
Current Conditions

Your Aspiration Communication

Life is not easy for any of us. But what of that? We must have perseverance and above all confidence in ourselves. We must believe that we are gifted for something, and that this thing, at whatever cost, must be attained.

--Marie Curie

Term after term, year after year our students fit more or less neatly under the classic bell curve. Each year society expects more A students than C students and every year the law of averages reasserts itself. Schools must find a way to balance academic "end product" (measured by grades and standardized tests) and effort, perseverance, and good conduct (measured by careful observation and a genuine relationship with one's students). As you reflect on the past school year, be sure to recognize and celebrate those who got "an A for effort."



CONDITION OF THE MONTH:

SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT

Being recognized for many different types of success,
including hard work and being a good person.

5 Strategies for Promoting Sense of Accomplishment

- Celebrate atypical accomplishments on a regular basis
- Model perseverance for your students
- Allow students the opportunity to revise and improve their work
- Create assignments where the process is valued over the product
- Allow students to self-evaluate their work



While 85% of students agree that "Getting good grades is important to me," only 68% of students say they put forth their best effort at school. Additionally 1 in 5 (19%) say they give up when schoolwork is difficult. (QISA My Voice[®] Student Survey)

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

- How do I celebrate effort and perseverance — my own and my students?
- How do I recognize the effort my colleagues have made throughout the year?

E-mail your Sense of Accomplishment stories, thoughts, or ideas to qisa@qisa.org

Aspirations in Action

Celebrating Parent/Student Accomplishments

Captain Albert Stevens School (CASS) – Belfast, Maine

Through the hard work and dedication of teachers and volunteers, The Captain Albert Stevens School hosted their first annual Student Aspirations Fair. The Aspirations fair was an opportunity for parents and their children to actively participate in the 8 Conditions. The evening began with an opening session on Belonging. All parents and children gathered in the gym and spent time getting to know each other. At the Heroes station, parents and children wrote postcards to relatives. The Fun & Excitement station was a drummer and African dancing. We were so proud of our mothers and fathers who danced away to the rhythm of the drums! The Curiosity & Creativity station involved creating planters and planting seeds. For Spirit of Adventure parents and children participating in fun, challenging, physical activities. Who knew adults could have so much fun with scooters and balance beams! For Leadership & Responsibility our parents and children discussed a variety of leadership scenarios. Finally, the group ended with a Sense of Accomplishment. Together we did a group activity to celebrate a successful evening. We are already looking forward to the second annual Student Aspirations Fair next year.

Mount View Junior High School – Thorndike, Maine

Situated in a rural Maine community, our school struggles with parental involvement. Some parents must drive an hour to attend a parent evening at the junior high school. This year we decided to offer parent and student Aspiration evenings out in the local elementary schools. The sessions were for junior high parents and their children, however, we went to their local communities. Much to our delight, these evenings were well attended. Parents and children were provided an opportunity to discuss the Aspirations Parent Reflective Guide and gain insight from each others' ideas and responses. As we think about engaging parents in the upcoming years, we will continue to find ways to reach out to our parents in the local communities. We believe our willingness to reach out to parents is creating a greater sense of Belonging in our school community.

Leroy Smith School – Winterport, Maine

Fourth and fifth graders at the Leroy Smith School have many leadership accomplishments to celebrate this year. A dedicated group of students along with the school counselor and QISA staff created a student leadership team. This team has managed to developed a school recycling program, deliver extra food to local shelters, problem solve school issues, as well as collect color books and crayons for children in Honduras. We are looking forward to growing and expanding the leadership accomplishments of all students at our school!