Student Centered Culture

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Because we are on Summer Session, I was unable to meet with my previous mentor administrator. However, I observed two classes during their respective Summer Sessions — the first, with Teacher A, at a public school. The second, with Teacher B, was at a private school. Both were located in Baltimore, MD, where I live and work. In both classes, the teacher had already established a routine in which she offered instruction. Students knew what the expectations were at all times. The classroom rules were displayed and visible for all who entered the room.

In both classes, students were responsive to the teacher because of the culture of the class. Summer school is an exciting time to observe teaching. Students are at their last chance to earn credits. These students are more determined than others to follow the rules and listen to their teacher so they can earn their credit and move forward. To promote a more positive, student-centered culture, Teacher A should do the following:

The ceremony is a celebration that shows why it is important to finish what you started. For instance, in the text, it states that most schools have formal ceremonies that mark transitions in the school year (Peterson, 2009). In other words, they provide a spiritual boost at the end of a daunting task. I interpret this to mean that once you have finished what you started; it is time to celebrate. However, more than that, it is important to celebrate. The celebration is what makes the journey worth it. As once can see, the ceremony is meaningful because it promotes a sense of accomplishment within the student-centered culture.

As a recommendation, Teacher A should have a classroom party at the end of the session for all students who earned a passing grade. I also think Teacher A should ask the students, “what would you like at your party,” so the students buy into the idea that they should celebrate what they have accomplished. I think telling the students that they will have earned this celebration gives them an incentive actually to finish what they started. It should be mentioned that this celebration should align with the vision of the school that all students graduate on time.

The text also describes the importance of values. Values are the center of what the school considers important (Peterson, 2009). Basically, they are everything good about school. Values keep you grounded and focused. Without them, students are more likely to diminish the education they are receiving in favor of more salacious means of entertaining themselves.

Teacher A should include a whole group discussion on the importance of valuing their education with her students into her lesson. This session is a summer session, which means that something happened to stop them from receiving the credit the first time around. Teacher A should include this conversation at the beginning of the class. This conversation should focus the students on what completing this course means to them. It should also support the rules the teacher has in place to ensure that all students are successful. This conversation further aligns with the schools’ vision of graduating competent students on time because it places their performance in the class into greater context.

References

Peterson, K. D., & Deal, T. E. (2009). *The shaping school culture fieldbook*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.