

# 7 Ways Teachers Can Influence and Motivate Change at Their School

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**The roles and responsibilities of a teacher include dozens of components that extend well beyond simply preparing and presenting appropriate academic content to the students in their classroom.**

When considering the broad range of academic, cultural, social, and emotional demands on students in our rapidly changing world, teachers must be masterful practitioners to support the unique needs of each of their students. In order to extend this impact beyond

their classroom walls and into the school as a whole, teachers must grow and flex key muscles to influence and motivate change with a variety of stakeholders.

Perhaps as a teacher you have developed a strong culture and sense of community in your own individual classroom, and are eager to engage a broader audience to improve the culture and climate of the school as a whole. Use the ideas below to create schoolwide culture change in your community, and work with your school leaders to implement a consistent system across your whole campus.

# Here are **7 ways** a teacher can connect with, influence, and motivate leaders to make a change to current schoolwide practices and resources at their school:

1

## Spread your research-based WHY

- Communicate your beliefs about student culture and discipline best practices with peers and leaders
- Use research to support your beliefs and practices and show proven outcomes with school culture improvement
- Discuss challenges and opportunities within current school practices

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## Share and encourage the sharing of best practices

- Open your door, both physically to peers and leaders to observe you and your students in action, and also metaphorically to hold open discussions
- Share an effective strategy during a team meeting or staff PD, and highlight best practices of other teachers

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## Initiate problem solving and learning opportunities

- Hold a discussion amongst peers about their biggest challenges in improving practices that support culture and climate, and support a brainstorming session using a problem-solving protocol to find solutions
- Get feedback from peers or leaders about the biggest pain points in improving practices that support culture and climate, and connect them with others who are strong in these areas





4

## Pilot a set of practices and gather data

- Try out a new program or set of practices to target key growth areas within student culture and climate. Gather data, and present this to peers and leaders to demonstrate the impact.
- Understand what is important to key stakeholders (i.e. reduction in time students spend out of class) and gather and present data that specifically highlights this area



5

## Conduct a premortem to identify “what could go wrong” prior to making a change

- Consider the schoolwide change in practice you’d like to see, and collaborate with peers to list all of the negative consequences that could occur if this change is not implemented well
- Create a proactive plan to address these challenges, and set a time to gather data and assess the impact of the change in practice a few weeks after implementation

6

## Share success stories

- Connect with teachers and leaders in similar schools that have implemented similar changes, and gather qualitative and quantitative data to highlight positive impact
- Share stories as a case study with peers and leaders (or borrow some of ours). Brainstorm all considerations that would go into deciding whether to implement this change, and note lessons to be learned from the school in the case study.

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## Have a direct, open conversation with leaders

Ask to meet with your school leader, and plan to present your idea for a change in practice. Plan for questions like:

- What do you see as the benefits to this approach?
- What might be the biggest barriers?
- What factors would we consider in making this decision?
- What opportunities can we explore to try this out on a smaller scale?
- What can I/we do to make this happen?





Given these ideas for influencing and motivating stakeholders to impact change at your school, consider one thing you can do this week to collaborate and connect with peers and leaders to continue to improve the culture and climate for students at your school.



**Chart a course of action, take the first step, and continue to expand your impact to students, teachers, and leaders across your school.**

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