

## Characteristics of High Performing Schools

Research on the characteristics of High Performing Schools has identified the following traits as key to the consistent success and effective functioning of these organizations. These traits form the basis of the questions in the annual survey administered in Everett Public Schools.

### Clean and Shared Focus

Effective schools are comprised of committed people (adults and students) who passionately embrace the vision and mission of education. They have a commitment to making a difference in the lives of the students and communities from which they come. These schools are staffed with people whose purpose for working is for those they serve.

### High Standards and Expectations

“Excellence” is a reflection of the personal discipline that staff members bring to their work. Schools that place a high emphasis on performance development and have a clear understanding of the distinction between experience and expertise are more likely to experience a commitment from staff to achieving performance excellence.

Teachers and staff believe all students can learn and that they have the skills and systems in place to teach all students. They hold one another accountable for student learning.

### Effective Leadership

Effective leaders are committed to the core values of the school and district, and provide feedback and encouragement to achieve performance excellence. Effective leaders demonstrate maturity, good judgment, strategic and critical thinking to the process of creating within the organization they need, the increased capacity for success.

### High Levels of Collaboration and Communication

Effective schools intentionally foster teamwork to create an environment that celebrates individual differences and contributes to organizational outcomes. Effective organizations and teams are a reflection of equal participation, substantive conversations, clear expectations, accountability, and continual feedback. There is constant collaboration and communication between and among teachers of all grades, students, and parents, families, or guardians. Everybody is involved and connected, including students, parents and members of the community, to solve problems and create solutions.

### Parent and Community Involvement

Effective schools create and sustain high levels of parent and community involvement. There is a sense that all educational stakeholders have a responsibility to educate students, not just the teachers and staff in schools. Parents, as well as businesses, social service agencies, and community colleges/universities all play a vital role in this effort. It is essential that parents be informed and involved in decision-making to support their student's educational experience.

### Supportive Learning Environment

The environment in which a staff works and students learn has a significant impact on the quality of educational work. Equality, safety, and a sense of fairness go a long way toward encouraging staff members to strive for excellence. A sense of community as distinct from being a team is another avenue to achieving organizational success, the pride and support all staff members.

### Frequent Monitoring of Teaching and Learning

Effective schools engage in constant, thorough, and rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning. Teaching and learning are continually adjusted based on frequent monitoring of student progress and needs. A variety of assessment procedures are used – both for monitoring adult work and student work. The results of the assessments are used to improve student performances and to improve the instructional program.

### High Quality Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

Effective schools implement, with fidelity and rigor, high-quality curriculum, instruction and assessment. Curriculum is aligned with the state standards for learning. Research-based materials and teaching and learning stratagems are implemented. There is a clear understanding of the assessment system, what is measured in various assessments and how is measured.