

GUIDE

Facilitate a Charter Meeting

SUGGESTED TIME: 1-2 HOURS (MAY BE BROKEN UP INTO MULTIPLE MEETINGS)

This guide can be used to lead staff through the steps of creating a staff Charter.

Welcome

Start the activity by reading the brief introduction below:

“The Charter is designed to build and sustain a positive climate. The Charter represents agreed-upon norms for how all staff members want to feel, as well as what needs to happen or change for those feelings to be consistently present.

Staff members develop a Staff Charter before introducing it to the students so that adults can experience the process and benefits.”

Step 1: How Do We Want to Feel?

Ask each staff member to consider how they want to feel at school. Each person should record individually and silently (on paper or electronically) a list of three to five feelings that he or she wants to experience each day at school.

You may ask: *What specific emotions would you like to experience each day (or as often as possible) in the school?*

You may also add: *Some of your feeling words may have similar meanings. Group those words of similar meaning together. Then, choose the distinct words that best represent the various feelings.*

Step 2: Consolidate Your Answers

After completing Step 1, divide the room into groups of four to eight people.

- Ask each group to combine their lists to form a single list of five to eight feeling words.
- To consolidate, consider having groups tally which words come up most frequently.
- If different team members shared similar words (supported, appreciated, respected), groups can discuss which word is most important to include on the list.
- Combine the group lists into one staff list of five to eight feelings (use the same process outlined above, as needed).

Step 3: How Will We Help Each Other Experience These Feelings?

Ask staff to think critically about the specific and observable behaviors that everyone can practice to help each other feel how they said they want to feel.

There may be some overlap across feelings; the same behavior may contribute to more than one feeling.

- Assign each group (same groups) to identify one to three unique behaviors for each feeling.
- Ask groups to write down ideas for what staff members will need to do each day or week to ensure everyone experiences the feelings listed on the Charter. For instance: “To help others feel respected, we may limit our phone use during meetings until breaks.”
- Invite groups to share their lists with the whole group and write down agreed-upon behaviors on the Charter. You should end up with one to three behaviors for each feeling, though some of the same behaviors may make sense for fostering multiple feelings.

Step 4: Share the Charter

Determine how the Charter will be shared.

- The Charter can be created electronically through the Charter app (located in the “Tools” area within RULER Online), printed, and signed by everyone in the group. For larger groups, the Charter may be shared electronically without signatures.
- Post the Charter somewhere visible (e.g. school office, faculty lounge), so it can be referred to and revisited as needed. The more creative, the better!
- Designate a Charter Committee who will be responsible for creating, sharing, and maintaining the Charter.

Step 5: Discuss Keeping The Charter Alive

Discuss ways to keep your charter alive. For example, the RULER Implementation Team or Charter Committee can collect the ideas from the group, edit them, and then present back to the faculty to review before finalizing.

Closing Reflection

Conclude this activity by reflecting on the following questions:

- How will this new Charter change how I approach my work?
- How will this new Charter change how I approach my professional relationships?
- What will I do if I feel like we are not living up to this Charter?