

# Key Take-Aways

## Elementary/Middle School Workshop:

### Action Planning

April 16, 2009

This month's agenda item was to pre-teach the action plan template to the mentors so they could help the rest of the committee work with it.

#### Purpose of the action plan:

- To give thought to the direction the school wants to go
- To have all on the same page
- To have staff, students, parents and community all working towards the same finish line
- To make life less complicated

#### For the goals themselves:

- There are 7 goal areas in which you might choose a one year overarching goal for.
  1. Develop leaders dedicated to supporting the initiative
  2. Modeling
  3. Improve school culture
  4. Buy in and raising awareness
  5. Core value integration
  6. Integration social emotional skill building
  7. Other goals

**First brainstorm – write all ideas down! Then go back and see what can truly be accomplished. Some will fall in to other years.**

- After you have all of the ideas and selected the goals, look at what the priority is and developmentally what is needed. What would make sense to go first?
- You may or may not have the same goals for staff, students and parents/communities.
- To mirror goals for different groups is a possibility. Think top down, these are 7 useful areas to address. Since the goal is to build community, same types of plans for each will help with the meshing of the 3 plans.
- The parent/community and student plans are to be set up to support YOUR goals for the school.
- Take a realistic step forward not a leap forward so it is realistic, successful and sustainable.
- For the 2008/2009 goals record what you have worked on this year. Your 2009/2010 goals may be built off of this or may be something different.
- If your school is not ready to create a goal this year for one of the categories, you may want to consider capturing the idea as a possible goal for a future year.

# Key Take-Aways continued....

## For the action steps:

- The difference between a goal and action step is that a goal is a year long. An action step can be a shorter term task that can be given a specific due date.
- One mentor mentioned that the goal or action step may make sense with smaller group of students/parents as a pilot. This will allow you to provide structure and allow the smaller group to have some input on this as well.
- How you will celebrate success is important to capture in this area

## For who/whom is responsible:

- While the entire committee may have input on certain goals, you will want to assign a point person to each goal. You may even find that people not on the committee will be asked to be responsible for parts of specific goals.
- You may want to consider creating subcommittees so the group can divide and conquer

## Evaluating the work:

- Be specific on how this will be evaluated.

## Completion by season:

- If you think in terms of seasons, it will help you spread out the work for the year

## General comments:

- Fill out staff first action plan first - then parents and then students
- Since this will grow more than one page, numbering system is important
- There is an open workshop on 5/6 so as a team, you can work on your plan.
- This will be held at New Trier High School from 9 – 3. More specifics will be sent out to you as we get closer to the date.
- Final document to your coach by the end of June

## Support offered to the schools:

- The coaches are here to help and available through the summer.
- Ashley Ward, director of community development for Charmm'd is available to help with the parent/community portion of your action plan. She can be reached at [Ashley@tbgfoundations.org](mailto:Ashley@tbgfoundations.org). She will be on maternity leave from July through September. If you would like assistance during this time please contact [Gene@tbgfoundation.org](mailto:Gene@tbgfoundation.org)
- With the help of the schools themselves, a list serve will be created which will include the names of the steering committee members, their staff positions, contact information and who the mentors are.

# Key Take-Aways continued....

## Celebrating success!!!

- Off the topic of the action plans, congratulations to District 67 who worked hard and received a \$6,000 grant from a local foundation. This grant allows all elementary schools, (K-4) in their district to purchase picture books that help teach character. While each school can select the books they are interested in, each student within that school then receives the same book. This helps introduce a specific core value to the students, and is a great conversation starter for the families at home. **Way to go District 67!**

**The Charmm'd Foundation and CEP team want to thank you for all of your hard work and dedication. We are truly honored to be working with you.**

## Miscellaneous comments from the schools celebrating the journey - Ah Ha Moments:

- Excited about Character Education. They are practicing some of the social emotional competencies. Active Listening is one of the competencies that has been very beneficial to their team.
- Merged the school council with the student service committee. This has been a huge step in the right direction for getting others involved in the initiative.
- Feel fortunate to be working with other schools to learn about character education and share experiences and practices.
- This school has started to hold “casual” conversations with other district members to spread the word. The more people on board the broader the initiative becomes.

## Success for Next Year

- Would like to see continued growth on committee membership
- Add additional schools to the program along Chicago's North shoreline
- All members involved in the initiative should act as stakeholders
- Would like to mix up schools at the tables during the day of the workshop. It would be great to share and learn practices that other schools are using.
- Create a shared community space for blogging and message boards to be used by schools participating in the initiative
- Provide identification of core ethical values for everyone in the schools
- Expand parent involvement – get the parents more involved in the initiative
- When teaching the initiative to other staff members, have the staff members come with the ideas to share rather than the committee members providing the ideas
- Would like to see children as stakeholders setting an example for character education
- Observable changes from children, parents and community members

**Imagine... celebrating the differences you make—every day!**