



SKYLINE HIGH SCHOOL

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE



March 7, 2022

School experiences have the potential to greatly influence student academic outcomes if they are hospitable toward learning. A positive school culture that encourages the belief that all students can master academic content is necessary for a school to become successful. When the principal, the teachers, and the students believe in the inherent capacity of students to learn, the academic prowess of students rise (Bryk, 2010; Spiro, 2013). When teachers believe that a student can learn and they believe in their own capacity to provide the instruction that can help the student to learn, outcomes improve (Elmore, 1995). The claim is that when teachers and administrators create this positive school culture, they set the bar that students must reach, and because the bar is defined, students perform at a level that matches or exceeds the bar that has been set for them.

School culture is “a complex pattern of norms, attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, values, ceremonies, traditions, and myths that are deeply ingrained in the very core of the organization” (Barth, 2002, p. 8). It defines the way people approach their work and the way in which they interact with others. A school culture must be tended to and intentionally worked on or it has the potential to devolve into a toxic environment where people feel unsafe, protective, and inhospitable to each other, making any semblance of success impossible (Peterson, 2001). A positive school culture is foremost a “professional community” (Harvey, 2013). The people involved make these communities a “safe and orderly” climate where growth, risk, and support for one another are encouraged (Robinson, 2008). People in these communities value the history and traditions of the past while striving for a better future (Peterson, 2001; Portin, 2004). Most importantly, a positive school culture is characterized by a “common focus” that is concentrated on the value teachers are adding to students through effective instruction (Elmore, 1995; Green, 2015; Janney et al., 2005). A positive school culture is the intangible support that helps everyone feel belonging and that they are valued so that they can express their self-efficacy and produce wonderful student academic outcomes.

Skyline High School has a wonderful school culture that is safe and allows for risk taking. Parents have helped to create the history we all value and are supportive of efforts to create an even better future. The research supports the effective school culture of Skyline and this helps to support all students as they struggle, grow, and achieve. Congratulations Eagles, you have established one of the state’s best academic school cultures and something we are all proud of.

Reminders:

- Skyline universal deadline for 3rd term is March 18.
- Rachel’s Challenge assembly and family night, March 21, at 6:15 p.m., (Dinner served).

We want to hear from you about how our great teachers worked to help your students succeed this last quarter. We will honor a staff member each week based on your feedback. Please, take

a moment and tell us about the great things happening in the classrooms of Skyline High School. Here is the link for nominations: <https://forms.gle/mDQP7xybBCKnpq97>.

This week we honor Ms. Kathy Affleck. Ms. Affleck teaches Biology and AP/IB Biology. She is the Science Department Chairperson and also serves on the Skyline Leadership Team. Her precise, encouraging instruction is evident in her classroom every day.

Here are some comments about Ms. Affleck:

“Kathy Affleck is an amazing teacher as she has a great sense of how to engage students through her cohesive explanations of topics. Keep it up!”

“ . . . these teachers have really made my year better through the care they show to students and myself. Because most importantly, I don't feel unmotivated or afraid to ask questions.”

Sincerely,
Mitch Nerdin, Principal