

# From At-Risk to Academic Excellence: What Successful Leaders Do

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**Solutions**  
*to the Dropout Crisis*

How do school leaders build school cultures that diminish the likelihood of children dropping out of school?

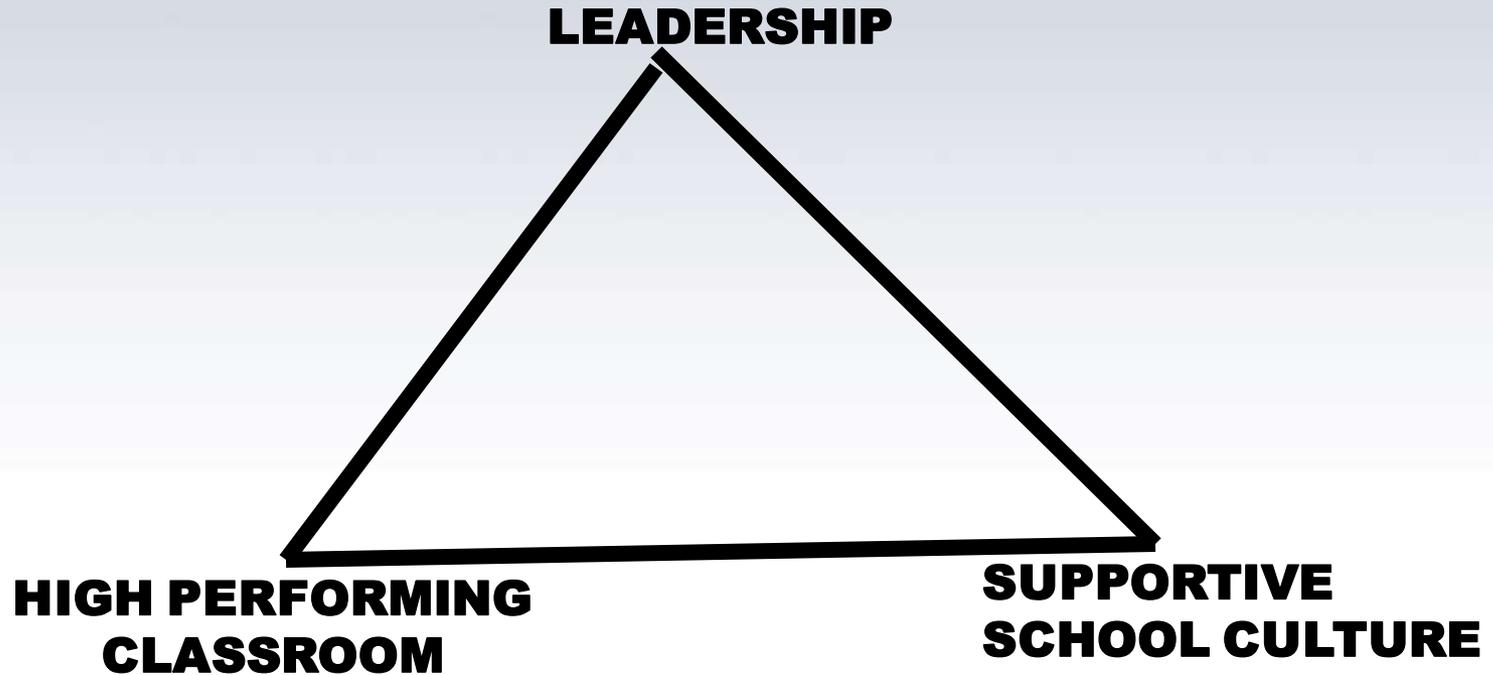
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# School Improvement

is based on 3 elements



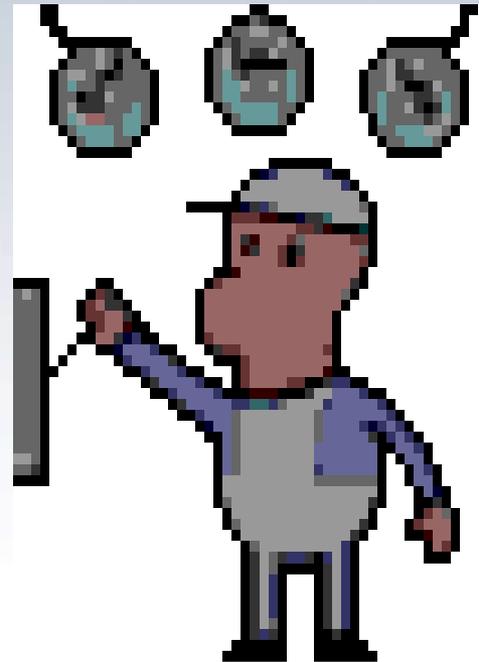
# Determinants of School Success

- Visionary, empowering leaders
- Positive, supportive school cultures
- Improved student learning in high performing classrooms.



# Dimming Out; Not Dropping Out

A slow, progressive dimming of a student's belief in himself and his capabilities, and the gradual extinguishing of one's faith in learning as key to the future.

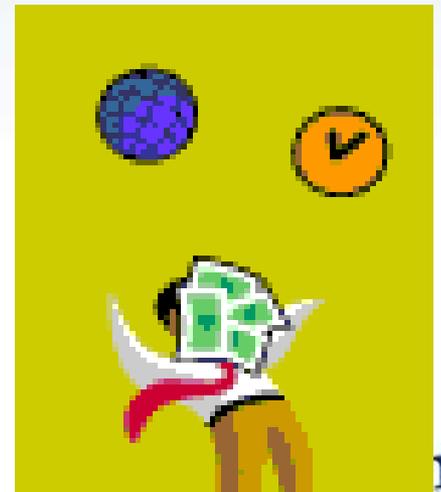


# 1. Emphasis is on Learning

Dim out begins when students realize that learning is not really the most important thing because adults make it abundantly clear by their actions or inactions that other things are more important.

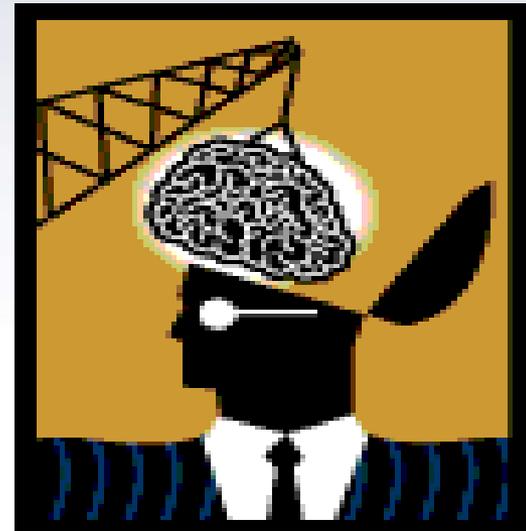
Teaching and  
Learning First.

Always!!!



## 2. Genuinely Believes that School Makes the Difference

Dim out starts in schools in which the expectations are low, especially for students who struggle. One of the prime focal points is on school improvement.



### 3. Understands and Supports School's Mission



Dim out begins when students realize that the mission statement is really just words on a wall.

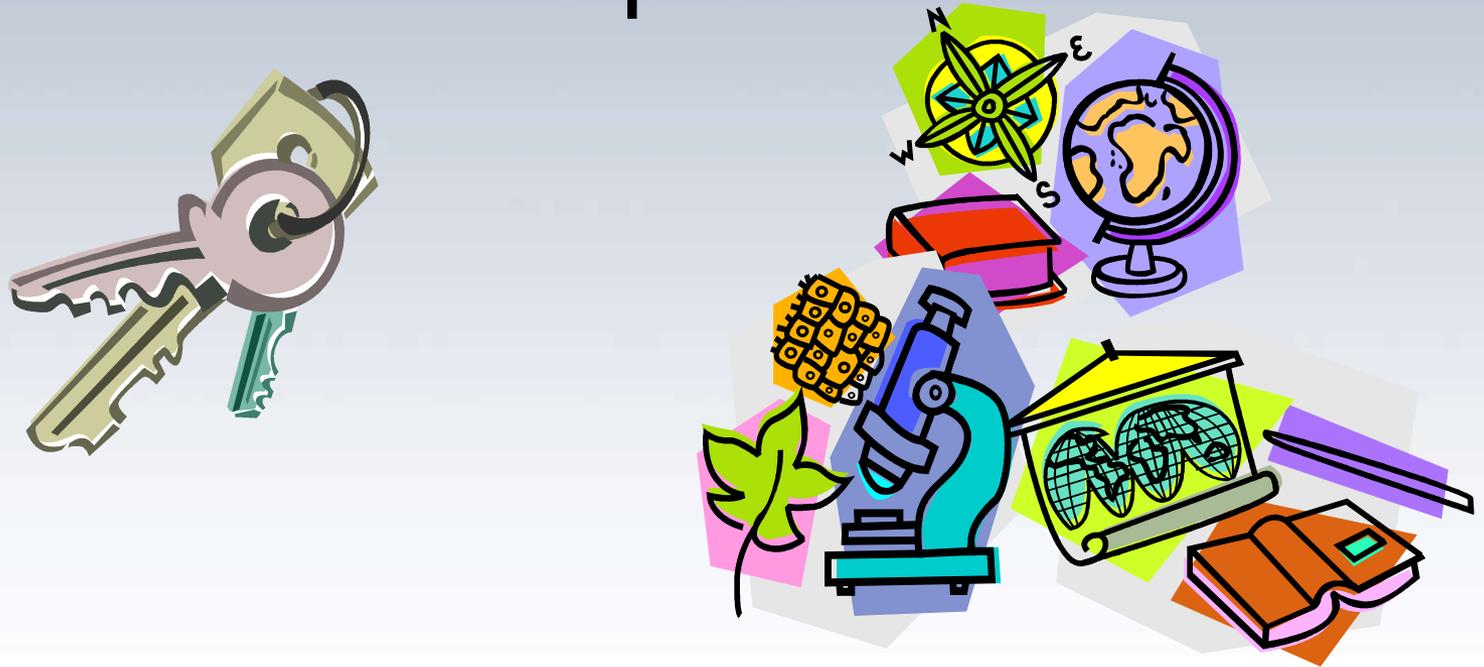


# 4. Hires Best Faculty Possible and Empowers Them

Deadwood floats, and will float down stream and out of the building if the current is swift and steady. Deadwood is a leading cause of dim out.



# 5. Knows Teaching and Learning Principles



The keys to the school are not nearly as important as the keys to learning. Dim out begins even when there is a great deal of teaching – if there is no learning.



# 6. Models Effective Teaching

Dim out begins in schools where the leader is superficially concerned with instruction. He/she is only in the classroom when process requires a visit.



Faculty meetings are always about instruction and student learning.



# 7. Empowers parents and the community

Dim out happens less in schools in which the leader constantly involves all of the stakeholders.



# 8. Promotes Innovation

Innovation keeps the school climate and culture fresh. This constant renewal and excitement is often a catalyst for keeping the potential “dim out” student involved.



# 9. Know how to prioritize

Dim out begins when schools and leaders attempt to put out all of the fires at the same time.



# 10. Uses Data

Dim out begins and continues when no one reads the symptoms so there is no intervention.



# Learning is Light

We need children & staff to run into school on Monday morning as quickly as they run out of school on Friday afternoon.

