Closing the Attitude Gap-B. Kafele

Reflection

This book was all about culture. What does your school culture feel like? What can outsiders feel when they walk into your building? What do they see? What do the students feel inside your building? What do they hear? What do they see? What does your school value? Can that be articulated by those inside, and even visitors, the building? How do they know?

Culture is all about relationships. The adults in the building need to truly believe in the students. They need to believe in their potential to be more. Education is not just about academics but human potential (Dave Burgess-Learn Like a Pirate). What are the relationships with your students like? Do you even know all of your students' names? Luckily, as a PE teacher, I teach every student in my school so I know everybody's name and believe me it makes a huge difference in all aspects just knowing the student by name. Beyond that, do you know what your student's passions, interests, goals, accomplishments, and struggles are?

Does your school recognize **AND** celebrate the culture of the students you serve? What do your students look like? Where do they come from? Does the curriculum, guest speaker schedule, pictures, quotes, or anything else represent the very best of your student's culture and background? Why or why not? Our students need to know they matter. They need to know they can succeed. They need to know we believe in them to succeed. And they need to know they are expected to do nothing less than **succeed.**

Notes

-attitude gap=those students with the will to strive for academic success vs. those who do not
-must create a welcoming environment for students
    -what do students see, hear, feel, and experience?
    -what 'masks' do students have to wear in the school due to climate and expectations?

Attitude towards students.
-believe in **all** your students and demonstrate it regularly
-hold high expectations and standards for each
-literally, genuinely say "I believe in you"
What is your WHY?
-teaching must be a mission, not a career
-you must see students' long term success and challenge them to do the same
-create and post short and long-term goals for your students
    -create and post these for each student
-be a role model in speech, dress, and actions--bring them to our level, do not go to their level for sake of forging a connection
-be willing, able, and ready to be the determinant of your students' success (teachers and leaders)
-self select and self assess every day
    -look in the mirror: who are you? What are you about? What is your most recent evidence?

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Relationships with students.
-how do you greet and interact with students?
-how do your students learn?
-what are their goals and aspirations?
-what are your students' needs? Think Maslow but focus on upper levels
-what are your students' interests? These can be turned into careers
-what are your students' experiences and realities? Home, travel, food, etc.
-know their challenges and obstacles
-know their parents: whole school is a community of responsibility
-know their neighborhoods

Compassion for students.
-do you care about your students? Do they perceive this?
-show your appreciation for them
-show your respect for them
-understand them
-empathize, don't sympathize (and allow excuses)
-show patience, equality and fairness, commitment, you don't fear them

Environment for Learning
-are the classroom and school environment welcoming? Inviting? Motivational? Inspiring? Clean and neat? orderly?
-post mission and vision for the classroom in the classroom and for the school in the main lobby
-post district standardized assessment goals and objectives
    -show students their performance vs. other schools (wealthier schools) and ask if they will accept this?
-post academic excellence expectations
    -homework expectations
    -behavior expectations (not rules--what you can and cannot do)
-have students create goals and strategies: then post them on the walls (goal chart-current standing for each subject, goal standing, strategy for each subject at home and at school)
    -greater influence turn into an art project and personalize
-Wall of Fame: ideas: honor roll, subject area student of the month, homework student of the month, attendance, student work samples (updated monthly)---all based on criterion and not competition versus others
-positive quotes and affirmations
-historical images that reflect the population of your students
-names and pictures of colleges and universities
-names and description of careers

Relevance in Instruction
-students need to know their history, their power, their potential

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-teachers need to teach the students their story and its importance
-tie lessons into student's story and their everyday life