

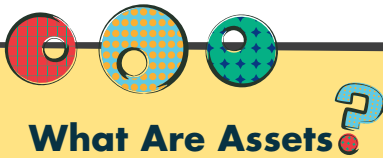


Ideas for Educators

42 Ready-to-Use Newsletters for School Success

12. SCHOOL BOUNDARIES

School provides clear rules and consequences.



What Are Assets?

Assets are 40 values, experiences, and qualities that help kids succeed.

School boundaries is one of six boundaries-and-expectations assets.

52% of youth surveyed have this asset in their lives.*

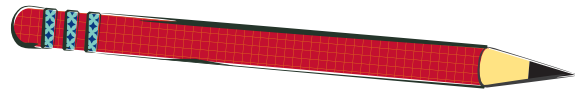
*Based on Search Institute surveys of 148,189 6th- to 12th-grade youth throughout the United States in 2003.

- Engage students in discussions at the beginning of the year about your rules and why you have them.
- Make rules simple and clear.
- Make consequences simple and clear.
- Be consistent in your application of the rules and consequences.

Making All the Rules

It is a fundamental (and sometimes fundamentally infuriating) fact that youth seek independence and control over their own lives, which can cause continual power struggles in the home and at school—sometimes small, sometimes colossal.

One of the most effective ways to minimize these monumental battles at home is when rules are consistent and have a clear rationale, and consequences are immediate and effective. The same applies at school. From the smallest classroom to the district as a whole, rules must follow the same logic.



Remember that rules should make everyone's lives easier: consider student concerns when a rule really is inconsistent with their needs. Teachers will consistently find that discipline problems are dramatically minimized when students feel that they have some agency over the rules that govern them. This doesn't mean that kids make the rules. However, when kids' needs are respected in the process of making the rules and when they understand *why* the rules stand, they can more easily follow the rules.

Good Fences Make Good Neighbors

Chances are the rules, regulations, and consequences in your school are well established and understood. Like laws in a civil society, there

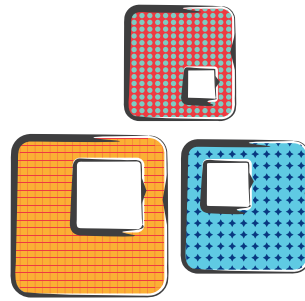
are rules and regulations because a school is very much a small city, with its various roles and communities.

But there's a less formal sense of boundaries that exists within the school community, and it's a multifaceted one. Here's a sampling of the boundaries that affect your daily work within a school:

Boundaries between you and . . .

- ⦿ Students
- ⦿ Colleagues
- ⦿ Administration
- ⦿ Community
- ⦿ Work demands
- ⦿ Life outside of work

Some of these boundaries give you space and time to do your work well. The more you respect



them, the better you can do your job. Others get in the way, keeping you from really connecting with the people who can help you.

This week, take a daily assessment of which boundaries seem to be beneficial to your job satisfaction, and which boundaries seem to be harmful to your success.