



Regional Growth Strategies

Invitational Education addresses the greatest challenges faced by our schools. With an Inviting foundation, schools can build staff morale, raise student achievement, improve communication, increase attendance, and expand human potential. It's up to us to share the good news.

We begin by targeting an audience. The positive or negative culture of a school system is impacted by individuals, schools, districts and even regions. Proven strategies listed here can help you reach out to any of these audiences. Let these strategies inspire new ideas that work in your location.

Individual Outreach

1. Invitational Theory provides simple, yet deeply insightful answers to many complex human issues. Share your stories about words and actions that made you believe you are able, valuable, and responsible, OR that had the opposite effect. Discuss ways actions and words shape self-concept and influence behavior.(1)
2. Share introductory articles about Invitational Education* and suggest books about Invitational Education that would inspire readers.(1)
3. Offer a **“Trial IAIE Membership”** coupon to a colleague. IAIE will send emails and notices to all trial members for two months and give them full access to member resources on the IAIE website, too.(1)
4. Share enticing benefits from IAIE such as the Inviting School Awards, International School Exchanges, the Positive Schools Coalition and the World Conference.(1)
5. Invite colleagues to join IAIE and receive a free copy of *The Fundamentals of Invitational Education*, a subscription to *The Journal of Invitational Theory and Practice*, and full access to member resources on the IAIE webpage.(2)
6. Send invitations to Facebook friends to ‘LIKE’ the IAIE Facebook page.(2)
7. Offer to speak about Invitational Education to any professional group in which a colleague is a member. Discuss ways the group can create and sustain a positive school culture so all stakeholders realize their full potential.(3)

School Outreach

1. Tell administrators about benefits of the Inviting School award. Focus on global networking and international recognition. Provide resources for administrators to examine. Acknowledge that inviting practices are already in place at the school. Offer to speak to the staff to brainstorm ways the school can become even more inviting.(4)
2. Meet informally with like-minded colleagues to support each other. Discuss ways to make a positive impact at the school. The group is always open for new participants. Consider holding a brown bag lunch each month with a shared appetizer or dessert. (1)
3. Form a volunteer steering committee to develop Invitational initiatives in the school. Elect a chairperson, create meeting agendas and take minutes.(3)
4. Offer “**Trial IAIE Membership**” coupons to interested colleagues like those on the steering committee. IAIE will send emails and notices to trial members for two months and give them access to member resources on the IAIE website. Mentor trial members. (1)
5. Encourage the school to obtain an IAIE Institutional Membership. Five staff members receive full membership benefits with an Institutional Membership. In large schools, more than one Institutional Memberships may be desirable. Steering committee members can be rewarded with these memberships.(3)
6. Send a school team to the IAIE World Conference. Require all travelers to return with ideas they would be willing to implement to make the school more inviting.(3)
7. Share articles and activities from the online IAIE Member Resources with colleagues available Nov. 15 on the new IAIE website. (2)
8. Lead a book study on *The Fundamentals of Invitational Education*. Conversations about the book can be conducted live or online. (3)
9. Encourage school leaders to purchase the *Invitational Theory and Practice Toolkit* to guide school improvement. The Toolkit outlines a 12 step process to optimize school culture. Facilitation notes guide a presenter through each step of the process. (3)
10. Schedule training from the *ITP Toolkit* in measured steps across the school year. This sustained focus will build a common foundation for school improvement based on Invitational Theory and Practice. (3)
11. Share stories about Invitational Education practices from your own experience. Encourage others to try inviting approaches. Seek their success stories and create opportunities to share stories in written, oral or video form.(2)

12. Nominate the school for IAIE's Welcoming School Award if it has already implemented positive climate initiatives but is new to Invitational Education. Application forms and instructions are on the IAIE website: <http://www.invitationaleducation.net>.(1)
13. Mentor staff if the school is ready to apply for the Inviting School Award. Application forms and instructions are on the IAIE website: <http://www.invitationaleducation.net>.(2)
14. Suggest that the school's staff, parents, and students participate in the Inviting School Survey. Instructions are on the IAIE website: <http://www.invitationaleducation.net>.(2-3)
15. Develop an exchange program with another Inviting school. Regional exchanges are encouraged. International exchanges are supported logistically by IAIE for elementary and secondary schools.(3)
16. Sponsor a project with colleagues to make the school more inviting for ADULTS. Spruce up the lounge with unused items from home such as pillows, art and rugs. Or start a library where adults give away or take away free books. Make it known the project is sponsored by those who apply Invitational Theory and Practices at the school.(2)
17. Sponsor a project with colleagues to make the school more inviting for needy STUDENTS. You might create a food, toiletries and clothing closet, a food backpack program, a used prom gown collection, etc. Family Resource Centers, local churches, fraternities, sororities, service clubs, etc., can be introduced to IE through a workshop and then organize this project using community involvement.(2)
18. Sponsor a project with colleagues to make the school more inviting for PARENTS. Create a parent welcome center that promotes the school's goals and projects. Offer morning coffee for parents dropping off kids at school. PTO, PTA and Booster Club parents can be introduced to IE at their meetings and then organize parent projects.(2)
19. Post positive quotes around the building. Post positive pictures of people, places and events in a prominent location. Change pictures often and vary the subjects. This can be done electronically with a monitor and digital camera. Students might be assigned to collect pictures, too. (1)
20. Organize a flash mob to celebrate learning. Staff, students or parents can devise the plan. Sing the school song or another uplifting song in the hallway between classes, in the cafeteria, or at any highly visual location when it is unexpected.(1)
21. Recognize student learning during regularly schedule assemblies held for this purpose. (1)

22. Participate in the free *Gallup Student Poll* at the school to measure hope, engagement and well-being. Learn more at: <http://www.gallupstudentpoll.com/home.aspx>. Results are provided for the school and data is included in national poll results. (1)
23. Use the *Battelle for Kids Survey* which also measures hope and engagement plus belonging and classroom management. School and classroom data are provided often throughout the year. Support includes data coaching and a Teacher Action Response Guide. <http://www.battelleforkids.org/solutions/student-experience-survey>. (3-4)

District Outreach

1. Meet with the Superintendent and district leaders to discuss Invitational Education's opportunities such as *The Invitational Theory and Practice Toolkit*, the School Awards Program and the International Exchange Program. Acknowledge inviting practices that are already in place in the district. Offer to speak to administrators about IE. (3-4)
2. Introduce Invitational Education at a district-wide training where all teachers are in attendance. This can be presented as a commercial for IE. (3)
3. Meet each month with like-minded district colleagues to support each other. Discuss ways to have a positive impact on the district. The group is always open for new participants. Consider holding a brown bag lunch with a shared appetizer or dessert. (2)
4. Organize a District Chapter of IAIE. This may develop as an outgrowth of more informal meetings. Select a chairperson, use an agenda and take minutes. File for recognition as an official Chapter of IAIE.(3)
5. Organize a district team to attend the IAIE World Conference. Encourage top leaders to attend. Introduce district leaders to national and international leaders in IAIE with whom they can develop rapport. (3)
6. With the superintendent's approval, invite principals to a workshop for an overview of Invitational Education. Or, ask to give an overview of Invitational Education at a district administrators' meeting.(2-3)
7. Offer **Trial IAIE Memberships** to interested administrators after the district workshop. (1)
8. Follow-up personally with principals and central administrators after district training. Offer to present introductory workshops at school sites. Organize mentors to support school administrators and steering committees as school initiatives gather momentum.(4)

9. Invite participating school leaders to share their experiences at future district meetings. Leave the door open for more schools to join the initiative.(2)
10. Nominate schools for IAIE's Welcoming School Award if they have already implemented positive climate initiatives but are new to Invitational Education. Application forms and instructions are on the IAIE website: <http://www.invitationaleducation.net>.(1)
11. Arrange for all students in the district to take the free *Gallup Student Poll* to measure their levels of hope, engagement and well-being. Learn more about the student poll at: <http://www.gallupstudentpoll.com/home.aspx> Results are provided once each year for the district and each school. Local data is also included in national poll results. (3)
12. Use the *Battelle for Kids Survey* to frequently collect district data which also measures hope and engagement plus belonging and classroom management. District, school and classroom data are provided. Support includes data coaching and a Teacher Action Response Guide. <http://www.battelleforkids.org/solutions/student-experience-survey>. (4)
13. Include Invitational Education training in the district's professional development plan, using keynote speakers, video conferences, embedded training and Special Topic Institute breakout sessions. (3)
14. Develop an Administrative Internship Program for staff working on administrative degrees. Provide interns with a free copy of *The Fundamentals of Invitational Education*. Use FIE as one of the texts for the program to prompt school culture discussions.(4)
15. Use public communication resources to focus on issues identified by Invitational Theory and Practice. Student art can be reproduced as placemats or bookmarks to send messages to internal or external publics. Public service announcements can reach homes, families and businesses in the community. A media campaign can promote intentional trust, respect, optimism and care.(4)
16. Organize school visits for those who want to observe practices in a district school that has adopted Invitational Education. Schools both inside and outside the district may be included. Short sabbaticals can be offered within the district for sustained study by selected staff. (3)

Regional Outreach

1. Reach out to regional organizations that train teachers and host administrative meetings. Ask central office administrators to request a short presentation at regional meetings which they attend.(3)
2. Offer to lead training for administrators and teachers at district offices in the region. Invite a representative from a successful school to share Invitational Education in action.(3-4)
3. Organize a Regional Chapter of IAIE. Select a Chairperson, use an agenda and take minutes. Apply for official recognition as an IAIE Chapter. Host free workshops for teachers at regional centers where educators from other school districts may attend. Collect email addresses and maintain a database of interested educators. Encourage universities and regional education centers to join the Chapter. (4)
4. Hold regional workshops focused on Invitational Education. Include a credentialed presenter from IAIE to work with local leaders. On the agenda link topics of local interest to Invitational Education (e.g. student engagement, the culture of poverty, growth mindset, intrinsic motivation, special education, behavioral strategies, etc.) (1)
5. Collect email addresses for local university faculty in departments of education, educational leadership, social work and psychology. Offer faculty **Trial IAIE Memberships** to those who hold these email addresses.(1)
6. Offer to lead an introductory workshop or teach a class session for students in education, school leadership, social work, or psychology. University departments and honor societies often host workshops for students.(1)
7. Provide university instructors with a free copy of *The Fundamentals of Invitational Education*, and encourage them to use it in their undergraduate classes(2)
8. Invite university professors to visit Invitational schools to consider placement of student teachers.(3)
9. Apply to host the IAIE World Conference. IAIE leaders will guide the conference hosts. Conference cities are selected up to two years in advance to provide the local committee sufficient time to prepare for the conference. Site selection is based on availability of a suitable venue, identification of a local committee, access to an international airport, presence of one or more inviting schools (or inviting school applicants), and the quality of tourism opportunities.(4)

Strategy Selection

The strategies are intended to assist Regional Leaders as they plan ways to encourage regional growth. The number at the end of each item considers different levels of experience and allows for comfort on the part of Regional Leaders as well as the IAIE Members they will be connecting with. Depending on circumstances, activities may fall into one or more categories.

- (1) Introductory - strategies that would be considered introductory level
- (2) Intermediate - strategies that integrate basic knowledge of invitational theory and practice.
- (3) Advanced - strategies that are supported by the Regional Leader's background in invitational theory and practice and the readiness of the members to advance.
- (4) Exemplary - strategies which can widely impact the learning community engage in invitational activities that can widely impact schools and all who are connected with the school.

***Suggested Introductory Articles:**

- *Introduction to an Invitational Theory of Practice*, Purkey and Novak 2015.
- *Revisiting Blue and Orange Card Metaphor*, Purkey and Novak, 2012.

** Contact Executive Director **Joan Fretz**: joan.fretz@invitationaleducation.net

631-266-2720 (office) 631-553-2620 (mobile)

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