

I-5: Create a welcoming environment

Market Welcoming Values and Messages

Think like a marketer and “package” and “promote” your messages to maximize every opportunity to convey your values.

Marketing Options	Examples
Class Names	<p><i>The Helping Hands Classroom</i> (emphasizes collaboration and teamwork)</p>
Mottos	<p><i>Mistakes are Learning Opportunities</i> [note: this can also build students’ “I can” – see the I-1 page for more on this]</p> <p>Send the message that Academic Achievement Requires Team Effort to help students embrace the notion that together they <i>will</i> achieve more. The following are examples of some mottos/slogans that teachers have used to communicate the necessity of teamwork:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective teachers testify to the power of developing a sense of inter-dependence among students and of communicating the idea that We Succeed Together. • At KIPP Academies, every student has internalized the notion that Team Beats Individual. As a result, students are inclined to monitor, push, protect, and collaborate with their peers. Jaime Escalante used similar messages to make his students understand that each individual’s goal is to have the whole class succeed. • Several corps members have cited the success of the message Together Everyone Achieves More (which has the very convenient acronym, TEAM).
Chants/Pledges	<p>I pledge allegiance to the A+ Class at J.A. Hernandez. I will always be respectful, responsible, and ready to learn for my sake and for the sake of those around me.</p>
Visual Displays	<p>To communicate the importance of respect and collaboration with others, you might create an <i>Acts of Kindness Wall</i> or where you post supportive things you’ve seen your students do or assignments where students have collaborated to produce a high quality product. You might hang banners that present your messages in catchy slogans such as “<i>Work Hard. Be Nice</i>” (A KIPP slogan).</p> <p>Use and display collective academic goals to foster a sense of unity among students. For each of her classes, Avra Federman, Houston ’01, had a “How Are We Doing?” poster on the wall that showed the classroom average on the latest assessment.</p> <p>Kristin Bourguet (South Louisiana ’99) kept a large chart of her learning goals and crossed off the goals once everyone in the class demonstrated mastery of the objective.</p>

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IMPORTANT DISCLAIMER:

Ensure that your actions and words support your marketed messages

If students in the “Helping Hands Classroom” never work with a partner or in collaborative groups, or are never affirmed for supporting their classmates’ achievement, that class name will probably ring false to students. Imagine if you hang a banner that reads “Together Everyone Achieve More” and yet when students ask if they can work in partners, you always so “No. Do your own work.” Translating your values into messages and packaging them in a way that students can understand is one thing. Securing the reality behind those messages is another key piece. As any good marketer affirms, you can’t send messages effectively unless there is a reality behind them; you must “walk the walk.”