

Introduction

The importance of the culture of the school cannot be under-estimated. School culture is the basis of all success and achievement at the school. It is the culture of the school that regulates the behaviour of the school community, it is the school's culture that builds commitment to purpose among all members and stakeholders of the school, and it is the school's culture that builds and sustains the pride that moulds the school community into a viable force. The culture of the school impacts learner attitude and performance, teacher commitment and professionalism, and parental involvement and support. The culture of the school is the basis of a positive school image, and the reason for the resulting respect that comes from the community and community structures and institutions. All priorities and activities of the school must be embedded in a positive school culture in order to improve the chance of success.

Because of the importance of culture to the success of the school, this module seeks to provide principals with the understanding and skills to assess and reflect on the culture of their schools, and the information and guidelines that are necessary to develop and implement an agenda for creating positive school cultures.

The module seeks to highlight and reinforce the following points.

- 1. Culture is the basis of the performance and success of the school.*
- 2. Culture does not reside in the artefacts and physical attributes of the school, but in the character and contribution of its people.*
- 3. Since all schools have people who inhabit them, all schools will acquire a culture based on the nature and behaviour of people in the school community.*
- 4. Culture is a collective responsibility. All must practice and preserve the culture, and all must add value regulating and sustaining that culture.*
- 5. While a positive culture will significantly transform a school, it is equally important to note that the school, with the power and dominance of its culture, will transform all the people who enter the school's space.*

6. A positive culture cannot be left to chance. A positive school culture must be crafted, facilitated and nurtured by school leadership with the support of members of the school community.

In order to build capacity in schools for crafting new and transformed school cultures, this module is divided into 14 practical activities which slowly introduces participants to the concept and practice of crafting positive school cultures.

The first 3 activities are foundation activities which introduce the concept of culture and highlight the core elements of a positive school culture.

Activities 4 through to 13 explore the 10 considerations which are essential for embedding particular cultural attributes in the school. These 10 activities explore the 10 different requirements for building a positive school culture that advances particular values and attributes in the school.

The last activity in the module is a school-based activity. It provides, in a step by step process, a set of general guidelines for principals to follow in order to rollout an agenda for building a positive school culture.

Principals will receive ongoing support from the district office and from NECT coaches in building a school culture that is appropriate for the school and a school culture which reflects the aspirations and desires of the school community.

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Activity 1:

FAMILY CULTURE

Introduction:

Culture lies, not only in the physical or material attributes in our environment, but in what we feel and what we hold within ourselves. In this respect, our culture as a people is not only in what we have but in what we share, in what binds us and holds us together as a collective, and what binds us together as one. Culture is largely manifested in people themselves – how they feel, what they honour and preserve; and how they behave. There is no better example of the ideals in organizational culture than the family culture. The family, as a social institution, is a good example of the core attributes that make and preserve cultural bonds among its members. In this activity, the concept of family is used to illustrate and discuss some of the core attributes of a culture. We will explore and discuss the attributes which serve to create the beliefs and the bonds that hold an organizational unit (e.g. the family) together.

This activity is an introduction to the concept of culture, defined formally as the ideas, customs and social behaviour of a people which binds them together. It seeks to explore what we understand about culture by looking at the organizational unit with which we are most familiar – the family.

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to assist participants in identifying some of the critical attributes of a culture and some of the fundamental requirements for culture building. This understanding will be used as a backdrop for understanding, building and nurturing positive cultures in schools.

Objectives:

1. To identify cultural attributes of the family which have applicability and relevance to schools, and to efforts for improving school cultures.
2. To list some of the initiatives you can take to improve the culture of the school using the family culture as an example.

Instructions:

This activity has two exercises. Illustrating your family culture and applying aspects of your family culture to schools. Instructions are provided separately for Exercise 1 and Exercise 2.

Instructions for Exercise 1:
Illustrating your family culture

In the table on page 7 a few statements are provided about your family. Each of these statements illustrate some aspects of a family culture. For each statement, please note whether this is true for your family by answering 'yes' or 'no'. If the statement is true for your family, provide some evidence or illustration about what makes it true. Please do this exercise individually.

After completing the table individually, work as a group to identify and list aspects of a family culture which could be applied to schools.

Instructions for Exercise 2:
Applying Aspects of Family Culture to Schools

In the table on page 9, list the aspects of the family culture which you have identified in the previous table. For each aspect of culture, note how you will apply it to your schools.

Exercise 1
Family Culture
Exploring and Illustrating your Family Culture

About your Family	Is this true of your Family?	Evidence and Family Experiences
1. My family is unique.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<i>What makes your family unique?</i>
2. The values of my family are always evident in what we do as family members.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<i>What are the values? How are they evident?</i>
3. My family have routines that reflect our values and priorities.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<i>What are some of your family routines?</i>
4. In our family home there is evidence and symbols of how much we care about each other.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<i>What evidence and symbols are there?</i>
5. Every day our love and caring for each other is reinforced and confirmed.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<i>How is love reinforced and confirmed?</i>
6. As a family we celebrate the things we value.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<i>What do you celebrate as a family?</i>
7. We have pride in our family as a unit.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<i>What makes you proud of your family?</i>
8. We teach and support each other so that each can be useful and productive in the family.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<i>How do you teach and support?</i>
9. We have unstated rules, which we do not easily violate.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<i>What are some of the rules which keep your family together?</i>
10. We are known in the community as a loving and caring family.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<i>How do people know that you are a loving and caring family?</i>

Aspects of a Family Culture which could be applied to Schools

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

Exercise 2
Applying Aspects of My Family Culture to Schools

Aspects of my Family Culture	Application to Schools
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	

Summary Points
About Family Culture
... Know the power of culture

1. Commitment to and respect for culture binds a group together.
2. In any organization, a strong and vibrant culture is the basis of good performance in the organization.
3. The components of a culture must be continually and routinely reinforced.
4. The culture of the group is invested and anchored in each member of the group. Each one in the unit represents and is evidence of the culture.
5. Commitment to culture breeds and nurtures inherent obligations.
6. When you enter a group you grow into the culture.
7. The culture embedded in you is carried with you wherever you go.
8. Culture serves as your badge of identify.

Activity 2:

SCHOOL CULTURE CHOICES

Introduction

There is no school without a culture. The culture of every school is borne and shaped by the people associated with the school – staff (teachers, management), learners, support staff, parents, and community members. What is experienced in the school results from the beliefs, attitudes, perspectives and behaviours of the people in the school. A school with cruel and unreasonable teachers will be known for harshness, insensitivity and bullying. A school with kind and professional teachers and staff will be known for its sensitivity and caring for learners. No school will have one kind of teachers, staff, learners or parents. As a result, no school will automatically imbue a particular culture. Instead, many schools are known for many things – some pleasant and complimentary, some disturbing and some unflattering. Yet, culture is the source of success and the basis of excellence in schools. It is the first responsibility of principals, therefore, to shape and nurture a school culture which advances the objectives and priorities of the school. This culture must become part of the DNA of the school, and should infiltrate and permeate all in the school and all that takes place in the school. The culture of the school becomes its essential essence – it becomes the sweet fragrance that is carried by all in the school. When the culture is well established it belongs to the school. It does not change when the leaders in the school change. It does not change with every successive group of learners.

The culture of the school then begins to shape and nurture its inhabitants so that it may be preserved.

It is because of this that school leaders must create the culture that serves the priorities of the school.

The purpose of this module, therefore, is to create positive cultures in schools. It implies that if there is no definite culture in the school, the leaders in the school must exercise the choice of creating the culture they desire to serve the school, its members and its stakeholders.

This activity is about making and reflecting on school culture choices. The activity focuses on what culture you want to adopt or establish in your school, and it encourages reflection on the values which inform the culture, and the outcomes or

evidence which confirms that the culture exists. These we use as the basis for envisioning a culture and seeding the culture in the school so that it can be nurtured to become the DNA of the school. In subsequent activities, there will be exercises on the process used to nurture and grow the cultural profile of your choice.

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to give participants the opportunity to reflect on and design the kind of cultural features they desire at their school. In this regard, participants are expected to develop a profile of their school culture – the values; the cultural norms; and the observable outcomes.

Objectives:

1. Participants will identify the aspects of a positive school culture they wish to create at their schools.
2. Participants will profile their ideal school culture by indicating the values they wish to underlie the culture, the essential features of the culture, and the observable outcomes or evidence which will confirm that the culture exists at the school.
3. Participants will reflect on whether any effort is needed to strengthen and improve the culture of their respective schools.

Instructions:

This activity has 2 exercises: *Exercise 1 – School Culture Choices*; and *Exercise 2 – Profiling your Ideal School Culture*. Instructions for each exercise are provided below.

Exercise 1
School Culture Choices

The table on page 14 presents a list of options for choosing the features or the characteristics of the school culture you desire. The features of the school culture require the identification of cultural characteristics for which your school will become known. These features will represent the DNA of your school, and will affect the behaviour and performance of all who inhabit the school. You may choose as many cultural features as you wish. For each of the 16 items noted, please note whether each is currently part of your school culture, and then tick (✓) whether you desire the item to be part of your school culture. If there are any features of your current or desired school culture that are missing, please write in those features at the end of the table.

Each participant in the group should do this individually. In the end participants in the group will discuss and review their responses and develop a priority listing of the 10 most desirable features of a school culture. The ranked items should be placed on page 16

Exercise 2:
Profiling your School Culture

In profiling your school culture you are required to write: (a) the core values to which all in your school will subscribe; (b) the basic features of your school culture which you will seek to establish and nurture, and (c) the outcomes or evidence of success which you will expect to see when your school culture is fully established. A chart to record your choices is presented on page 17. Please fill out the chart to profile the features of the school culture you wish to establish.

As a group you will identify the values you want to establish and reinforce in the school. In order to assist you in thinking about the values you wish to establish at the school, a sample list of values is provided for your easy reference on page 18.

After completing the chart individually, please compare your profiles and record how many in the workshop as a whole have identified each particular item as part of the cultural profile of their school. Please go back to the chart on page 16 to record the number of participants choosing each item as part of their school's cultural profile.

Exercise 1

School Culture Choices

School Culture Choices <i>What is my School known for? What do I want my school to be known for?</i>	Do you have?	Do you want?	<i>What features of this culture do you want? What do you want to see as evidence of this culture?</i>
	Yes/No	Yes/No	
1. Academic excellence	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
2. Good relations among staff	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
3. Good relations among students	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
4. Administrative efficiency	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
5. Discipline	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
6. Safe school	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
7. Friendly and welcoming	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
8. Sporting school	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
9. Environmentally sensitive	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
10. Education for the future	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
11. Maths and Science excellence	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
12. A healthy school	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
13. Excellence in technology	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
14. Service to the community	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
15. Kindness and respect	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
16. What other aspects of school culture do you want?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

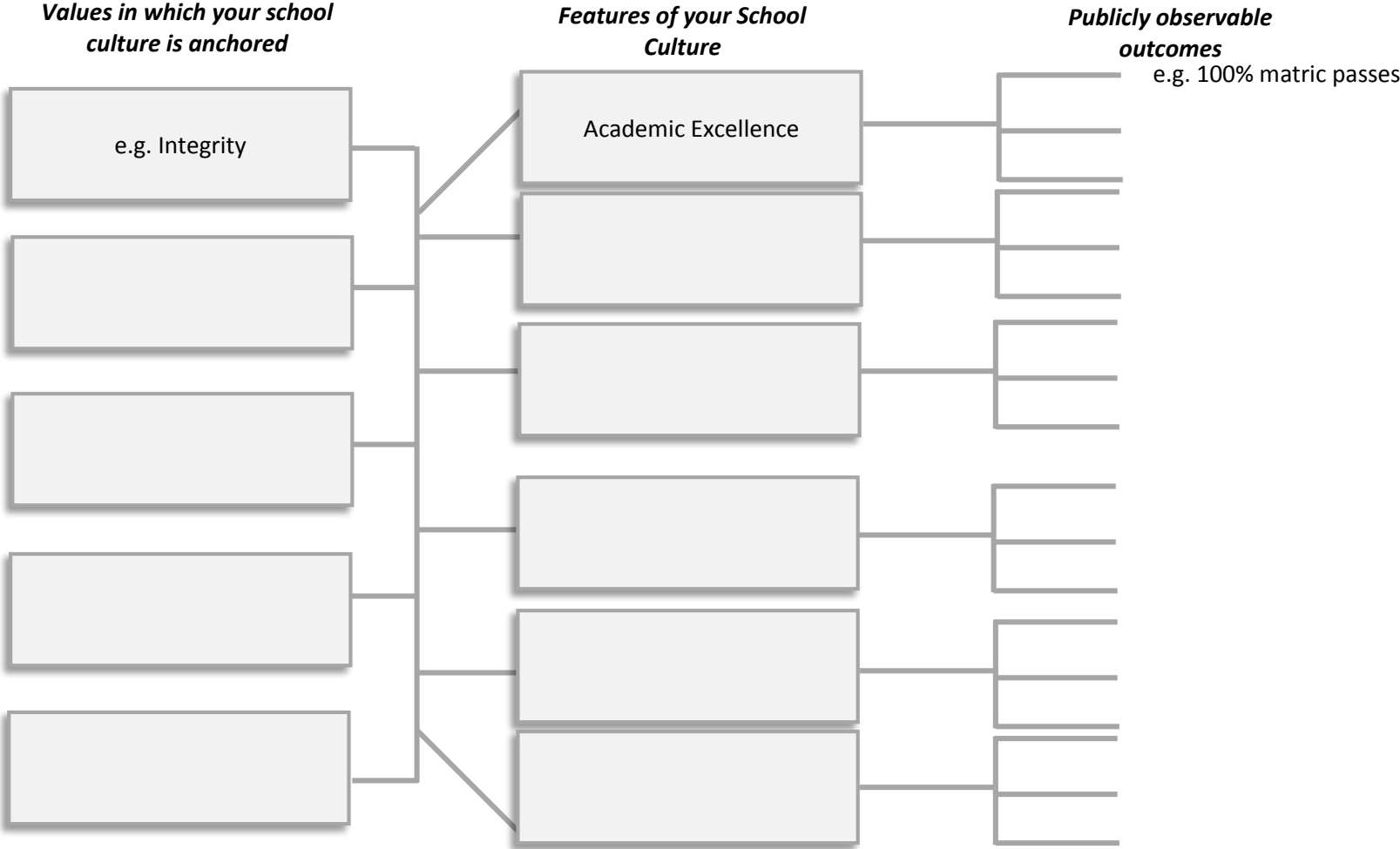
School Culture Choices <i>What is my School known for?</i> <i>What do I want my school to be known for?</i>	Do you have?	Do you want?	<i>What features of this culture do you want?</i>
	Yes/No	Yes/No	<i>What do you want to see as evidence of this culture?</i>
Other school culture choices			
17.			
18.			
19.			
20.			

Exercises 1 and 2

Group Ranking of the 10 Most Desirable Features of our School Culture

<i>From Exercise 1</i>	<i>From Exercise 2</i>	
<i>Ranking</i>	<i># of participants choosing item</i>	<i>Final Ranking</i>
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10		

Exercise 2: Profiling your Ideal School Culture



Sample List of Values

Acceptance	Determination	Leadership	Skill
Accomplishment	Development	Learning	Skilfulness
Accountability	Devotion	Integrity	Self-reliance
Accuracy	Dignity	Intelligence	Selfless
Achievement	Effectiveness	Intensity	Sensitivity
Adaptability	Efficiency	Intuitive	Serenity
Alertness	Empathy	Joy	Service
Altruism	Empowerment	Justice	Sharing
Ambition	Endurance	Kindness	Significance
Amusement	Energy	Liberty	Silence
Assertiveness	Enjoyment	Logic	Simplicity
Attentiveness	Enthusiasm	Love	Sincerity
Awareness	Equality	Loyalty	Spirituality
Balance	Ethical	Maturity	Spontaneous
Beauty	Excellence	Meaning	Stability
Boldness	Experience	Moderation	Status
Bravery	Exploration	Motivation	Strength
Brilliance	Expressive	Openness	Structure
Calmness	Fairness	Optimism	Success
Candour	Family	Order	Support
Capability	Fearless	Organization	Surprise
Careful	Ferocious	Originality	Sustainability
Certainty	Fidelity	Passion	Talent
Challenge	Focus	Patience	Teamwork
Charity	Foresight	Peace	Temperance
Cleanliness	Fortitude	Performance	Thankful
Clever	Freedom	Persistence	Thorough
Comfort	Friendship	Playfulness	Thoughtful
Commitment	Generosity	Poise	Timeliness
Communication	Genius	Potential	Tolerance
Community	Giving	Power	Toughness
Compassion	Goodness	Present	Traditional
Competence	Grace	Productivity	Tranquillity
Concentration	Gratitude	Professionalism	Transparency
Confidence	Greatness	Prosperity	Trust
Connection	Growth	Purpose	Trustworthy
Consciousness	Happiness	Quality	Truth
Consistency	Hard work	Realistic	Understanding
Contentment	Harmony	Reason	Uniqueness
Contribution	Health	Recognition	Unity
Control	Honesty	Recreation	Valour
Conviction	Honour	Reflective	Victory
Cooperation	Hope	Respect	Vigour
Courage	Humility	Responsibility	Vision
Courtesy	Imagination	Restraint	Vitality
Creation	Improvement	Results-oriented	Welcoming
Creativity	Independence	Reverence	Winning
Credibility	Individuality	Rigor	Wisdom
Curiosity	Innovation	Risk	
Decisiveness	Inquisitive	Satisfaction	
Dedication	Insightful	Security	
Dependability	Inspiring	Smart	
Discipline	Knowledge	Solitude	

Activity 3:

ASSESSING YOUR SCHOOL CULTURE

Introduction

You can design and nurture the culture of your school; and, in this regard, the culture of your school will depend largely on the values and beliefs that are advanced in the school. The culture of the school will also depend on the extent to which these values become the DNA of the school, and is reflected in the members of the school community and in everything the school does.

In essence, the values of the school will permeate the activities and behaviours of the entire school community. In assessing your school culture, therefore, it is essential to know the values that are advanced in the school, and the nature of the school beliefs, vision and priorities. Most schools value academic excellence, good relations among and between staff and students, and good relations and a good image among parents and the community. This assessment of your school culture seeks to highlight the predominant values which normally shape the culture of successful schools. You have already plotted the profile of your own school culture (*Activity 2*), and, from this activity you will begin to understand what is required in your school to grow and nurture a positive school culture based on the culture you seek to create.

Here, you will assess your school culture on the same dimensions or in the same categories you will use to shape and grow the culture you desire. This activity will provide you with an overall sense of what is important in growing positive school cultures. The remaining activities in the module will enable you to go into more detail on each of the dimensions for growing positive cultures in school.

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to enable participants to conduct a general assessment of their school culture so that they understand the status of their school in creating a school culture which sets a positive environment for learning, growth and development.

Objectives:

1. To introduce participants to a basic set of standards for creating and nurturing a positive school culture which values academic excellence and good relations between and among staff and students.
2. To introduce participants to 10 critical areas for growing, shaping and nurturing positive school cultures.
3. To give participants the opportunity to reflect on the structures, activities or process they must have in place to build the culture they wish to have in their schools.

Instructions:

The activity is divide into 2 exercises. Instructions are provided for each exercise

Exercise 1:

Instructions for Self-assessment Exercise

A questionnaire is presented on the pages to follow. The questionnaire presents a set of statements to which each individual must respond. Please take note that in this phase of the process all participants must respond as individuals.

Step 1	Please be as truthful as you can in your responses.
Step 2	Read the statement, and if you believe the statement to be true, please circle "Yes" as your response. If the statement is not true, you may circle "No" as a response. In cases where you really do not know the answer, please circle "Don't Know" as a response.
Step 3	Remember that if any aspect of the statement is not true for school culture, you must circle "No" as a response.
Step 4	There are 100 statements to which you must respond. Please be patient and read and respond carefully and truthfully. You may have to justify your response to your colleagues. Be clear about your reason for saying "Yes" or "No".
Step 5	Do not discuss your answers with your colleagues at this point.
Step 6	When you have responded to all the statements, proceed to the matrix on page 27.
Step 7	On the matrix there are numbers 1 to 100. For each item you have circled "Yes", circle the number of that item on the matrix. If you have circled "Yes" for item # 1 then you circle item 1 in column A. Only record your "Yes" responses.
Step 8	At the bottom of each column (A-J at the top), please enter the number of circles or "Yes" responses in the respective column. You will have a number in each of the 10 columns.
Step 9	On page 28 there is a table in which you will record your score in each column. Please note that there are 10 categories (A to J) and each category represents one essential component of school culture.
Step 10	Do not use the last column of this table labelled "Average Score". When you enter the next phase of the process, you will work with your colleagues to derive the average score on each of the 10 items.
Step 11	The score you have recorded (the number of "Yes" responses) reflects the level of readiness of the school on that category of "fundamentals of performance"
Step 12	Plot your scores on page 30 and note your comments on the level of readiness for a positive school culture.
Step 13	You have now completed this phase of the readiness assessment process.

READINESS ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT				
#	ASSESSMENT ITEMS	IS THIS TRUE FOR YOU? Tick (✓) for Yes, No, Don't Know		
1	The school has a uniform which identifies its learners.	Yes	No	Don't Know
2	There are quotes on the wall which represent the school beliefs.	Yes	No	Don't Know
3	There are school songs to confirm school beliefs.	Yes	No	Don't Know
4	There are photographs of staff and students engaged in learning activities.	Yes	No	Don't Know
5	Learners know what is expected of them and this is continually reinforced.	Yes	No	Don't Know
6	Staff members are publicly recognized for their efforts to promote excellence in learning.	Yes	No	Don't Know
7	Students and staff feel a sense of pride when they enter the school.	Yes	No	Don't Know
8	There are clear rules and expectations about academic behaviour and performance (as a priority).	Yes	No	Don't Know
9	Students are encouraged to share their ideas and solutions. They are listened to.	Yes	No	Don't Know
10	Classrooms are well organized and reflect a good environment for learning.	Yes	No	Don't Know
11	The vision and mission of the school is shared by all.	Yes	No	Don't Know
12	The values of the school are made clear in all school materials and activities.	Yes	No	Don't Know
13	A school pledge is recited on special occasions to confirm the school values.	Yes	No	Don't Know
14	The work of students is exhibited on walls.	Yes	No	Don't Know
15	Both students and teachers are generally positive and encouraging.	Yes	No	Don't Know
16	Learners are complimented when they perform well.	Yes	No	Don't Know
17	There are stories and anecdotes of school heroes of the past that are regularly shared.	Yes	No	Don't Know
18	Rules about academic behaviour are consistently applied and builds trust.	Yes	No	Don't Know
19	Students in the school feel valued and respected.	Yes	No	Don't Know
20	Teachers are seen to be interested in learner performance and academic excellence.	Yes	No	Don't Know
21	Classrooms and hallways are visually branded with the school colours.	Yes	No	Don't Know
22	There is a code of conduct for learners reflecting school values.	Yes	No	Don't Know
23	The school remembers and celebrates its heroes.	Yes	No	Don't Know
24	Trophies are displayed publicly at the school.	Yes	No	Don't Know

READINESS ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT				
#	ASSESSMENT ITEMS	IS THIS TRUE FOR YOU? Tick (✓) for Yes, No, Don't Know		
25	All in school are clearly informed and updated on what is happening in and around the school.	Yes	No	Don't Know
26	Learners are publicly recognized for academic excellence – assemblies.	Yes	No	Don't Know
27	Successful graduates from the school return to speak to learners about success.	Yes	No	Don't Know
28	The school is fair and consistent in applying its rules.	Yes	No	Don't Know
29	Staff in the school feel valued and respected.	Yes	No	Don't Know
30	Staff believe in the ability of learners to succeed.	Yes	No	Don't Know
31	All are aware of the founder of the school.	Yes	No	Don't Know
32	There is a code of conduct for teachers at the school.	Yes	No	Don't Know
33	There is a school day set aside to recognize special achievements.	Yes	No	Don't Know
34	Certificates of school achievements are displayed.	Yes	No	Don't Know
35	The success of learners is communicated within the school and in the community.	Yes	No	Don't Know
36	Learners receive awards for academic performance.	Yes	No	Don't Know
37	The successes of the school are well-known and valued in the community.	Yes	No	Don't Know
38	There are rules which govern all academic awards.	Yes	No	Don't Know
39	The relationship between staff is positive and supportive.	Yes	No	Don't Know
40	School staff always reflect a positive outlook and attitude.	Yes	No	Don't Know
41	Historical photos are displayed at the school.	Yes	No	Don't Know
42	School values are repeated and reinforced in assemblies.	Yes	No	Don't Know
43	The school pledge and school song are in the school handbook/calendars for learners.	Yes	No	Don't Know
44	Learners wear house flaps or badges.	Yes	No	Don't Know
45	The community is constantly informed about the school to build pride, confidence and support.	Yes	No	Don't Know
46	Learners who perform well wear special items of clothing or special badges.	Yes	No	Don't Know
47	On a weekly basis, the school principal draws attention to something of which the school should be proud.	Yes	No	Don't Know
48	Rules of the schools seek to ensure that its values and priorities are known and observed.	Yes	No	Don't Know

READINESS ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT				
#	ASSESSMENT ITEMS	IS THIS TRUE FOR YOU? Tick (v) for Yes, No, Don't Know		
49	The relationship between staff and students is positive and supportive.	Yes	No	Don't Know
50	School staff show an active interest in reading and gaining new knowledge.	Yes	No	Don't Know
51	There is recognition and celebration of when the school was built.	Yes	No	Don't Know
52	The school has a set of values to which all subscribe.	Yes	No	Don't Know
53	The school calendar reflects school priorities.	Yes	No	Don't Know
54	Newspaper articles about school successes are posted on school notice boards.	Yes	No	Don't Know
55	The school has learner books to communicate with parents on learner progress.	Yes	No	Don't Know
56	Learners' work is displayed.	Yes	No	Don't Know
57	Evidence of teachers' successes in attaining academic excellence is publicly displayed.	Yes	No	Don't Know
58	In respect to its priorities, there are rules and guidelines for learners, teachers, parents, and all school staff and management.	Yes	No	Don't Know
59	Learners are trained in the skills and behaviours they need to succeed in school and in life.	Yes	No	Don't Know
60	Teachers' behaviour always reflects the core values of the school.	Yes	No	Don't Know
61	All are aware and supportive of what the school values.	Yes	No	Don't Know
62	There is a school pledge to confirm its values.	Yes	No	Don't Know
63	The founding day of the school is celebrated.	Yes	No	Don't Know
64	There are quotes on the wall which represent the school's beliefs about learning.	Yes	No	Don't Know
65	The school has open days for parents and the community to become familiar with school activities.	Yes	No	Don't Know
66	Special occasions are hosted for learners who achieve.	Yes	No	Don't Know
67	The success of parents of community members associated with the school is publicized.	Yes	No	Don't Know
68	All in the school community are fully aware of the rules of the school since information is readily available.	Yes	No	Don't Know
69	Teachers are trained so that they acquire skills and behaviours which benefit the school's mission and culture.	Yes	No	Don't Know
70	Teachers exhibit respectful behaviour in what they do and say.	Yes	No	Don't Know
71	All are aware and proud of the school history.	Yes	No	Don't Know
72	Learners understand school values in relation to their behaviour in school and the community.	Yes	No	Don't Know

READINESS ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT				
#	ASSESSMENT ITEMS	IS THIS TRUE FOR YOU? Tick (✓) for Yes, No, Don't Know		
73	There are motivational rallies where learners wear school colours and sing school songs	Yes	No	Don't Know
74	Hallways and classrooms are visibly branded to reflect school colours, emblems and priorities.	Yes	No	Don't Know
75	The school has a communication process to ensure that learners are kept informed.	Yes	No	Don't Know
76	There are routine award ceremonies for teachers, learners.	Yes	No	Don't Know
77	There are myths about the school which invest pride in teachers and learners.	Yes	No	Don't Know
78	There are unwritten rules which govern how people treat each other.	Yes	No	Don't Know
79	Learners are given leadership opportunities.	Yes	No	Don't Know
80	Teachers show courage, resilience and persistence in dealing with challenges.	Yes	No	Don't Know
81	There is pride in wearing the school colours.	Yes	No	Don't Know
82	It is clear how school values relate to academic excellence.	Yes	No	Don't Know
83	Learner leaders are trained and are recognized by special seating in assembly.	Yes	No	Don't Know
84	The school has a display of its learner leaders and high achievers over the years.	Yes	No	Don't Know
85	Parents are kept informed about learner progress.	Yes	No	Don't Know
86	Everyone in the school recognizes and congratulates all in the school, including teachers and learners for their successes.	Yes	No	Don't Know
87	The school wears its colours in rendering community service.	Yes	No	Don't Know
88	The school honours democratic processes for both teachers and learners.	Yes	No	Don't Know
89	Learners are physically assessed and supported to maximize performance.	Yes	No	Don't Know
90	Teachers mentor learner leaders.	Yes	No	Don't Know
91	There is something for which the school is well known.	Yes	No	Don't Know
92	All in the school honour and feel bound together by the value of the school.	Yes	No	Don't Know
93	There is an annual award ceremony to revere all who have contributed to the values and mission of the school – within the school and from the community.	Yes	No	Don't Know
94	The school displays photographs and CVs of graduates who are successful.	Yes	No	Don't Know
95	The school has a newsletter to communicate its activities, successes and priorities on an ongoing basis.	Yes	No	Don't Know
96	The school has merit boards to display learners who have achieved.	Yes	No	Don't Know

READINESS ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT				
#	ASSESSMENT ITEMS	IS THIS TRUE FOR YOU? Tick (✓) for Yes, No, Don't Know		
97	Learners are aware of the meaning of school colours and school crest or badge.	Yes	No	Don't Know
98	All are consulted or involved in the development of rules.	Yes	No	Don't Know
99	Learners participate in extra-curricular activities to reinforce their development and performance.	Yes	No	Don't Know
100	Learner leaders serve as mentors and models to their peers.	Yes	No	Don't Know

Assessing your School Culture

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70
71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80
81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
<i>Write total below – total number of “yes” responses</i>									

Individual and Group Scores

Categories	Total Score	Your Score	Scores in your Group								Average Score	
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		
A. Collective identity	10											
B. Living your values	10											
C. School, structure, process, routines to confirm your culture	10											
D. Symbols and displays to reinforce your culture	10											
E. Communication to promote and reinforce your culture	10											
F. Incentives, recognition and celebrations	10											
G. Sourcing and nurturing pride	10											
H. Investment in people to build and reinforce your culture	10											
I. Rules to govern and sustain your culture	10											
J. Modelling the culture to groom culture ambassadors	10											
AVERAGE SCORE												

Meaning of Categories for Building School Culture

Culture Categories	Rationale and Meaning
1. Collective identity	Collective identity refers to the means through which the members of the school could be seen and identified as a community with particular characteristics. Through this identity, it will be easy to identify learners as members of the school through their dress and their character.
2. Living your values	The nature of the school culture is founded in the values espoused and practiced in the school. Values must not only be spoken, they must permeate the character of all in the school, and must be reflected and reinforced in all school activities.
3. School, structure, process, routines to confirm your culture	School routines will reinforce aspects of the school culture. Structures and processes at the school must accommodate and allow for the reinforcement of the cultural attributes of the school.
4. Symbols and displays to reinforce your culture	Symbols of the school culture are dispersed throughout the school in order to reinforce and confirm the school's identity and the basis of its pride and prominence. Symbols display the character of the school for all to see.
5. Communication to promote and reinforce your culture	One of the important aspects of culture building and reinforcement is communication. It is important to communicate successes and measures related to attributes of the school's culture. This communication confirms in the minds of school and community members what the school is all about.
6. Incentives, recognition and celebrations	Incentives and rewards represent one way in which cultural attributes and priorities are reinforced and encouraged. These implant in the minds of school members what is important and treasured in the school community.
7. Sourcing and nurturing pride	Pride in one's school defines the nature and importance of the school culture. A school which makes its members proud, is a school which maximises success in its undertaking.
8. Investment in people to build and reinforce your culture	The culture of a school lies in the heart of its people. People must embrace and reflect the culture. They must be capable of contributing to the culture; and they must be comfortable and must feel embraced and motivated within the culture.
9. Rules to govern and sustain your culture	There must be rules and guidelines to protect the culture and there must be soft sanctions in place for violating the culture.
10. Modelling the culture to groom culture ambassadors	It is important that leaders in the school model the culture so that learners can honour, follow and abide by the attributes which define the culture of the school. Modelling the culture creates synergy among members of the school community who are all part of the culture that has been established.

Observations about your School Culture

1. What other culture building priorities do you have for your school?

2. How did your school core in its culture assessment – average score across all categories

High 8-10	
---------------------	--

Moderate 5-7	
------------------------	--

Low 1-4	
-------------------	--

3. In what areas did you score the highest?

4. In what areas did you score the lowest?

5. In what areas did your group score?

Lowest

Highest

6. What are the critical areas for improving school culture in general?

Exercise 2

Improving your Culture Score

Instructions:

In this exercise you will have an opportunity to review your responses in each of the categories for evaluating your school culture. You will see the standards which apply to your school and the criteria which your school did not meet. You will have an opportunity to reflect, as a group, on the things you can do to improve the culture of your school.

Step 1	Read the standards in each category and look at the tables on pages 32 to 36 to see whether you responded positively (yes) or negatively (no) to that standard. Note your response next to that standard in the table provided.
Step 2	Discuss as a group the standards you did not meet. Discuss reasons why these standards were not met.
Step 3	Make notes, as a group, what initiatives will be taken to improve your school culture in respect to each of the components evaluated.

CATEGORIES FOR CULTURE IMPROVEMENT	SELECTED STANDARDS FOR IMPROVEMENT		YOUR ASSESSMENT Yes/No	SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT
	#	STANDARD		
A: COLLECTIVE IDENTITY	1	The school has a uniform which identifies its learners.		
	11	The vision and mission of the school is shared by all.		
	21	Classrooms and hallways are visually branded with the school colours.		
	31	All are aware of the founder of the school.		
	41	Historical photos are displayed at the school.		
	51	There is recognition and celebration of when the school was built.		
	61	All are aware and supportive of what the school values.		
	71	All are aware and proud of the school history.		
	81	There is pride in wearing the school colours.		
91	There is something for which the school is well known.			
B: LIVING THE VALUES	2	There are quotes on the wall which represent the school beliefs.		
	12	The values of the school are made clear in all school materials and activities.		
	22	There is a code of conduct for learners reflecting school values.		
	32	There is a code of conduct for teachers at the school.		
	42	School values are repeated and reinforced in assemblies.		
	52	The school has a set of values to which all subscribe.		
	62	There is a school pledge to confirm its values.		
	72	Learners understand school values in relation to their behaviour in school and the community.		
	82	It is clear how school values relate to academic excellence.		
	92	All in the school honour and feel bound together by the value of the school.		

CATEGORIES FOR CULTURE IMPROVEMENT	SELECTED STANDARDS FOR IMPROVEMENT		YOUR ASSESSMENT Yes/No	SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT
	#	STANDARD		
C: CONFIRMATION ROUTINES	3	There are school songs to confirm school beliefs.		
	13	A school pledge is recited on special occasions to confirm the school values.		
	23	The school remembers and celebrates its heroes.		
	33	There is a school day set aside to recognize special achievements.		
	43	The school pledge and school song are in the school handbook/calendars for learners.		
	53	The school calendar reflects school priorities.		
	63	The founding day of the school is celebrated.		
	73	There are motivational rallies where learners wear school colours and sing school songs		
	83	Learner leaders are trained and are recognized by special seating in assembly.		
	93	There is an annual award ceremony to revere all who have contributed to the values and mission of the school – within the school and from the community.		
D: USE OF SYMBOLS	4	There are photographs of staff and students engaged in learning activities.		
	14	The work of students is exhibited on walls.		
	24	Trophies are displayed publicly at the school.		
	34	Certificates of school achievements are displayed.		
	44	Learners wear house flaps or badges.		
	54	Newspaper articles about school successes are posted on school notice boards.		
	64	There are quotes on the wall which represent the school's beliefs about learning.		
	74	Hallways and classrooms are visibly branded to reflect school colours, emblems and priorities.		
	84	The school has a display of its learner leaders and high achievers over the years.		
	94	The school displays photographs and CVs of graduates who are successful.		

CATEGORIES FOR CULTURE IMPROVEMENT	SELECTED STANDARDS FOR IMPROVEMENT		YOUR ASSESSMENT Yes/No	SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT
	#	STANDARD		
E: COMMUNICATION TO REINFORCE	5	Learners know what is expected of them and this is continually reinforced.		
	15	Both students and teachers are generally positive and encouraging.		
	25	All in school are clearly informed and updated on what is happening in and around the school.		
	35	The success of learners is communicated within the school and in the community.		
	45	The community is constantly informed about the school to build pride, confidence and support.		
	55	The school has learner books to communicate with parents on learner progress.		
	65	The school has open days for parents and the community to become familiar with school activities.		
	75	The school has a communication process to ensure that learners are kept informed.		
	85	Parents are kept informed about learner progress.		
95	The school has a newsletter to communicate its activities, successes and priorities on an ongoing basis.			
F: RECOGNITION AND CELEBRATION AS INCENTIVES	6	Staff members are publicly recognized for their efforts to promote excellence in learning.		
	16	Learners are complimented when they perform well.		
	26	Learners are publicly recognized for academic excellence – assemblies.		
	36	Learners receive awards for academic performance.		
	46	Learners who perform well wear special items of clothing or special badges.		
	56	Learners' work is displayed.		
	66	Special occasions are hosted for learners who achieve.		
	76	There are routine award ceremonies for teachers, learners.		
	86	Everyone in the school recognizes and congratulates all in the school, including teachers and learners for their successes.		
96	The school has merit boards to display learners who have achieved.			

CATEGORIES FOR CULTURE IMPROVEMENT	SELECTED STANDARDS FOR IMPROVEMENT		YOUR ASSESSMENT Yes/No	SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT
	#	STANDARD		
G: NURTURING PRIDE	7	Students and staff feel a sense of pride when they enter the school.		
	17	There are stories and anecdotes of school heroes of the past that are regularly shared.		
	27	Successful graduates from the school return to speak to learners about success.		
	37	The successes of the school are well-known and valued in the community.		
	47	On a weekly basis, the school principal draws attention to something of which the school should be proud.		
	57	Evidence of teachers' successes in attaining academic excellence is publicly displayed.		
	67	The success of parents and community members associated with the school is publicized.		
	77	There are myths about the school which invest pride in teachers and learners.		
	87	The school wears its colours in rendering community service.		
	97	Learners are aware of the meaning of school colours and school crest or badge.		
H: RULES TO GOVERN	8	There are clear rules and expectations about academic behaviour and performance (as a priority).		
	18	Rules about academic behaviour are consistently applied and builds trust.		
	28	The school is fair and consistent in applying its rules.		
	38	There are rules which govern all academic awards.		
	48	Rules of the schools seek to ensure that its values and priorities are known and observed.		
	58	In respect to its priorities, there are rules and guidelines for learners, teachers, parents, and all school staff and management.		
	68	All in the school community are fully aware of the rules of the school since information is readily available.		
	78	There are unwritten rules which govern how people treat each other.		
	88	The school honours democratic processes for both teachers and learners.		
	98	All are consulted or involved in the development of rules.		

CATEGORIES FOR CULTURE IMPROVEMENT	SELECTED STANDARDS FOR IMPROVEMENT		YOUR ASSESSMENT Yes/No	SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT
	#	STANDARD		
I: INVESTMENT IN PEOPLE	9	Students are encouraged to share their ideas and solutions. They are listened to.		
	19	Students in the school feel valued and respected.		
	29	Staff in the school feel valued and respected.		
	39	The relationship between staff is positive and supportive.		
	49	The relationship between staff and students is positive and supportive.		
	59	Learners are trained in the skills and behaviours they need to succeed in school and in life.		
	69	Teachers are trained so that they acquire skills and behaviours which benefit the school's mission and culture.		
	79	Learners are given leadership opportunities.		
	89	Learners are physically assessed and supported to maximize performance.		
	99	Learners participate in extra-curricular activities to reinforce their development and performance.		
J: MODELLING THE CULTURE	10	Classrooms are well organized and reflect a good environment for learning.		
	20	Teachers are seen to be interested in learner performance and academic excellence.		
	30	Staff believe in the ability of learners to succeed.		
	40	School staff always reflect a positive outlook and attitude.		
	50	School staff show an active interest in reading and gaining new knowledge.		
	60	Teachers' behaviour always reflects the core values of the school.		
	70	Teachers exhibit respectful behaviour in what they do and say.		
	80	Teachers show courage, resilience and persistence in dealing with challenges.		
	90	Teachers mentor learner leaders.		
	100	Learner leaders serve as mentors and models to their peers.		

Summary Notes for Activity 1

1. Know the profile of the school culture you seek to create.
2. There are 10 areas of intervention to improve your school culture.

1. *Collective identity*
2. *Living your values*
3. *School structure, processes, routines to confirm your culture*
4. *Symbols and displays to reinforce your culture*
5. *Communication to promote and reinforce your culture*

6. *Incentives, recognition and celebrations*
7. *Sourcing and nurturing pride*
8. *Investment in people to build and reinforce your culture*
9. *Rules to govern and sustain your culture*
10. *Modelling the culture to reinforce your culture*

3. In each of these 10 areas of intervention it is necessary to reflect on:

- a. *The structures and processes that are in place to advance cultural values and priorities.*
- b. *The manner in which structures or processes will be used to advance cultural values and priorities.*

Activity 4:

COLLECTIVE IDENTITY

Introduction:

School identity is an important aspect of its culture. The school must be identified as a community and must be known and respected for what shows and represents the community. The school could be identified for its physical attributes or its cultural attributes or characteristics. In this respect, the school could be identified for its uniform or colours, the character of its students or staff or its reputation in the community. All these will work together to institute and frame the identity of the school. But identity is not only recognition. It must have meaning and must generate and serve as a source of pride. Identity must be external in what people see from the outside, and most importantly, it must be internal in terms of what school members feel and how they have come to identify themselves. The first requirement of building a school culture is to build the identity or the brand of the school. This requires the identification of the physical attributes which define the community and instil the feeling, commitment and sense of belonging which are associated with the attributes of the school's identity. School identity is not automatically attained. The identity of the school must be carefully crafted for external representation and for internal solidarity as a school community. Principals can craft the identity of the school and can manage identity creation as a means of building a sense of belonging in the school community. Creating a collective identity is the first stage in building a positive school culture. There are general identity measures such as school uniform and identity measures related to particular aspects of the school culture.

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to provide participants with the opportunity to identify measures for creating a school identity in relation to the school culture attribute that is chosen. Participants must determine how they will ensure that the school is identified as a community in relation to the selected cultural attribute (e.g. educational excellence).

Objectives:

1. To enable participants to reflect on the current identity of their school and to determine whether this identity has meaning among members of the school community.
2. To guide participants in the selection measures for school identity in relation to the cultural attributes they have chosen for their school

Instructions:

1. In the table on page 39 there is a list of items which represent the ideas (structures and opportunities) which can be used to develop measures to define the school identity. The list is intended to assist participants in generating ideas.
2. In the right-hand column of the table, please outline some of the measures you will adopt to construct the identity of the school. Please note that the measures you adopt must be related to the cultural attribute you have chosen. People outside and within the school must associate the learner with the cultural attribute through the identity measure you have chosen.
3. Please note that, in the interest of time, each group is requested to explore identity measures for only one cultural attribute. For example, if educational excellence is the cultural attribute you have chosen, you must identify measures related to educational excellence. Through the identity measure, the school will be recognised for educational excellence.

Collective Identity

Structures and Opportunities for Identify Formation <i>(general and specific to cultural attribute)</i>	Use and Application to Promote Cultural Identity	
	Academic Excellence	Other:
1. School uniform – dress code		
2. School colours		
3. Badges and insignia e.g. name badges		
4. School mascot		
5. Conduct and behaviour of learners		
6. Conduct and behaviour of teachers		
7. Banners and their display on special occasions		
8. Participation in conferences, meetings, competitions and other events related to cultural attribute		
9. Community service in relation to cultural attribute		
10. Houses, clubs and societies in school in relation to cultural attribute		

Activity 5:

LIVING THE VALUES

Introduction:

The core values of the school constitute the foundation of the school culture. But these values will only be useful if they have life and are manifested in the activities, behaviour and interactions of the members of the school community. Such values must be collectively identified and endorsed, and their recognition and application must be routinized in the life and activities of the school. The concern of principals is the manner in which these values will be routinized and the manner in which they will be applied to and enrich the cultural attribute chosen. In this respect, there is a general routinisation of the values chosen to ensure that the values are confirmed and integrated in the daily life of members of the school community. However, the values must also be applied to the cultural attribute. If, for instance, educational excellence is the cultural attribute and integrity is the core value, all in the school community must understand how integrity will inform and enrich the attainment of educational excellence. Integrity as a value will be highlighted and adopted in the routine activities of members of the school community. But what integrity means and how it is applied in aspects of school life and culture must also be contemplated and managed. The school principal serves as the custodian of the school values and must design and manage the manner in which these values become embedded in the school culture.

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to provide participants with the opportunity to reflect on and develop measures for embedding a set of core values in the culture of the school. The activity also seeks to confirm the importance of core values in setting the foundation for a positive school culture.

Objectives:

1. To identify and reflect on the core values of the school currently managed by each principal.
2. To identify measures for embedding these values in the life, activities and engagements of the school.

3. To identify measures for applying these values in supporting and enriching the cultural attributes chosen.

Instructions:

1. In the table on page 45, a list of items is presented on the manner in which the core values of the school could be embedded into the activities, behaviours and engagements of the school. These can be used as the identifying measures to embed and apply these values in sustaining a positive school culture.
2. In the right-hand column of the table, please make a list of the measures you will take to embed the values within the school.
3. Please note also how you will apply these values in enriching the cultural attributes you have chosen.

Living the Values

Structure and Opportunities for Embedding Values	Use and Application to Embed Values as a Foundation of School Culture	
	Academic Excellence	Other:
1. Collective endorsement of values		
2. Use of school assemblies		
3. Induction of learners		
4. Induction of teachers		
5. Induction and engagement with parents		
6. Reinforcement in classrooms		
7. Reinforcement on the sports field		
8. Reinforcement in clubs and societies		
9. Honouring staff and learners who are good models of core values		
10. Public display of values in schools and classrooms		

Activity 6:

ROUTINISATION TO CONFIRM CORE FEATURES OF CULTURE

Introduction:

Routinisation refers to the use of established structures, processes or arrangements in the school to repeat rituals, activities or behaviours so that specified cultural attributes are constantly confirmed and deeply embedded in the practice of schooling. Reciting the school pledge at morning assemblies, for instance, is an example of routinisation. The key here is the manner in which the principal and the school seek to embed routines in the structures and processes of the school. The routine here is not the school assembly, but the recitation of the pledge during assemblies. The decision of the principal therefore is to determine, identify or construct opportunities for applying selected routines which will benefit the culture of the school. Here, the principal has to determine how the structure or opportunity will be used to apply measures to advance the selected cultural attributes. The school assembly, as an opportunity, can be used to promote educational excellence, pride in sport, community service or any other cultural attributes which the school seeks to advance and embed. The question is what the principal will routinely do on particular occasions to advance the cultural attributes chosen. Routinisation is important because it constantly informs, confirms and honours the attribute chosen. It is through routinisation that a particular value or commitment becomes embedded in the behaviour and character of members of the school. Routines for teachers embed values among the teacher core; routines for learners transforms their character and behaviour in line with the culture to be established; routines for parents bring parents into the fold and the DNA of the school community. In a strong school culture for instance, teachers and parents join learners in reciting the school pledge. This will occur because the meaning and recitation of the pledge will be confirmed and practiced whenever the opportunity allows.

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is for principals, as participants, to reflect on and determine how and when they will use the opportunities available to adopt and apply routines in advancing, confirming and embedding a particular cultural attribute.

Objectives:

1. To enable principals to reflect on and understand the power of routines in embedding particular cultural attributes.
2. To enable principals to develop routines or to identify measures which could be applied as routines in advancing a particular cultural attribute.
3. To provide principals with the opportunity to share the routines which they have established in their respective schools to advance particular cultural attributes.

Instructions:

1. In the table on page 49, a list is provided of opportunities through which routines can be embedded in the school culture. The list also provides some routines which could be used to the principal's advantage.
2. For each opportunity or the type of routine, please note what measures you will adopt and establish to promote the cultural attribute you have chosen.
3. You may come up with a wide range of ideas as you seek to identify measures. Select a few of those ideas which best use the concept of routinisation to advance your cultural attribute.

Routinisation to Confirm Core Features of Culture

Opportunities for Routines to be Embedded in School Structure and Processes ¹	Use and Application of Routines in Promoting Features of Culture	
	Academic Excellence	Other:
1. School assemblies		
2. Merit award ceremonies		
3. Reciting school pledges		
4. Saying school prayers		
5. Singing school songs		
6. Ceremonies to honour staff, heroes or events		
7. School competitions and competitive events		
8. Open days for parents and the community		
9. Excursions for learners		
10. Learner calendars and communication books		

¹ each of the items listed can be used as a routine in themselves, or they can be used to embed a particular routine

Activity 7:

USE OF SYMBOLS TO REINFORCE FEATURES OF CULTURE

Just as a person's clothing or attire could tell about their character, so too the symbols of a school can reflect the culture, interests and priorities of the school. In establishing the school culture, the principal must reflect on the manner in which the school will be 'dressed' or 'adorned' to reflect its nature, its character and its culture. The importance of symbols in the school is that they serve as a constant reminder of 'who we are' as a school community. The symbols and character of the school become embedded in members at the school as a source of pride, the basis or a sense of belonging and an instrument of identity. The symbols of the school say 'who we are' and 'what we are proud of'. Symbols include displays, photos, certificates of achievement, newspaper articles or any other item which represents the achievement, character and cultural attributes of the school. Through the use of symbols, the school brands itself and begins to sell its brand to the school community, its patrons and its visitors. The school's adornment or its symbols are a public statement of its identity. The symbols of the school do not only reflect the interest of the principal. The symbols of the school reflect the collective identity and character of the school community – teachers, learners, parents and school management and governance. School symbols could be displayed to represent particular cultural attributes. Merit boards are used to display academic achievement, leadership talent or sporting achievements. The display of learner projects could highlight artistic inclination, specific technical talent or the intellectual capacity of learners. In establishing the school culture, the principal must be clear on the cultural attributes which will define the character of the school.

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is for principals, as participants, to identify the symbols they will use to advance and promote particular cultural attributes of the school.

Objectives:

1. For the cultural attribute to be advanced, participants will identify symbols which could be applied to reflect the character of the school.

2. For each of the types of symbols noted, participants will reflect on and discuss and make note of the measures that will be taken to apply the symbol.
3. To provide principals with the opportunity to share ideas on how they have used symbols in defining the character of their respective schools.

Instructions:

1. Identify the cultural attributes to be advanced.
2. For each of the examples of the symbols noted, what measures will be used to embed or advance the cultural attribute selected.
3. Select the key symbols you will apply in reinforcing and confirming that particular aspect of your school culture.

Use of Symbols to Reinforce Features of Culture

Symbols of School Culture and Priorities	Use and Application of Symbols to Promote Features of School Culture	
	Academic Excellence	Other
1. Merit boards		
2. Leadership boards		
3. Display of learner projects		
4. Photos		
5. Trophies		
6. Certificates of achievement		
7. Newspaper articles		
8. Flags and badges		

Activity 8:

COMMUNICATION TO PROMOTE AND REINFORCE FEATURES OF SCHOOL CULTURE

Introduction:

The purpose of communication in embedding one's school culture is reinforcement. Communication, both internally and externally, seeks to establish in the minds of staff and community members, what the school is all about. The communication programme within the school seeks to reinforce, in students and staff, that *"this is who we are"*. It reinforces values, priorities, practices and cultural attributes, and it helps to retain, in the minds of school members, the features of the school which forge and sustain the school's identity. School staff communicate to learners verbally every day, all day long. This is the ideal opportunity for reinforcement. But learners communicate with each other and staff communicate as peers. These human relations interactions are important for the reinforcement of cultural attributes.

The school also communicates internally through its notice boards, its newsletters, through assemblies and through various forms of social media that are used internally. All forms of communication should convey messages about the cultural attributes and the features which forge the school's identity. School members will believe in their school through the structure of messaging which continually reinforces the features which constitute the source of pride for the members of the school community.

Similarly, a programme of external communication reinforces, in the minds of parents and community members, these features of the school which should be valued, and the aspects of the school operations which should generate, restore or sustain pride in the school. External communication is about crafting and reinforcing the image of the school in the community. In this regard, the school should continually share with its external community, aspects of school life and news of school successes which reinforce its image or standing in relation to the cultural attributes which frame the identity of the school. A school that focuses on technology should share with its community all the news which portrays its standing, its efforts and its successes in technology. Similarly, a programme of external communication could be established for any cultural attributes chosen. It should be noted, however, that a communication programme relies on the

instruments for communication that are set up in the school and in the community to establish and sustain the image of the school – internally and externally. The efforts of the school in this regard should be planned and deliberate. It should not be left to chance.

Purpose:

The purpose of the activity is to provide principals with the opportunity to reflect on a communication strategy which will establish and reinforce the cultural attributes they have chosen. The activity provides examples of structures and opportunities for promoting school communication in relation to particular cultural attributes.

Instructions:

1. Identify and agree on the cultural attributes to be advanced. These may already be assigned to your group.
2. For each cultural attribute, identify, discuss and write the communication measures you will take to promote and advance this cultural attribute internally and externally at your school. Here, through communication, you will be seeking to reinforce, in the minds of the school community, that this item is part of the core feature and identity of the school.
3. Discuss the communication measures you plan to apply at your school and reflect on whether all the instruments and vehicles for a good communication programme for the school are currently in place – internally in the school, and externally in the community.

Communication to Promote and Reinforce Features of School Culture

Structures and Opportunities for Communication	Use and Application of Communication to Promote Features of School Culture	
1. School newsletter		
2. Notice boards in school		
3. Notice boards in the community		
4. Use of e-communication social media		
5. Parental meetings		
6. Assemblies at beginning or end of term for parents and learners		
7. Ongoing engagements with learners		
8. Open days		
9. Communication through learner leaders		

Structures and Opportunities for Communication	Use and Application of Communication to Promote Features of School Culture	
10. Teacher peer communication		
11. SMT communication		
12. Communication with sister agencies		
13. Communication with alumni		
14. Use of newspapers		
15. Communication with community leaders		

Activity 9:

INCENTIVES AND REWARDS TO REINFORCE FEATURES OF CULTURE

Introduction:

Incentives and rewards are means through which the school shows appreciation for and gives recognition to the cultural attributes it values. Incentives and rewards encourage desired behaviours as members of the school community understand the value of that behaviour in the school. Incentives are provided to encourage desirable behaviours and rewards are given to show appreciation and give recognition for excellence in the behaviours that are prioritised. Students, and staff are motivated to excel in a particular area because of the incentives provided or because of the rewards anticipated. In this manner the structure of incentives and rewards in the school is one of the primary factors in embedding the desired cultural attributes in the school. In general, the incentives and rewards should be a public statement to the school community about what is valued at the school. Those who are rewarded should be publicised and celebrated for all to see. The public nature of incentives and rewards, serves as a public and community reinforcement and celebration of the school's values. But incentives and rewards could also be private. In this regard, the school should adopt a culture of peer recognition among students and staff so that members of the school community are complemented and celebrated by colleagues for their successes. Teachers must continually reinforce learners' performance by taking note of what they do and showing appreciation on a daily basis.

The school must have basic structures and opportunities in place to apply incentives and rewards in promoting particular cultural attributes. Structures and opportunities include award ceremonies, merit boards, award dinners, merit badges and other forms of public recognition so the meritorious candidates are known and publicly celebrated. The desire of all to be similarly celebrated is what embeds the behaviour and what reinforces the cultural attribute that is prioritised. Principals must therefore craft and adopt a structure of incentives and rewards to advance, promote and embed the school culture they desire.

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to provide principals with the opportunity to reflect on and identify a structure of incentives and rewards for promoting the cultural profile they desire for their school. On the basis of some of the structures and

opportunities that are currently available in the practice of school leadership, principals will determine how these structures can be applied in creating the culture they desire for their schools.

Objectives:

1. To enable participants to identify the measures to be taken to use incentives and rewards in reinforcing the cultural attributes that are prioritized for the school.
2. To enable participants to reflect on the manner in which incentives and rewards are used to establish and reinforce the cultural attributes of the school

Instructions:

1. Identify and agree upon the cultural attributes to be prioritised.
2. For each cultural attribute, identify, discuss and write the measures you will take to apply incentives and rewards in advancing cultural attributes.
3. As a group, discuss the measures for incentives and rewards which you plan to apply in you schools, and reflect on whether your schools now have the structures, processes and programmes for adopting and integrating these measures in the routine practices of the school.

Incentives and Rewards to Reinforce Features of Culture

Structures and Opportunities to Reward and Promote Features of School Culture	Use and Application of Opportunities to Promote Cultural Priorities	
	Academic Excellence	Other:
1. A culture of peer recognition among learners		
2. A culture of peer recognition among teachers and school staff		
3. Merit award ceremonies		
4. Academic and other high performance or achievement badges		
5. Special clothing for high performers – ties, shirts, jackets		
6. Merit boards		
7. Leadership pins – class monitors, prefects, RCL, etc.		
8. Special educational trips or tours		
9. Recognition at school assemblies		
10. Public citation for merit		

Activity 10:

NURTURING PRIDE IN SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Introduction:

When the members of the school community collectively feel a sense of pride in their school then a sound and positive school culture is well established. A sense of pride in one's school grows stronger when the school has a public image that is desirable, and when it is rewarding or beneficial to be associated with the image and accomplishments of the school. Pride in the school comes largely from the history of success of the school. However, pride can be nurtured by a sustained effort to show that the school is a special place. The school may be special because of its performance and its accomplishments, its history, its heroes, the reputation of its alumni or staff, its contribution to the nation or to its community or its success in some area of endeavour. Becoming a special school that builds a sense of pride in its commitment is not an automatic process, but must be carefully crafted and managed by the principal and leadership of the school. There are many ways in which the principal could nurture pride – the items to be proud about could be continually highlighted and brought to the awareness of members of the school community, and supporters of the school can 'wear their pride' through stickers on cars, or through clothing or badges.

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to provide principals, as participants, with the opportunity to identify ways in which they could nurture pride among members of the school community – particularly in relation to the cultural attributes identified.

Objectives:

1. Reflect on cultural attributes to be prioritized in relation to nurturing pride in the school.
2. Identify, discuss, and write the measures to be taken in order to nurture pride among members of the school community.

Instructions:

1. In the table provided on the following page, structures and opportunities for nurturing pride are listed in the lefthand column of the table.
2. For each of these suggested ways in which pride could be nurtured, write measures you would take to nurture pride for the cultural attributes you have chosen.
3. As a group, discuss what structures you currently have in place for embedding a sense of pride among members of the school community.

Nurturing Pride in School Community

Structures and Opportunities for Nurturing Pride	Use and Application of Opportunities to Nurture Pride	
	Academic Excellence	Other:
1. Celebrations in recognition of heroes		
2. Stories and publications about successful alumni		
3. Highlighting and celebrating school history to show importance of school		
4. Highlighting and publishing the achievements and successes of teachers and learners from the school		
5. Myths, anecdotes and stories about school heroes		
6. Highlighting the school's standing in academics, sports, or for any cultural attribute to be prioritised.		
7. Highlighting the importance of the school's name.		
8. Wearing pride – stickers for cars; badges of clothing for parents, etc.		

Activity 11:

INVESTMENT IN PEOPLE TO BUILD AND REINFORCE CULTURAL ATTRIBUTES

Introduction:

People carry the culture of the school. It is in the beliefs, pride, support and behaviour of people – particularly members of the school community – that the school realises and sustains its culture. It is necessary, therefore, that actions be taken to build in people, the attitudes, behaviours and overall capacity to support and advance the cultural attributes of the school. In all other areas of reinforcing the school's culture, the measures that are taken seek to change the perceptions, attitudes and behaviour of people. Investing in people, however, refers to the direct efforts that are made to build the capacity of people to advance and support the cultural attributes chosen. If for instance, inter-personal relations is valued as a cultural attribute, then training may be provided to the school's staff and students to build skills in inter-personal relations. Measures can be taken to prepare the members of the school community to be competent in the areas in which they have to model the behaviour that is valued. Investment in people is concerned with the training and development provided, the opportunities that are available for making training interventions, and the general environment that is created (school climate) so that members of the school community can give their best in contributing to the school's priorities. The school climate is important. When people feel valued, staff and students alike, they are likely to work harder, stay the course and enjoy their work. When students feel liked and respected by teachers they behave better in school and are more successful academically. It is the responsibility of the principal to create in people the capacity to advance and sustain the school culture. It is also the responsibility of the principal to create a school climate which will encourage people to maximize their potential.

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to give principals the opportunity to reflect and plan on the manner in which they will create an environment in which people will advance and sustain the attributes of the school culture. This will include the training they will provide and the measures they will take to maintain a positive school climate.

Objectives:

1. To identify the measures which will be taken to build capacity in people to advance the culture of the school.
2. To reflect on the extent to which the climate of their school stimulates all in the school to perform at their best, and to identify measures for improving the school climate.

Instructions:

1. The table which follows identifies structures and opportunities for investing in people. For each of these items, identify what measures will be taken to build capacity in people to advance, support and sustain the school culture.
2. As a group, please reflect on and discuss the measures you have identified, and prioritise measures you believe would be most useful at your school.

Investment in People to Build and Reinforce Cultural Attributes

Structures and Opportunities for Investing in People	Use and Application of Structures and Opportunities to Invest in People	
	Academic Excellence	Other:
1. Induction of learners		
2. Induction of teachers		
3. Training teachers and school staff		
4. Training and development of learners: life skills, leadership, etc.		
5. Support provided to teachers and learners		
6. Nurture positive relationships		
7. Ongoing assessment and tracking of growth and development		
8. Training of parents to support their children		
9. Promote a positive school climate		
10. Extra- and co-curricular activities		

Activity 12:

RULES TO GOVERN AND MAINTAIN SCHOOL CULTURE

Introduction:

Rules govern every aspect of school life. Rules help to create a predictable, stable and positive environment that is more conducive to hearty interactions and positive behaviour among both students and staff. Rules set limits, clarify standards and help to manage expectations and aspirations. There are rules about punctuality, behaviour and performance requirements to attain merit. These rules are related to a culture of academic excellence. There are rules which govern eligibility for particular sports, entry into school competitions and the award of merits and demerits in school. Rules preserve a positive school climate, and advance the attainment of a positive school culture. Rules can be crafted to manage and attain the objectives of a particular cultural attribute. If, for instance, your school culture prioritizes trustworthiness as a value, then there may be rules which reward trustworthy behaviour and rules which sanction acts of untrustworthiness. Rules can be applied to embed the cultural attribute by clarifying expectations and by setting out the principles which govern behaviours related to that attribute. If caring is valued in the school culture, there may be rules to govern which student receives the 'caregiver' award for the term. There may be sanctions for uncaring acts such as bullying, disrespect or verbal abuse. The principal must carefully apply rules in order to sustain the school culture. Rules must be developed to preserve the culture and to properly manage behaviours in relation to the culture. It is best, however, when these rules are properly negotiated, when they are consistently applied and when the responsibility for their application is shared among the members of the school community.

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to provide principals with the opportunity to reflect on and to develop rules which will serve to advance, manage and sustain the cultural attribute that is prioritized.

Objectives:

1. To identify rules which can be used to advance and sustain the cultural attribute that is prioritized.

2. To give principals the opportunity to reflect on whether the rules that are identified could be readily absorbed within the school culture, without any undue pressure or unwarranted disruptions.

Instructions:

1. In the table on the following page, a set of structures and opportunities are presented as those which can be used to advance rules and guidelines related to that cultural attribute.
2. Please discuss and note, as a group, the measures that you could take to apply rules in embedding your cultural attribute.

Rules to Govern and Maintain School Culture

Structures and Opportunities for Advancing Rules and Guidelines	Use and Application of Rules and Guidelines for preserving School Culture	
	Academic Excellence	Other
1. Classroom rules and expectations		
2. Standards of behaviour – codes of conduct		
3. Effective administration and administrative protocols		
4. Sanctions, consequences and follow up for those who ignore rules		
5. Rules governing merit awards		
6. Publication and display of rules		
7. Encouragement and rewards for compliance		
8. Rules governing extra- and co-curricular activities; school clubs and societies		
9. Restorative discipline		

Activity 13:

MODELLING THE CULTURE

Introduction:

Modelling is important in the establishment of a positive school culture. When people in the environment routinely practice a particular behaviour others in the environment will always follow, particularly if the person modelling the behaviour is in a position of authority or if the person is admired by others in the environment. Modelling is the key to understanding. A role model can show students how to be kind and caring, how to value things around them, and how to be disciplined in using time and applying themselves. Learners will model teachers who are avid readers and will seek to emulate teachers who show interest in technology and innovation, for instance. Modelling is messaging. A school that prioritises modelling uses the constancy of messaging to reinforce and embed particular behaviours. Teachers must set the tone by modelling the positive behaviours they want to see in students.

In creating a positive school culture, principals and school leadership must determine what behaviours must be modelled in relation to the cultural attributes that are prioritised. All members of the school community must model that behaviour so that the behaviour and its associated attribute are embedded in the school culture.

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to provide principals with the opportunity to reflect on, discuss and identify the modelling behaviours which are associated with the cultural attributes they have prioritised.

Objectives:

1. To identify measures which can be taken to ensure that members of the school community model behaviours that embed the cultural attributes prioritised.
2. To provide principals with the opportunity to reflect on whether school staff are good models to represent and embed the school culture desired.

Instructions:

1. The table that follows presents a list of structures and opportunities for modelling the school culture and messaging appropriate behaviours through action.
2. Using these items as examples, make notes and discuss the measures you will take to model the cultural attribute you have prioritised.

Modelling the Culture

Structures and Opportunities for Modelling the Culture or Messaging through our Actions	Use and Application of Structures and Opportunities for Modelling Cultural Norms of the School	
	Academic Excellence	Other:
1. Learner leaders modelling the culture		
2. Teachers and staff modelling the culture		
3. Parents modelling the culture		
4. Community members as role models		
5. Alumni and graduates as role models		
6. Encouraging modelling and messaging – awards, praise, celebrations		
7. Use of social media and e-communication for modelling and messaging		
8. Classroom opportunities to model the culture		

School-Based Activity

Developing a Plan for Culture Improvement in School

Key Actors in the Planning and Implementation Process:

School Leadership

Develop and implement plan involving all members of the school community. Process is illustrated.

NECT Coaches

Monitor and support the process of plan development and implementation, and make resources available as necessary. Monitoring schedule provided.

Circuit Managers and Subject Advisors in the District Office

Support and advice in the plan development and implementation processes, and ensure that the goals and activities of the plan are consistent with existing school and district plans and priorities

Introducing School-Based Activity

In the final session of the workshop the NECT facilitator will introduce the school-based initiative to plan for and manage improvement of the culture of the school. In introducing the school-based activity, the following points should be made:

1. Because the school culture is the basis of success and achievement in all aspects of school life, the purpose of the module is to guide and support practical efforts to improve school culture to transform schools.
2. This activity provides a step by step process for embarking on practical activities to improve the school culture.
3. The result of the activity will be a process and a plan for improving the school culture, and the rollout of practical initiatives for school culture improvement.
4. The process will involve all members of the school community in a transparent and participative process.
5. The process will be monitored and supported by NECT coaches and by district officials – Subject Advisors and Circuit Managers.
6. The process must be part of the routine plans and activities in planning school improvement.
7. Guidelines and resources are provided for managing the culture improvement process, but these are just minimal guidelines. School leadership can be creative in finding ways to strengthen the process.
8. All members of the school community should be involved in the process, and all should also take some responsibility for implementation.
9. The culture improvement plan should assist in attaining the vision of the school.
10. All members of the school community should honestly reflect on the school's circumstances and on what they want the school to be.

Activity 14 – School-Based:

PLANNING IMPROVEMENT OF SCHOOL CULTURE

Introduction:

Improvement in the school culture does not occur by chance or in an unattended manner. The school culture will improve through deliberate efforts in the school community (led by the principal) to make the school a better place. In this regard, creating a positive culture in the school must be carefully planned and properly administered so that it becomes embedded in the school community. Principals must understand how to conceive, plan and implement the improvement in the culture of the school. There are 5 guidelines for planning and implementing school culture improvement. These are as follows:

- 1. A Participative Process:** the process must involve all members of the school community. It must be a democratic process where all concerned will have an opportunity to share their ideals and perspectives. The school must establish its vision of what its school culture and climate should be. This is the basis upon which all in the school will be mobilised to contribute to the culture improvement initiative.
- 2. An Incremental Process:** the process will be incremental in that the culture building process should be planned as a phased process that could be sustained over time. It may not be necessary to embark upon too many initiatives at the same time. School leadership must carefully reflect the cultural attributes to be advanced and the initiatives to be initiated to build the school culture. The most fundamental activities must be initiated first then undertaken.
- 3. A Reflective Process:** the culture building process must begin with the circumstances which exist at the school which can affect the school climate and the welfare and performance of members of the school community. It is on the basis of this reflection that members will formulate a vision of what they want for the school.
- 4. A Collective Process:** the responsibility for the establishment and development of a positive school culture is the responsibility of all members of the school community. In this respect the roles and responsibilities of all

stakeholders in the school must be clearly designed and carefully assigned. Although school leadership will lead the process of culture improvement, all in the school will actively participate.

5. ***A Deliberate Process:*** the process must be carefully planned with targets, milestones and clear assignment of responsibilities. The plan, once completed, should be carefully managed so that progress is tracked and monitored, and resources and support are made available when needed.

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to provide a process with the associated guidelines for the principal to provide leadership in the school to develop a plan for the improvement of the school's culture. At the end of the process the school will have a detailed plan for improving its culture.

Objectives:

1. To assess and reflect on the currently established culture of the school.
2. To solicit the view, perspectives and ideas of the school community in establishing and developing the vision for a positive school culture.
3. To develop a comprehensive plans for the improvement of the school's culture.
4. To use this plan for managing the implementation and attainment of the vision established for a renewed school culture.

Instructions for Plan Development and Implementation:

The school leadership (SMT) will embark upon a process to plan for the enhancement of the culture of the school. The purpose of this process is to involve the school community in envisioning and enhancing the school culture.

The SMT of the school will be given support through the NECT and the Circuit Managers to develop and implement the plan.

The process for developing a plan to improve the school culture is outlined below. Instructions, guidelines, templates and resource materials are provided for each step of the process. The school leadership will mobilise members of the school community to embark upon the process of culture improvement.

The suggested steps to be followed by the SMT are outlined below. Each of these steps is described and illustrated in the pages to follow.

1. Announcement to school community of intent to transform or enhance school culture.
2. Mobilisation of school community to envision the desired cultural attributes of the school.
3. School assembly to share the school's vision for improvement of its culture.
4. Plan development for improving school culture.
5. Submission and approval of culture improvement plan by school SGB.
6. Advocacy and communication of culture improvement plan.
7. Implementation of culture improvement plan.
8. Monitoring and reporting success in the enhancement of the school culture.

Each of these steps is explained in separate sub-sections of this school-based activity.

Step 1: Announcement

Purpose:

The purpose of this step is to announce to members of the school community the intent of the school to embark upon a process of improving the culture of the school.

Things to do:

1. Call a staff meeting to inform staff members of the initiative to transform the culture of the school. See ideas and get endorsement from members of staff. Note importance and benefits of a positive school culture.
2. At a school assembly, announce the school project to learners, staff and parents. Note benefits for the school. Summarise what the process will be. Note that all members of the school community will be involved.
3. Announce invitation for volunteers for various roles on the project.
4. Make introductory presentations to various bodies in the school community.

Step 2:

Mobilisation of the School Community to Envision the Desired Cultural Attributes of the School

Purpose:

The purpose of this step is to enable the school community to envision what they desire to be a positive culture for the school.

Things to do:

1. Convene groups at the school to speak about problems and issues at the school, strengths of the school, what can be celebrated at the school and about what is desired at the school to:
 - a. Resolve problems and issues*
 - b. Confirm and celebrate its strengths and successes.*
 - c. Be displayed as significant achievers*
 - d. Place the school in the spotlight for its significant achievements*
2. List all that members of the school community desire as attributes of a positive school culture.
3. Prioritise cultural attributes to be pursued by the school.
4. Seek confirmation from groups representing members of the school community on the endorsement of cultural attributes.
5. List desired cultural attributes.

Step 3:

School Assembly to share Vision about School Culture

Purpose:

The purpose of this step is to share with the school community a vision of the culture to be created at the school.

Things to do:

1. Prepare a presentation (PowerPoint) on the vision of the school for a positive school culture.
2. Convene and assemble to share the vision of the school for a positive school culture.
3. Prepare posters and handouts on the vision of the school to excite and motivate members of the school community.
4. Get various members of the school community (teachers, learners, parents, etc.) to confirm why they believe the vision is important for the school.
5. Announce the plan of action for attaining the school's vision.

Step 4:

Plan Development for the Improvement of the School Culture

Purpose:

The purpose of this step is for leadership of the school to put a plan in place to establish a set of activities and initiatives to be undertaken to realise the vision for a positive school culture.

Things to do:

1. Select a committee to develop the plan for the school. Include a wide representation of the school community.
2. Assign responsibilities among members of the plan development committee.
3. For each of the features of the school culture (cultural attributes) make notes of ideas you can apply in the context of your school. See Table A as a template, and note some suggestions you may want to use in Table B.
4. On the basis of the list of ideas generated, prepare an outline of activities, timelines and responsibilities. See template in Table C.
5. Develop a plan with templates from Tables A and C as the core content.

Step 5:

Submission and Approval of Culture Improvement Plan by School SGB

Purpose:

The purpose of this step is to seek the SGB's endorsement of the culture improvement plan. The SGB will take oversight responsibility for the advocacy and implementation of the plan.

Things to do:

1. Schedule and publicise a meeting for the SGB to discuss and approve the plan.
2. Prepare an overview or summary of the plan document. This overview will be attached to the plan document submitted for approval.
3. Prepare a PowerPoint presentation on the culture improvement plan. Highlight the following:
 - a. Rationale for the plan*
 - b. Cultural attributes prioritised*
 - c. Outcomes anticipated – what the school will become culturally and what changes will be observed*
 - d. Timelines and milestones for specific activities and interventions*
 - e. Responsibilities assigned*
 - f. Resources requested/allocated*
4. Publicise the meeting in order to maximise community participation. Maximise the participation of members of the school community to show solidarity for transforming the school culture.
5. Invite district officials to the SGB meeting to show support for the plan.
6. After the approval of the plan, publish an announcement in the school newsletter or the community paper

Step 6: Advocacy and Communication of the Culture Improvement Plan

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to build interest, awareness and support in the school and community for the culture improvement plan.

Things to do:

1. Display posters in the school on improving the school culture. Include motivational posters.
2. Convene event in the school to initiate and communicate culture improvement agenda. Involve motivational speakers.
3. Send brochures to parents via students at the school.
4. Publish newspaper article or article in school's newsletter.
5. Have all students wear a coloured ribbon to indicate and celebrate the birth of a new culture in the school.
6. Convene mini workshops for managers of the school community in order to provide training on aspects/attributes for the transformed school culture.

Step 7: Implementation of the Culture Improvement Plan

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to rollout the activities, interventions and developments that are promised in the plan.

Things to do:

1. Convene meeting among implementers to clarify responsibilities and timelines.
2. Clarify readiness of each person to implement.
3. Provide resource support for implementation as required. Recruit more volunteers to support as required.
4. Meet bi-weekly to discuss progress among all school community members who are assigned responsibilities.
5. Celebrate intermittent successes.

Step 8: Monitoring and Reporting Success in the Enhancement and Transformation of the School Culture

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to ensure accountability for the outcomes of the culture improvement plan.

Things to do:

1. Set up a chart with targets and timelines in the staff room to track and display accomplishments.
2. Prepare a brief report on a monthly basis for district officials and SGB.
3. Report to school assembly on progress made and on highlights of the school's improved culture.
4. Publish accomplishments and highlights in school's newsletter.
5. Set up recognition and award ceremonies to celebrate progress and to recognise those who have made significant contributions.

Table A
Planning Steps for Reviving School Culture

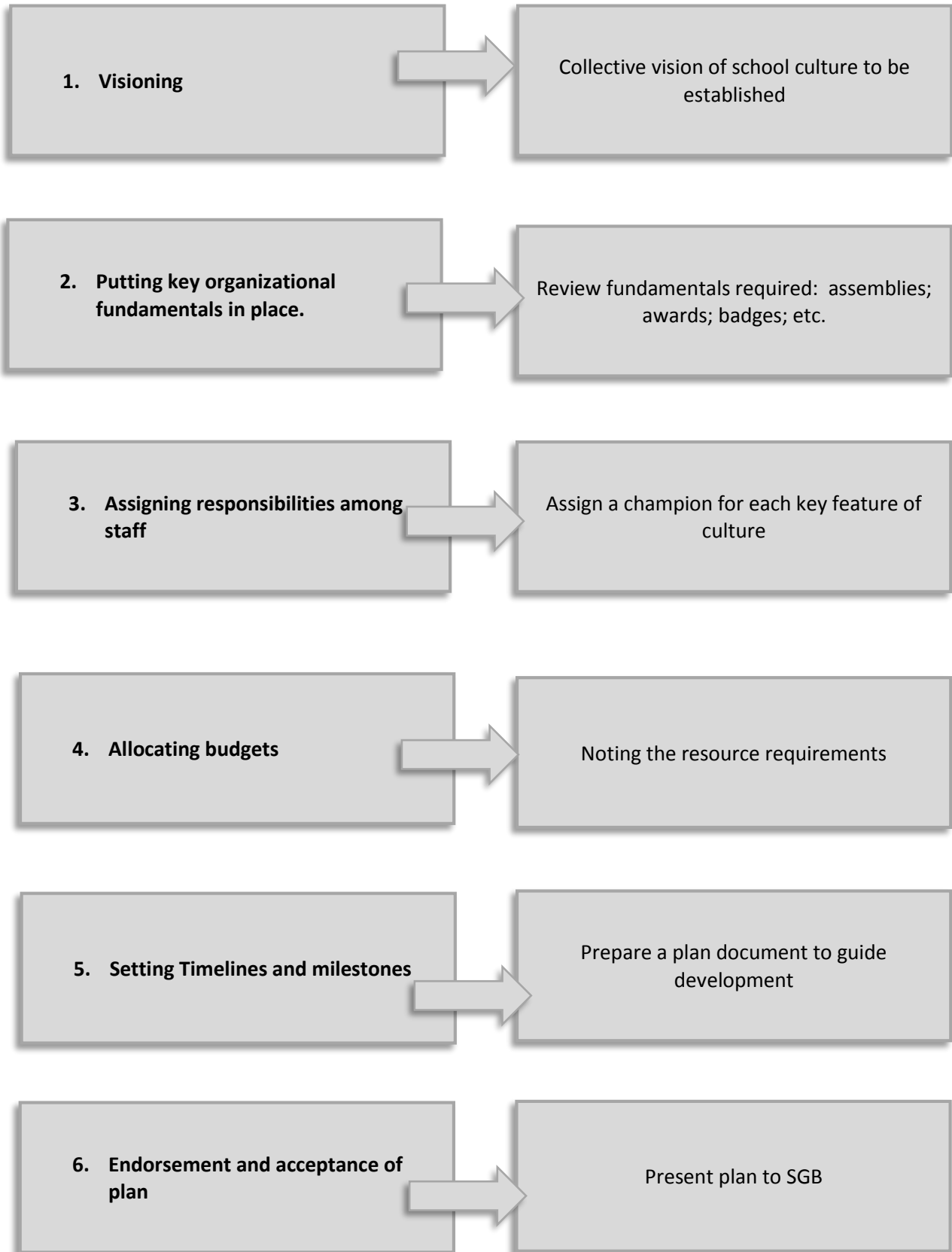


Table B: Planning Improvement of School Culture

Categories of School Culture Improvement	Features of School Culture			
	e.g. Academic Excellence			
1. Collective identity				
2. Living your values				
3. School, structure, process, routines to confirm your culture				
4. Symbols and displays to reinforce your culture				

Categories of School Culture Improvement	Features of School Culture			
	e.g. Academic Excellence			
5. Communication to promote and reinforce your culture				
6. Incentives, recognition and celebrations				
7. Sourcing and nurturing pride				
8. Investment in people to build and reinforce your culture				

Categories of School Culture Improvement	Features of School Culture			
	e.g. Academic Excellence			
9. Rules to govern and sustain your culture				
10. Modelling the culture to groom culture ambassadors				

Table C: Plan Outline for a Positive School Culture

Initiative to be Undertaken	Responsibility	Completion Date

Some Ideas relating to the Development of a Positive School Culture

Category of School Culture Development	Some Ideas to Consider
School physical environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neat and tidy playgrounds • Neat and tidy buildings • Welcoming reception area • Display of house flags and badges • Displays of merit boards • Displays of leadership boards • Displays of historical photos • Displays of trophies • Displays of certificates of achievements • Displays of learner art works • Displays of learner projects • Displays of different school attire • Displays of heroes and achievers CVs
Celebrations and ceremonies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General assemblies • Class monitor and prefect induction assemblies • Class monitor and prefect pledges • Founders day celebrations • Principal's dinner Top 10 awards • Merit awards ceremonies • Teacher farewell assemblies • Casual days • School songs • Cheerleaders • Sharing anecdotes of heroes and achievers • Wearing of achievement badges
Extra-curricular activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport codes • Clubs and societies • Derby days • Tournaments • Inter-school contents e.g. SACEE • Drama productions • Eisteddfods • Subject excursions • Scifest visits • Excursions

Category of School Culture Development	Some Ideas to Consider
Communication with parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learner communication books • Letters to parents/guardians • PTAs • Parent call-in on learner progress • SGB elections • AGMs • Disciplinary call-in • Exhibition of children’s works • Learner psychological assessments • Learner placement at schools • Parents’ participation in school activities • Open days
Communication with learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal one-on-one discussions • Grade assemblies • Class teacher communications and discussions • Parent-teacher-learner discussions • Prefect, class monitor discussions • Training for members of the RCL • Leadership training for learners • Peer mentorship and training among learners
SMT – Teacher communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff meetings • Grade meetings • Subject meetings • Formal one-on-one discussions • Informal one-on-one discussions • E-communication • Developmental workshops in areas related to school improvement
Teacher-Peer communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade meetings • Subject meetings • Formal one-on-one discussions: coaching, mentoring and support • Informal one-on-one discussions: coaching, mentoring and support • E-communication: coaching, mentoring and support • Professional learning communities • In-school professional development sessions • Teacher mentors • Newsletter for teachers • Communication board for teachers

Category of School Culture Development	Some Ideas to Consider
Discipline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School uniform • Dress code • Code of conduct • Merit and demerit system • Etiquette • Taboos • Tacit permissions • Wearing of name badges • Training of discipline
Decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultative • Democratic • Analytical based on data • Consensus • Transparent • Supporting successful change and improvement efforts • Amplifying energy and motivation of the whole school community • Transparency of decisions
Inter-relationships with staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Congenial • Collegial • Fostering extra effort and productivity • Motivating and supportive • Building commitment and helping students and teachers identify with the school • Training on inter-personal relations • Awards for demonstrating exemplary inter-personal relations
Community relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication with educational NGOs • Communication with religious leaders • Communication with community leaders • Communication with learner welfare organizations
School management committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial committee • Learner wellness committee • Sports committees • Subject committees

