Developing the Mindset for a Restorative School Culture

Center for Dispute Resolution
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1. Challenge your thinking
2. Encourage your deeper reflection
3. Spur positive action
4. Have a few laughs
OPPORTUNITY IS NOWHERE!

NOWHERE
NOW HERE

Schools at the “top of the mountain” weren't dropped there!
The path to the “top” is a journey, not a destination... and very hard work.
“Hard work spotlights the character of people. Some turn up their sleeves, some turn up their noses, and some don’t turn up at all.”

Sam Ewing

Which are YOU?
What do you remember?

- 2020 Best Actress Oscar
- 2020 Best Picture Oscar
- 2020 Super Bowl MVP
- Teams in 2020 NBA championship

- A teacher who made a difference in your life

Climate or Culture?

“Good morning class. My name is Miss Applegate. One false move and I’ll kill you.”
Climate
- Is around us
- Attitude (easier to change)
- Way we “feel” around here
- *Occasional* experiences...

Culture
- Is part of us
- Personality (harder to change)
- Way we “do” things around here
- *Consistent* rituals

What does a “restorative mindset” culture look like?
What is a “Restorative Mindset”?

Restorative
/re·stor·a·tive/
Adjective: having the ability to restore health, strength, or a feeling of well-being.

Mindset
/mīn(d)·set/
Noun: the established set of attitudes held by someone
Schools with a restorative mindset row as one!

A place where students thrive academically, socially and emotionally....

- Student needs come first. WE work for THEM.
- A strong sense of community united by a common vision, clear goals and a shared language.
- There is a palpable “get-to”, not a “have-to” attitude.

- Student effort is recognized and acknowledged, as much, if not more, than achievement.
- Students are disciplined, NOT punished.
“A “Restorative” Staff…

- Are *enduring* role models
- Work collegially, not just congenially
- Passionate, persistent, pro-active and professional
- Deeply committed to their students and see **potential** where others might see challenges
- ***Believe in the importance of strong relationships and powerful connections***
- These schools have a WAY!

- What’s yours??

As educators, we have a professional and moral duty to impart a sense of **identity**, **belonging** and **purpose** to ALL students…
“Belonging”

“While it may be called a clan, a gang, a family, or a tribe, whatever the name, people will fight to belong to it.”

Two fundamental human needs...

1) We are important to someone
   Relationships

2) What we do makes a difference to someone
   Connections
A way to connect:

Organize key groups of students into organizations with a clear purpose, high expectations and a duty to serve others...

 The “Gentlemen”
 Common purpose
 High Expectations
 Mentoring roles
 Adhere to a “Promise of Duty” to others

Connected to each other...
A game changing connection...?

Before...  

After...
“Sophisticated Ladies”

An effective counselor must be ready to “listen” anywhere and at any time!
How are “challenging” students perceived in your sphere of influence?

“At-Risk”  “At-Promise”

“Buzzards”  “Robins”

“In your future, I see…”
Albert Einstein

- “______ is a very poor student. He is mentally slow, unsociable, and is always daydreaming. He is spoiling it for the rest of the class. It would be best for all if he was removed from school at once.”

Amelia Earhart

- “She is bright and full of curiosity, but her interest in bugs and her daredevil projects are just not fitting for a young lady. Perhaps we could channel her curiosity into a safe hobby.”
Woodrow Wilson

- “He is ten years old and only just beginning to read and write. He shows signs of improving, but you must not set your sights too high for him.”

Build a community that supports, challenges...
...and cares for each other

A restorative school culture supports “communities of learners” in learning and growing together...

- Frequent opportunities for students to learn from and with each other?
- From “surface to substance”
- Community and relationships are intentionally developed
- “B-I-A”
“Two Minute Interview”

- What’s a goal you’re working on?
- What’s a special interest you have?
- What’s an achievement you’re proud of?
- Who is a hero for you?

Adapted from H. Urban
“ANONYMOUS COMPLIMENTS”

1. Each student draws the name of a classmate.
2. By the week’s end, the student writes an anonymous compliment about that person on a strip of paper, shows it to the teacher, and puts it in the Compliment Box.
3. On Friday, the teacher posts the compliments on the bulletin board for class members to view.

“The Daily Four”

1. Who has good news?
2. Who would like to affirm/compliment someone else?
3. What is something in the past 24 hours that you are thankful for?
4. Laughter (tell a joke)

—adapted from Hal Urban’s “Life’s Greatest Lessons”
Discipline-based Consequences
The 5 Rs

1. Relevant— not arbitrary
2. Respectful— not demeaning
3. Reasonable— not excessive
4. Restorative— makes restitution/repairs relationship
5. Resource-building— helps student develop necessary skills to “Reflect, Renew, Resume”

To make a true and lasting difference, we must believe...

“All children are gifted. Some just open their presents later than others.”
“Children today are tyrants. They contradict their parents, gobble their food, and tyrannize their teachers.”

Socrates (469 BC – 399 BC)

Characteristics of many students ...

- Creative and spontaneous
- Resilient
- Sincere
- School is not the only thing on their minds
- Loyal to friends, family and to adults whom they trust
- Experience varying feelings of disconnection*—generally a loss of self-efficacy as they move up in grade.
“One of the luckiest things that can happen to you is to have a happy childhood.”

Agatha Christie

What are their nights like?....
Do we have a clue?

[Images of students sleeping in various locations]
Teachers are human too!

“All children may be created equally, but not all experience life that way”
“Dear Dad”

Dear Dad,
I lost my bathing suit. I’m really sorry. I gave Mommy 25 dollars to give you. I love you and I hope that you don’t getステームed up with me.

Laura.

PS. If you want to tell me something I’ll probably be in my room punishing myself.

“Dear God”

3505 Taylor St.
Brentwood, MD 20722.

Dear God, can you help my mother? She wasborn in 1962 and she has not been the same. She does not smile or laugh like she used to. She just sits and looks at tv. She does not walk or dance like she used to either. Please bless my mother back together again.

Signed Michael Roberts
Her Son
Keep a sense of humor!

Laugh!

Laugh!

Laughing is the best medicine. Unless you're laughing for no reason...then you need medicine.
“Parent Communication”…

▶ “Please excuse Jimmy for being. It was his father’s fault.”
▶ “My son is under the doctor’s care and should not take P.E. Please execute him.”
▶ “Please excuse Joyce from Jim today. She is administrating.”

“Please excuse Jennifer for missing school yesterday. We forgot to get the Sunday paper off the porch, and when we found it Monday, we thought it was Sunday.”
“Writing at the same time as Shakespeare was Miguel Cervantes. He wrote Donkey Hotie. The next great author was John Milton. Milton wrote ‘Paradise Lost’. Then his wife died and he wrote ‘Paradise Regained’.”

From an actual 3rd grade test:

“Define the word ‘benign’ ”

“It’s what you are after you be eight.”
They’re watching...

- How we speak to each other
- How we address negative behavior
- How we react in stressful situations
- *What* we say when upset and, more importantly, *how* we say it
- If we are people of integrity

- Our desks

How often do you celebrate “The Good”?
On “those” days...

Remember the 95% Principle...

Find ways to recognize and acknowledge the efforts of the “95%”!

Consistently
Equitably
Sincerely

Otherwise don’t bother!
“Mr. C’s Wall”

DE-ESCALATION is a skill!
REMAIN CALM

People can’t “get your goat” if you don’t tell them where it’s tied!

Describe an “Effective” Leader…

Someone who, when being chased by upset parents, angry students and a nosy central office, makes it look like they’re leading a parade!
“Anger after 15 minutes is ego.”

Teacher’s Thoughts”

Hiam Ginott

“I have come to a frightening conclusion that I can be the decisive element in my school. It is my personal approach that creates the climate. It is my daily mood that makes the weather...
...As a teacher, I possess tremendous power to make life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal...

...In all situations it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated, and a person humanized or de-humanized.”
Remember, what you say to a child can be very powerful... be certain to choose your words wisely....

What I miss the most....
Overheard at recess from a kindergarten student to a new student who was being cruel to a peer.

“We don’t do that here; we’re a Peace School!”
Reflect...

*How will I contribute to the restorative mindset of my school culture?

*What will I do to get to know my students better?

*How do I add to my school’s “Way”?

Once students experience excellence, they are never again easily satisfied with mediocrity.

“Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around.” L. Buscaglia

To the world, you might be just one person…but to one person you just might be the world.

Success is never final and failure is never fatal. Courage is what counts.” J. Wooden
"Courage is being scared to death but saddling up anyway."  John Wayne
"I Am A Teacher"

"I am a teacher. A teacher is someone who leads. There is no magic here. I do not walk on water. I do not part the sea. I just love children."

Marva Collins

“If”...

- Not here, where?
- Not now, when?
- Not me, who?
Stay Well!

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