

What Makes A Good School?

Ryan J. Zaro

Sierra Nevada College

Abstract

This paper takes a deeper look at what makes a good school. The factors that make up a good school can be anything and everything. Three elements explored in this paper are effective teachers, the environment of the school, and the administration that runs the school. Teachers need to be effective, supportive, engaging and knowledgeable in order to run a good school. The school itself should be a rich environment that promotes student learning and has a bond to everyone involved in the school, whether it's the students, staff, or community. The administration that runs the school should also be supportive and connect with the students in a positive, engaging way. The combination of these three things is vital to what makes a good school.

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When examining what makes a good school, many items need to be looked at and examined. No school is ever the same as the next and it is vital to examine the factors that make each individual school a good school. These factors can be many things and are successful in their own individual ways. Three important elements to a good school are the teachers that make up the school, the environment of the school itself, and the administration that leads the school. Many schools have one of these three things, but if a school has a combination of the three, the school is a good school.

Henry Brooks Adams once said, “A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops” (Guillemets, 1998). This quote exemplifies the impact effective teachers have on students, as well as their impact on good schools. Teachers are the backbones of any school, so it is key to have the best of the best in a good school. A uniformly able teaching staff is essential to ensuring student achievement. Schools in which teachers teach out of their content area or where they are poorly prepared in their subjects, where teacher morale and engagement are low, where teachers are unable to teach well to diverse student needs, and where incompetent teaching is tolerated are severely handicapped in the pursuit of excellence (“Effective Schools,” 2010). This is a prime example of what schools shouldn’t do when it comes to teachers. Schools need their teachers to be the best, know their content area, be encouraging, and be ready and willing to adapt to both student and school needs. Teachers are the people that work with students everyday, and it is the teachers that make the difference when it comes to student achievement. If the students are engaged, encouraged and doing well, the teacher is doing his or her job. In turn, the school is affected, making it a good school.

The school's environment is something that makes or breaks a good school. There are many elements within a school that promote or impede students' success. Schools that promote student achievement, nourish strong academic performance. This is achieved when schools express high expectations through meaningful statements of academic missions, goals that strive for high performance, display students' work publically, and hold ceremonies that celebrate excellent individual and collective performances ("Effective Schools," 2010). In turn, schools that promote or encourage these things, make them good schools. These are the schools that students want to come to and thrive in. Another huge element is the idea that the school is a community. There is a growing body of research that demonstrates schools with a sense of community enhance student performance. The idea that individuals are valued and have their own unique relationships, promote learning and makes the school an all around better school ("Effective Schools," 2010). The idea that the school is a community show how important the school's environment is, and how it makes a good school.

The administration that leads the school is another key element that makes a good school. The characteristics and attitudes of the principals, headmasters, and others that run the school, often determine the dynamics of the school, the academic outcomes, and the policies and procedures (Streich, 2009). This is key when running a good school. Without effective leadership, minimal learning takes place. Administration must provide strong leadership that sets a tone for the daily operations of the school community. If such leadership does not exist, discipline breaks down, academics falter, and a sense of organized chaos reigns. School leadership is about dynamic modeling that encourages collegiality and promotes excellence in every aspect of the school community (Streich,

2009). This again is key when determining if a school is a good school.

In closing, there are many factors that make a good school. Strong, effective teachers are the first and most important factor that makes a good school. Without these amazing people, students would not succeed or achieve what they need to. Schools that have the best teachers are considered the best schools. An effective community-like environment is the best type of school environment. Schools that promote academic success and achievement, as well as create a sense of community are the best schools. Lastly, the administration that runs the schools are just important as anything else when looking at a good school. Administrators that promote a sense of community and support everyone are the most effective. A combination of these three elements is what makes a good school. If a school has these three things, it is destined to be a good school. If they have some of these things, they are well on their way to becoming a good school. It is all up to the individual schools to become the best school they can be.

Reference

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