

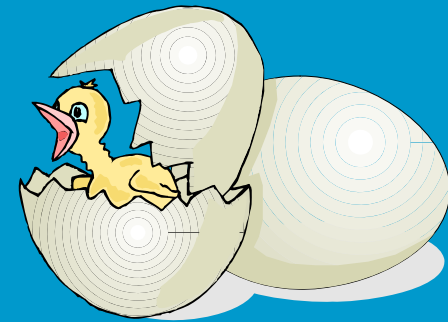
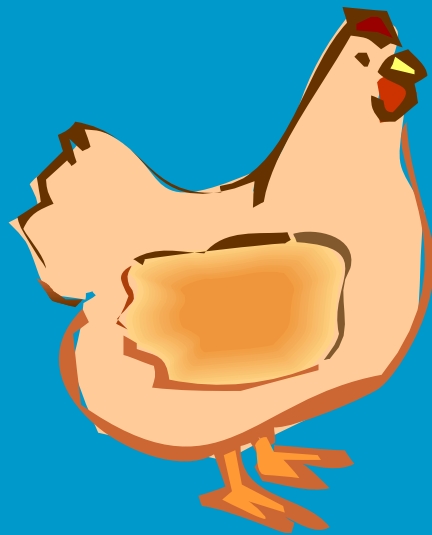
# EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS

Kenai Peninsula Borough School District



**Donna Peterson, Ed. D.**  
**Superintendent of Schools**

Which comes first? The chicken or the egg....





# Activity

**What are the excuses?**



"Treat a man as he is, and he will remain as he is. Treat a man as he can and should be and he will become as he can and should be." GOETHE



What you want for your child should be what we want for all children.





This is "our watch" and children only get one shot at their years in school.





# Change your vocabulary

- ▶ “At-risk students” to “school dependent” students
- ▶ What happens with these students depends on what we do at school.
- ▶ The buck stops with us.





# Activity

## Three wishes







# **“KEEPER OF THE DREAM”**

**ALL students of the Kenai Peninsula  
receiving a quality education.**

**What is best for kids?**

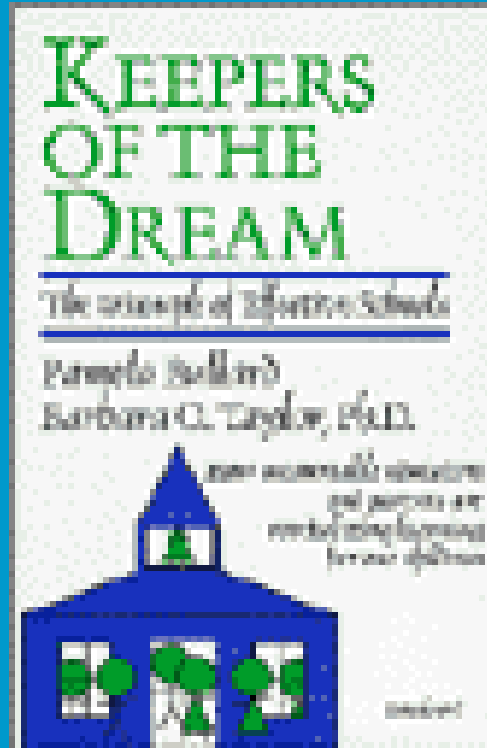
**means**

**What is best for all kids?**

- **Inspired Teachers**
- **Peaceful Schools**
- **Reflective, competent administrators**
- **Adequate human and material resources**



# Keepers of the Dream





Teachers and administrators at a school site will reach and teach all children. They will be held accountable for that task by the parents, the community, and the Board of Education.



# Picture this

- ▶ Kids saying, "This is the best school in the District and I am lucky to go here. I'm a wonderful, smart human being."
- ▶ Parents saying, "I could not have picked a better school. If I had a million dollars a year, I could not have provided my child with a better education."
- ▶ Teachers saying, "I teach at \_\_\_\_\_ and that is where it is happening for kids."
- ▶ The person who replaces me saying, "I must walk on water to be even thought of as capable of being principal of this magnificent school."

“The good old days are just old days now.”





The old days when the principal's role was more clearly defined are gone. The principal of today is not just there to carry out the directions from central office and keep things going. The lines are blurred. We didn't learn the necessary collaboration skills in Administration 101.



# Maintaining the Status Quo

- ▶ It's easy
- ▶ It's comfortable
- ▶ It will take a long time for anyone to figure out there's a problem
- ▶ It means that discrimination is going on





However, "... this time of economic trauma just may be the right time for school reform. In times of crisis, the infrastructure is reexamined and priorities are realigned."

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## Effective schools are about accountability

- ▶ Accountability viewed not a threat, but a motivator
- ▶ Kids don't feel pressure from tests, they feel pressure from teachers
- ▶ Teachers don't teach to the test, but to the curriculum
- ▶ Problems are identified early and interventions started



## Effective schools are about collegiality

- ▶ Attention is paid to detail
- ▶ Hours and hours of discussing, envisioning, clarifying
- ▶ Problems with personalities, differing agendas disappear
- ▶ Traveling in uncharted waters becomes a way of doing business



# Effective schools are about shared decision making

Leaders say:

- ▶ Talk to me
- ▶ What's going on around here
- ▶ How do we change

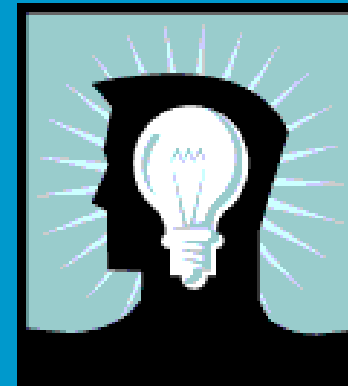
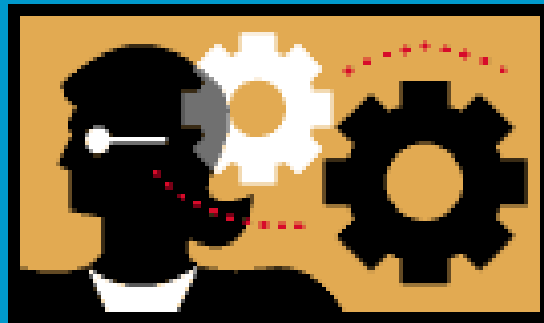


# Activity

- ▶ Write down all the things you would like to do at this school to make it a better place for students.



Model that workers of today have to think





## What does that mean for students?

- ▶ NOT children without dreams (they come in all colors, shapes, and sizes, and by the third grade, their last little bit of hope fades)
- ▶ RATHER classrooms filled with energized, respectful, fascinated children that are passionately committed to learning and to being responsible for their own actions and behavior





## Specifically for students

- ▶ They are the workers.
- ▶ They are active participants in their school and their future.
- ▶ There is no bell curve.
- ▶ There is no tracking.
- ▶ Every child gets an equal shot at a quality, inspired, and inspirational education.



## What does that mean for teachers?

- ▶ NOT teachers who just like kids (they should have gone into daycare because teaching requires talent, sophistication, and dedication besides just plain hard work)
- ▶ RATHER teachers who believe in themselves and who treat every student as a competent, aggressive learner (“you come to this school, you sweat!”).



## Specifically for teachers

- ▶ They have the child and his/her growth as the focus.
- ▶ They really matter and they know it. (combat “just a teacher” thinking and talk)
- ▶ They truly contribute to the operation of the school.
- ▶ They make a difference in the educational “business” AND with climbing reading and math scores, they are part of a very successful business.



## What does that mean for principals?

- ▶ NOT satisfied with “good enough” or the “status quo”; NOT an island
- ▶ RATHER a good manager, influencer, mover and shaker with vision, wisdom, experience, and commitment



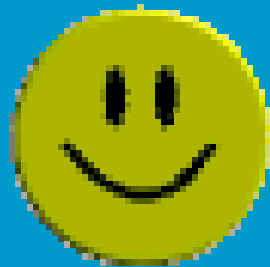
## Specifically for principals

- ▶ They get along with students, parents, staff, school board, central office, and the community.
- ▶ They know as much about instruction as their teachers.
- ▶ They are a commanding (in a good way), inspirational leader.
- ▶ They have the ability to persuade, the ability to move people emotionally, and the ability to move people intellectually (Mortimer Adler)



# Activity

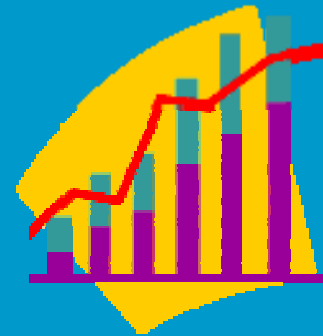
Helping or hurting





# Two kinds of schools

Improving or declining







## What about the disasters?

Those schools that don't serve children need to be called for what they are and we have to say, "This will no longer be tolerated."



# Ineffective Schools – the differences are enormous

## ▶ Some indicators:

- building is dirty, messy, and disorganized
- no direction or idea of its true purpose
- principal has no control
- teachers don't care OR don't know how to teach
- parents are regarded as worthless
- school has no idea what is going on in the district
- no way to evaluate effectiveness
- wishes of employees are valued more than needs of students



## Effective Schools Correlates (Modified)

1. Clear and Focused School Mission
2. Safe and Orderly Environment
3. High Standards and Expectations
4. Opportunity to Learn and Time on Task
5. Effective School Leadership
6. Frequent Monitoring of Student Progress
7. High Levels of Collaboration and Communication
8. Positive Home-School Relations



## Clear and Focused School Mission

- ▶ Clearly articulated
- ▶ Shared and understood
- ▶ Actions match commitment



# Safe and Orderly Environment

- ▶ Purposeful
- ▶ Physically and psychologically safe
- ▶ Supportive of learning



# High Standards and Expectations

- ▶ Climate and belief
- ▶ Data for decision making
- ▶ All help students achieve mastery



## Opportunity to Learn and Time on Task

- ▶ Significant amount of time to instruction
- ▶ Students engaged in planned learning activities directly related to identified objectives
- ▶ Curriculum and instruction aligned with standards



# Effective School Leadership

Distinct leadership behavior and strengths in key areas:

- a. Mobilizing resources
- b. Communicating
- c. Serving as an instructional resource
- d. Being a visible presence





# Frequent Monitoring of Student Progress

- ▶ Feedback on student academic progress
- ▶ Information used to improve individual student performance
- ▶ Information used to improve the total instructional program



## High Levels of Communication and Collaboration

- ▶ Outcomes drive the conversation
- ▶ Constantly monitoring, adjusting, enlightening, enhancing
- ▶ Teaching for learning and sharing what works



# Positive Home-School Relations

- ▶ Parents play an important and valued role
- ▶ Open, inclusive, transparent organization
- ▶ Parents are supportive and serve as ambassadors



# HOTS (Higher Order Thinking Skills)

- ▶ What makes it work?



# High Expectations for Parents

- ▶ ASSETS
- ▶ Responding to, “I’m not good at \_\_\_\_\_, either.”
- ▶ Know specifically how to help



# What High Expectation Teachers Believe

- ▶ All students can learn, regardless of difficult circumstances
- ▶ Refuse to believe family background is principal cause of low achievement
- ▶ Their work with students is important and meaningful, and they talk about it
- ▶ They can be successful with even the most difficult students
- ▶ It is their responsibility to see that students learn AND when the student experiences failure, they examine their own performance
- ▶ They are involved in a joint venture with students, pursuing common goals



# What High Expectation Teachers Do

- ▶ Standards and expectations are clear
- ▶ Return work if standards haven't been met
- ▶ When introducing an assignment, stress importance of hard work
- ▶ Praise students for true accomplishments
- ▶ Visually display student work
- ▶ “push” students to get going and are less tolerant of off-task behavior
- ▶ Greet students and interact informally before class begins
- ▶ Spend greater percentage of time engaged in instruction
- ▶ Plan carefully for student learning
- ▶ Have a formal signal that it is time to get to work
- ▶ Have a formal procedure for signaling the end of class
- ▶ Understand the power of wait time
- ▶ Seek out low-achieving students for academic assistance
- ▶ Refuse to tolerate students' mistreatment of each other



# Specific Tools for Teachers

Encouraging students isn't enough; good intentions aren't enough – teachers have to know **WHAT** to do with students

1. TESA (Teachers Expectations and Student Achievement)
2. Summer School Success – focused professional development
3. Teacher Skills - observation checklist OR KPBSD evaluation instrument





# Activity

What would happen if you used this checklist as a conversation starter?



# Walking the Walk

- ▶ Help everyone understand that education is an investment
- ▶ Build trust by concentrating first on discipline
- ▶ Be a true leader – with poise, passion, and presence
- ▶ Be willing to change the way things are done every day, with an eye on teaching all children
- ▶ Foster mature relationships
  - Be a good person
  - Accept people the way they are (people have to want to change)
  - Pay attention to the present
- ▶ Have confidence in the good of people
- ▶ Recognize that this is a process, not an event with an end date



# Sample District Goals

1. HSGQE and benchmark exams will show annual increases in the percentages of students at the respective grade level who attain essential objectives of the standards based curriculum
2. Standardized test scores will show annual increases in the percentage of students within the top two quartiles and annual decreases in the percentage of students in the bottom two quartiles
3. There shall be no significant differences in the proportion of youth demonstrating minimum academic mastery as a function of gender, race, or socioeconomic class.
4. 100% of K-2 students will be on target to successfully being able to read or have an appropriate personalized learning plan to close the achievement gap
5. The percentage of student attendance will increase annually
6. The percentage of student dropouts will decrease annually
7. 90% of all students will complete the equivalent of Algebra II with a C grade before graduating
8. As overall achievement scores rise, outstanding individual achievement will also increase.



# Sample School Goals

- ▶ At least 95% of all students at each grade level will demonstrate minimum mastery (to be predictably successful in the next grade) as measured by performance on a standardized test
- ▶ There is no significant difference in the proportion of youth demonstrating minimum mastery as a function of socioeconomic class
- ▶ The above two items are maintained for three years



# The District's Commitment

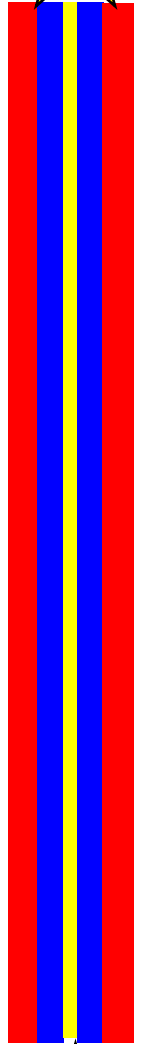
- ▶ Clear and focused school mission (Long Range Plan, School Planning)
- ▶ Safe and orderly environment (Handbook, Critical Incident, Aspirations)
- ▶ High standards and expectations for all students (Alaska Standards Focus)
- ▶ Opportunity to learn and time on task (Curriculum Mapping)
- ▶ Effective school leadership (Principal Conversations)
- ▶ Frequent monitoring of student progress (Data Analysis)
- ▶ High level of collaboration and communication (Make It, Take It)
- ▶ Positive home-school relations (Volunteer and site council trainings)



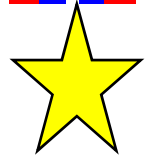
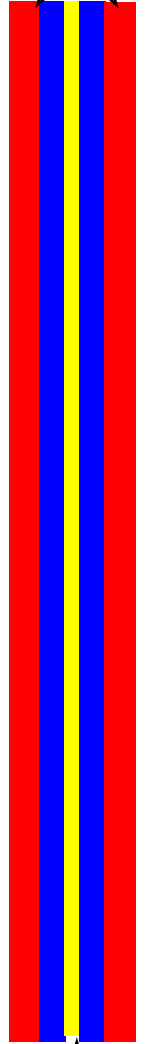
# Activity


- ▶ How does an effective leader pull rather than push.....

We all know that modeling and inspiration accomplish more than mandates



**We are very good  
at what we do but  
we must live the  
life of continuous  
improvement.**





**We need  
hope,  
opportunity,  
and success  
for all  
students**



A black silhouette of a person standing with their arms raised in a celebratory gesture, set against a light gray background. The person is wearing a short-sleeved shirt and shorts.

**Leaders are not heros,**

**they are hero makers.**