Clear School Mission. In the effective school, there is a clearly-articulated school mission through which the staff shares an understanding of and commitment to instructional goals, priorities, assessment procedures and accountability. Staff accepts responsibility for all students achieving the school's essential curricular goals.

High Expectations for Success. In the effective school, there is a climate of expectation in which the staff believes and demonstrates that all students can attain mastery of the essential content of the curriculum. The staff members also believe that they have the capability to help all students achieve mastery of a challenging curriculum based on state and national standards.

Instructional Leadership. In the effective school, the principal acts as an instructional leader and also empowers and helps teachers to become collaborative leaders in continuous improvement. He or she effectively and persistently communicates the school’s locally-developed mission to staff, parents, and students. The effective principal also understands and applies the characteristics of quality instruction and assessment in implementing programs and evaluating classroom instruction.

Frequent and Appropriate Monitoring of Student Progress. In the effective school, student academic progress is measured regularly and rigorously by a variety of appropriate assessment procedures. The results of these assessments are used to improve both individual student performance and the instructional program. Student mastery of the adopted curriculum standards is determined through these assessments, and progress reports are made available to teachers, parents, and older students on a regular basis. In conjunction with other pertinent data about the student, teachers use these mastery data to make timely and targeted decisions about each student’s instructional needs. Parents are kept informed and included in their children’s academic progress, and administrators can make more informed judgments about building-wide and district-level curricular and instructional issues.

Opportunity to Learn and Student Time on Task. In the effective school, teachers concentrate on using classroom time for instruction in essential content and skills. For a significant proportion of the time, students engage in teacher-structured activities, and grouping arrangements are used to ensure that all students receive the help needed to master challenging material. The interruptions for announcements and other non-academic uses of time are kept to a minimum. All staff are well-versed in and expected to use the “best practices” research to deliver and assess classroom instruction, thereby maximizing each student’s opportunity to achieve the highest possible expectations.

Safe, Orderly, and Productive Environment. In the effective school, there is an orderly, purposeful, businesslike atmosphere which is free from the threat of physical harm. The physical facility is clean, attractive, kept in good repair, and student work is prominently displayed. The school climate is not oppressive and is conducive to teaching and learning.

Positive Home - School Relations. In the effective school parents understand and support the school’s basic mission and play an important role in helping the school to achieve that mission. Their involvement is legitimate in that they actually help to shape policies and procedures. Parents in the
effective school share the responsibility for their children’s academic success by seeing to it that they attend school, demonstrate responsible citizenship, and work to meet the academic expectations set forth for them.

The preceding correlates (and several comparable or very similar sets identified in effective schools research) are associated with improved student learning. The Effective Schools model of school reform, when adopted, can enable a school to establish the correlates as a means to achieving high and equitable levels of student learning.

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