CHAPTER B.

Positive School Climate: Overall Tips & Strategies

Resources for the School Community

Chapter Highlights:

- Examples of the effect assets have on school communities
- Surveys to gauge school climate
- Tips and Best Practices to build positive school communities
- Student Fish Bowl School Climate assessment

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A Start to a Positive School Year
Helpful Tips

- Clarify and post classroom and school wide expectations, rules and policies at the start of the year, using positive language.

- Teach behavioral expectations and critical social skills (e.g. cooperation, listening, participation, etc.) - invest time in it as you would for language arts, math or any other core curriculum area.

- Set up your classroom consistent with the level of structure needed for optimal student success (high structure > desks in rows; medium structure > desks that can rotate; low structure > cooperative work centers/tables); using seating charts can be a good way to learn student names.

- Contact parents and caregivers early in the school year – before problems arise – to welcome families to your school/classroom and to let them know that you are available to talk with them throughout the year about any aspect of their child’s education.

- When possible, review student cumulative files. Look for special needs that will require special accommodations (vision, hearing, attention or mobility deficits); review health conditions of students to ensure you are comfortable responding to possible medical emergencies; check allergy and asthma conditions among incoming students before deciding on pets and plants in the classroom.

- Get a head start on improving Indoor Air Quality: Use only district-approved cleaning products; limit clutter to decrease distractions from learning and to limit amount of dust; check the heating, air conditioning and ventilation systems to make sure they are working properly (please contact Nurse of the Day at School Health Programs for further information at 242-2615).

- Build positive relationships with students - get to know their interests, concerns, hopes, talents, families, pets, history, communities, cultures, and unique attributes – this is the key to managing misbehavior, motivating students and creating a successful learning environment for all students.

- Warmly greet/welcome each student every morning and close each day on a positive note.

- Commit to interacting with students using a ratio of at least four positive reinforcements (e.g., specific praise, recognition) to one corrective/punitive action (e.g., reprimands) – a greater emphasis on positive interactions increases the likelihood that students will consistently meet expectations.

- Focus and build on students’ strengths and assets rather than on their deficits and shortcomings – this fosters self confidence and a strong sense of self worth ensuring the best chance for school success.

- In common areas, talk/engage with students, systematically walk around and monitor students, stand in the hallways between classes and visually scan areas to prevent conflicts from escalating.

- Use only healthy snacks for classroom, school-wide and fundraising activities (for example: cheese sticks, fresh fruit, yogurt, whole wheat pretzels, and fresh vegetable sticks).

- Identify students that need extra support early. Collaborate with your Student Support Services Professionals to respond to students’ needs (Wellness Coordinator, Learning Support Professional, School District Nurse, School Psychologist, School/Grade-level Counselor, Parent Liaison, Elem/MS Advisor, and Attendance Officer/Liaison). Discuss Focal Students and Transition Students at the first Student Assistance Program (SAP) meeting.

- Refer to the SFUSD School Health Programs Department Creating a Positive School Climate binder for further resources, ideas, strategies and activities on how to start a positive school year.

SRUSD SHPD Aug 07
ASSET POWER

Why bother with asset building in your school? Let the numbers speak! The following shows 22 assets that schools can most directly affect.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSETS SCHOOLS CAN AFFECT</th>
<th>% OF YOUTH EXPERIENCING ASSET</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Achievement motivation*</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive peer influence*</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School engagement*</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth programs*</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonding to school*</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School boundaries*</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework*</td>
<td>53</td>
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<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service to others</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High expectations*</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal competence*</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other adult relationships*</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peaceful conflict resolution</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resistance skills</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent involvement in schooling*</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning and decision making</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult role models</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring school climate*</td>
<td>29</td>
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<tr>
<td>Youth as resources</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community values youth</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading for pleasure*</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative activities</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Assets that research suggests are most important to academic success. Statistics from 1999–2000 school year surveys of 217,277 students grades 6–12 in public and private U.S. schools.

Percentages of young people who report experiencing each asset were gathered from the Search Institute Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors survey in 318 communities and 33 states.

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THE ASSET-BUILDING DIFFERENCE

The asset-building difference helps us focus on positive thoughts and actions when we:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MOVE FROM . . .</th>
<th>TO . . .</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Viewing students as problems</td>
<td>Seeing students as resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talking about problems</td>
<td>Talking about possibilities and positives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reacting to problems</td>
<td>Actively building strengths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treating students as objects of teaching</td>
<td>Respecting students as actors in their own development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relying on professionals to help</td>
<td>Involving everyone in the lives of students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing crises</td>
<td>Building a shared vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on troubled students</td>
<td>Focusing on all students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blaming others</td>
<td>Claiming personal responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competing priorities</td>
<td>Cooperative efforts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflicting signals about values and priorities</td>
<td>Consistent messages about what is important</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Asset-Building Affirmations

☐ I’m a powerful asset builder in the lives of my students.
☐ I know and use students’ names regularly when I see them.
☐ Each day, I greet students warmly.
☐ I focus daily on young people’s gifts and talents.
☐ I help young people use their strengths to overcome their deficits.
☐ I regularly encourage my fellow staff members to build assets for and with students.
☐ When young people are in trouble, I begin my interactions with them by focusing on their strengths.
☐ Each day, I’m involved in spontaneous acts of asset building.
☐ I’m expanding my positive influence by pursuing relationships with students I don’t know.
☐ At least once a week, I do something for or with students that goes beyond their normal expectations.
☐ I work hard to maintain relationships with the students I’m already connected with.
☐ I have high expectations for myself, fellow staff members, and students.
☐ I take the time to listen when students speak to me.
☐ I help students to visualize themselves performing at higher levels.
☐ I take the initiative in engaging young people positively.
☐ I smile at and make eye contact with young people as I go about my day.
☐ I believe that my power as a teacher comes from the relationships that I develop with my students.
☐ Before school, at passing time, at lunch, and after school, I’m out in the hallways engaging students.
☐ I’m meeting state standards by doing asset-building activities.
☐ I engage young people positively at school and in the community.
What does a school with exemplary **Asset Building & Youth Development** look like?

**Staff who.....**
- Make and take the time to foster caring relationships with students.
- Smile and address students by name.
- Clarify and post expectations and consequences initially and review throughout the year.
- Are versed in youth development and asset building principles and utilize these skills to plan and structure classroom activities and projects.
- Communicate with youth using asset-based language by building on strengths and teachable moments.
- Are comfortable shifting at times from an adult-led to a youth-led classroom activity or structure by incorporating youth ideas, providing opportunities for youth leadership, and training youth as activity/project facilitators.

**Students who.....**
- Feel comfortable sharing their ideas and opinions to adults through classroom discussions, focus groups, surveys and through participating in activities.
- Have opportunities to lead their peers by making daily announcements, leading activities, or being involved with youth leadership groups.
- Are trained as youth tour guides for visitors.
- Are trained as peer helpers, peer tutors and peer mediators.
- Have a sense of pride and ownership of their classroom and school.

**School/classroom structure that.....**
- Ensures adults are in hallways, cafeteria and yard during transition times, lunch and after school to greet students and encourage safety and respect at school.
- Posts expectations and consequences in hallways for all members of school community. Ensures that staff/youth consistently share and implement expectations.
- Provides opportunities for all youth to build caring relationships with adults and peers, participate in meaningful ways and successfully meet high expectations.
- Regularly recognizes student and school successes (daily shout-outs, youth awards, peer appreciation board, student incentive systems).
School/classroom structure that (cont.)

- Incorporates opportunities for youth to choose activities on a regular basis (e.g. lunchtime activities, after school program, school site council votes).
- Offers exposure to many different types of clubs and enrichment activities for students.
- Provides opportunities for youth to lead activities, games and projects.
- Provides opportunities for youth to assist in school activity planning (giving activity ideas, participating in focus groups, youth surveys, etc.).
- Incorporates community building activities, community circles and youth forums to give youth a fun and safe place to share information about themselves and learn about their peers.
- Showcases accomplishments, completed projects, and successes through school events/showcases, newsletters or bulletin boards.

Physical Environment that

- Is welcoming and youth friendly.
- Is emotionally and physically safe.
- Promotes and fosters open communication between youth, adults, and peers.

Research Based Curriculum and Resources:

- Community Network for Youth Development (CNYD) youth development framework, activities and resources- [www.cnyd.org](http://www.cnyd.org)
- Search Institute Asset Building Information and Tools, including the 40 Developmental Assets™- [www.search-institute.org/](http://www.search-institute.org/)
- National Institute of Out of School Time- [www.niost.org](http://www.niost.org)
- National Youth Development Information Center- [www.nydic.org/nydic/](http://www.nydic.org/nydic/)
- Youth Leadership Institute- [www.yli.org](http://www.yli.org)
Improving Student Conduct on the School Campus

Introduction
About 50% of the problem behaviors reported to the school office for action originate outside the classroom, in the bathroom, playground and the school bus. Student behavior in each of these areas is important in that it can determine how other students react and feel about school. If students are intimidated by others in any of these areas, it will likely affect their school attendance and academic performance.

1. Maintaining Peace and Cleanliness in the Bathroom
Behavior in the bathrooms can be a major problem, resulting in students being fearful of entering or using them. The CDE’s Safe Schools Guide (2002, p. 108) provides the following suggestions:

- Provide supervision in the restrooms during all passing periods
- Remove all graffiti from restrooms
- Involve student teams in keeping the restrooms clean

2. Improving Conduct in the Hallways
Problem behaviors that occur in the hallways, such as running, pushing, hitting, yelling, and screaming, often spill over into the classroom. To promote an environment conducive to learning, such problems must be addressed.

Staff members need to be expected to:
- Remind students, just prior to hallway transitions, to walk, use a quiet voice, and keep their hands and feet to themselves
- Move around the hallways during transitions
- Scan all areas, particularly concealed or distant areas
- Interact with students by
  a. Offering greetings
  b. Chatting briefly
  c. Praising students for following rules/demonstrating appropriate or model behavior
  d. Providing signals cueing appropriate behavior
  e. For elementary school: Stating the broken rule and sending the student back to the starting point to demonstrate appropriate behavior

Students need to be expected to:
- Walk
- Use a quiet voice
- Keep hands and feet to self
- Show hall pass during class time when out of classroom
- Be kind (Keep hands and feet to self and allow others to work when you enter the classroom)
- Be safe (Walk and watch where you are waking)
- Be cooperative (Wait for directions before leaving and follow rules)

• Be respectful (Use polite language and follow adult directions)
• Be peaceful (Walk quietly and enter classrooms quietly)

3. Improving Conduct on the Playground
Trouble on the playground during recess, and loosely structured activity periods, need to be addressed. Some youngsters aggress when other youngsters deny them access to a play activity, or when another youngster interrupts an ongoing activity (Stormont, Zentall, Beyda, Javorsky, & Belfiore, 2000). Also, it is well known that youngsters tend to aggress after being called names, teased, or bullied. Systematic interventions, as described below, are needed.

Staffing
In many schools, the recess period serves as a break, not only for the students, but also for the teachers. To recommend intervention procedures that would require the attention of many instructional staff probably would be resented, thus proving impractical. Teachers do need a few minutes for planning and a reprieve from the continual vigilance required of them. Methods that minimize the necessity for many teachers to be present, then, would seem ideal.

One solution is to involve peer monitors, in that they have been reported helpful in improving social interactions on the playground. But are they equipped to handle difficult youngsters? Consider what Mullins, Fowler, and Paine (1982) did. Individuals and groups could earn rewards concurrently for good behavior. First, the school consultant administered the program; then the classroom teacher took over, and next classroom peers handled it. This approach was very successful.

Opportunities for Learning on the Playground (Elementary School only)
The playground is an ideal place for students to learn both physical and social skills, and, as asserted repeatedly, students involved in productive learning are less apt to misbehave. Conducting practice in physical skills and good sportsmanship, or providing structured games, would be a constructive way to prevent difficulties while enabling the students to enhance their abilities.

Illustration: Noon Recreation Program

Highlights
This program provides a positive alternative to lunchtime behavior problems.

Situations
Noon Recreation Programs can be used with junior high school or elementary students who have 40-minute (or longer) lunch periods. A junior high school teacher, who was concerned about certain students who consistently got into trouble during lunch period, developed the program.

Purposes
To provide rewarding activities during lunch that help reduce student mishandling of free time.

Procedures

1. During lunch periods, teachers organize teams of students from the playground who are willing to participate in organized team sports.
2. In the spring, weekly softball teams are chosen, and during football season, three teams are selected. One team always watches the other two play. Each season ends with a championship game. Teachers may also organize basketball and volleyball games or water-balloon tosses as well.
3. Staff members are always on the lookout for, point out, and praise illustrations of good sportsmanship (e.g., assisting others who desire assistance, praising and encouraging others, apologizing when wrong).
4. Participants receive rewards, such as tokens exchangeable for prizes at the student store or gift certificates. They are also recognized via announcements made over the P.A. system to acknowledge outstanding participants.

Materials, Equipment, and Personnel Needed

✓ Teachers to coordinate and participate in the program
✓ Appropriate sports equipment
✓ Rewards (tokens, prizes, gift certificates, etc.)

Results

One seventh-grade student said, “It’s a lot of fun and keeps us out of trouble.” Another seventh-grade student commented, “It’s all right! It’s better than eating lunch.” The vice principal reacted, “It’s made all the difference in the world,” and a counselor stated, “The noon recreation program has made a real turnaround with some of the kids, especially the ones with discipline problems.”

Monitoring Progress of Program Implementation on the School Grounds

Lewis and Sugai (1999, p. 20) have presented the following checklist that can be used to monitor progress in non-classroom areas and/or as a guide in determining what needs to be done:

☐ Schoolwide expected student behaviors are taught in non-classroom settings
☐ Supervisors actively supervise (move, scan, and interact with) students in non-classroom settings
☐ Rewards exist for meeting expected student behaviors in non-classroom settings
☐ Physical/architectural features are modified to limit (a) unsupervised settings, (b) unclear traffic patterns, and (c) inappropriate access to and exit from school grounds
☐ Scheduling of students movement ensures appropriate numbers of students in non-classroom spaces
☐ Staff receives regular opportunities for developing and improving active supervision skills
☐ Status of student behavior and management practices is evaluated quarterly from data
☐ All staff members are involved directly or indirectly in management of non-classroom settings

## Example: School Rules and Expectations for Common Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Area</th>
<th>Safety</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>Respect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cafeteria</strong></td>
<td>Take your place at the end of the line, no cuts</td>
<td>Wait in line patiently</td>
<td>Use good manners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Walk at all times</td>
<td>Clean up after yourself</td>
<td>Clean up your area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eat only your own food</td>
<td>Place recyclables in proper containers</td>
<td>Keep food inside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sit when eating</td>
<td>Bring your lunch card</td>
<td>Follow adult direction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Keep aisles clear</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exit in a calm manner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clean up spills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gym and Yard Area</strong></td>
<td>Sit properly in bleachers or benches</td>
<td>Show good sportsmanship</td>
<td>Be a team player</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No drinks, food or gum</td>
<td>Return equipment</td>
<td>Encourage others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No running in locker room</td>
<td>Wear your uniform daily</td>
<td>Do not make fun of others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Auditorium: Assemblies/Special Events</strong></td>
<td>Sit quietly during presentation</td>
<td>Refrain from talking and remain seated during activity</td>
<td>Applaud appropriately</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fill in all empty seats</td>
<td>Focus on the activity</td>
<td>No littering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Listen for instructions</td>
<td>Follow teachers instructions</td>
<td>Pay attention &amp; show respect</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Take off backpacks</td>
<td>Refrain from negative responses to performers</td>
<td>Lift up seat when leaving</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dismiss by aisle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Library</strong></td>
<td>Use chairs/tables and equipment appropriately</td>
<td>Return materials to proper places</td>
<td>Use inside voice at all times</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use computers/internet appropriately</td>
<td>Use computers/internet appropriately</td>
<td>Respect the property of others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No food, drink or gum</td>
<td>No food, drink or gum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use inside voice at all times</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hallways &amp; Stairways</strong></td>
<td>Walk to the right at all times</td>
<td>Use your own lockers, no sharing</td>
<td>Use kind words and actions</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Keep hands &amp; feet to yourselves</td>
<td>No food, drink or gum</td>
<td>Use inside voice in the hallways/staircases, no shouting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Move to class on time, do not linger</td>
<td>Listen to adults</td>
<td>If an adult stops you in the hallway, stop and give your name, if requested, and listen to their direction</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use approved staircases</td>
<td>Follow directions the 1st time they are given: All teachers are your teachers. If you bump into someone, say “Excuse me”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Report all unsafe situations to an adult</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Counseling/Main Office</strong></td>
<td>Use inside voice in the building at all times</td>
<td>Ask for assistance, be polite</td>
<td>Use kind words and show respect to all individuals at all times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use Hotline to report problems</td>
<td>Obtain permission to use the phone</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Bathrooms</strong></td>
<td>Keep Water in sink</td>
<td>Flush toilets</td>
<td>Give people privacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wash hands</td>
<td>Inform adults of vandalism</td>
<td>Respect the property of others</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Put towels in garbage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Yard at lunchtime</strong></td>
<td>Keep hands &amp; feet to yourself</td>
<td>Be helpful to others in need</td>
<td>Treat others as you would like to be treated</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No play fighting</td>
<td>Keep your environment clean-keep food in café</td>
<td>Take turns, be fair, share</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Be aware of others while playing</td>
<td>Return all equipment promptly and safely</td>
<td>Do not disrupt or take over other’s games—ask first</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Report all unsafe situations to an adult</td>
<td>Listen and follow directions of all adults</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6, 7, 8th Grade Line</strong></td>
<td>Line up in two’s</td>
<td>Use indoor voices</td>
<td>When the bell rings:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Walk, stay orderly</td>
<td>Take your place at the end of the line-no cutting</td>
<td>Line up immediately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Keep hands, feet &amp; objects to yourself</td>
<td>Pay attention to all adult supervision</td>
<td>Return equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use only assigned doorways</td>
<td>Be considerate to your peers</td>
<td>Lead by example</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from SFUSD - Marina Middle School, School Wide Behavior Expectations, 2004
1. **Build Relationships with Students**
   - Welcome students each morning with a positive greeting 
     (e.g. handshake, high-five, “great to see you”, hello using student’s name)
   - Eat lunch with students

2. **Explicitly Teach Behavioral Expectations**
   - Don’t assume that students know appropriate behavior
   - Clearly post classroom rules/consequences and review them regularly
   - Clearly post behavioral expectations and review them regularly

3. **Recognize and Reward Desired Behaviors (“Catch them being good”)**
   - Praise on-task behavior frequently (Strive for a 4:1 positive to negative feedback ratio)
   - Implement a system to reward students for desired behaviors. Speak to your Learning Support Professional (LSP) or School District Nurse for ideas.

4. **Use De-Escalation Techniques**
   - Refer to page B-15 in the Positive School Climate Guide for specific interventions to de-escalate agitated students

5. **Enlist Support of Parent/Guardian**
   - Call home with good news to develop parent/teacher alliance
   - Seek parent support when addressing concerns about student

6. **Modify the Environment**
   - Structure desks according to level of classroom structure needed (e.g. table groups, rows)
   - Keep easily distracted students away from the door and windows
   - Allow active students opportunities to move (e.g. deliver attendance to the office, etc.)

7. **Modify your Instructional Delivery**
   - Use a variety of modalities to deliver instruction (e.g. verbal/visual/tactile)

8. **Utilize Available Resources**
   - Create and utilize a “peace table” or “quiet corner” 
     (use for a brief duration - allow students to calm down and return to class activity)
   - Send student to a buddy teacher for a brief time out
   - Call for push-in support (e.g. LSP, Administrator, Student Advisor)

9. **Know When to Ask For Help**
   - Consult with available support staff (i.e. LSP, Wellness Coordinator, School Psychologist, etc.)
   - Consult with a colleague (e.g. special education teacher with expertise in behavior management)

10. **Refer Student to the Student Assistance Program (SAP) for Further Support**
    - Refer student to the SAP to develop an intervention plan specific to student needs (e.g. referral to SST, individualized behavior plan, referral to counseling group, after school program, etc.)
Responding to bullying or name calling:

Tips for on-the-spot Intervention

Adults play a critical role in helping students who are bullied, ensuring a healthy and safe school climate. Yet, bullying and name-calling occurs everyday in schools. Although we might hear it or see it, we don’t always know how to address the bullying. This uncertainty can keep us from doing anything, which sends the message to students that it is okay to bully and/or use hurtful and damaging language in school.

Below are some suggestions for responding to bullying and name-calling:

► Be sure school/classroom rules and SFUSD Anti-Slur Policy are posted and reviewed with students. Work with school colleagues to identify and support enforcement of school wide expectations

► Immediately intervene to stop the bullying:

► Use a “matter of fact” tone and refer to the bullying behavior. For example: “Excuse me, that language is unacceptable.” Or “Calling someone “retarded” is bullying and it’s against our school rules.”

► Teachable moment. If students understand where the word comes from, or why it is hurtful, it can often help avert further offenses. Ask the student if they know what “retarded” means. Tell them it means “slow to learn or to be delayed.” Explain that people learn in different ways, and when you use “retard” as a slur, it is hurtful to those with physical or mental challenges as well as their friends and family.

► If needed, clearly explain why you are calling the incident bullying. Occasionally students don’t realize the prejudice in what they are saying. Use those few moments to explain how what they are saying is name-calling.

“If telling someone that they are ‘retarded’ is offensive when using it as a put down. Using it as an insult to mean ‘stupid’, means you are actually saying people with disabilities are stupid. It is not okay to put down retarded people. Furthermore, it’s not okay to call someone stupid.”

► If appropriate, impose immediate consequences for the student who was bullying. See the Parent/Guardian Handbook pps. 60-61 for assistance.

► Follow up privately, if necessary. Check in with the student who was being bullied to make sure s/he is okay, and to let the student know that you care.

► It’s also a good idea to check in with the student doing the bullying. Often times, students who bully are in need of positive role models, including adults and other students. Identify a caring adult for the student.

► See curriculum ideas on the January School Safety/Violence Prevention Month sheet.
**De-Escalation Tip Sheet**

**Tips from SHPD Professionals**
- Try to build relationships and rapport before de-escalation is needed
- Call for assistance prior to a fight
- Do not block a door
- Listen to threats
- Give students a lot of room when agitated
- Ask agitated students simple questions that require concentration.
- Ask agitated students open ended questions that need explanations. You want the student to talk so he/she can get back his/her self control.
- Encourage agitated students to write by completing your school’s version of a “This is what happened” form

**Verbal De-escalation**

► Center yourself and breathe
► Allow extra physical space between you and the other person
► Listen to and acknowledge feelings
► Avoid becoming defensive
► Lower your voice, tone, pitch and tempo
► Ask questions
► Respond to valid complaints
► Set limits respectfully but firmly
► Know when to terminate the meeting

**In the Moment**
- Do Not raise voice
- Do Not Say “Calm Down!”
- Do Not Grab
- Do Not Unnecessarily Touch or Push
- Do Not give them power by insulting them or making a joke at their expense.

**Three Most Important Rules**
1. Give the Student an Honorable Way out of the situation.
2. Give the Student an Honorable Way out of the situation.
3. Give the Student an Honorable Way out of the situation

**Resources**
School Health Programs Department 415.242.2615 Nurse of the Day
Homophobic and anti-gay slurs are commonplace on school campuses. Adults can play a critical role in curtailing the use of such slurs and ensuring a healthy and safe school climate. Although we might hear it or see it, we don’t always know how to address the slurs, such as “faggot”, “dyke” or “that’s so gay”. This uncertainty can keep us from doing anything, which sends the message to students that it is okay to use such hurtful and damaging language in school.

Below are some suggestions for responding to homophobic bullying and name-calling:

■ Be sure school/classroom rules and SFUSD Anti-Slur Policy are posted and reviewed with students. Work with colleagues to identify and support enforcement of school wide expectations

■ Post the “Safe Space” posters in classrooms and hallways (available from SHPD).

■ Immediately intervene to stop the slurs:

► Use a “matter of fact” tone. “Excuse me, that language is unacceptable and is a put down. It’s against our school rules.” If age appropriate, call it homophobia. If time is available, define homophobia. Explain that homophobia is the hatred or fear of lesbian, gay and bisexual people.

► If needed, clearly explain why you are calling the incident homophobic. Occasionally students don’t realize the prejudice in what they are saying. Take a few moments to explain what they are saying is name-calling.

“Telling someone that they are ‘so gay’ is offensive. Although you might mean ‘stupid’, you are actually saying stupid and gay are the same. It is not okay to put down gay people. Furthermore, it’s not okay to call someone stupid.”

► Teachable moment. Ask the student if they know why the teacher found the term offensive. If students understand where the word comes from, or the history of why it is hurtful, it can often help avert further offenses.

“The word ‘faggot’ actually means a bundle of sticks used for creating a fire. The term originates as far back as the 15th century, when gay men were forced to collect wood for witch-burning fires during the Spanish Inquisition—and their own bodies were used as fuel when the flames died out.”

► Intervene in gender-based stereotypes

Gender stereotypes are simplistic notions held by individuals or groups that expect males and females to fall into predictable roles. Hearing somebody refer to a group of boys as “girls” or calling a boy a “sissy” should also be addressed as bullying behavior.

► If appropriate, impose immediate consequences for the student who was using the slurs. (See the Parent/Guardian Handbook pps. 60-61 for assistance).

► Follow up privately, if necessary. Check in with the student who was called a name to make sure s/he is okay, and to let the student know that you care.

► It’s also a good idea to follow up with the person who used the hurtful language. Often times, students who bully are in need of positive role models.

Resources: Student and Parent/Guardian Handbook (pps.60-61)
School Health Program’s Department: Support Services for LGBTQ Youth 242.2615
Cybersafety and Cyberbullying
Tips for Safety on the Internet

Personal Information
▶ Don’t share personal information such as your name, age, sex/gender, pictures, location/address, cell phone number or social security number
▶ Create nicknames that don’t reflect your own name or anything personal
▶ Never respond to online communication that is inappropriate or makes you feel uncomfortable
▶ Never agree to meet someone you met online in person
▶ Always talk with a parent/caregiver or a responsible adult about your online activities

Social Networks
▶ Never share any information about yourself or your friends
▶ Be careful about adding strangers to your “friends list”
▶ Don’t be shy; report inappropriate postings/profiles

Cyberbullying
▶ Don’t respond to or meet with a cyberbully. It is always better to walk away.
▶ Save proof of the harassment like e-mail messages, blogs and IM logs. Print them out and show them to an adult you trust, like a parent, school counselor or other adult at school.
▶ Tell a trusted adult who can:
  • File a complaint with the Internet Service Provider, or the host of the Web site
  • Contact the parent/caregiver of the one who is writing the messages
▶ Think carefully about what you say online. Make sure it’s not going to hurt or scare someone

If you observe someone else being the target of cyberbullying:
▶ Support the person. Let them know that it’s not their fault
▶ Go with them to talk to a trusted adult
▶ Report what you’ve seen to an adult

Resources
School Health Programs Department 415.242.2615 Nurse of the Day
National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center www.safeyouth.org 1.866.safeyouth
Center for Safe and Responsible Internet Use www.cyberbully.org
CELEBRATE ACHIEVEMENTS

Students deserve our recognition when they strive to be and do their best. The following is a short list of ideas for making every young person in our school community feel valuable. Please feel free to add (and share) your own ideas and give them to

- **AWARDS ASSEMBLY**
  
  *Here’s one way to do it:* Establish a tradition of having an all-school awards assembly once or twice a year. Create awards categories for achievement in each of the asset categories: support, empowerment, boundaries and expectations, constructive use of time, commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies, and positive identity.

- **EXTRACURRICULAR AWARDS**
  
  *Here’s one way to do it:* Put trophies, certificates, or other awards on public display in a trophy case used expressly for showing the latest extracurricular achievements. Use a bulletin board next to the case to list names of those involved and post photos of the events when available. Put captions on photos as a way to acknowledge individual students involved in the event. The key is to recognize the MVP as well as the best musician, artist, or scientist so that students feel appreciated for their individual talents and gifts.

- **FROM THE PRINCIPAL’S DESK**
  
  *Here’s one way to do it:* Periodically distribute a short newsletter giving praise for student and teacher achievements. Give it a title like “The Monthly Who’s Who at XX High” or “Stars of the Month” or “XX Middle School’s Best and Brightest of the Month.” (Add another level of asset building by giving books as prizes.)

- **NONTRADITIONAL RECOGNITION/ “Caught in the Act”**
  
  *Here’s one way to do it:* Celebrate even the smallest achievement by regularly polling staff and students about the person who they believe has achieved the most over a certain period of time. Suggestions will vary—maybe a known bully was “caught” helping a younger student, or a “chatty” student sat through a class period without disturbing everyone else. Invite everyone to share her or his ideas.

- **A AND B HONOR ROLL**
  
  *Here’s one way to do it:* Post names on bulletin boards in a public area of the school building, announce names after each grading period over the intercom or at student assemblies, and publish names in the school newsletter.

**OTHER IDEAS:_________________________**

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## STUDENT FISH BOWL FOCUS GROUP ACTIVITY

### Activity Purpose:

To allow students to voice their concerns in an atmosphere that is safe, non-judgmental and allows their perspective to be heard on issues affecting them. It requires active listening on the part of adults and provides a chance to hear honest opinions from young people. Fishbowl forums provide an opportunity for better understanding and a chance for a group that is not usually empowered in decision-making processes to be heard.

### Activity Description:

A fishbowl forum provides a comfortable and non-judgmental environment for youth to discuss questions which concern them. The basic structure consists of two groups of people, adults and youth, sitting in a ring around the other. The youth sit in the middle and answers questions posed by an adult facilitator. One key part of the procedure is that the outer circle remains quiet at all times, and listens respectfully without interruption to the youth responding in the inner circle. In some situations it may be advantageous to switch and have the adults answer similar questions inside the fishbowl.

### Materials Needed:

- Fish Bowl questions (see sample on back page)
- Chairs arranged in two circles (one inside itself)

### Approximate Time: 2 hours

- 30 minutes to prepare students and set up room
- 45-60 minutes for focus group (+ introductions, overview of process and ground rules)
- 30 minutes for groups to debrief (groups can debrief together or separately)

### Activity Outline:

1. Select 10 students from a range of backgrounds, not just the student leaders. Select about six questions designed to capture information on the topic under discussion. Some general sample questions are included in this resource.

2. Have students meet prior to the fishbowl focus group to discuss questions. Give students a copy of the questions and encourage them to write notes to help them frame their answers to the questions. Every student gets a chance to answer each question. Rotate the order in which students answer the questions so a different student is first to answer for each question.

3. After all students have had the chance to answer a question allow some time for other students to comments on the answers they have heard from their peers. It provides the chance for them to share additional comments stimulated from listening to their peers. Do not let them engage in cross discussions.

4. During the fishbowl have students sit in a smaller circle inside a large circle formed by adults. Use the same process as above. Once you have gone through all the questions ask the adults if they need any clarification. At this point they can directly address a particular student or ask the entire group. Again, this is not an opportunity for discussion but just to clarify statements they have heard.
Adults observers agree to:
1. Watch, listen and take notes and refrain from speaking.
2. Refrain from direct interaction with students during the fishbowl.

Students agree to:
No names
No put downs
One student speaking at a time
Confidentiality
Focus on what you like/want or need
Remember time limits

Debrief:
Have the students speak about how this process felt for them. Then have adults do the same.

Discussion:
After this depending on what has come up you may want to discuss a process for getting at solutions to issues raised. Sometimes the youth are willing to continue to meet with the adults in an advisory format.

QUESTIONS:
1. What are some things at school that make you want to be there?
2. What would make school more fun and interesting for you and your peers?
3. What kind of things can be done to improve things at school? How could you or other students contribute to these improvements?
4. What do you think are the issues of most concern to students at this school?
5. What do adults at this school say or do to make you want to succeed in school? In your life?
6. If you could share with an adult two things you need to help you achieve your goals or dreams what would these be?
7. What actions of adults let you know they care about you?
8. Who are the people you go to at school when you have a problem?
9. What are the traits that these people have to make you select them?

Adapted from multiple sources; Putting Assets in to Action, 2005, Region 4 Bay Area Safe & Drug Free Schools County Coordinators & Bonnie Bernard, Senior Program Associate, West Ed.
Developmental Assets for Staff

Please read the following descriptions and respond by circling the appropriate number ranking in the far right column as follows: “1” for an asset you don’t have, “3” for an asset you sometimes have; “5” for an asset you consistently have.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXTERNAL ASSETS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Colleague Support (You experience a high level of mutual respect, positive regard, and personal support from colleagues in similar roles.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Positive communication (It is easy to engage colleagues and supervisors in open, honest exchanges.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Positive relationships outside department (You feel known by and communicate easily with others not directly affiliated with you, e.g., with nonacademic administrators.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Sense of caring from parents, alumni, and trustees (You feel a sense of positive regard and a desire to be helpful coming from members of key constituent groups.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Caring organization climate (You sense that you are personally valued by the organization and that steps are taken to protect and promote your interests and well-being.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Supervisors knowledgeable involved with your teaching (You see evidence that your supervisors understand your job and have some direct knowledge of your performance.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Organization community values staff (You see evidence that parents, alumni, trustees hold the profession in high regard and pay attention to you and your colleagues.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Administration listens to staff (The organization’s leaders consult with you and your colleagues and utilize you as resources in problem solving and decision making.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Colleagues call on each other as resources (You and your colleagues consult with each other and utilize each other as resources in problem solving and decision making.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Safety (You feel you can voice concerns and reveal difficulties without embarrassment, reprisals, or putting your position in jeopardy.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Organization expectations (The organization’s expectations for you, its rules and sanctions relevant to you, and its criteria for decisions affecting you are clear and reasonable.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Department/Division expectations (The guidelines for conduct and shared commitments among you and your colleagues in your department are clear and reasonable.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Community expectations (The prevailing community norms and expectations placed on the organization support your work and what you consider good educational practice.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Administrator conduct (Supervisors and other administrators model in their own conduct what they expect of you and your colleagues.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Peer Conduct (Your colleagues model professional conduct and appropriate expectations toward you and toward one another)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. High expectations (You feel the expectations of you are appropriately high, and you sense tangible support for high achievement in your work.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Culture (Your professional involvement with the organization enhances your quality of life by supporting or broadening your cultural opportunities.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Leisure (Your professional involvement with the organization enhances your quality of life by supporting or broadening your recreational opportunities.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Faith (Your spiritual convictions are respected by the organization, and your religious commitments are honored.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Home (Your family commitments and the boundaries of your private life are respected and honored by the organization.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## INTERNAL ASSETS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commitments</th>
<th>21. Professional goals (You have explicit professional goals and a plan for your own continuing professional development.)</th>
<th>1 2 3 4 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22. Engagement (You feel meaningfully engaged in your teaching and in the development of your curriculum.)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23. Management (You effectively manage your priorities, fulfilling your core duties and attending to the ancillary tasks associated with teaching.)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24. Bonding (Your own beliefs and values are aligned with those of the organization, and you feel a philosophical commitment to the organization and its mission.)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25. Personal development (You see yourself as a learner and regularly engage in developing yourself beyond your area of specialization.)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values</td>
<td>26. Caring (You see yourself as a contributor to a caring workplace; you are cognizant of and reach out to colleagues in need.)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27. Social justice (You are interested in the political and social implications of the organization’s mission and the role it plays in the broader community.)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>28. Integrity (You voice your own beliefs and values, when appropriate, whether they are consonant or dissonant with those of your colleagues or the organization.)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>29. Honesty (You are truthful in your professional relationships and provide candid feedback to colleagues and administrators.)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30. Responsibility (You accept a fair share of responsibility for the work of the organization and for the problems the organization experiences.)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31. Health (You practice habits of self-care and self-management, e.g., diet, rest, exercise, moderation.)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competencies</td>
<td>32. Planning and time management (You are able to budget your time, set priorities, plan Ahead, and adhere to a plan.)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>33. Interpersonal skills (You demonstrate interest in others and practice effective communications; thoughtful expression, empathic listening, respectful negotiating.)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>34. Cultural skills (You demonstrate openness to diverse viewpoints and experiences; you are able to practice “code switching” to facilitate communication across cultural boundaries.)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>35. Personal boundaries (You are able to empathize with a situation or problem another person is experiencing without taking it on as a personal burden.)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>36. Conflict resolution (You demonstrate respect, careful listening, and a blame-free, problem-solving approach to disagreements and conflicts.)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Identify</td>
<td>37. Power (You have a sense of adequate control over what happens to you at organization and the ability to influence decisions that are important to you.)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>38. Self-esteem (You feel positive about being a teacher and about being a member of this organization community.)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>39. Sense of purpose (You have a sense of personal mission and a career plan or life plan for fulfilling that mission.)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40. Positive view of future (You are optimistic about where the organization and the profession are headed.)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments (e.g., anything missing? anything unclear? reactions to the exercise?):

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