Organizational Structure for Improving School Culture

Doing Whatever It Takes to Build a Strong Foundation

Presented by:
Shanell George & Janique Cambridge
This Workshop...

WILL...
1. Identify important first steps in framing organizational structures
2. Identify key elements for sustaining strong school culture
3. Explain the importance of relationship building as it relates to school culture

WILL NOT...
1. Provide a ‘quick fix’ to cultural challenges
2. Address specific cultural challenges i.e. discipline, achievement gaps, teacher burnout
DO NOW...

DISCUSSION PROMPT: What does school culture mean to you? What is one key element needed to build a strong foundation for school culture?

DIRECTIONS:
1. Think (1min)
2. Pair (2min)
3. Share (2min)
AGENDA

- AMS 3 School Culture
- Acknowledge, Reflect and Reframe
- Key Factors for Sustainability
- Final Takeaways
What is the definition of school culture?

“The term school culture generally refers to the beliefs, perceptions, relationships, attitudes, and written and unwritten rules that shape and influence every aspect of how a school functions, but the term also encompasses more concrete issues such as the physical and emotional safety of students, the orderliness of classrooms and public spaces, or the degree to which a school embraces and celebrates racial, ethnic, linguistic, or cultural diversity.”

https://www.edglossary.org/school-culture/
Who is AMS 3? Our School Profile

- Enrollment: 402 Students
- Demographics
  - 80% African American
  - 9% Hispanic
  - 3% Asian
  - 2% White
  - 4% English Language Learners
  - 13% Students with Special Needs
- Free/Reduced Lunch: 87%
- Student Attendance: 93% (City Average 89%)
- Graduation Rate: 92%
- College Acceptances: 100%
- Location: Sheepshead Bay Brooklyn, NY-South Brooklyn
- Campus: Shared with three (3) other schools
# Our Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acknowledge</th>
<th>Reflect</th>
<th>Reframe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Evaluate the state of the school</td>
<td>1. Reflect on the data</td>
<td>1. Create systems to implement change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Review what has already been done</td>
<td>2. Involve school based stakeholders for feedback</td>
<td>2. Develop timeframe for implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Identify what is working and what could be improved</td>
<td>3. Develop action plan from feedback</td>
<td>3. Active and continuous norming and reflecting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from the ASCD: Handling Student Frustrations by Renate Caine and Carol McClintic ASCD
Arias Publication May 2014
Step 1
Acknowledge
Our Inquiry Story
Year One!

- 3 R’s & P.R.I.D.E
- Advisory
- Instructional Coaching
- Scholar Dollars
- Code of Conduct
Years Two, Three & Four!

- Additional teaching staff
- Additional Cohort Leaders
- Instructional Coaching Systems
- PRIDE Dollars
- Code of Conduct
End of Year 4: What did the DATA say?
Step 1: Acknowledge: What did the data say?
Staff Anonymous Anecdotal

“I believe more goal oriented department meetings would improve my professional experience, such as department meetings with meaningful agendas each week and collaborative course, unit, and topic planning throughout the departments.”

“We need more consistent procedures for promoting positive student culture and buy-in. I think this needs to start in the beginning of the year where the cohorts focus on building relationships among each other.”

“I would like to have more opportunities to collaborate with other teachers in my content area. It would also be helpful to be able to have more common planning time with my department.”
Step 1: Acknowledge
Evaluating the State of AMS III

1. Data
   a. Insight Survey
   b. NYC Survey
   c. Staff Anecdotal

2. Observations
   a. Review current systems and protocols in place.
   b. Staff Anecdotal

3. Identify what is working and what could be improved
What Leadership Acknowledged

Inconsistencies in the following areas:

1. Clarity of the purpose of systems
2. Buy-in for school systems
3. Sustainability of systems
Activity # 1: Acknowledge - School Culture Challenge

1. With a partner acknowledge a current challenge in your school based on one of the categories below.
2. How does this challenge impact school culture?

Examples:
Learning Environment, School Leadership, Rigorous Instruction, Professional Development, Academic Expectations, Peer Culture, Discipline, Family Engagement, Teacher Development, Student Achievement
Step 2
Reflect
The Review and Debrief
## Our Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acknowledge</th>
<th>Reflect</th>
<th>Reframe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Evaluate the state of the school</td>
<td>1. Reflect on the data</td>
<td>1. Create systems to implement change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Review what has already been done</td>
<td>2. Involve school based stakeholders for feedback</td>
<td>2. Develop timeframe for implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Identify what is working and what could be improved</td>
<td>3. Develop action plan from feedback</td>
<td>3. Active and continuous norming and reflecting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from the ASCD: Handling Student Frustrations by Renate Caine and Carol McClintic *ASCD Arias Publication May 2014*
Reflect: Develop a Plan

SLT Inquiry ➔ SLT Meeting with Leadership ➔ Leadership Debrief and Next Steps
The SLT Takeaways...

What We Needed to Shift

1. Relationship Building for all stakeholders
2. Individual Mindset to Community Mindset
3. Teaming Structure with Accountability
4. Learning Environment as it relates to maximization of instructional time
KEY ELEMENTS TO IMPROVING SCHOOL CULTURE

Community

Social-Emotional Learning

Instructional Coaching
STEP 3.
Reframe
Putting Key Elements into Action Through Relationship Building
## Our Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acknowledge</th>
<th>Reflect</th>
<th>Reframe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Evaluate the state of the school</td>
<td>1. Reflect on the data</td>
<td>1. Create systems to implement change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Review what has already been done</td>
<td>2. Involve school based stakeholders for feedback</td>
<td>2. Develop timeframe for implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Identify what is working and what could be improved</td>
<td>3. Develop action plan from feedback</td>
<td>3. Active and continuous norming and reflecting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from the ASCD: Handling Student Frustrations by Renate Caine and Carol McClintic ASCD Arias Publication May 2014
Community

1. Team Building
2. PRIDE Light
3. Student Council (PRIDE Council)
4. Dean Incentives
5. Community Based Organization with Family School Alliance
Instructional Coaching

1. Learning Walks
2. Weekly Coaching with SEL Check-Ins
3. Restructured Team and Instructional Time
4. Teacher Led Professional Development
5. Relationship Interventions
Social Emotional Learning

1. Student Advisory
2. Teacher Advisory
3. Counselor Consultation
4. Staff PD’s on SEL Training
5. Restorative Approach to Consequences
IMPACT!

1. Teacher/Classroom Log Entries (Referrals)
   a. September 2016-April 2017 (876 Log Entries)
   b. September 2017-April 2018 (355 Log Entries)

2. Suspension Data (Area of Growth)
   a. September 2016-April 2017 (OSS=10/ ISS=37)
   b. September 2017-April 2018 (OSS=13/ ISS =37)*

3. Graduation Rate
   a. 2016-2017 (92%)
   b. 2017-2018 (97% Expected)
Key Factors to Sustainability
Key Factors Needed to Sustain a Strong Foundation for School Culture

- Purpose
- Norming
- Reflection
- Feedback
### Key Factors to Sustain a Strong Foundation for School Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Norming</th>
<th>Feedback</th>
<th>Reflection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What’s your <strong>why</strong>?</td>
<td>1. Open communication</td>
<td>1. Give feedback on systems and performance</td>
<td>1. Progress Monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Clear objectives and expectations</td>
<td>2. Include all stakeholders</td>
<td>2. Be open to receive feedback on systems and performance</td>
<td>2. Did we achieve our goal?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Assume positive intent</td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Identify what worked well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4. Identify challenges and next steps</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activity #2: Reflect- Reframing Plan

**Task:** Brainstorm an action plan to bring back to your school team to reframe a challenge.

**Guiding Questions**

1. Based on your answer from activity #1, what is one structural shift or move you would make to improve school culture? What impact do you see this shift making?

2. What would be some of your first steps to shift your school’s culture? *Remember to incorporate the Four (4) Key Factors - *Purpose, Norming, Feedback, Reflection* *
Doing Whatever It Takes

*The Unwritten Rules of Our School Culture*

1. Be comfortable with discomfort - Have the difficult conversations that will lead to change.
2. Embrace conflict - manage it, don’t avoid it.
3. Be strong with your decisions, but leave room for flexibility.
4. Self-reflect - how are you contributing to the school culture? Critique your contributions.
Final Takeaways

1. Remember your goal as a school.
2. Acknowledge the challenges and barriers in the way of reaching your goal and do something about it.
3. Your TEAM is your biggest resource.
4. Add value to your team’s voice.
5. Develop a culture of reflection and consistent learning.
Thanks!

Any questions?

You can find us at:

- Shanell George
  sgeorge13@charter.newvisions.org
- Janique Cambridge
  jcambridge2@charter.newvisions.org

www.NewVisions.org/AMS3