

# Collective Efficacy



Collective efficacy refers to the shared belief that through their collective action, educators can influence student outcomes and increase achievement for all students (Donohoo 2017). Research indicates that collective efficacy is the number one factor influencing student achievement, three times larger than such factors as socioeconomic status, home environment, and parental involvement and twice that of prior achievement (Donohoo, Hattie, and Eells 2018). When collective efficacy exists, teachers place improvement of student learning at the centre, choosing strategic drivers for change, learning collaboratively, and delivering results collectively. Collective efficacy pushes and supports educators to improve their practice in the service of students (Malloy in Fullan, 2016).

Collective efficacy, however, is more than simply a belief that teachers can make a difference. Rather, it is the combined belief that it is the teachers that cause the learning, combined with the action of working together, and fed with the evidence that through their actions they are impacting student learning. It is through teachers reflecting on teaching practice and implementing plans to positively impact student learning that collective efficacy is developed and realized. (Hattie 2018 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UCMV692itfg>)

Collective efficacy helps create an environment where:

- there are high expectations for student success;
- there is shared language with a focus on student *learning* as opposed to *instructional compliance*;
- there is a belief by teachers that it is their fundamental task to evaluate the effect of their practice on students' progress and achievement;
- there is a belief that success and failure in student learning is more about what teachers did or did not do, and they place value in solving problems of practice together;



- teachers work together to search for high-yield strategies and investigate their evidence of impact; and
- teachers and leaders approach their work with an intensified persistence and strong resolve.

### The Power of Collective Efficacy (Donohoo, Hattie, Eells 2018)

There are six enabling conditions for collective efficacy to flourish in a school setting:

1. Advanced teacher influence: provide teachers with opportunities to participate in decision making in the school;
2. Goal consensus: reach consensus on where they are going;
3. Teachers' knowledge about one another's work: gain more knowledge about each other's practice to gain confidence in their ability to impact student learning;
4. Cohesive staff: agree with each other on fundamental educational issues;
5. Responsiveness of leadership: leaders show concern and respect for staff and protect teachers from issues that detract from teaching;
6. Effective systems of intervention: use effective systems of intervention ensuring all students are successful.

How do schools build collective efficacy?

- Validate instructional improvement through sources of data, making the link between teachers' actions and student outcomes explicit. ("What was the impact when I did x?" "How did x affect the students?" "How can we work together to make x even better?")
- Engage in conversations with teachers about the meaning of impact, about the difference between achievement goals and progress, and about the use of dependable evidence.
- Orient work around outcomes: "Did the students gain the essential understandings and skills?" "How do we know?" "How can we use evidence of learning to improve classroom instruction?"



- Set expectations for formal, frequent, and productive teacher collaboration and create high levels of trust for this collaboration to take place. The emphasis should be on identifying student learning needs and detecting problems that need to be addressed in classrooms and making adjustments to instruction as necessary.
- Use daily evidence to determine impact to support teachers in seeing how they can make adjustments to their classroom practices.

## Reflection

The following data sources and questions can be used to guide the group's discussion.

### Performance Measurement Framework School Report:

**Outcome 2:** Students experience a safe, caring, and inclusive school environment.

- Indicator 2.2: Positive School Climate – Staff

**Outcome 3:** The education system is responsive to students' strengths and needs.

- Indicator 3.1: School Engagement - Student
- Indicator 3.2: Teachers' Expectations - Student
- Indicator 3.3: Self-Efficacy - Teacher

### School Development Survey Scales:

- Professional Learning (Staff Survey)
- School Fit (Family Survey)

### Reference Documents

Responsive Teaching and Learning Policy;

School based policies and procedures.






### Additional Evidence:

- Schools' Professional Learning plans
- Meeting minutes for teaching and learning teams, grade level teams, department teams (types of items discussed as above in building collective efficacy)

## Questions to Consider



Use evidence of current practices to support your discussion points, strengths and opportunities for growth.

-  What conditions exist within your school that provide evidence of collective efficacy? Refer to the conditions listed above.
-  What does your school do to build collective efficacy? Refer to the section “How do schools build collective efficacy?” above.
-  How do you contribute to the collective efficacy in your school culture? How does your school culture contribute to your sense of collective efficacy?

### References:

Hattie, J. (2016). *Visible Learning for teachers: Maximizing impact on learning*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Katz, S., & Daik, L. (2012). *Intentional interruption: Breaking down barriers to transform professional practice*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.