



Indicator: The school promotes social/emotional competency in school rituals and routines, such as morning announcements, awards assemblies, hallway and classroom wall displays, and student competitions. (F7)

Explanation: The evidence review suggests that school rituals and routines—such as morning announcements, awards assemblies, hallway and classroom wall displays, and student competitions—can be effective avenues for promoting the school's values and mission, which should include the development of social/emotional competency (along with cognitive, motivational, and metacognitive competencies).

Questions: What is the school culture and how does it bear on personal competencies, particularly social/emotional competency? Are all school personnel (including administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals, front office and lunchroom staff, co-curricular program staff, etc.) included in training on promoting personal competencies for all students, including social/emotional competency? Are the school's values discussed often and made clearly visible to families and visitors, both online and within the physical campus? Do key documents such as the school's mission statement, compact with parents, staff employment manuals, and student handbook include recognition of the value of social/emotional competency? How do current rituals and routines promote social/emotional competency, and how could they do so more effectively?

Personal competencies may be enhanced directly through the school's formal programs and curriculum, but they are also built more indirectly through the prevailing school culture. School culture resides in the school's collective values, beliefs, and norms, and evidenced in its mission statement, rituals, routines, and relationships among its personnel and students. School climate, as opposed to school culture, is reflected in the general morale or mood of the people in the school. (Redding, 2014a, p. 13)

A sense of community within a school may be built, in part, upon common experience, that is, when "all students, and often their parents and teachers, are engaged in collective events or connected to common strains in the educational program that unite them and allow them to share common educational experiences" (Redding, 2000, p. 28). These opportunities provide a means to both build and demonstrate social/emotional competencies.

In a recent survey, a correlation was found between lack of student interest and schools with less schoolwide emphasis on developing social/emotional competencies. Only 61% of teachers who reported social/emotional learning (SEL) was implemented on a programmatic basis schoolwide also reported lack of interest in learning as a problem, compared to 74% of teachers in schools where SEL was only taught by some teachers and 77% of teachers in schools where SEL was not taught (Civic Enterprises et al., 2013, p. 6).

Thus, an emphasis on shared goals and social/emotional competency is most effective when infused schoolwide.

In addition to a programmatic approach to enhancing social/emotional competency, a school can infuse within its mission, curriculum, and culture an intentional focus on attitudes and behaviors that build and reflect self-worth,

respect, and responsibility. Specific social skills can be taught and reinforced, including such basic but essential skills as making introductions, paying and receiving compliments, and not forgetting the magic words—please and thank you. Cooperative learning methods build social skills, and service learning provides opportunities to practice pro-social behaviors. (Redding, 2014b p. 22)

Redding (2014a) suggests the school leadership team (or a similar group) should prepare a “clear and readily accessible document explaining the school culture, how it promotes social/ emotional competency, and procedures and schedules for the same” (p. 31) to be posted on the school website and used as a guide for planning supportive school rituals and routines. Engaging the families of current students in the planning of common experiences and in regular communication and partnership with teachers is also beneficial (Jeynes, 2013; Redding, Langdon, Meyer, & Sheley, 2004).

Technology-aided resources can also be used (Redding, 2014a). For example, use social media networks and in-school chat groups to recognize and celebrate social and emotional competency. Consider the creation of a “digital citizenship” program that publically promotes and rewards strong social and emotional competencies. Establish and communicate clear anti-bullying guidelines for face-to-face, as well as digital and any other interactions.

References and resources

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