

Assessing your School's Climate & Character needs...

- Ideas from Centennial Middle School

Karen Bromps, Principal, Centennial Middle School, WVSD.
Spokane Valley WA. 2017

Our 2016-17 School Data-

552 responses- from our fall and spring student-led conferences

- 99% of students and families feel welcome at CMS
- 99% students and families feel CMS is a safe place to be
- 98% of students and families feel that there is an adult at CMS that they trust to go to for help with a problem
- 98% of families feel communication occurs between home & school in an open and respectful manner
- 99% of students and families believe that CMS has high academic expectations for students
- 98% of students and parents believe that teachers and principals care about students' success
- 90% of parents feel they are encouraged to be actively involved in activities at CMS
- 90% of students and parents feel that teachers & principals ask for, and listen to, specific ways to engage and motivate students

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In order to know what you need to infuse into your students' lives at school, & ultimately what you want to assess, you need to establish an organic system in which all in the school operate from...

❖ Establish norms with your staff to operate from, together in your work, work with students, work with parents/families, and with community partners:

- ❖ *Be genuine with each other, our ideas & feelings*
- ❖ *Listen to understand*
- ❖ *Frame our interaction with each other from the premise of promise and potential*

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Take time for these critical conversations on...

- ❖ What is our core value around, and definition of, equity?
- ❖ Are students' voices & choices honored?- what evidence do we have?
- ❖ How do we, as adult teachers & learners, model and exemplify character to our students and each other?
- ❖ How can we hold each other accountable for not getting attached to the "True but Useless" issues/challenges?

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Then start the journey...

❖ Capture & respond to what the social & emotional needs are of students and families- How?

- ❖ Surveys
- ❖ Family connections, home visits, conferences, parent boot camp
- ❖ Flight Time activities (Advisory)
- ❖ Community Partnerships, including service learning
- ❖ Check & Connect students (administration/counselors)
- ❖ WEB
- ❖ PBIS

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Allow room for everyone on the path...

- STUDENTS! My school alone has 3500 combined years of current and relevant student experience, compared to 600 years that teachers have, & 60 years that two administrators have
- Leadership experiences/opportunities should be treated as a Tier 1 Intervention, meaning ALL students get this experience
- Create a dedicated time in your schedule to teach, model, reinforce & celebrate character, leadership, relational skills, service opportunities, growth mindset
- A frequent, fluid, & natural process to check-in needs to be in place

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Reflect on, & celebrate, all of the unique steps along the way ...

- ❖ Have students provide insight on culture of building-
 - ❖ Principal focus groups
 - ❖ Students on collaboration/staff meeting agendas
- ❖ Utilize summer time to continue planning
 - ❖ Staff, students, parents
 - ❖ Centennial *Welcome Back* bus
- ❖ PBIS- staff recognition & reinforcement..."if you don't feed the teachers, they eat the students."
- ❖ Align your School Improvement Plan with equal attention to & importance given to developing character in students as academic achievement (they will go hand-in-hand)

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If the Path before you is clear, you're probably on some else's



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