Indicator Explanation

DOMAIN	EFFECTIVE PRACTICE	INDICATOR
Leadership	Customize and target support to meet needs	1C.2 School leaders are attentive to staff emotional states, guide staff in managing their emotions, and arrange for supports and interventions when necessary.

The recent pandemic has highlighted and emphasized the need for social and emotional support for not just our students, but our school staff as well. Teachers leaving the field of education seemed to be a pandemic of its own. Teacher burnout, although perhaps not called that, increased during this time. Even before the pandemic, the American School Board Journal (Vail, 2005) was reporting that "one-third of new U.S. teachers leave the profession during their first 3 years and almost half leave before 5 years."

One way to staunch the flow of teachers from leaving the field is to nurture relationships within the staff—colleagues who can offer guidance and support. Trusting peer relationships can occur through informal interactions, collaborative learning teams, mentoring, and peer coaching. Overall school climate is important as well. School climate refers to the quality and character of school life and "reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching, learning, leadership practices and organizational structures" (Thapa et al., 2012). In a positive learning environment, all members of the school are respected, engaged, and work together to develop, live, and contribute to a shared school vision.

The National School Climate Center (2012) describes the leadership style that influences the school climate…

> Puts serving others before self, assumes a non-focal position within teams, and provides resources and support without expecting acknowledgement (Black, 2010). Research has demonstrated a relationship between this type of style and teachers' and principals' perceptions of a positive school organizational climate (Black, 2010; Ehrhart, 2004; Lambert, 2004). Black found that the supportive, intimate, collegial, builds community, values people, and displays authenticity constructs were the most important contributors in the association between measures of organization and school climate. The traits of valuing and developing people (e.g., recognizing, encouraging, or affirming) were most highly correlated with perceptions of a positive school climate suggesting that schools where the traits of valuing and developing people are seen to be demonstrated by teachers and principals are more likely to be perceived as supportive and collegial. (p. 6)

In a study conducted by Guo (2012) it was found that the school environment which is indictive of the relationships between teachers and teacher and administrators, when positive, is a critical foundation for a positive school climate. It is hard for teachers to promote the social and emotional needs of their students when their own personal well is dry.

References

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