



REAL REDSKINS

**A CULTURE
PLAYBOOK**



COSHOCTON CITY SCHOOLS

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DEFINING CULTURE

Culture is the combination of perceptions, attitudes, behaviors, and collaborations of an entire community. Every organization member contributes to its culture and none are immune from its influences. Highly effective school culture is the alignment of Beliefs, Values, Behaviors, and Practices in joint pursuit of Ambitious Goals. At Coshocton City Schools, we believe that a thriving school culture is foundational to student and adult success and psychological safety. We understand that, while individual “happiness” is an important component of a thriving culture, it is just the beginning. There are many “happy” schools in this country where students are not learning. We also understand that happiness is more than a mood; it is a mindset. Mindset influences behaviors and practices which, in turn, truly define our beliefs and values. Our actions will always be “heard” more loudly than our words. Our culture will be defined by the actions of every partner (teachers, administrators, support personnel, students) working collaboratively, as a family, in pursuit of our fullest potential.

This Culture Playbook has been developed for the purpose of achieving effective, focused, collaborative behaviors that will help us ensure the satisfaction and joy of reaching common goals.

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“What mattered more than how hard a man rowed was how well everything he did in the boat harmonized with what the other fellows were doing. And a man couldn’t harmonize with his crewmates unless he opened his heart to them. He had to care about his crew.”

— Daniel James Brown, *The Boys in the Boat: Nine Americans and Their Epic Quest for Gold at the 1936 Berlin Olympics*



culture playbook

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

1. We understand the meaning of culture.
 2. We understand that culture begins with “me.”
 3. We have a common language throughout the district.
 4. We understand the importance of and model Above the Line Behaviors.
 5. We understand and discourage the use of Below the Line Behaviors.
 6. We align our beliefs, values, behaviors and practices with ambitious goals.
 7. We have a clear set of expectations for all.
 8. We create Positive Events for ourselves and others.
- Event + Response = Outcome (E + R = O)
 - NO blaming, complaining, defending (BCD)

BELIEFS

Every action we take should align with these core beliefs.

Every student has the ability to learn.

Failure is part of the learning process.








Relationships matter.

Positive attitudes are contagious.

The team succeeds with trust, consistency and follow-through.

OUR VALUES

These attributes, outcomes, and behaviors will define who we are and what we do. Knowing our values allows us to live focused, authentic, happy, meaningful lives. Note: it is important that we identify only the values to which we will purposefully align our actions. Don't just talk about it; BE about it.

-  Loyalty to the organization (team, family, school)
-  Strong work ethic
-  Positivity/ happiness
-  Respect
-  Communication
-  Relationships/ empathy
-  Honesty

BEHAVIORS

We are creating a life that works by exhibiting the qualities of ownership, responsibility and accountability. We consistently make choices grounded in values and ideals that define how we live. We are in control of our outcomes when we use these behaviors.

- Greeting others warmly and complimenting each other
- Being responsible for your choices, owning your mistakes and failing forward
- Stepping up to help when needed
- Being actively engaged and listening intently
- Including others; teamwork
- Being involved and engaging with students intentionally
- Following through on commitments
- Being honest



ABOVE THE LINE

BELOW THE LINE

We give up control of outcomes and those of our organization by blaming, making excuses and living in personal denial. We become victims; stuff happens to us and we can't change anything. There is no learning, no movement, no happiness. We will work diligently to avoid and eliminate these behaviors.

- Complaining, without a suggested solution
- Negative talk (verbal and non-verbal); gossiping
- Making excuses
- Lying / dishonesty
- Refusing to honor building/district expectations
- Being late
- Failing to take responsibility for mistakes and blaming others
- Ignoring inappropriate behavior by staff or students

ADMINISTRATOR COMMITMENTS

As district leaders, we recognize that it is important to lead by example. We are committed to lifting up and serving our teams and believe that the following actions will demonstrate that.

1. Communicate regularly and with clarity (Written, Shared in Meetings, Repeated)
2. Follow through (I do what I say I will do)
3. Challenge staff to get better and believe that they can
4. Show Interest in others and build positive work relationships
5. Listen to others and give honest consideration to all others' Ideas
6. Visit classroom(s) daily when in the district
7. Maintain consistent expectations
8. Involve, and empower all staff
9. Always publicly back and support staff



EXPECTATIONS OF ALL DISTRICT EMPLOYEES

One of the strongest influences on student achievement is collective teacher efficacy, which means we are consistent and unanimous in our actions with and around students. We know that we make a positive difference as a team and act on that knowledge. We will be accountable to these actions.

1. Lift each other UP; be an encourager.
2. Hold each other accountable to our commitments.
3. Develop and practice the Above the Line Behaviors to use in school and life.
4. Strive to Bring the “Best Version of You” to School.
5. Treat every individual with respect and kindness.
6. Be a learner and a risk taker.
7. Actively participate in our team(s).

SCHOOL-BASED PRACTICES

These are the consistent, daily/weekly practices that we believe will contribute to a more effective culture and stimulate student achievement.

1. We will consistently use strategies that encourage student voice (i.e., call on all, turn and talk, restate, agree/disagree, add on, wait time).
2. We will provide students with consistent, specific feedback (verbal and written).
3. We will push/draw students (and ourselves) beyond the comfort zone.
4. We will intentionally build positive relationships.
5. We will utilize “Roll Call” and other monitoring protocols quarterly to match students with the type and degree of support needed.



INTEGRAL TASKS ASSOCIATED WITH THE CULTIVATION OF OUR CULTURE

We will use these integral tasks to continue cultivating our school culture.

1. Monitor all district goals at least semi-annually and plan forward.
2. Complete student, staff, and family surveys annually and plan forward.
3. Teams (horizontal and/or vertical) collaborate weekly.
4. We greet everyone (students & adults) we encounter, every day, all day.
5. Teachers communicate with at least one parent weekly; positives first.
6. Organizational and personal participation in community-wide events.
7. Create and disseminate displays of school pride through a variety of media.



Cultures cannot be built. They are cultivated like gardens...
 Flowers left unattended eventually yield to weeds.
 School Culture (like gardens) needs constant attention (beliefs, values, expectations) or toxic weeds will dominate.

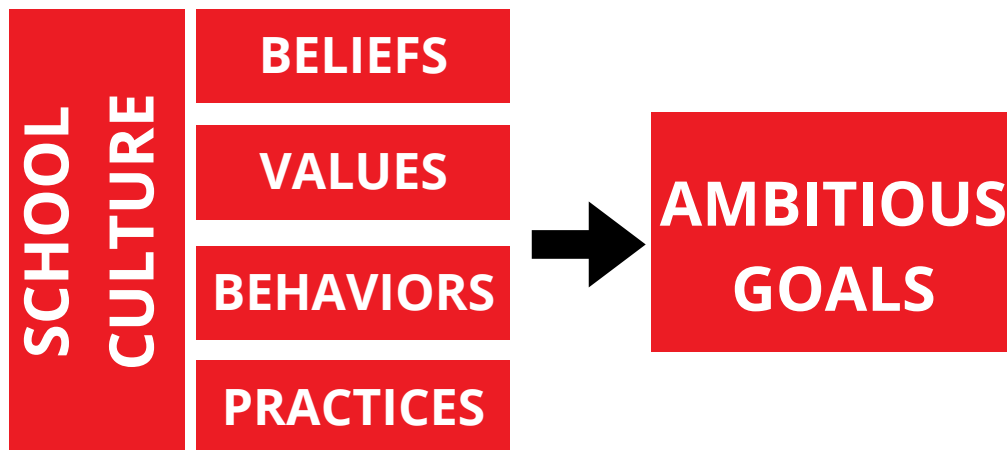
— Dufour & Burnette (2002)



ALIGNMENT OF BELIEFS, VALUES & BEHAVIORS

Culture is the Alignment of Beliefs, Values, Behaviors, and Practices in Pursuit of Ambitious Goals.

A culture is defined by the consistent actions of all participants. In a great school culture, all stakeholders will embrace and attempt to reflect the district's Beliefs, Values, expected Behaviors, and Practices. Additionally, we will hold each other accountable for our commitments. This sometimes requires courageous conversations. It is critical that each of us live out, in our actions, the beliefs and values to which we have committed as a school community.



AMBITIOUS GOALS

All schools must establish Ambitious Goals for their schools. It is not a sin to fail to meet your Ambitious Goals, but it is a crime not to set them for your students and staff. It's important to revise your SMART Goals to SMARTER Goals. In SMARTER Goals the **A** now stands for **Ambitious** and the **E** and **R** stand for **Evaluate** and **Reflect**.

SMARTER Goals

Change the A for Attainable to Ambitious, and add an E and R for Evaluate and Reflect. That's the pathway to SMARTER Goals.

FOR BETTER OUTCOMES

Learn how to control your emotions for better outcomes. Always *respond* and never *react*. When there is an event that challenges your emotions, 1) Press Pause—Count to Five, 2) Deep Breathing, 3) Get Your Mind Right and Respond. Remember your job is to create positive events for others.

E + R = O

Events + Response = Outcomes

SOURCE: Jack Canfield, Focus 3



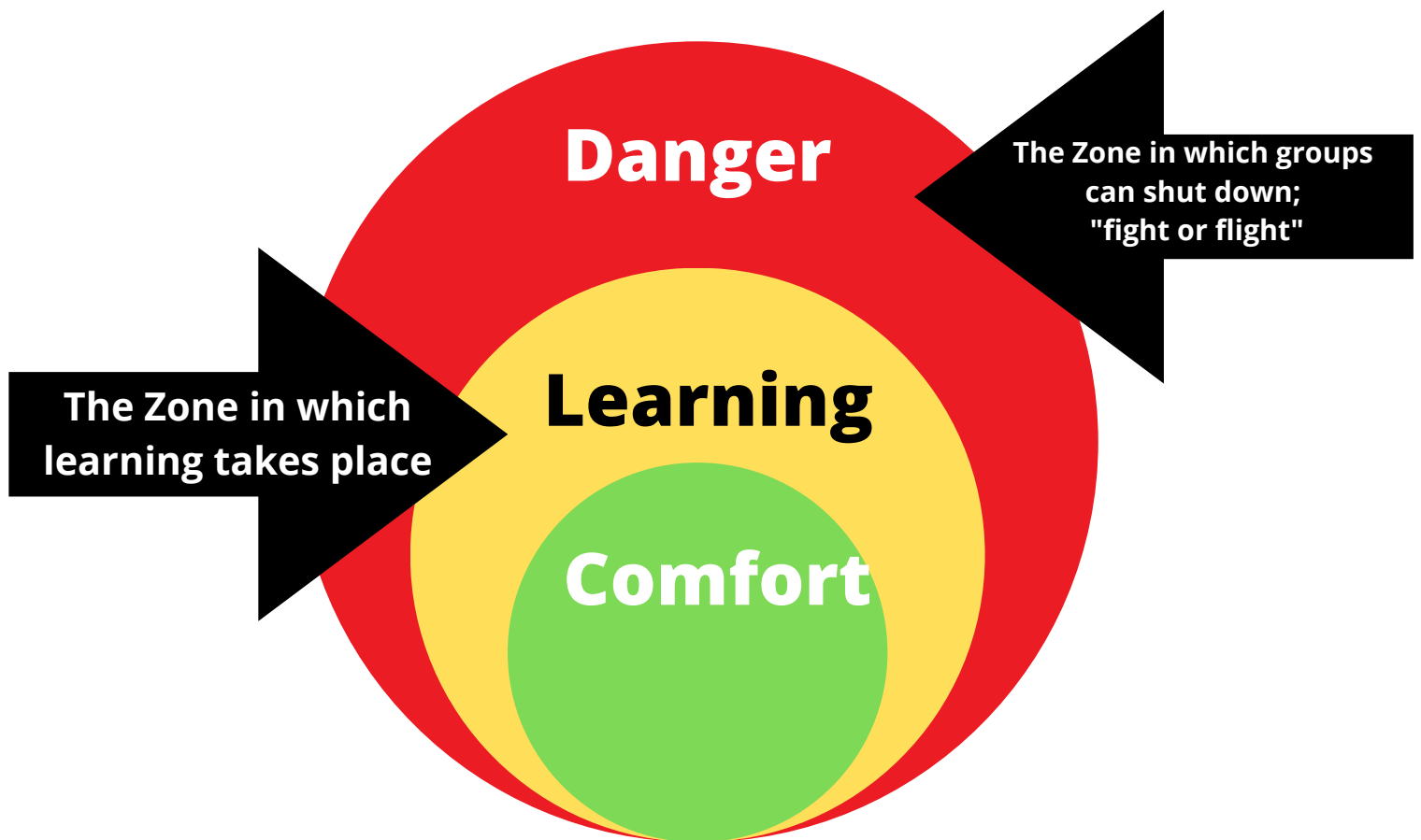
NO
Blame
Complain
Defend

SOURCE: Focus 3

CULTURE OF LEARNING

Culture of Learning / Penalty-Free Learning Zone / Embrace Productive Discomfort

We embrace the Learning/Risk Zone and will demonstrate resiliency. We learn from mistakes and “Fail-Forward.” We are curious and dare to challenge, take risks in the classroom, and learn from our mistakes. We understand students learn from rigor, and we will create *Penalty-Free Learning Environments* for our students, and for ourselves. Mistakes are part of the learning process. We only grow and learn when we are uncomfortable.



JUST BECAUSE I AM OUT OF MY COMFORT ZONE, I'M NOT IN DANGER.

I CAN TAKE RISKS, ASK FOR HELP, MAKE MISTAKES AND FAIL, AND I WILL ALWAYS BE VALUED AND UTILIZED.



CONTACT

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