

Twenty-four Things Successful Schools Do

by Christopher Woleyhand, Ph.D.

In 2007, Karin Chenoweth (@karinchenoweth) wrote a book titled *It's Being Done*. Her work highlights numerous schools that are successful with diverse student populations. These schools prove that all students can learn when principals and teachers maintain high expectations and a commitment to the needs of each and every child.

Through a compelling narrative, Chenoweth identified 24 things that successful schools do to meet the needs of all students. How does your school measure up?

They don't teach to the test.

They have high expectations for all students.

They know what the stakes are.

They embrace and use data.

They use data to focus on specific students, not just groups.

They constantly reexamine what they do.

They embrace accountability.

They make decisions based on what is good for students.

They use school time wisely.

They leverage community resources.

They expand the time students have in school.

Discipline isn't about punishment.

They foster an atmosphere of respect.

They like children.

They make sure that students who struggle the most have the best instruction.

Principals are a constant presence.

Principals are not the only leaders.

They pay attention to teacher quality.

Teachers have time to meet and plan collaboratively.

Teachers observe each other.

Professional development is valued.

They train and acculturate new teachers with great thought and purpose.

Office and building staff consider themselves part of the educational mission.

They are nice places to work.

In this era of accountability, the noise created by school reform shouldn't drown out the important work that is being done in schools. Is your school a nice place to work? It's such a simple question, yet it speaks to our priorities. Can you imagine how great our schools would be if we tried our best to address the 24 practices

above? Luckily, Chenoweth's book shows us that we don't have to use our imagination...it's being done.