



## National Dropout Prevention Center for Students with Disabilities

**Focus Area:** School Climate

**Attributes:**

1. School climate refers to the values, norms, beliefs, and sentiments associated with routine practices and social interaction in schools.
2. Theorists and researchers have used a wide variety of terms to refer to aspects of school climate – including atmosphere, culture, environment, morale, school community, and school ethos.
3. The concept of school ethos... is far more than an aggregate collection of individual variables. It is the interactions of school processes and not merely their sum that explains their variance in the performance outcomes measured... the “ethos” of an effective school is in a large measure a reflection of general, schoolwide expectations of consistent values and norms that permeate the institution.
4. The ethos of an effective school is characterized by generally shared high expectations of teachers and respect for them; positive models of administrators and other teachers for teacher behavior that reflects concern for one another; and some system of feedback through which teachers can evaluate their work/performance.

**Goal:**

**Strategy:**

### Some Effective Strategies

1. Provide structure and opportunities for youth to develop new skills in the context of warm, supportive relationships, thus allowing students to be most engaged when the social context promotes physical safety.
2. Identify, teach when applicable, model and reinforce positive social norms. Provide performance feedback.
3. High expectations for success breed and predict relatively high achievement. Therefore, a shared value system must be promoted, reinforced, and most of all, VISUAL.
4. A caring and committed staff must accept personal responsibility for student success, and must cultivate a school culture that encourages self-governance/management, and professional collegiality. Evidence suggest that student engagement and learning are fostered by a school climate characterized by an ethic of caring and supportive relationships; respect, fairness, and trust; and teachers' sense of shared responsibility and efficiency related to student learning.



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Specific Action	Progress	Barriers
1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.