or review.
- Hiring practices that violate policy – hiring a staff member without following proper vetting procedures, including background checks, due to personal connections/relative.
- Making significant policy changes without adequately considering feedback or input from parents, teachers, and the broader community.
- Note: a simple mistake or oversight may not be considered a breach, but knowingly going against policies is a violation.

# Duty of Obedience

- Requires Board members to comply with applicable federal, Tribal, and state laws
- Adhere to the School's Charter, bylaws and policies
- Serve as guardians of the organization's vision and mission – ensure School is fulfilling its purpose
- Ensure the School does not engage in unauthorized activities
- Honoring and adhering to funding requirements – School's resources are used for lawful purposes
- Ensure the School complies with reporting requirements

# Example School Board Code of Ethics

- a) I hold and enforce all laws, rules, regulations and court orders pertaining to the \_\_\_\_\_ School
- b) I will not support any board actions which result in financial benefit to board members, including approval of travel, training, and special board meetings, unless absolutely necessary for school purposes.
- c) I will make decisions in terms of the educational welfare of children and will seek to develop and maintain schools that meet the individual needs of all children regardless of their ability, race, creed, sex, gender identity or social standing.
- d) I will confine my board action to policy making, planning, and appraisal, and will approve policies only after the board has consulted those who will be affected by them.
- e) I will carry out my responsibility, not to administer the schools, but, together with my fellow board members, to see that they are well run.
- f) I will refuse to use the school for personal gain or for the gain of friends or family members.
- g) I will hold confidential all matters pertaining to the schools which, if disclosed, would needlessly injure individuals or the schools. In all other matters, I will provide accurate information to the school staff and community members.
- h) I will vote to approve the best qualified personnel available after consideration of the recommendation of the school superintendent.
- I) I will support and protect school personnel in proper performance of their duties.
- J) I will refer all complaints to the school superintendent for resolution.
- k) I will notify the board of any conflict of interest I have prior to the board taking action on that issue.
- l) I will abstain from decisions involving my immediate family members (spouse, parents, grandparents, siblings and their spouses, children, and grandchildren), and will not attempt to influence other board members in such decisions.
- m) If I am not able to meet my obligations as a board member, I will offer my resignation.

# Applicable Laws and Regulations

- OST Tribal Education Code
- School's Charter, Constitution and Bylaws
- School Policies
- Tribal Law
- Federal Law
- In some instances, state law
- Funding or grant agreements

# Duty of Obedience: Breach

- Knowing that the School must comply with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) yet does not have handicap accessible entrances to the school or blocks an ADA compliant entrance
- Accepting a grant for a specific project but spends the money on other projects
- Not following the financial policies requiring separation of duties when managing the finances of the School.
- Brings a staff member's complaint about a Superintendent, Principal, or Staff member to a Board meeting and impose, or direct the supervisor to impose, discipline or corrective action.

# Consequences of Breaching Board Duties and Responsibilities to the School

- Can lead to legal consequences and financial repercussions for the individual Board member, and possibly the School
- Could be subject to civil or criminal penalties as provided by law if the activity is illegal

# Strong Effective Leadership: Board Governance and Dynamics

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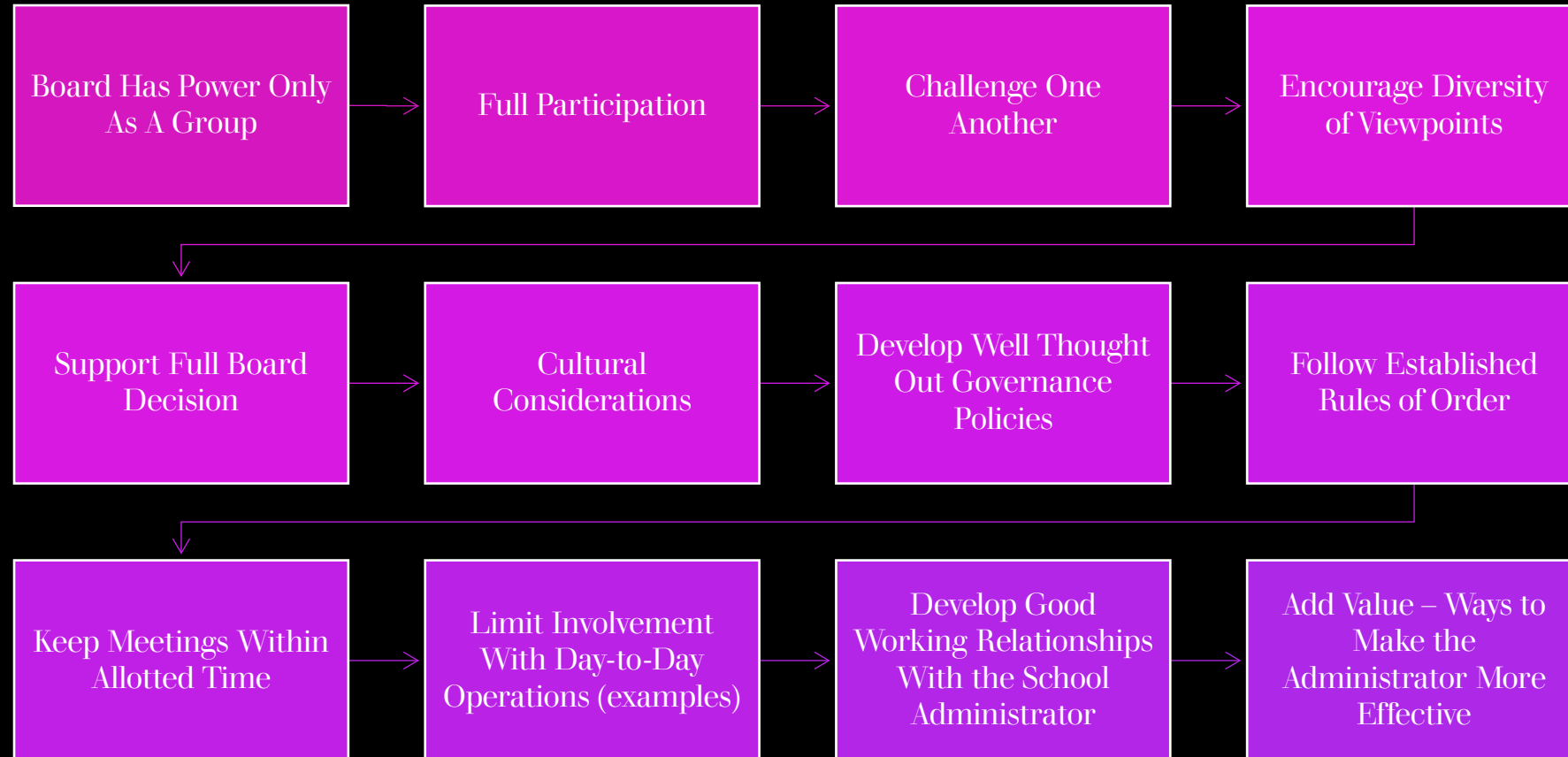
# Fostering a Healthy Board Culture

- Be knowledgeable of each others respective roles and responsibilities within the structure of your organizing documents, policies and laws.
- Hold each other accountable. Board members can call a point of Order anytime. A Point of Order can be called when Board Structure or rules for the board aren't being followed.
- Be respectful of each others' responsibilities and duties and time.
- The more collaborative and productive an Administrator and School board relationship is, the more efficiently a school system runs.

# Examples of a collaboration between the Board and Administrator

- What reports do you want every month?
- Do you want reports in writing or verbal reports
- For personnel matters: Refer matters to Administration if you hear something – don't expect an Administrator to address a concern on the spot if they know nothing about the concern before the meeting.
- For other issues and concerns: Give advance notice so the Administrator has time to research, investigate and prepare.
- Adopt Evaluation tools at the beginning of the year and share them with the Administrator. And evaluate the administrator timely so they have time to improve or change things the Board wants.
- Set clear goals and expectations – always good to set 5 goals you want the Administrator to focus on for the School Year.

# Board Dynamics and Governance



# Effective Board Culture

- Develop a relationship of open and respectful communication with the Chief Admin Officer
- Approach Difficult Issues and Decisions with openness and respect for the motivations and reasons for recommendations
- Listen Fully Before Speaking
- Trust the Process – Implement Board processes that ensure everyone is heard. Board President can let others know the order people will be called on and make a list
- Limit Discussion Time
- Give Board Members and CAO heads up on issues for the Agenda in advance

# Fostering Healthy Board Culture and Effectiveness Amongst Small Boards

- Exercise accountability
  - Set expectations for attendance and engagement and uphold them
  - Communicate regularly, respectfully, and responsibly amongst other board members and with school leadership. Focus on collaboration with the staff and the larger community.
  - Visit the School when students and staff are present
  - Speak as one Board, not as individuals
  - Lead with a supportive style—support staff and students
  - Be inclusive—Inclusive of board members cultural, identity, and beliefs
  - Be open to Professional Development opportunities (willing to grow and learn)
  - A strong focus on student achievement and success
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# What Makes a Small Board Not Effective

- Do NOT
  - Be a micromanaging board
  - A disengaged Board
  - A friends-and-family board

# Supporting Highly Effective Staff

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# Highly Effective Employees

- Anticipate the needs of their team
- Bring solutions instead of problems
- Accessible and responsive
- Conscious of presence/energy – Understand the value of a non-anxious presence
- Positively and intentionally contribute to a positive school climate/culture
- Taking responsibility v. being held accountable

# Employee Well-Being

- Create a climate of well-being that is both proactive and responsive
- Addresses the wholeness of employees – all aspects of well-being and health (emotional, physical, mental, spiritual)
- Implemented programs are only as good as they are engaged (and embraced) by staff and their perceptions of the programs
- Success of programs also depends on workplace practices and norms – who establishes and perpetuates the practices and norms in your school? What are the practices and norms of your school?

# Climate of Well-Being

- In 25 companies surpassing typical workplace experience (90% of employees reporting a great workplace environment), they prioritized: trust in leadership, pride in work, and connections among colleagues
- Significant factor associated with engagement and work outcomes
- Closely anchored to organizational culture, management practices, and HR processes
- Key dimensions contributing to a climate of well-being:
  - Mental and emotional support
  - Sense of purpose
  - Personal support
  - Financial health
  - Meaningful connections

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Source: Smith, R., Barton, M. A., Myers, C. G., & Erb, M. (2024). *Well-being at work: Fostering a healthy work climate for all*. Johns Hopkins Human Capital Development Lab & Great Place to Work. Retrieved from <https://carey.jhu.edu/wellbeing-at-work>.



# Climate of Well-Being cont'd.

- Mental and Emotional Support – with mental support, staff more likely to have a positive or optimistic attribution; builds energy, hope and confidence
- Sense of Purpose – sense of meaning, progress and fulfillment; have higher resilience and a positive view of their employer
- Personal Support – manager support regarding their unique personal situation, priorities and goals, more likely to have positive engagement and commitment to the work
- Financial health – adequate financial means to feel stable; equity in compensation practices
- Meaningful connections – develop social relationships with others at work, more likely to feel sense of teamwork and belonging, leads to enhanced employment experience

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Source: Smith, R., Barton, M. A., Myers, C. G., & Erb, M. (2024). *Well-being at work: Fostering a healthy work climate for all*. Johns Hopkins Human Capital Development Lab & Great Place to Work. Retrieved from <https://carey.jhu.edu/wellbeing-at-work>.



# Fostering Well-Being in Schools

Create positive school climates that can help build social and emotional competence in staff and students

- **Supportive relationships:** At the heart of what it takes for students and staff to thrive and do well in school is to have supportive, respectful, and trusting relationships
- **Engagement:** When students experience engagement and feel a sense of belonging and connection with adults and peers at school, they can build social capital and more readily use adults as social models, accept feedback, and navigate and persevere through challenges
- **Safety:** When students and staff feel safe, they are more willing to focus on learning from and with others and take academic risks.
- **Cultural Competence:** Cultural competence can help adults be aware of privilege, implicit bias and micro-aggressions. Culturally competent schools help educators engage students and families by creating conditions where students and families feel a sense of belonging, support, respect, and safety
- **Cultural Responsiveness :** Culturally responsive instructional approaches are engaging, participatory, and use diverse instructional models to scaffold learning by using students' own cultural knowledge to teach new concepts, connect experiences inside and outside the classroom, and master new information.<sup>24</sup> Such approaches can address the social and emotional and learning needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students by creating learning environments where students feel emotionally and intellectually safe, supported, and challenged.
- **Challenge and High Expectations:** Students are more personally motivated to succeed, more actively engaged in learning, and work better with others when they, their peers, and adults have high expectations for achievement that are experienced as relevant to them; when they are surrounded by peers who have academic aspirations; and when curricula, pedagogy, and opportunities to learn are rigorous, engaging and aligned with their goals

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<https://www.air.org/sites/default/files/2021-06/School-Climate-and-Social-and-Emotional-Learning-Integrative-Approach-January-2018.pdf>



# How to Foster Well-Being in Schools cont'd.

- The Center on Great Teachers and Leaders identified 10 teaching that promote student's social and emotional competences
  1. Student Centered Discipline
  2. Warmth and Support
  3. Classroom Discussions
  4. Self-Reflection and Self-Assessment
  5. Competence Building—Modeling, Practicing, Feedback, Coaching

# Improve Staff-Wellbeing

- Transparency and Staff Input
  - Bring staff into decisions about their own care and wellness
  - Gather and listen to staff input
  - Keep teachers in the loop
- Be mindful of how increased workloads contribute to teacher stress & burnout
  - Provide opportunities for staff to work together
  - Combine well-being activities into existing training or meetings
  - Go slowly when implementing a new program

# Improve Staff Well-Being cont'd

- Lead with flexibility, strategic thinking and patience
  - Be open to changing your mind
  - Leverage historical insights when planning
  - Remember that change is a long-term process
- Encourage and enable self-care
  - How and when staff care for themselves
  - Develop self-care plans – accountability partners
- Share the responsibility of caring for students
  - Be aware and address compassion fatigue
  - Adopt coordinated approach to supporting students' well-being among teams of teachers and counselors to reduce responsibility

# Improve Staff Well-Being cont'd.

- Promote relational care
  - Formal and informal mentoring programs
  - Allocating time for regular collaborative planning
  - Observing each other as a way to share best practices
- Create efficient systems and processes
  - Efficiency saves precious time – work mapping; reduce duplicate efforts; eliminate groups that are not high priority; maximize staff time
  - Implement and refine data management systems – centralized data management; online systems and document storage; AI possibilities

# Improve Staff Well-Being cont'd.

- Promote a culture of appreciation
  - Launch and sustain mechanisms to demonstrate appreciation – encourage staff to show appreciation to each other
- Professional development
  - Improves job satisfaction and engagement – demonstrates the school's investment in the staff
  - Benefits the students
  - Professional development workshops/trainings; creating professional learning communities within the school; mentorship/externship opportunities

QUESTIONS?

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