
Current Conditions

Your Aspiration Communication

When we show our respect for other living things, they respond with respect for us.
--Arapaho Proverb

Which came first the respecting or the respect? Is respect something that is earned or freely given? This dilemma, no doubt, contributes to the crisis of respect we see in our schools. Disruptive students, unappreciated support staff, students being harshly reprimanded, colleagues who don't listen, parent inappropriateness at athletic events, and bullying of all kinds are all too common symptoms of the respect impasse. HEROES are not distracted by the dilemma. They do not wait for respect before giving it. At the same time, there is something about a HERO that



demands, or rather, commands respect. At the same time, HEROES are accessible, attentive listeners, trusting and trustworthy. Be a HERO and respect will follow.

CONDITION OF THE MONTH: HEROES

Heroes are individuals who a person can connect with, who have a positive influence, and who listen to and value others' ideas.

5 Strategies for Promoting Heroes

- ✓ Plan time to actively listen to your students.
- ✓ Value students and colleagues for what they know.
- ✓ Show students you trust them by allowing them to share in decisions.
- ✓ Take seriously the role you play in your students' lives.
- ✓ Create an intimidation free school environment.

[2006-2007 My Voice© Surveys](#)

For Consideration and Conversation

In the My Voice© survey of 162,000 high school students, half (51%) agreed with the statement: "Teachers respect students." In a parallel survey, all (99%) teachers agreed with the statement "I respect students."

- ◆ How would you account for the discrepancy in the student and teacher perspectives above?
- ◆ How do you nurture a culture of respect in your classroom and school?

E-mail your Heroes stories, thoughts, or ideas to qisa@qisa.org

Aspirations in Action

Laconia, New Hampshire Aspirations Kick-off

On August 30th educators, administrators, and school staff packed the auditorium at Laconia High School in Laconia, New Hampshire to begin the 2007-2008 school year. Laconia is beginning its first year as a QISA Demonstration Site with both the high school and the middle school coming on board. The day began with Superintendent Bob Champlain welcoming everyone back and laying out a shared vision steeped in New Hampshire's *Follow the Child* initiative.¹ Superintendent Champlain provided living examples of what *Follow the Child* is about in the form of five students from across the grade spectrum. Each child stood in front of the hall full of educators, accompanied by one or both parents, with a slide that indicated gains in academic, social, personal, and physical categories projected behind them.



At the conclusion of each child's summation, the superintendent invited anyone in the room who had somehow touched that child's life—as a teacher, an administrator, a guidance counselor, a coach, a para-professional, or in any other way—to stand. There was a powerful sense of the interdependence of schooling and the way educators are heroes to children.

Dr. Russ Quaglia followed with a keynote on Aspirations and the 8 Conditions that Make a Difference. His address, peppered with humor, concrete examples, and statistics from QISA's national data base was met with applause and widespread agreement about the need to focus on the whole child and not just academics. "Only when we close the *participation* gap by fostering self-worth, active engagement, and a sense of purpose for all students and for ourselves, will we close the 'achievement gap' that receives so much attention in the popular media," said Quaglia.

This year QISA has begun a partnership with Stanford Center on Adolescence.² The Youth Purpose Project has enlisted the help of QISA to research and understand how young people develop a sense of purpose. Project leaders Karen Rathman, Seana Moran, and Matthew Andrews were in attendance at Laconia's district day.

In the afternoon, Dr. Michael Corso took the middle and high school staffs through further orientation on the 8 Conditions. The following day, each staff met separately with Dr. Corso to learn more about the first three Conditions—Belonging, Heroes, and Sense of Accomplishment—and to begin developing specific action plans for the coming year. Laconia is off to a great start!



¹For more on Follow the Child go to http://www.ed.state.nh.us/education/FTC/FTC_Index.htm

²For more on the Youth Purpose Project visit <http://www.stanford.edu/group/adolescent.ctr/>