

Defining a Quality School

Activity 3: Envisioning a Quality School

Participants are asked to close their eyes and through guided narration envision a high quality school. After the narration, participants are asked to share what they saw, heard, felt, and experienced at the quality school of their mind's eye.

Defining Quality Schools Process
Activity # 3 : ENVISIONING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hands-on/ experimental classroom instruction • Respectful, enthusiastic teachers • Teachers in strong teaching teams; planning together & learning together • In office support friendly & organized <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -accessible to all languages -relationship with parents • Supportive, fun programming for slow paced learners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -non alienating/ stigmatism • Beautiful buildings & school grounds • _____ staff (teachers, principals, assistants, custodian, secretary, etc.) • Walls with murals/ artwork (framed) from past years. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -social justice heroes/ historical figures • Inviting, colorful classrooms w/ labels, pictures, things are easily accessible • Teacher is engaging & enjoys being there, excited • Clean playground w/ appropriate equipment, field for sports • Gardens- with food & flowers • Children's laughter • Parents were involved/ active • Teacher not overwhelmed, focused on educating kids, not correcting few • All children paying attention, not distracting other students • My student excited about activities no one interrupted his learning

- Clean
- Safe
- Great teachers & leaders who are invested & care
- Respect for all/ dignity
- Academic rigor
- High expectations of all
- Opportunities for children to build healthy relationships
- Development of a love of learning
- Lots of books
- Computers

- Parents, teachers, students, and admin all greeting each other. General feeling of happiness from all parties
- Classroom shows LOTS of student learning
- Classroom SHOWS student growth and progress
- Students feel confident, successful, and challenged
- Administrators are present throughout the school
- Teachers are not yelling
- Diversity of students represented in curriculum
- Students are empowered
- Security guard – greeting and smile
- Office personnel welcoming and knowledgeable; they focus on students, too
- Classroom well-lighted and energetic
- Desks in groups – children greet your child; teacher greets each and moves about welcoming
- Teacher gives quick curriculum overview
- Children working in groups
- My granddaughter's voice loud
- I saw kids outside the school behaving (not like at my job kicking/yelling/down talking to each other)
- The hallways were covered with students' work; good grades on display – math homework, science projects, art work, etc
- I got the feeling as though administrators loved their jobs and the students around them
- School clean/office organized
- Teachers dressed professionally – smiling with students
- Having fun teaching/maintain disturbance in room
- I see a safe place for my son to learn
- A safe environment where my son can stay
- A room with a lot of specialties for my son to feel and experiment a new experience and a group of classmates to play with in the break and a teacher from whom he will learn
- I saw a lot of good things; the only thing I did not see is parking comfortably close to school

and taking my time to pick up that child

- Principal at the open from door, welcoming child and guardian by name
 - Practical art on the walls –learning through creative...creation (learning by doing)
 - Students in small groups, each with a different and explicit expectation and opportunity to take leadership
 - A teacher who listens twice to her students before speaking once, an expression of engaged seeking understanding
 - Teacher welcoming students and parents as equally important
 - Meaningfully engaged
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- There are many parents in the streets near by the school
 - Children walking and joyfully talking about the new school year
 - It seems like a shiny day! People at the school are happy and engage in their conversation
 - Students are ready to leave the classroom – there are some paper sheets on the floor
 - It seems the teacher was organized for the first day of school. She was telling the students her last recommendations for the next day.
 - I felt happy to bring my student to this school
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- Joyful collaboration among adults. Celebration of children as they are – photographs of happy children in this space
 - Black English and Spanish – but teachers putting out standard American English as (?)
 - School = Alternative Society
 - School = Prep for current society
 - Child immediately engaged with peers on activity
 - Teacher calls all parents together in multiple languages and dialects
 - The work is hard and deserving of great reverence and we can do it...
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- Music, warmth, cultural space, representations of cultural traditions
 - Circular building, circular rooms, people engaged in circles
 - Art in abundance – made by youth and adults
 - Teachers who look like my students – racially, ethnically, gender, sexuality
 - Lots of open and green space
 - Enlivened, empowered, connected to community, engaged, challenged, safe
 - Student is teaching me things from their day at school. Singing songs of freedom. Blessed.
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- Confidence, structure, expectations, code of conduct, happiness, smiles, students looking forward to going to school
 - Front office – parents, mentors, everyone doing their job
 - Community agreements
 - Students engaged
 - Encouraged to ask questions without feeling they are going to be laughed at
 - Motivated, excited, like they have learned something they can apply to their lives
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- Spacious parking lot where I can safely park and take my grandson into his new school
 - The school has flowers on either side of entrance and green grass

- I see a garbage can close to the building and a sign that explains why littering is not a good way to treat surroundings
- I entered the “K” classroom with my grandson and noticed 4 small desks with computers, bright bookshelves with books and an area with pillows to sit on
- I also noticed the letters of alphabet and numbers in different shapes and colors displayed on wall

- The school was filled with children playing during recess. There were murals on the walls, inside the classroom the children were raising the hands, learning. The teacher was welcoming talking to the parents, excited about having my nephew in the class. The teacher was sitting by the rug while the children sat on a rug, listening attentively to a story.
- All adults are open, welcoming, sincerely smiling
- Emphasis on building relationships amongst other students & staff
- Kid is excited to come back the next day
- The building inside is appropriately decorated to create motivation for students to learn
- Interaction & relationship
- Facilities-clean, everything working, cheerful colors
- Friendly greeting- students work on the walls of hallway
- Sounds of students talking and laughing
- Classroom arranged so students can work with each other
- Again student work on walls, student goals on walls
- A fish tank or small animal,
- Reading area, books & books
- When I looked in the classroom students engaged in learning cooperatively
- Child-excited to learn and demonstrate learning
- Parent-supportive and caring
- School-clean, safe, and buzzing with learning
- Classroom- clean, safe, buzzing with learning, environment conducive to learning
- Teachers-caring, effective
- Principal-leader w/ resolve
- My grandson and I felt good.
- Build & ground, clean & safe.
- Principal, teacher & staff} there were names of each class and teacher on the classroom. Principal greeted all of us and introductory of all staff. Classroom their were picture standard all over the walls defined section. Cafeteria was clean and inviting. Yard & play structure safe and adults all around. The day was good.
- The staff is friendly and warm. Everyone greets the students and families. The principal is outside. The teacher has work ready for the students and sets clear expectations and goals for

the year. If students are misbehaving the teacher redirects the behavior. The students feel safe and I feel excited to hear what they have to say at the end of the day.

- In the ideal school when I entered I saw a great environment and the teachers excited to teach the children and to make much progress with them. And the principal was there greeting the parents and students.
- When I arrived with my son we met school staff that were waiting for the children. Afterwards, my son went to his classroom where his teacher was waiting for him. This made me feel secure. I saw that the classroom was organized, clean, and smelled fresh. When I picked up my son I found him to be happy and proud of his school.
- My ideal school was a school that is pretty inside and out, safe, with a good environment, with teachers who inspire a lot of trust, a principal who is attentive and interested in all the students they see. My daughter was very happy with her first day in class and happy to have been there.
- At the school I saw my daughter happy, well behaved, greeting the teachers, principal and other staff. In the classroom I saw that everyone was working and paying attention and the teacher instructed the class while also giving each student one on one time. I saw my daughter happy and learning.
- A united team of parents, teachers, principal and staff.
- Excellent teachers.
- Staff who reach high expectations for the students.
- Its part of the culture of the school, to believe in the vision, which was chosen by the school team; that everyone is together with the vision and suggestion connected with the vision of the school.
- In the ideal school when I entered with my son it was the environment and cleanliness of the school. Also the way in which the teachers teach the children and the way they communicate with the parents and other teachers.
- In my daughter's school I see many good things. In first place, I see that my daughter is happy to come every day to a marvelous school because it has marvelous teachers who are very professional; it also is full of activities throughout the day which keeps her happy. She has many things to accomplish to work towards success, she loves her class, her friends, the walls in her classroom, and the most important is that she is in an effective community school because it is fundamental that there are these types of schools.
- The first thing I look for in a real school is...
- A principal who treats all the children the same
- Teachers, who wait to teach the children, learn.
- Walls covered with interesting things.
- Children who are happy with their teachers and classmates.
- A principal who says dismisses the children.

- Envisioned Peralta's black tree
 - Inside school, however, was the EnCompass or Acorn office, bustling with caring teachers and office staff
 - They're working out logistics for a smooth first day
 - Classroom is totally engaging. Instead of kids just sitting when they arrive, they choose an activity table. Choices are: ART (2x), petting area because classroom has many pets (chinchilla, fish, lizard, hamsters)
 - Teacher is young, excited, not childish, but beaming with happiness and excitement, she projects this onto her new students. She tells parents and students how happy and excited she is. She tells everyone the schedule for the day.
 - At the end of the day, the student is exhausted but happy.
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- Vision of school embodied by everyone.
 - Students were engaged at all activities
 - Students welcomed at inviting atmosphere from everyone
 - Students allowed to voice and reflect at every project
 - Staff interacted with everyone (staff, parent, student)
 - Area feels warm, colorful, nurturing
 - There was a check in/out process that is visible
 - Student felt safe, supported
 - School had an array of services that were visible
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- Vision at school is seen as a cohesive message – on walls, from voices of teachers
 - Welcoming environment – families genuinely engaged
 - Mixed teaching methods
 - Variety of tools/resources/books available
 - Art and music
 - Meaningful engagement in social justice activities
 - Desks grouped in clusters
 - Organized chaos
 - Exploration
 - Time spent outside and in community
 - Healthy food options

- school was peaceful and safe
 - seems to be a peaceful school
 - teachers in the office getting ready for the day; there was a security guard at the school to greet kids and parents as they came in
 - there were pictures on the walls, sculpture that students did in a glass case
 - the teacher had a smile on her face, she greeted us all at the door
 - my child really likes the school
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- Clean, bright, lit hallways

- Children engaged in learning on all levels K-12
- No kids wandering halls, on “time out” outside classroom
- Work samples clearly and neatly posted
- My child can tell me something he learned
- My child is engaged in the learning process
- Teacher is INVESTED in the success of ALL the children under his/her tutelage
- School and home are working collaboratively to ensure education of child

- La escuela que yo veo tal vez no es la perfecta, pero me gusta, y el director se enfoca mucho en los maestros a que ellos reciban los mejores entrenamientos para los alumnos y que los alumnos estén al tango día lo que aprenden. Están enfocados en una buena preparación académica y física.
- La escuela esta limpia, organizada, son muy estrictos.
- Que sean amables con todos
- Que estén pensando los maestros en un éxito académico para los alumnos

- Yo me imagino que la escuela es muy buena y me imagino que cuando entramos los sentimos muy felices. Para me, eso es todo.

- De todo lo que vi es que en esta escuela es muy preparado para los niños y el cual es todo lo contrario

- Cuando todos los padres y maestros están unidos en el cuidado y apoyo para el niño y sobre todo en la seguridad del niño ya que a veces hay niños violentos que intimidan a otros niños y es muy importante de cuando cosas asi pasen los maestros tomen cuidado en el asunto y así nuestros niños puedan ir seguros con confianza a sus clases sin temor a nada

- Cuando entre en la escuela mire que todo estén organizado y el personal era muy amable
- En el salón mire que la maestra era muy atente a los niños y muy estárter con ellos y eso me gusto
- Mi hijo esta muy feliz estudiando y aprendiendo mucha disciplina
- Cuando el niño aumente sus calificaciones y sus trabajos son excelente y su aprendizaje mejora

- They keep up with it
- They have good work hanging / pictures of the kids
- Classes look over packed – may not be too many teachers
- Most dressed in school clothes
- The school feels happy, welcome, warm, trustworthy, good learning area
- Make sure they understand
- Make time
- Going over / checking
- Proof reading

- Secretary/principal that greets all visitors (acknowledges you are here)
- Teacher:

- Welcomes students/families
- Refers to students by name – greets family by name
- Has an open-door policy – families can sit in / volunteer with class
- Space:
 - Furniture is suitable for class (not too new but not old)
 - Enough materials available for students
 - Classroom is well-organized
 - Space is large enough to accommodate students, space to move around
 - Color/windows
 - Class size is small
 - Artwork in hallways
 - Diverse resources (racially diverse books, materials, variety of family structure is represented)
 - Classroom has helpers (adult)
 - Hearing laughing, talking, listening – engaged
- Learning is fun – inspires curiosity
- Made friends with other kids
- Parents expected/needed to help/support
- Classroom as a home for the day
- Office staff that are approachable/wanting to help
- Teacher who has high expectations and is encouraging
- Social skills
- Challenge – socially and academically
- Student work on walls and in classrooms
- Grass around school
- Smiling faces (both adult and child)
- Diverse student and staff population
- Clean, bright
- Colorful classrooms
- Murals on school walls
- Play structures, grass
- Big carpet for morning/afternoon meetings
- Lots of books
- Children asking questions/adults happy to answer questions
- Teachers welcoming students and parents into classroom
- Parents feeling comfortable to stay and participate in child's class
- Laughing, joy, happiness
- Parents congregating outside
- Parents hugging their children
- COHESIVE
- Classroom materials – computers, books (mini library), walls decorated, examples of work on walls, comfortable reading area with rugs and pillows
- Principals – welcoming and friendly
- Urgency (but good kind)

- Sparked interest of learning
- Teacher – student / student – student positive relationships
- Both students and staff engaged
- Listening, compassion

Feel:

- Open environment
- Multicultural
- Peace/serenity atmosphere
- Welcomed
- Cultural competence

See:

- Project-based learning
- Socratic seminar
- On-line classes/technology
- Service learning
- Outdoor scenic classroom
- Interactive presentations
- Multiple learning styles addressed
- No chairs in rows / stations
- Parents – community involved
- Gardens
- Techno-innovations
- Teacher was a learner as well
- Students articulating an expectation of more/depth

Hear:

- Concrete facts connected with multiple examples
- Discourse, laughter, great questions/critical dialogue
- Information shown
- Divergent ways to think about the facts
- Heard kids laughing, smiling, asking each other how they were doing
- Adults were outside greeting me and checking in with kids to see if they needed breakfast
- Lots of student work, art, and writing on the walls – photos of activities
- Hard to tell who the teacher is – he/she is in mix of activity
- Child says she likes the school, people seem to care about her, she's made friends, people are not mean to her, they have an organized way to walk kids to and from school, so she feels safe
- Adults greeting children and families
- Office staff pleasantly acknowledging visitors, providing info about the school
- Teachers prepared to teach *all* students

- Children grouped, conversing, aware of exactly what is expected
- Quality student work posted throughout halls and classrooms
- Learning targets posted for each child and adult
- Teachers as facilitators
- Rich learning environment – lots of literature, writing act
- Transitions are well-organized and occur without disruption
- Children clearly understand procedures
- Lunchroom is well-organized and social climate
- Healthy food; little waste; children clean up

- Smiles, laughter
- Students learning from one another – interactive – hands on learning
- Multi-ethnic/racial/academic differentiated learning classrooms
- Whole group/small group activities
- Adults know each child; happy/caring; see potential
- Standards – starting point not ending point
- PD (teachers open/eager to learn to improve practice)
- Student voices, “it’s fun here,” “I am learning a lot,” “I have a lot of friends,” “my teacher is nice”
- No cliques – children included – reach out to help classmates – friendships outside classroom

- Facilities with modern, clean amenities
- Students are loud in a fun, playful manner as they walk the halls getting and giving mutual respect to each other and the adults in the building
- The lessons are designed for a deep inquiry to promote critical analysis and exchanges of ideas
- Teacher redirects students with humor but a firmness that the students know isn’t to be taken lightly
- Students walk to lunch area; there’s no haggling over places in line because it’s set up for multiple areas to get food, and there’s always enough with plenty of good nutritious choices

- Clean, vibrant, welcoming buildings and grounds
- Noticeable citizenship skills by all
- Work of students prominently displayed
- Caring, engaging demeanor by staff and teachers
- Positive affirmations to reinforce good behavior, learning, and achievements
- Feeling of order, conduct aligned with fair rules

- I see adults eagerly greeting and mingling with students
- I see strong relationships, yet ones where respect for authority and discipline prevails
- I see dynamic instruction that echoes through the hallways – a give-and-take, not just one-way lecturing
- I see a community where students are treated as family members and the whole child is cared for
- Group work that places an emphasis on interaction

- People and children talking and laughing, greeting and welcoming one another
- Artwork of students clearly displayed throughout the school
- Quotes and positive images posted on the walls
- Teachers greeting students and welcoming them into their classrooms
- Student awards, accomplishments visible in the classrooms
- Parent volunteers throughout the school
- Students walking around with heads up and smiles on their faces

In classrooms:

- Teacher and students working together and asking and answering questions
- Students working with each other
- Classroom culture of respect, honesty, care, and responsibility
- Classroom that is developing habits of heart and mind

Cafeteria:

- Students are selecting food from salad bar and fruit smoothie bar
- All students eating and talking together
- Laughing and smiling
- Students and staff recycling and cleaning their cafeteria

Welcome:

- Greeted with a smile
- Staff greeting students with courtesy and personal engagement
- Teacher and classroom *ready* to begin learning

Matriculation:

- Environment communicates high expectations for all
- Motivational posters, etc
- Space is clean – respect for learning that takes place

Behavioral norms: students respectful of others

In classroom:

- Teacher engages with individual students, but maintain awareness of classroom (eyes in the back of the head)
- Response to disruption – consistent with posted classroom norms
- Every student is engaged in learning

Lunch:

- Fresh foods prominently displayed
- Students choose fruits and vegetables
- Groups of students are mixed – gender, race, age
- Focused activity
- Engaged students
- Personal greetings of staff and students
- Active noisy, but controlled excitement
- Redirection allows main flow to continue

- Student happy at new school
- Purpose of everything with focus on student inclusion and learning, parent/community engagement in student development
- Flexibility to accommodate needs, purpose in work
- Welcoming interactions that respect ownership/investment, trust/confidence
- Clean and orderly
- Comfortable, purposeful, thoughtful uses of time and language
- Students know the routines and what they're engaged in...and are conversant
- The food is good, fresh, local, and students have a hand in prep
- The students know how to present to peers, adults, formally, and informally
- Register, vocabulary are tools they can use effectively
- Engaging physical space
- Students interacting with teachers
- Satisfaction
- Laughter and confidence in the students
- Teacher acknowledges students and disruptions
- Teachers have the capacity to use multiple teaching methodologies interchangeably, based on student and classroom dynamics
- Every kid being lovingly greeted by name
- Excitement and positive anticipation
- All on time, neatly dressed, clean
- Visually clean hallways
- Pictures of children with their aspirations articulated
- Older kids taking care of younger kids
- Students are enthusiastic
- A lot of parents wandering throughout the school, talking to teachers
- A lot of smiling and laughing
- Students working together in groups
- Students sitting in circle, not in rows
- Teachers engaged with students during breaks
- Students are talking about schoolwork among themselves during breaks
- Very little disruption to the classes – students are attentive
- Students say they like school – they find it interesting and relevant, they want to be there
- The teachers do not talk a lot about tests
- School was clean, had a well-kept lawn and landscaping
- Principal was outside welcoming students
- Parents and students smiling
- There is a buzz of excitement
- Students welcomed by teacher to class with a smile and on time
- Students eager to go to class
- Bulletin boards fused with student work
- Teacher providing engaging instruction, incorporating multiple learning styles

- Appealing landscaping – not run down
- Friendly chatter/buzz
- Parents and teachers in friendly dialogue
- Kids excited to be there
- Kids more interested in being smarter, learning things than being cool or “sagging”
- Bright environment – welcoming
- Kids excited to learn
- Kids like their teachers
- Kids are respectful of adults and each other
- Teachers who make learning fun
- Teachers who care, and the kids feel it
- Teachers who know how to teach and know the content

- Clean, beautiful facilities
- Excitement and enthusiasm in children and staff
- Students’ work displayed and representing a variety of issues and depth of understanding of topics
- Students participating and actively engaged – non traditional seating
- Friendly greetings; respectful – people know each other and greet by name
- Classrooms are fun and students are asking and answering questions about the curriculum; teachers are following students leads and interests while bringing it back to tie into the curriculum/goal
- Goals are written
- Students are respectful to each other
- Food is healthy and visually appealing

- See:
- Students walking with purpose
- Student work on walls – rigorous, well done
- College banners, college acceptance letters

- Hear:
- Teachers giving supportive feedback
- Students debating, students talking about the future – how they’re using these experiences to get to what they want next

- Feel:
- Welcome, warm, intrigued, hopeful
- Students are curious, thoughtful, excited about what they’re learning

- Students having quality interactions
- “Buzz” “In the air”
- Students feeling they belong
- Positive relationships between students and adults
- Teacher as coach
- Personalization
- Rigorous hands-on curriculum

- Exhibition of learning
- High expectations and high support
- Families involved in day to day school day
- Accountable talk
- Academic language
- Students excited about what they are learning and doing and want to share
- Clear routines and procedures – the way we do things here
- Culture of respect and high expectation
- Place where kids feel valued for what they bring to the school
- Teachers collaborating, taking leadership

- Clean integration of technology in classrooms
- Parents speaking in multiple languages to staff members
- Students greeting teachers and staff members
- Goals posted on bulletin boards with data
- Students excited about learning
- Process for checking in visitors, parents
- Teacher with respect for students and vice versa
- Students have clear routines and expectations

- Student work products are EVERYWHERE
- A student stops me in the hall and asks me if I need help or directions
- Students make eye contact with me and smile
- I bump into business and community members al over the place who are volunteering and partnering in projects in the school
- Celebrations of student achievement are EVERYWHERE – sports, arts, academic, music, technology, community service
- Technology is all over the place, students and teachers are using it
- Students are known, recognized, celebrated, offered opportunities to shine but held to relentlessly high standards
- Success and aspirations are constantly stretched – is that good enough? Can you do better?
- Every student has both an inside and an outside advocate – neither ne of whom will accept failure as an option

- See/feel/hear? GREAT SCHOOL
- Smiles/joy
- Connection, mutual respect, regard, relationship
- Evidence of full range of talents as scholars, artists, athletes, leaders
- Rigor – real world, contextualized leaving connection across disciplines, concepts
- 50% or more student talk
- Voice, interaction – respect for and encouragement of divergent thinking
- Beauty in environment / conducive space
- Student investment in learning/inquiry – supported to possess
- Students fully in possession of necessary skills/capacities
- Teachers intentionally teach to different groups but maintain high level of cognitive challenge

- Children laughing and working together, helping each other solve “real” problems and each child stands tall, speaks with alacrity in multiple languages and the teacher is walking to each group asking questions
- The children are reading, writing, listening to each other with confidence and demonstrate basic skills along with critical skills; asking questions
- Adults sharing work, planning excited, lots of parents and community – openness
- Students relating to each other with humor, curiosity, reflectiveness
- I didn’t see a lot of adults! Adult impact is clear without their physical presence. I saw students using the tools of experimentation, debate, creativity to engage with all kinds of content
- I felt proud of Oakland, our future, our hard work evidenced
- Students are at the center of the school community – they create and maintain/sustain and adjust the relationships within it
- Restorative practices are used to deepen connections and ensure the culture is responsive to student needs
- There is stability, but not stagnation
- There is calm, but it isn’t quiet
- I can feel that growth is happening, and my role in the growth is critical, though not central.
- Students are alive with curiosity
- Students are leaving and coming from exploratory experiences outside the school
- In the hallways students, volunteers, parents are laughing about learning experiences and community service projects
- Classrooms are alive and open to view through one-way glass
- Videos, charts, awards, school presentations on the walls
- Students walk briskly to lunch, but are careful to be polite to others around them
- There are lunch open-air workshops taught by volunteers, local businesspeople on food, health, and a variety of topics
- Discipline is based on an understood and agreed upon set of standards used to redirect students with love and clarity
- Music is playing – no words, education video games
- Principal was greeting students and parents as students arrived in the morning
- Students and staff were greeting each other in the halls and in the office
- The halls were full of student work – essays, college info and projects – were arranged in groups
- Class started as the bell rang
- Teachers had greeted students at the door – students were eager and happy and charged up about being in their classes working with brilliant teachers
- There are clear goals and opening activities
- The students are engaged in high level problem solving, or reading and writing
- Questions are encouraged and high level
- Teachers demonstrate caring for students are respect abounds
- Work is grade level, rich in content and challenging – students feel they can tackle it
- Presence of technology – students and teachers have access to and tie to use quality,

- current computers, software and other technology
- School has a website
- Clean – clean bathrooms, new paint, upkeep and landscaping; well-kept school
- Children appear happy to be there and engaged
- School yard is safe, modern, and inviting
- School and blocks around school feel safe – safe to walk on sidewalks
- Teachers are funny and interesting
- Lessons involve hands-on projects like dissecting owl pellets
- Students are outgoing and eager to talk about lessons, as well as other components of their school day – they are proud of the school
- Food fed to students is food adults would also want to eat

- Friendly, respectful interactions between students, parents, staff, leadership
- Joyful expressions
- Structure and purposeful activity
- High expectation
- Habits of inquiry and discourse centered on continuous learning and growth
- Celebrations
- Work aligned to quality standards
- Clear learning target with carefully designed tasks that engage students and scaffold production
- Nourishing food
- In class, teachers/students facilitate open ended questions
- Structure/safe justification/arguments
- Seeking additional info, diverse perspectives valued, relevant, timely, project-based, thematic

- School was very quiet
- Teachers is the only person talking
- Student work is displayed on the walls
- Students moving about in an orderly manner
- Student interactions with each other
- Staff interaction with each other

- Smiles
- Clean environments
- Pictures of students, teachers, and staff
- State of the art integrated technology
- People warmly greeting people
- Glass walls
- Open “home like” learning areas conducive to conversations
- Locations for high volume telecommunication learning/teaching/instruction
- Smart buildings
- Salad
- Calm conversations
- Student art, music, creations
- Colors
- No bells

- Natural light
- iPad-like learning tools
- Happy sounds

- Well-groomed, well-cared for landscaping, external building is clean, shows community respect. No trash, no graffiti.
- Children laughing, playing on playground before bell; adolescents happy to see each other and be there
- Welcome front office staff, no students waiting to see administrator
- Teacher engaged with students; students on task and having fun → smiling, working together
- Students are working in groups, self-directed with teacher checking in on them as they complete task
- Son/daughter is excited about something s/he learned today – can talk about different things that happened in a positive tone and manner
- Talking to each other with respect
- No one is excluded → inclusion
- Diverse students and staff

- Initial interactions - welcoming, wanting to know us
- Garden
- Children – sense that they're happy to be there
- Books in every classroom
- Art or projects that are unusual, maybe surprise me
- Kids enter engaged with classroom discussion, or working together on project
- Teacher says that class often works in groups, encourages sharing and participation
- My child excitedly tells me what she did in class, who she met, what she liked about her teacher
- Different modalities of learning

- High quality schools: like St Paul
- Respective office staff – welcoming
- Work on walls reflecting learning/standards, not just art
- Classroom arranged in activity tables
- Assistant and tutors helping individuals and small groups of kids
- Students engaged in learning – hands on activities
- Group discussions
- Help for struggling students
- Systems of organization for homework
- Welcome parents
- Multiple modalities
- Relevancy

- Excited
- People greeting each other
- Photos of students
- Work of students

- Leadership/teachers look like students
- Way classroom is configured
- Student photos and work
- Books
- Clean facility
- Playgrounds on yard, safe
- Trees on yard
- Teacher explains morning routine
- Volunteer opportunities
- Students stay together at end of day
- Teacher greets/says goodbae to each student individually
- Students learning responsibility for “jobs” (cleanup, turning in homework, etc)

- Front door: other parents/families speaking to each other and to students in the school
- Adults are helping children
- Main office: administrative assistant is greeting families and providing helpful information
- Classroom/hallways: student work is displayed of a range of subjects; standards taught are highlighted with description of lesson activity/objective
- Greeted warmly by the teacher; I’m able to sit in
- Student activity: student-centered, engaged in the class work and lessons; high level of peer-to-peer interaction
- Ranger of learner needs are met

- Large outdoor areas, grass; should feel safe and secure
- State of the art; organized

- Feeling nervous leaving my child in a new place
- Seeing other parents with their children
- Seeing the teacher in the class with the students in front
- Leaving at the request of the principal so class can begin
- Arriving to pick her up I see other parents waiting
- The teacher is finishing a lesson involving the students
- The children are writing and drawing
- Going home my daughter talks about the kids, teacher, and the project they did that day

- In the front , wheel that kids ride on that pumps fresh water for the children
- Aquarium of fish that goes through the school
- Growing trees on the shelves of the classroom
- The kids were greeting me at the door
- Each day the student would get a chance to teach the class and participate actively, molding clay
- Principal tutoring children that have challenges

- Excited
- Looked around to see student art on wall/welcome sign
- Greeted by an adult
- Outside of school painted – nice lawn

- Child's classroom – teacher welcoming
- Theme art on wall represented what subject is throughout the room
- Classroom observation: (high school) – student focused on teacher with enthusiasm
- Teacher engaging students with smile
- Class assignments posted on wall/board
- Student thrilled, eager for next day

- School known to work at students' own pace
- Schools with like-minded students (ability)
- Very purposeful – business-like, polite without dilly dally
- Children's art and motivational art
- Gardens – play yard, area
- Books in classroom/library, science projects
- Observations: little scientists – research journal writing of observing robotics, plants, insects, etc
- Teacher pulling attention to the board – asking students to finish up observations and to clean up area, prep for class discussion
- My student is leading their group – she felt empowered
- Students welcome other students
- New students on a welcoming team
- Small class size
- Clean, emotionally and physically safe, colorful, art on the walls, welcoming
- Smiling adults and children, bright, a place that inspires kids to be curious and feel eager and excited to learn
- A school garden and quality play structures
- All children are welcomed with a smile by staff that wants to be there
- Teacher is focused, respectful toward students and encourages that same behavior between students
- Classroom is dynamic and orderly and well supplied
- First day: class size is not too large; the day was spent doing exercises that give the students a chance to learn about each other and get an introduction to their new teacher and classroom
- Focus on community building, mutual respect, diversity appreciation, FUN of learning

- Felt excitement, nervousness, but trying not to let my own feelings affect my child's perception/experience
- The school is inviting, clean, examples of student work on walls
- Teachers, staff treat student and parent with respect and welcome us into classroom
- Children are engaged and eager to learn
- Observed student engaged in classroom discussion; teacher encouraging/facilitating the discussion; students treated with respect and returning that respect to teacher and classroom materials and each other
- The classroom has bonded and gotten to start knowing each other and are supportive of each other

- Relationships – 1st name basis
 - Parent – parent
 - Parent – teacher/staff, etc (office, halls, classroom)

- Excited and felt lucky
- Aesthetically pleasing environment (art, plants, welcoming)
- Hall → children’s work reflecting individuality – not “canned”
- Quality “rich” work
- Documentation of learning process
- Classroom → busy, children intent, confident, instructor engaging; room reflects children
- Teacher passionate, affective and responsive
- Facilitating learning
- Children working on individual tasks (differentiated instruction)
- Defined space for individual kids
- Evidence of learning
- Room reflects a spirit of collaboration, inquiry, emphasis on relationship
- Child feels like they are an important part of the whole
- Teacher greets child and parents (first name, shows interest in the individual)
- Welcoming, partnership, open door policy, excited for volunteering

- Physically and emotionally safe
- Opportunities for play (K-5) or physical activity (6-12)
- Environmental – solar, compost, garden, vegetables
- Strong teachers – handle various learning styles
- People are polite
- Colorful
- Art on the walls
- People want to serve the school

- A warm and welcoming office
- The classroom door open, child and myself warmly welcomed. The classroom is well lit, bright; kids are attentive and engaged, eager and ready for what is before/prepared for them by an inspired and ready teacher. Lots of dynamic visual learning tools posted. Each and every student is there to participate. Raising their hands, wanting for the next opportunity to contribute to the lesson at hand. The teacher calls on as many students as possible and makes the lesson rich, inclusive, and relevant. My student is inspired and goes on and on about how happy they are, excited by the day’s experience

- Entry – great mix of people/families
- Clean grounds
- Up to date facilities
- Teacher – enthusiastic, upbeat, creative, flexible
- Creates welcoming and respectful environment for all kids
- Uses different ways to teach (verbal, written, hands on, etc)
- Room – exciting but not overwhelming/distracting
- Allows for group learning
- Classroom activity: students engaged, attentive
- Teacher dynamic yet controlled
- Works with kids individually – can use group’s energy to push learning to class

- Be seen, be heard, be attended to, be cared for – follow through

- Entrance to school – clean and hallways filled with art
- Main office – given eye contact and was greeted and student was greeted and welcomed
- Clean room – teacher has good tone, dialogue with students – students are not rudely loud or disrespectful – they are listening and they are being heard by teacher
- Artwork and projects are displayed in room
- Parents and teachers have dialogue
- Kids studying – attention is given to teacher as teacher lectures about subject
- Student described that they enjoyed the class and classmates, and teacher’s lecture was productive and fun
- No disruption in classrooms

- Colorful artwork
- Happy faces/smiles
- Children’s voices, laughter
- Green garden/light
- Welcoming words
- Organized room/teacher
- Books
- Tools
- Learning items on wall
- Feels warm, safe, inspiring
- Greeting each other, making friends
- Positive encouragement
- Varied activities
- Kids working in pairs, small groups
- Teacher – one or more, with class varied
- Changing, dynamic expressions on teacher’s face
- Kid ; “I loved it” ; tired, excited, saw bug, heard story, drew picture, feels smart

- Peaceful, collaborative, nurturing interactions among adults and children
- Learning centers, desks grouped by activities
- 2-3 teachers/adults per classroom
- Nature, plants, natural lighting, eco-friendly environment
- Some children are engaged as a group, others are reading on their own/or painting/or dreaming at an aquarium
- My child said “I didn’t do anything!” or “it was so much fun to...”
- Content, happy, relaxed

- I was excited walking in; kids looked comfortable, at ease, like they belonged there. Interaction was warm and personal. The rooms were clean, bright, artwork and class work were displayed
- People spoke to each other with respect, held each other accountable but held each other lovingly, too
- Students greet my child and introduce them to an activity they are doing
- Students are having a discussion – most are actively participating, all are engaged
- My kid will have had art and been excited about activities that she did. She will say kids are friendly and helped her get situated.

- The ideal school: clean, well landscaped
- A group of parents and adults to welcome us
- Classrooms orderly and clean, computers 'new,' state of the art overhead equipment
- The teachers represent the culture of the students
- The walls and classrooms represent them
- New books, clean desks
- Small class sizes
- Uniforms
- Students felt empowered

- Clean, vibrant grounds
- Water fountain, plenty of staff in front, welcoming/secure
- Staff – smiling, professional.
- Clean, organized office
- Kid-friendly, visitor friendly
- Display of student work, standards-based, inquiry
- Students walk by and greet you with respect and polite language
- Students: multiracial, multiage, talking, joyful, respectful conversation
- Adults: student interaction present, academic language
- Students working independently on tasks, students working cooperatively, paying attention to teacher with purpose
- Eager, enthusiasm
- Sense of community
- All seen and heard and attended to
- Dynamic faces, responding
- Diverse faculty
- Teacher moves with purpose
- "I had a great day!" talked about friends, what they learned,, what they are thinking about
- Extra help for struggling kids
- Small groups, personalized attention

- Energetic
- Welcoming
- Engagement of staff to children/adults
- A smile, a nod, acknowledgment
- Art, projects from English, History, Math
- Music
- Light filled
- Children being children, excited, excitable
- Respect modeled by staff/administration
- Children informed by the teamwork exhibited by teachers/principal
- Engaged
- Involved
- Involvement by all children
- Interaction
- Funny stories

- Issues of growing up – getting along
 - Exclusion vs. inclusion
 - Humility to those with greater challenges
 - Work to do for homework
 - What they learned in a past class
 - Excited for an experiment in science

 - Excitement, joy, laughter, smiles, children’s art, engagement, clean, organized, welcoming, greetings, safe, secure, familiar, engaging, enthusiasm, attention, order, learning, eager, exciting, smiling, joy, engaged

 - Relief – finally a good school – *not one with a list of problems*
 - Office – light/windows/green plants – living things
 - People are welcoming/friendly/service-oriented
 - The teacher engages the student
 - Welcomes them along with the parent
 - The halls are filled with student art
 - Active listening – the students engaged in the classroom activity – teacher engaged with students
 - Student enjoys school – wants to return
 - At home can talk about what was learned

 - Garden, plants
 - Engagement
 - Art of kids
 - Welcoming people, staff
 - Friendly
 - People interacting – staff, parents, students, siblings
 - Calm classroom with student artwork, music is playing
 - Teacher engages kids, Introduces other children, has control of classroom
 - Students feel as if they are a part of an extended family

 - *Non-ideal school?*
 - Unsupervised children playing, fighting, office very cold
 - Administration very unapproachable
 - Hallways – children not being supervised, teachers, staff not very welcoming and friendly
 - In classrooms students holding conversations, some listening
 - Teacher looking only at chalkboard, telling kids to be quiet
 - Classrooms over populated and teacher seems tired and irritated, a lot of chaos
 - *Ideal school*
 - Clean, children, happy smiling teachers, happy to be teaching
 - Safe, pride
 - Diversity with students and teachers more interacting lesson plans
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- Nervous/excitement
 - Hear – students talking, teachers talking among selves and students

- See – student work, people (adults and children) happy to be there, clean/well cared for hallways/common areas, excitement of students going in to class
- Front office – teachers and parents vying for principal time
- Classrooms – engaged students wanting to learn
- Activity outside, kids playing, parents around
- In the office – several people seated at desks, greeting people/working
- Some people passing through on their way to another place, another activity
- Principal friendly, talks about school climate, goals, leading community expectations
- Classroom – outside evidence of current work, inside shared conversation, group discussion, with lots of participation
- At the beginning, students are talking, not yelling or cursing
- They are hurrying to get to class
- in the office, the staff notices when I and others come in and ask how they can help *they are bilingual)
- there is a sense of purpose and direction
- principal’s office – organized, pictures of school
- the principal offers support for the classroom and teachers
- in classrooms, there is lovely discussion going on – the students and teachers respect each others’ opinions and challenge each other to think further
- there is no need for a student to be disruptive
- A great school has a beautiful entrance, one that has an aesthetic that suggests great learning inside.
- Inside the school, the halls are free from graffiti, there are photos and artwork and newspaper reports of student achievements
- There are no students in the hall
- The office is cheerful
- The receptionist greets you with a friendly and warm smile
- The principal’s office is welcoming; s/he does not sit behind the desk but beside me
- s/he talks about special projects at each grade, past successes, future plans
- s/he says “what lights your teaching fire?”
- When I leave the principal’s office, I see through various teacher’s’ open doors that all students are engaged, that students are prepared, that there is technology in every room.

- Gardens; kids laughing and playing
- Welcoming
- Support – planning time, equipment, supplies
- Collegial atmosphere – teachers working together; time to teach; realistic pacing
- Sense of openness
- Care about the whole child – emotional/social, arts, music
- Projects
- Teacher engaging students in conversation
- High level of expectation of academic achievements
- Personal responsibility for everyone
- Healthy organic, locally grown, fresh food
- Quiet conversation, courtesy

- Challenge and support, dynamic
- Teacher-led groups focused on student learning or focused on researching topics chosen by teachers to support innovation in teaching; answer teacher questions that arise from practice – TRUE inquiry
- Principal, support staff supplying things requested by teachers

- The parking lot was peaceful, clean. The halls were quiet. The principal greeted me warmly. The office was organized. The principal talked about the students and types of curriculum support offered.
- The classroom was comfortable but not crowded. About 15 students.
- Two team teachers teaching.
- Students were doing a Socratic seminar on an interesting topic. The teacher and students interacted in a friendly way. The disruptive student changed his/her behavior immediately.
- Professional Development: Teachers work in groups sharing specific work topics they're doing, and addressing issues they're having – some discussion of specific students. PD directed by teachers and aids planning classes.
- Student says she loves this school because the students are engaged and nobody would think of disrupting.

- Classrooms: engaged but relaxed
- Hallways: conversational, a bit loud en route to class, not escape
- Cafeteria: healthy food
- PD – PLC – teachers shaping curriculum; principal acting as a peer, NOT a facilitator or boss
- Students – talking about something they learned/are learning that's directly relevant to their lives

- Outside school – gardens, flowers, children working in garden – grass vs. asphalt
- Inside – greeted warmly – no rushing – everyone pleasant; office has big sofa, more flowers; sounds of music – instruments
- Office – principal focused on school climate – conflict managers in office helping kids resolve conflicts – warm, calm atmosphere
- Hallways – children's photos with tags on them – eg, "showed appreciation," etc.; no data/test scores
- Classroom – children working in groups – busy hum – engaged – teacher frequently calling on them – redirecting. THEIR PROJECT.
- Misbehavior – Teacher continues with lesson, walks by child, hand on shoulder – if worse, buddy class
- Cafeteria – Music playing – salad bar – busy hum but no chaos – recycling bins – like science camp
- PD – teacher led and directed – high engagement – lots of interaction
- Child from former school – happy – gets positive feedback – knows he's learning – keeps portfolio of best work so can see own growth – gets help as needed – not afraid to make mistakes (poster in room)

- Hallway – children walking calmly; clean and comfortable (not cold or hot)
- Classroom – students working together/student centered

- Cafeteria – staffed with food service worker and custodians plus monitors (adult); healthy, fresh food choices, relaxed eating decorum
 - Student – student choice in learning; field trips/study tours; arts; eco technology; librarian; PE; lots of resources
 - Parents conversing; smiles; traffic; pictures of school community; cleanliness; security officer; calendar of events; staffed office; student projects, work displayed
 - Principal’s office – student pictures, student art/work, calendar evidence of planning
 - PD – teachers are prepared like there is a routine or good communication
 - PD is guided by teachers; collaboration; choice; teachers all spread art based on grade levels or cross grade
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- A carefully maintained garden outside
 - Parents with kids coming and going; hugs, kisses, etc
 - Teachers enjoying each others’ conversation before the start of the day
 - In the office (a student needing some attention, scrape on the knee)
 - A smiling secretary
 - A teacher looking at his or her email
 - Principal greets warmly
 - Cafeteria is clean
 - Kids eating salad and hot food pasta
 - Art on the walls and authentic writing (no worksheets)
 - Clean facility all around
 - Kids engage with each other
 - PD is agendized and beginning and closing times are honored
 - PD fills the folks in the room and not cookie cutter or for rookies
 - Teachers are engaged in the PD
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- Noisy and loose outside, then suddenly shifts before the hall
 - Older helping younger
 - Meeting with department teachers, excited to see kids
 - Posters for community events, kids – on walls
 - Disruption – name, calm
 - Small group PD
 - Real student work
 - Student: says little (better at complaints)
 - Pottery studio, computer lab, science lab
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- Everyone is friendly
 - Bulletin boards are beautiful and full because parents help put them up
 - Principal is friendly and talks about individual teachers and students in complimentary way – seeing all their better points
 - Teacher interactions with disruptive student is positive and respectful because there is support for teachers from principal and family
 - Professional development is teacher-led and teacher-driven – they are working on something that all teachers (or most of them) wanted to work on so teachers are engaged and learning something valuable
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- I noticed that the adults appeared to be happy and move with purpose

- The hallways are clean, but not perfect. Student work is displayed through.
 - Cultural posters surround the walls. Student work is displayed: writing, stories, poems, art work
 - The class is noisy but not loud. Students asking each other questions.
 - Teachers sit together in tables with student work. 1 teacher discusses how they presented the lesson and other teachers listen.
 - The principal walks in and no one notices.

 - I work at this school already. There are trees. A buzz of children getting out of their parents' cars, running up the front steps. They go into various doors for language classes. The office is to the left. Walking in, there are a few parents around. The secretary is asking for you.
 - The classroom is well managed. Students are given choices. Most comply and participate readily. The students are highly engaged.
 - The hallways are filled with children's work. It covers the gamut of topics.
 - The PD is highly organized and teacher derived. People are respectful and attentive. Everyone contributes.
 - The student is happy at this school. They are learning about the tribes in California and talk passionately about a book about the Pomo they are reading.

 - The outside of the school is clean, landscaped – no graffiti or paint touchups, fences locking people in or bars, no one is in the hallway – everyone is in a classroom
 - The inside of the school has natural light in the halls and office
 - In the classroom the children are working in groups like a Montessori style at stations
 - The teachers is wandering through the class asking questions from the students about what they learned
 - Child who disrupts the class receives a smile from the teacher and a light touch on the arm. Child smiles and apologizes.
 - Professional development is collaboration between all faculty and staff – everyone is eager and energized to collaborate
 - Student says the school is great and quickly reports names of adults who “really like me”

 - Nice facility – well kept – full athletic field
 - Technology well maintained, remodeled, or new
 - Students are engaged, interacting calmly
 - Focus is on addressing student needs – differences
 - Admin relaxed
 - Hallways have student work/art posted
 - Students are engaged/discussion activity – talking to partners or small groups
 - Varying levels of questions – discussion
 - Meals are healthy – there is ample time to students to get in line and eat
 - Bathrooms are clean
 - There are art facilities and a functioning and complete library/computer resource center – there is a music and drama program with events/awards, etc displayed in school
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