

School environment analysis

Education



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

In the world of education, there are many different challenges and needs that a school will face or have at any given time. As leaders we have to be willing and ready to take on all challenges that a school may pose and come up with good solutions that will promote the success of the students and the school as a whole. I have chosen to research the school that I work at and the environmental/contextual factors and community needs of the school.

I have chosen four areas that I will focus on in this essay, socio-economics, community support for education, classroom rules and management. Here I will explain how these factors relate to our school and in a negative ways to learning and also give solutions that I feel could help foster in progress and achievement in the learning environment. Our school is located in Lake Worth, FL. We are a small community just south of West Palm Beach, FL. in Palm Beach County.

Now based on the research in various geographical communities, the need of students in one area of a city can be and are distinct from another area of the city (Mujs & Reynolds, 2003; Rice, 2003; Taylor, Martin, & Fix, 1998) In the school district of West Palm Beach, there are school that are located in very affluent areas and there are schools that are located in impoverished areas. Students that live in the more affluent areas have unique characteristics. When it comes to learning and development, they have the prior knowledge, subject familiarity, lifestyles, and previous experiences. This helps in the learning process.

These students have the resources and money to be exposed to things that have enhanced their lives. They have been afforded the privilege of exposure. Most of these students have had the parent involvement in their

lives. This drives home the importance of student achievement and the quality of a good education. These are some of the building blocks to successful learning. Now with the other student who may live in the impoverished area, it is completely opposite. First of all there is very little parent involvement at all, if any. It is hard to get the parents to come out and supports their children. And this can be attributed to various reasons. The lack of funds and resources leaves most of these students confined to the immediate area. They never venture out and some of that exposure that the more affluent student has gotten over the years. Much of them come from single parent homes. There is not a lot reading and writing going on. So they miss the prior knowledge, subject familiarity, and previous experiences. They fall behind and sometimes miss the opportunity to an equal and quality education. Some ask how do we deal with this situation. First thing is that we can't change the socio-economic situation for these families. Nor change the location of the school.

But there are solutions that can positively impact these students and the school. We are a TITLE 1 school. So we are entitled to federal financial aid that will help ensure that all our students have a fair and equal opportunity to obtain a high quality education. Sending teachers to different workshops and learning team meetings to get the training needed to tackle the educational needs of this particular school. Make teachers get in-service points to insure that they are staying up to date with any new and inventive ways to teach students. These points will allow the teacher to maintain their professional licenses as a teacher.

As the students become more challenging, the more the teacher must obtain knowledge on innovating and creative ways to teach. Another thing would be creating new ways of getting more parental involvement. Making them more a part of the school and a major stakeholder in the process of their child's education will give them a sense of pride about themselves and the children. Another need that needs to be addressed at Lake Worth High School is to see more of a relationship and involvement of the community and the school. We have a very diverse population that attends this school. Our school reflects the community. 7% of the students are Hispanic. 36% of the students are Black. 20% are White and we have a mixture of Asian and Native-American. If schools don't engage with the community in new ways, there is a danger that some young people will become even more disconnected from their educational experience (Riley, Kathryn, 2008). Principals must play a bigger role in the interpretation the external community context. We have a lot of Haitian and Spanish students walking the halls. Some of these students can't read, write, or speak English. They are immigrants and just arrived here. Our school grade is still affected by them.

As for learning gains, our school has dropped. Test score have declined. We are in a competitive school district. The one thing that this school has done is develop new choice programs that would attract more middle class students to the school. This would in turn push up test scores. Another solution would be to give a monetary incentive to teachers that are will to transfer to our school for a minimum of 4 years to help increase learning and improve the

overall school grade. At the end of the day there must be a trusting relationship built between the school and the community.

The principal must meet with local leaders of the community and discuss what the needs of the school have for the community and the needs of the community and what they have for the school. By working together working with students, parents, and community leaders, the information is turned into knowledge and understanding. From there we all can strive towards excellence (Riley 2007). Last, when looking at a school and evaluating learning, we must take a close look at classroom management. At Lake Worth High School, we have a lot of teachers that are sending students out of the class for small infractions.

Some are writing a lot of referrals and students are being suspended frequently. I question, what is the problem? We know when a student misses class they miss out on education. So when he or she is suspended, there is a lot of learning being missed. Well when I took a closer look, the first thing that I found was that most of the referrals were coming from the first year teachers. They are green and haven't been around for enough seasons to know how to deal with it. A good thing is to buddy those teachers up with some good veteran teacher that will show them the ropes.

The next thing that I saw was that there was a lack of organization and preparation. A teacher must have lesson plans ready and prepared ahead of time maybe weeks in advance. Setting up the classroom in a way that is conducive to learning and will fit your way of teaching will help in managing the classroom. Clear academic and behavioral expectations need to be visible and understood by all students and staff (McIntosh, Julie; 2009). A teacher

needs to have sequential consequences in place. You can't go from telling a student to sit down to writing him up without going through some kind of step process.

These are just a few good solutions to managing a classroom. In this essay I have clearly defined the different environmental/contextual factors and community needs of the school. These are needs that can and will promote a successful learning environment. Or if not addressed properly, these needs can destroy the learning environment of a school. We are a very diverse school that poses many different challenges for any principal that is at the helm. With proper data collection and assessment, these needs can be met and a strong learning environment will be created for the school and the community to admire.