

Teaching POS
Good Teacher, Great Teacher:
How to Embody What We Advocate?
Robert E. Quinn

In a current study of excellent elementary school teachers (top 1% in terms of value added scores), we are learning that, while teaching is their job, the great teachers also feel called to their work. While they inform, they also seek to transform. While they are responsive, they are also empowered. While they build cultures of trust, they also build cultures of challenge. In those cultures they facilitate the process of positive organizing, and because they do, their students flourish and so do they. In short, these teachers internalize and practice many of the principles POS researchers write about. The central question of this roundtable is, “**How do we create positive organizing in our own classrooms?**” We will use the findings of the above study to structure our exploration of how we can embody the things we seek to teach and thus have a transformational impact on our own students.

Organizing: Two Lists

List One: Make utilitarian assumptions; Act with self-interest; Minimize personal costs; Engage in conflict; Become alienated; Fail to learn; React to constraints; Comply with demands; Prefer the status quo; Fail to see opportunities; Compete for limited resources

List Two: Sacrifice for the common good; Show compassion/respect; Make spontaneous contributions; Build social networks; Live in high quality connections; Experiment – feedback - learning; Expand roles/craft jobs; Take charge/express voice; Become generative; Envision possibilities; Expand the resource pool.

Questions:

1. What does positive organizing look like in the classroom (See Reverse Side)?

2. What does it mean to embody (exemplify; symbolize; represent; personify; express; stand for) a message? (Think of an example and then answer.)

3. If you were to more fully embody the message of POS, what would change in you, in your teaching, and in your students?

4. List three things you could do to embody POS between now and the start of your next course.

INTERVIEWS WITH HIGHLY EFFECTIVE PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS

Personal Level: Empowered

- Meaning: Instead of a job they have a calling.
- Impact: They succeed in transforming children
- Competence: They are confident they can adapt and reach every child.
- Autonomy: They are internally directed, self-determining and proactive.

Getting Started

- Content: Fanatic commitment to customized relevance.
- Order: Order emerges from relevance and engaging activity.
- Rules: Emphasis on participation/ownership rather than rules
- Routines: Routines are used to energize as well as stabilize.
- Peer Pressure: Negative peer pressure is transformed into positive peer pressure.

Community Building: Inspirational Motivation

- Goal: The intention is not passing a test but becoming a continuous learner.
- Moral Power: Model a passion for continuous learning.
- Potential: They see the potential in every student.
- Confidence: They have and express confidence in every student.
- Strategy: Continually invite students to the actualization of self.
- Challenge: Continually challenge (Demanding, intense, productive)
- Students: Students begin to motivate each other.

Community Building: Intellectual Stimulation

- Questions: Continuous state of inquiry (Stimulating Questions)
- Awareness: Assumes students are fully aware of who the teacher really is.
- Authenticity: Teacher is fully authentic in every conversation.
- Stimulation: Authentic conversation is intellectually stimulating.
- Possibility: Students are assisted in envisioning possibilities.
- Error: Mistakes are valued and part of discourse, find the root logic.
- Students: Students become intellectually challenging to each other.

Community Building: Individual Consideration

- Organization: The classroom becomes a community of learning.
- Priority: The focus is on the common good.
- Empathy: Teacher understands and works with individual needs
- Intimacy: Teacher goes the extra mile in providing psychological support.
- Students: Students, know, respect and support each other.

Community Building: Idealized Influence:

- Power: Teacher operates from increasing integrity and moral power.
- Emotions: Teacher self-regulates so as to always radiate positivity.
- Climate: Positive emotional contagion.
- Consideration: From individualized to individualized and generalized.
- Theory: Operates from a universal theory of intrinsic needs.
- Exchange: Transcends exchange to live in unconditional positive regard
- Relationships: Moves from respect, trust and love to mutual adoration.
- Culture: Classroom is a sacred space.
- Students: Students discover new ways to influence each other.

Learning by Transformative Conversation

- Facilitation: Teacher moves from instructor to facilitator
- Collaboration: Students learn in teams
- Total Inclusion: There are no outliers, everyone is engaged.
- Improvisation: The learning process is self-organizing and emergent.
- Ego: Learning and not the teacher is the center of attention
- Co-creation: Knowledge is co-created.
- Amplification: The capacity to learn is greatly amplified.