

The JAM Jar



OCTOBER CAN BE A SCARY MONTH

In our September Issue of the JAM JAR we spoke to the importance of clearly communicating your vision, purpose and core values to ensure a smooth start to the year. The importance of trusting relationships and a strong culture from the beginning of the year will ensure October is not a scary month.

We always told our leaders and staff to work hard in September to build culture and routines. Setting the expectations and reinforcing them at all levels is critical. Once these are in place the environment will be conducive to learning for all.

When October becomes scary and you find yourself in a position where things are not going as planned you should stop and be ready to reset. Ignoring the "chaos" or putting all your energy into the small distractions will not result in a course correction.

Now is a time to examine the data you have collected so far. Are office referrals increasing? Are you seeing students disengaged in their learning during your classroom walkthroughs? Are you finding it difficult to visit classrooms? Do staff and students struggle to articulate the expectations for behaviour and culture within the school? Are parents feeling unwelcomed and not part of your team? If your answer to any of these questions is yes...you NEED to reset!

In September we introduced you to our leadership development academies. One of our beginning foci for this work was school culture. It truly is the foundation on which all other work is built.

In the next excerpt on page 2 you will hear from one of our school based administrators about how this work has impacted her approach to school culture.



THIS MONTH'S EDITION :

- October Can Be A Scary Month
- Principal's Reflection
- How Can We Be of Support?





REFLECTIONS FROM A SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

School culture and routines play a pivotal role in shaping the educational experience of our students. A positive school culture fosters a sense of belonging, trust, and collaboration among students and staff, creating an environment conducive to learning and personal growth. This was a consistent focus during our Principal's Academy where we had the opportunity to share best practices with fellow leaders. Some key components to consider when supporting a positive school culture include:

- **Leadership Commitment:** School leaders, including principals and administrators, need to champion the cause of creating a positive culture. Model, Model, Model!
- **Clear Vision:** Collaboratively build a clear and compelling vision statement and a set of core values that guide the school's culture.
- **Inclusive and Welcoming Atmosphere:** Emphasize inclusivity and diversity. Promote empathy, respect, and understanding among students and staff.
- **Candid Communication:** Encourage candid and honest communication among all stakeholders. Transparency and vulnerability build trust and foster a sense of community.
- **Consistent routines:** Establish a sense of predictability and stability, helping students feel safe and allowing them to focus on their studies. Moreover, routines promote building strong executive functioning skills in our students.
- **Celebration of Achievements:** Recognize and celebrate the accomplishments of students, teachers, and staff. This creates a culture of appreciation and motivation.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Regularly assess and adapt the school culture. Solicit feedback from all stakeholders and be willing to make changes that enhance the positive aspects of the school's environment.
- **Community Engagement:** Engage with the broader community to build partnerships and support networks. This can enrich the school culture and provide additional resources and opportunities for students.

When students, teachers, staff, and parents collectively contribute to and benefit from a positive culture, the entire educational experience is enriched, leading to better academic outcomes and the personal development of students.



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How Can JAM Consulting Support You?

JAM Consulting is not about a one size fits all service. We work with school divisions and schools to get to the root of their individual needs through reflective dialogue, school reviews, data analysis, culture audits, classroom walkthroughs and more. We meet with teams to determine what supports and strategies will enable them to achieve their vision, purpose, core values and goals. We are student focused and have the expertise and experience to support you in achieving success for all students. Check us out at jamconsulting.ca or book a free online session, at info@jamconsulting.ca, to meet with us to discuss how we can support you.