



Implementing a Positive School Climate

Creating a safe school environment for students and educators is critical to the personal development and academic achievement of all students. To assist educators in implementing a positive school climate, CEC has developed tips to assist in creating school environments that act as a catalyst to learning.

Confront the Issue: Assessing School Climate

By understanding the current school climate, schools can develop a plan to build on strengths and address areas that need improvement. To assess school climate, seek feedback from *all* school personnel, students, and families. Conducting an anonymous survey/questionnaire can provide valuable insight.

Be Pro-Active: Establish & Promote a School-Wide Anti-Discrimination Policy

By establishing, disseminating, and enforcing a clear policy that prohibits harassment/discriminatory behaviors, describes unacceptable behavior, and defines/encourages teaching of expected behaviors, educators create an environment that sets clear expectations for students, school personnel and families. Establishing these expectations is a critical step in creating an environment that supports learning.

Work Together: Engage All School Personnel & Families

To improve school climate, it is important to gain buy-in from all school personnel and families. Strategies – including soliciting feedback and encouraging participation – should be used to better engage the entire school community. Working together with a unified message reinforces the importance of creating and maintaining a positive school climate.

Create an All-Star Team: Educate the Educators

Just as all professional athletes must maintain a strenuous exercise regimen, all school personnel need to have access to on-going, effective professional development that supports school-wide strategies as well as in-the-moment strategies to create a positive school climate.

Lead by Example: Integrate Tolerance in Teaching

What better way to create a positive school environment than reinforcing messages of tolerance during appropriate times in classroom teaching? Whether through history lessons that illustrate the impact of tolerance/intolerance or examples in literature, classroom experiences provide excellent opportunities to help students gain a better understanding of the importance of tolerance.

The Digital Age: Understanding All Forms of Bullying

As -mail, instant messaging, and text messaging become increasingly popular forms of communication among youth, identifying and addressing cyberbullying should be included in bullying prevention/intervention training for all school personnel.

Stop the Cycle: Addressing the Needs of Bullies/Bullied

Providing supports to students who bully as well as to those who are bullied is vital to getting to the crux of the issue and may prevent future incidents. School personnel – particularly school counselors, social workers, and psychologists – play an integral role in addressing bullying and underlying causes for such behavior and coping strategies.



