Positive Environments in Education
Our Agenda

- Introduction of Presenter (2:30-2:35)
- Framing/Background on Urban Education V. The State (2:35-2:45)
- Presentation of 3 Elements of a Positive Education Environment (2:45-3:05)
- Question & Answer/Wrap-Up (3:05-3:15)
Education Background

- 11th & 12th grade English – Strawberry Mansion High School
- 6th grade English Teacher- Grover Cleveland Elementary
- 2nd-8th grade Social Studies & Science- Green Tree School
- 9th-12th Principal- Green Tree Upper School
- 7th & 8th Grade Teacher Leader & Literature/Writing – Frederick Douglass
Framing the Setting

- P.S.S.A Proficiency Scores
- Students with Disabilities
- National School Lunch Program
- Absentees
Philadelphia V. Pennsylvania
Education Framing

- **E.L.A**
  - Philadelphia: 41%
  - Pennsylvania: 33%

- **Math**
  - Philadelphia: 19%
  - Pennsylvania: 25%
Philadelphia V. Pennsylvania Education Framing

- N.S.L.P
- Income to qualify for free lunch (under $15,000 total household)

National School Lunch Program

Philadelphia: 88%
Pennsylvania: 51%
A thriving education environment needs:

- Engaging Lessons & Facilitator
- Participation & Constant Discussion
- Organization
- Honest/Respectful Communication
- Relationship between teacher & student
- Joy Factor
- Established Expectations
- Calm/No Chaos
- Motivational Posters
- Safe
- No Fear
Surprisingly you did not hear...

- Money
- Incentives
- Games
- Recess/Gym
- Free Time
- Computers/Technology
3 Elements of a Positive Education Environment

- Clear Routines & Systems
- Solid Object Relationship Model (S.O.R.M)
- Décor of Learning Space
Clear Routines & Systems

- Entry & Dismissal (building, class, off-campus)
- Distribution of materials
- Retrieving late or lost assignments
- Discussion & Dialogue
- Peer Mediation
- Positive Behavior Support Plans
- Ladder of Consequences
- Lesson structure
- Absent/ Late Procedure
- Retrieving items
How Clear Systems & Routines Support

Students:

- Make reliable predictions
- Feel competent
- Build on and increase their independence
- Practice taking accountability for their own behavior & academic success
- Build on a trusting relationship with student & family

“If it’s predictable- it’s preventable”
Supporting the Whole Child

• “Each student learns in an environment that is physically and emotionally safe for students and adults”

  John L Brown, *Educating the Whole Child*
Solid Object Relationship Model

- 1973 - Bruce Chapman – Handle With Care
- Person in crisis needs stability
- Students who lack behavioral control need to feel protected.
How S.O.R.M Supports...

- Students:
  - Become more self-aware in order to self-regulate
  - Feel safer & will take more risks
  - Set more realistic personal goals
  - Accept challenges
  - Recognize and understand boundaries
  - Frank C. Garrity- “learning mode”

“Students need to be in the mental, physical, emotional, spiritual, and psychological ready state in order to learn or they won’t”
“Not realizing that children exposed to inescapable, overwhelming stress may act out their pain, that they may misbehave, not listen to us, or seek our attention in all the wrong ways, can lead us to punish these children for their misbehavior... If only we knew what happened last night, or this morning before he/she got to school, we would be shielding the same child we’re now reprimanding”

- Mark Katz, *Playing a Poor Hand Well*
Décor of Learning Space

- Should have:
  - Motivational posters/thoughts/quotes
  - Reflections of the cultural/racial background of the population of students
  - Updated strategy focused anchor charts
  - Specific content focused theme
  - Reflections of the teachers past years teaching & personal life
  - Current student work
How Décor of Learning Space Supports Students:

- Feel a sense of belonging
- Aware of their teachers care for them as an individual
- Praised for growth rather than perfection
- Find that teachers are creating a sense of family
- Gain a sense of ownership

“One of the most powerful and rewarding ways we can help our students flourish is to provide the safety of a trusting, healthy environment”
Supporting the Whole Child

“These children aren’t seeking attention (even though they will settle for it). They are looking for a safe and trustworthy relationship (environment”).

- Marvin et al., *The Circle of Security Intervention*