

Navigating the Road to Positive School Culture

Everyone in a school community contributes to school culture.¹

School culture is the beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors that arise over time from how people treat and feel about each other, as well as how the school community faces challenges and celebrates successes.



For students, positive school culture is associated with increased:^{2,3,4,5}

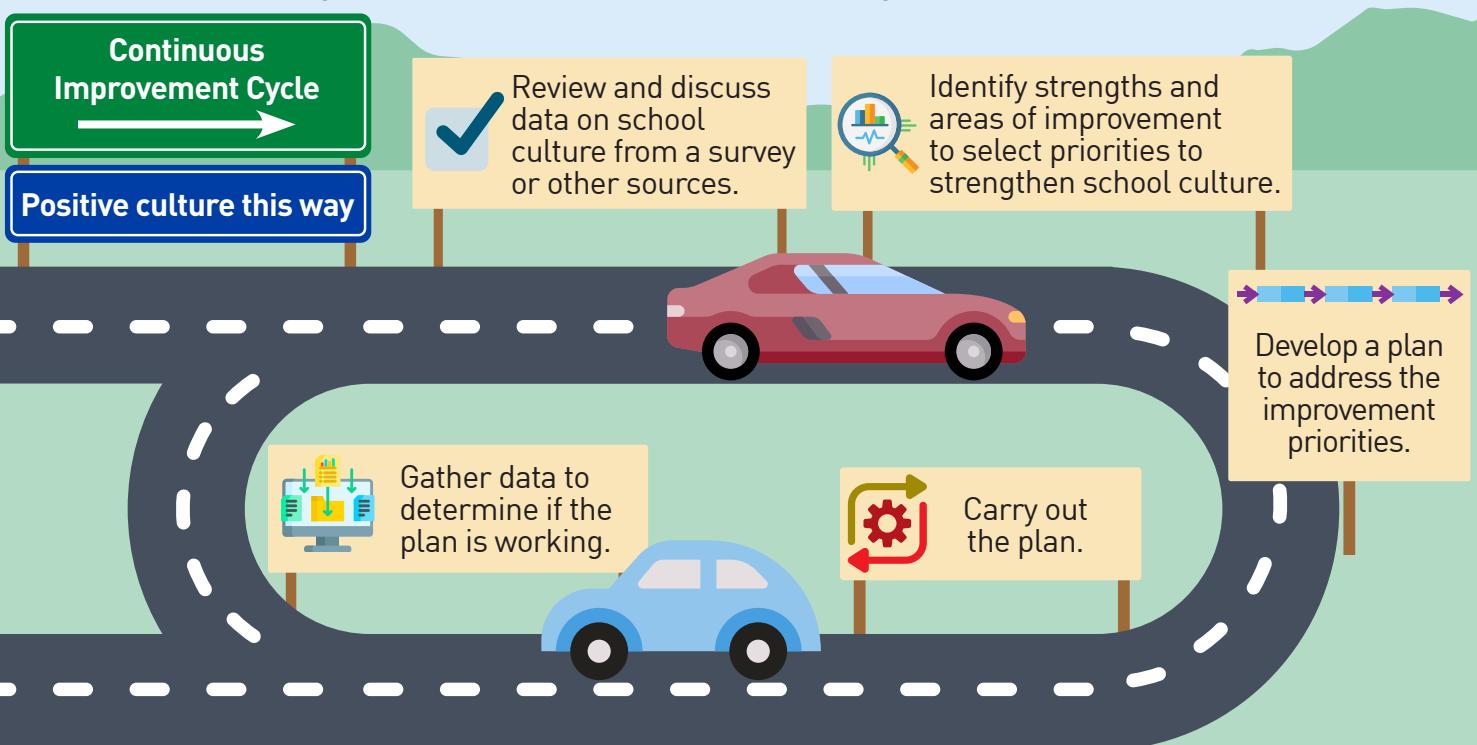
- Achievement
- Attendance
- Engagement and empowerment
- Social-emotional learning

For teachers, positive school culture is associated with increased:^{4,6,7}

- Job satisfaction
- Commitment
- Collaboration

School communities can use a continuous improvement approach to drive change in school culture.

Members of the school community can use a continuous improvement approach to examine school culture, make adjustments to practices or programs, gather data to inform changes, and study the effect of any changes on outcomes of interest.⁷



Put your school in the fastlane using REL Appalachia materials



Positive school culture is at the heart of the West Virginia Simulated Workplace career and technical education program. Check out these REL Appalachia workshop materials, created in partnership with the West Virginia Department of Education, on continuous improvement and school culture, which education leaders can adapt and use in their own school context.

¹ Peterson, K. D., & Deal, T. E. (2009). *The shaping school culture fieldbook*, 2nd ed. Josey-Bass.

² Ellis, A., Özgür, Z., & Reiten, L. (2018). Teacher moves for supporting student reasoning. *Mathematics Education Research Journal*, 31(2), 107–132.

³ Geier, R., Blumenfeld, P. C., Marx, R. W., Krajcik, J. S., Fishman, B., Soloway, E., & Clay-Chambers, J. (2008). Standardized test outcomes for students engaged in inquiry-based science curricula in the context of urban reform. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 45(8), 92–93.

⁴ Hixson, N. K., Ravitz, J., & Whisman, A. (2012). *Extended professional development in project-based learning: Impacts on 21st century skills teaching and student achievement*. West Virginia Department of Education, Division of Teaching and Learning, Office of Research.

⁵ Anderman, E. M. (1991). Teacher commitment and job satisfaction: The role of school culture and principal leadership. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, April 3–7, 1991.

⁶ Collie, R. J., Shapka, J. D., & Perry, N. E. (2012). School climate and social-emotional learning: Predicting teacher stress, job satisfaction, and teaching efficacy. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 104(4), 1189.

⁷ Bryk, A. S., Gomez, L. M., Grunow, A., & LeMahieu, P. G. (2015). *Learning to improve: How America's schools can get better at getting better*. Harvard Education Press.