

Academic Optimism

Academic Optimism is an overarching construct that unites efficacy, trust, and academic emphasis; each of these basic elements contains a sense of the possible and each has a focus on learning and achievement. Efficacy is the collective belief that the faculty can make a positive difference in student learning; teachers believe in themselves and their ability to achieve. Faculty trust in students and parents is the collective belief that students, parents, and teachers can cooperate to improve learning, that is, the faculty believes in its students to achieve. Academic emphasis is the enacted behavior prompted by efficacy and trust, that is, the emphasis is on student success. Hence, a school with strong academic optimism has a culture in which the faculty believes that it can make a difference, that students can learn, and that academic performance can be achieved. In brief, the school has a “can do” culture, which leads to student success in terms of achievement (Hoy, Tarter, and Woolfolk Hoy, 2006).