



An Invitational Education *Member Resource*

Title:	The Invitational School
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Type of Activity or Resource:	Individual and small group consensus activity
Objective:	To facilitate agreement about those behaviors, procedures, programs, and policies that would create an inviting school where everyone in the school community feels safe and where the school is a place where students and staff WANT to be.
Recommended Age Group:	Upper elementary, middle and high school Adults
Materials Needed:	Handout: The Inviting School Paper/pencil, and chart paper with markers
Time:	One hour to seven hours (depends on how facilitator structures activity)
Additional Notes:	This activity is VERY EFFECTIVE in groups where students and staff are combined.

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Note: This activity is very effective in groups where students and staff are combined.

Procedure:

1. Distribute the handout entitled "The Inviting School." Ask the group members to individually write seven responses to each question. Be sure and clarify the difference between behaviors and attitudes.
2. Bring the participants together and ask them to share their written responses with the group.
3. The task of each group is to come to unanimous agreement regarding seven responses for each category. If an item does not have unanimous agreement, it should be discarded.
4. The group list should be presented to the community group if this is done in a workshop. If this activity is done in a support group, the group list should be copied and shared with the staff.
5. The teachers can conduct this same activity in their classrooms by dividing the students into small groups. Students will provide valuable insights to teachers about students' needs.
6. The groups should be allowed at least one hour for the task for each category.

Suggested Questions for Processing:

- A. Did your opinions change as your group discussed the topics?
- B. How might we use this information to help our school become a more inviting place?

The Inviting School

What would make school a more inviting place where students would want to be? Be sure to list ideas which could be implemented within the existing framework of school rules and policies.

I. Teaching Behaviors

What might teachers do to make classes more inviting? List seven ideas. Be sure to focus on teaching behaviors.

II. Student Behaviors

Please list seven student behaviors which would help your school become more inviting for everyone. Consider student behaviors in relation to teachers, staff members, and other students. Focus on behaviors which would go beyond "just following school rules."

III. Teacher/Student Relations

List seven ideas that might be implemented to help improve teacher/student relations at your school.

IV. Human Relations

List seven ideas you have for bringing various "cliques" and student groups together to help enhance understanding.

V. Curricula

List seven courses you would like to see offered for credit.

VI. Programs (Extra-curricular activities)

List seven kinds of programs or activities you would like to see expanded or made available for the first time.

VII. Discipline Policies

List seven ideas for fair strategies for enforcing discipline at your school. You may include already existing strategies if you think some of them are effective.