

# Building a Culture One Student at a Time

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## **Background That Led to Your Inquiry:**

Jac-Cen-Del is a small rural school district with families which support the school and education. While I grew up in a neighboring district this project gave me an opportunity to develop a deeper connection with more students and families within our School Community

## **Statement of Your Wondering:**

How would positive phone calls home affect my relationship with families and caregivers?

## **Methods/Procedures:**

- Reach out to families either by phone or in person with positive comments about their children
- Record date, type of contact, and notes from each contact
- Record observable effects on school culture

## **Stating Your Learning and Supporting it with Data:**

Over 300 contacts made: Phone, In Person, Social Media

Reasons for contact:

- Straight A Breakfast
- Eagle Merit Awards
- Art & Music Performances
- Athletic Accomplishments
- Grade Improvements
- Academic Achievements

Anecdotal

- "Are you kidding me, he did something good for once!"
- "Thanks for calling, I've been worried about my son this year transitioning to 8th grade."
- (from student) "I appreciate you noticing my artwork, I worked really hard to get it just right."
- "Thanks for hosting the Straight A Breakfast, I'm glad we reward the student's hard work."
- (from student) "Thanks for noticing, I didn't think anyone was paying attention."

Overall Effect on School Culture

- Student (Especially those who struggle) have a more positive attitude toward school
- More Conversations with Parents and Students at School Events
- Overall a more positive school culture

## **Providing Concluding Thoughts:**

The action research process has been beneficial to me as it has helped me to build relationships with students and the larger school community. Building those positive relationships has helped to better understand the students and families within my school and opened the door to additional communications both formal and informal. This has also been beneficial as difficult conversations come up with families about student performance or behavior, these conversations are never easy but are less challenging when a positive relationship between school and home has been established.

The next logical step in this process is to focus on giving more frequent positive comments to teacher and staff members in order to strengthen the established relationships with staff. As we look into next school year I plan to be more intentional about making both formal and informal positive comments to staff members. This is something I have always done in the past, but this process has encouraged me to be more systematic in my approach.

**References:**

N/A