

# Jeremiah Rhodes Middle School

*Faculty SPF Focus Session (Friday, March 8, 2019, 1:45 PM- 3:00 PM)*

## What Makes a School Great – Questions for Faculty

Rhodes Middle School. Entire Faculty

### 1. What are your hopes and dreams for your students?

For them to:

- Graduate and function in society
- Obtain higher education
- Make good choices to become productive citizens
- Become good leaders and examples for their community
- Be successful and happy. This looks different for everyone
- Live the lives they desire. Leaders working towards liberation for themselves, families and humanity
- Give back to their community by instilling a culture of volunteering
- Develop coping skills
- Have compassion and empathy for others

### 2. What should schools do to help students achieve their dreams?

Schools should:

- Provide summer reading program for students
- Establish a mentorship program with teacher and student mentor
- Facilitate learning opportunities in the trades (woodshop, home economics)
- Provide opportunities for students to present to an outside audience
- Teach students life skills through elective classes (e.g. financial literacy, how to apply for a job, crafting a resume)
- Ask students what their dreams are
- Teach students how to set, track, and manage goals
- Be supportive and believe in student dreams
  - Tell students that we (teachers) believe in them
- Help students feel validated in their dreams.
- Provide an advisory class to calibrate life to school, organizational skills, leadership skills, catered to the needs of each grade
- Give students expeditionary learning opportunities
- Provide students opportunities to see different ways of living
- Structure an environment that validates and affirms student lived experience, culture, and ancestry by providing culturally responsive and relevant learning.
- Provide resources to meet the basic needs of our students (e.g. food, clothing, safety)

- Provide before/after school tutoring and Saturday school opportunities.
- Teach students study and communication skills
- Facilitate community partnerships to benefit our students, including the business community
- Provide opportunities for students to feel part of the community- ignite their stakeholder role
- Facilitate service learning programs such as NJHS, PALS, Student Council.
- Push students to at least graduate high school or get a GED. Zero dropouts.
  - Conduct a case-management system to identify and support for at risk students.
- Provide credit recovery opportunities
- Conduct periodic grade level assemblies to teach students about educational and community opportunities (e.g. volunteering, school choices, college pathways)
- Support student job shadowing and/or internships
- Facilitate college and/or near peer mentorships

### 3. How do you know a school is doing a good job?

A school is doing a good job if:

- Student and staff pride is positive and high
- There is a positive staff culture
  - Staff members support students and faculty
  - Team oriented
  - Supportive
- There is community pride
  - School reflects community pride and is visible in the community
- There is high teacher retention
- Enrollment increases
- There is a high level of student retention
- There is less disruptive behavior by students and teachers
- Positive parent involvement
- High parent, student and staff turnout to extracurricular activities
- Students feel respected and validated
- Students have opportunities to direct their learning
- It teaches to student interests and passion
- Students have voice in school decision making?
- It offers a multitude of extracurricular activities (Summer School, Saturday School)
- There is community trust and buy-in
- It represents a beacon of hope and opportunity for the community
- Attendance is high
- Student and staff morale is high
- Grades are high
- Student performance is high
- Referrals are low