

# Excerpts from “How to Create a Culture of Achievement in Your School & Classroom”

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Full text can be found at: <http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/111014/chapters/Conclusion.aspx>

The part of a tree that we can see is above the surface; these are the procedures of the school [i.e. schedules, dress code, discipline policy]. But we understand that... there is just as much happening below, [the school's culture]. And we know that damaging its roots or poisoning its soil can result in the death of the tree. A school's culture works in much the same way.

A school's culture should not be underground and assumed. It should be uncovered, openly and purposely discussed, assessed, and developed [so that like the branches and leaves of a tree, it is easily seen and enjoyed]. School culture cannot be hidden. [If culture is in the open, we can] create, and maintain a hospitable, engaging, and enjoyable environment where administrators, teachers, and students thrive.

Cultures are not created overnight or by planning alone. Building the culture of a school takes time and effort. Culture is created and maintained by all of the members of a community, not just the leaders.

## 1. Welcome

[Everyone is valued and feels safe. Each person is able to learn and treats one another with respect. Students feel comfortable making mistakes and asking questions. Wins are celebrated!]

## 2. Do No Harm

[Everyone has a different learning style and a successful class helps everyone achieve. People work together to increase understanding and find creative ways to explain the same thoughts in different ways. The class allows for different personalities and skill sets to thrive. No one is left out of learning.]

## 3. Choice Words

[Everyone uses positive language in class and about one another. People feel comfortable speaking in class and asking questions]

## 4. It's Never Too Late to Learn

[Everyone can be successful and has a growth mindset: with effort comes improvement. Giving up is not an option. Each student is capable and intelligent. Each person does their part to get better and smarter.]

## 5. Best School in the Universe

[Everyone contributes and actively builds upon class culture. Each person adds something unique to the classroom and takes pride both in his/her role and the culture he/she help create.]