

# Leadership for Educational and Organizational Advancement



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## Reducing Cultural Challenges Saves Money

Many school districts are reporting low achievement for historically underserved students while other students do not have the same challenges.

Asian and White students outperform most historically underserved students in Language Arts, mathematics, and science.

In many cases, the students have the similar curriculum standards, curriculum materials, teachers, governing rules, and physical environment. For some reason, in any given economical region, whether it is poor, middle class, or rich the statistics reveal that most historically underserved students are outperformed by Asian and White students.

So what is the difference? The major difference is the cultural expectations that students and educators bring to the school setting.

When educators and students have different cultural expectations the result is increased suspensions and reduced aca-

demic achievement which also results in the loss of monies for many under-achieving schools.

Since most schools are in the business of successfully educating students, reduced academic achievement is an indication of an ineffective organization. Ineffective organizations often have high employee turnover rates, high employee absenteeism, and low employee morale which are symptoms that plague many low performing schools.

Ineffective organizational symptoms can cost schools to lose hundreds of thousands of dollars annually. For example, replacing employees can cost a school one and one-half the salary of the replaced personnel. If a teachers earns \$50,000.00 per year it can cost \$75,000.00 to replace an employee due to replacement cost. Replacement cost include:

- ◆ Attracting applicants
- ◆ Entrance interviews
- ◆ Pre-employment administrative expenses

- ◆ Acquisition and dissemination of employment information

Schools can use teamwork to overcome the symptoms of an ineffective organization. Teamwork fosters an environment where administrators, teachers, parents, and students can collaborate to work cooperatively to meet the vision of the school which ultimately increases student achievement for all students in the school.

Teamwork can begin with each educator's personal vision for the school. Afterwards educators will need to develop a shared vision for their school. Once the shared vision has been developed educators should gather all of the information necessary to accomplish the shared vision. This also requires a scientific evaluation of the school's culture. Finally, teachers must develop goals, benchmarks, and assessments for attaining the shared vision.

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