

Simple Practices to Strengthen Your Teacher Community

As an educator, you likely understand why it's essential for students to have a sense of belonging in the classroom. But how often do you consider your rapport with those around you? In the workplace, your connections play a meaningful role in your success, mindset, and overall happiness. Research confirms that having a strong sense of community among colleagues increases your likelihood of thriving and engaging in your work by over 50 percent, and makes you 66 percent more likely to stay in your role, demonstrating the necessity for prioritizing community (Porath and Sublett, 2022).



The start of the new school year is full of opportunities to establish and strengthen the educational community at your school and create an environment that students, teachers, and support staff can look forward to showing up to every day. Explore some of the following ways to foster community and inspire fulfillment.

Ways to Strengthen Community

There are many ways you can contribute to an inclusive, supportive, and inspiring space for you, your students, and the school community as a whole. Consider some of the following ways to inspire connection in your school:



- **Engage in simple connection opportunities.** Invite colleagues to sit with you at lunch, join you for a short after-school walk, or come together for coffee during an off-campus planning day.
- **Check in.** A quick “How have you been?” or “How are you doing today?” can go a long way when building rapport with your colleagues. Consider ways to offer support when possible.
- **Ask for support.** Support is a two-way street; just as you offer it to your colleagues, you can ask for it also. Need help navigating a challenge with a parent? Struggling to plan a student activity? Your colleagues can offer you unique perspectives and creativity to help you work through challenges and feel accomplished together.
- **Share helpful resources.** Is there an app, book, website, or something else that you’ve found useful? Share the wealth and let your colleagues know!
- **Give appreciation and celebrate often.** Can you give thanks to a colleague who lent a helping hand? Does someone have a birthday or life milestone coming up? Being aware of opportunities—big and small—to show appreciation and celebrate each other is a great way to lift spirits.

Practice Inclusivity

As you engage in these practices, be sure to remain inclusive of all your colleagues. Welcome, collaborate, and share with teachers across grade levels and subject areas, cafeteria staff, janitorial staff, counselors, librarians, etc. Remember that everyone in the school plays a vital role in the culture and success of the school, and deserves to be an included member of the community.

Welcoming New Staff

When a new staff member joins, you can take a couple of extra steps to help them feel welcome and settled. If you know they will be joining ahead of time, send them a quick welcome email to introduce yourself and let them know you look forward to working with them. You could stop by their classroom to say hello, offer them an unofficial tour of the school, or simply let them know you are happy to help answer any questions they have.



We're Here to Help

Fly Five is here to welcome, collaborate with, and offer support to your school community, every step of the way. Schedule a call with an Educational Partnership Consultant to discover how we can provide support, resources, professional development, and a transformative K–8 life skills curriculum.

References:

Porath, C., & Sublett, C. P. (2022, August 26). Rekindling a Sense of Community at Work. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2022/08/rekindling-a-sense-of-community-at-work>

