

Positive Morale, Positive Results

By: Heather Noesges, Fortville Elementary School

Team Members Names: Stacy Muffler, Emily Thompson

Contact: heather.noesges@mvcsc.k12.in.us

Background That Led to Your Team's Inquiry:

Over the past 2 years, our corporation has implemented several changes. Some of these include- implementing 1 to 1 technology, weekly PLC's, changing math curriculum, standards based report cards, creating data walls, and the list continues. We could feel the stress level rise and the morale of our building lower. Therefore, the purpose of our action research was to develop strategies to improve staff morale in order to make a positive impact on the overall school climate.

Statement of Your Team's Wondering:

With this purpose, we wondered:

- How will improving staff morale affect the overall school climate at Fortville Elementary School?

As we began the process we began to reflect:

- What can we as school leaders do to increase staff morale in today's school climate with increased teacher responsibilities and high-stakes testing?

Methods/Procedures:

To gain insights into our wondering we began our process by surveying our staff. We wanted to gather some baseline data on the current level of morale in specific areas. We sent a Google form that had staff rate their current level of morale on

- Curriculum
- Time
- PLC Team
- Instruction

We also asked them to include

- Area for praises that help increase their morale
- Area to put suggestions on how we could improve morale

After reflecting on the survey, we began to plan some immediate actions:

- Scheduled a quarterly lunch with all staff where we talked about life and things other than school!
- Updated staff "shout out" board
- Continued with the coffee/candy bar
- We continued planning staff events where we can come together and grow as a family!
- We met with each certified staff member to talk about instruction and ways that we could support them.
- Bought staff shirts and had some fun dress up days

Finally we have come together to reflect and grow through a professional book study (This was Implemented during our delayed start Wednesday PLC time). We gave this book to teachers right before our spring break.

Teachers took the time over their break to read -Move your Bus.

Finally, we asked the staff to complete an exit survey in order for us to analyze the impact of making these positive changes.

Stating Your Team's Learning and Supporting it with Data:

Through this process we have learned that we are moving in the right direction. We have had comments from parents, outside professionals and the Superintendent that our building is an inviting and friendly school.

We have had some great conversations with teachers and staff about the positive impact of the actions we have implemented. We are hearing from the teachers and the conversations have taken a positive turn.

Most importantly, we are growing together! We are working to nurture and support each other so that we are all moving our bus in the right direction.

Providing Concluding Thoughts:

Fortville Elementary is reaching up and building positive morale so that we can celebrate positive results with our staff, students and community.

References:

N/A