

The Feelings Walking Tour

One valuable form of assessment focuses on the emotional reactions that one experiences while inside of a school, and exposed to all of the different settings and situations that are present. This is known as a “Feelings Walking Tour.”

Instructions:

Take a walk through your school building (or any school or workplace environment if you do not work in a school) and notice what feelings you experience. No, not an actual walk—a mental one. By doing this you will be able to learn a lot about the culture and climate of your school and some areas where action may be needed.

Close your eyes and picture yourself arriving at school, walking in, and moving from place to place over the course of a typical day. Pay attention to the entranceways, what you see on the walls, the furniture and how it’s arranged, and the main office. How welcoming is it? Look in on classes, lunch and recess times, hallways and staircases, trailers and far-off wings of the building, meetings, extracurricular activities, after-school and evening events – the entire gamut of what occurs on regular school days. Finally, imagine yourself preparing to leave and departing, and then open your eyes.

Once you complete the walking tour answer the following questions about what you experienced. Please write down your responses and have them available for our discussion about this activity during the Online Workshop this week.

- Where and when did you experience “positive” emotions such as pride, joy, and excitement?
- Where and when did you experience “negative” emotions such as anxiety, frustration, and anger?
- Where did you experience both types of emotions?
- Where did you detect harassment, intimidation, and/or bullying going on?
- Where did you see the most student peer-to-peer, adult-to-student, and adult-to adult support?
- What is your sense of diversity, inclusion, and respect for differences?
- How are students with disabilities included?

- Are there locations and situations involving certain groups whose exclusion you can “feel”?
- What is happening in these places to cause these emotions?
- What did you find to be most surprising?
- What else did you notice that you feel is important to explicate as part of the school climate?
- What insight did you get about places in your school that need to be changed, as well as those whose good qualities need to be preserved and expanded?