The Culture Code by Daniel Coyle

Think you might want to read this book?
Do you think a positive organizational culture is primarily luck or based on a charismatic leader? Daniel Coyle is here to convince you that it is actually a series of intentional steps that anyone can do. The Culture Code lays out how comedy troupes, Navy SEALS, San Antonio Spurs and jewelry thieves all use the same tactics and process to build culture. This is a great read for any school leader looking to create stronger bonds within their teams.

What would Socrates ask?
- What if teacher training involved the periodic changing of mentors?
- Does your school have a Mission or Vision that can be clearly stated by all?
- Does your school do a good job at the beginning of the year reframing why education is so important?

Research
- (when observing) It's possible to predict performance by ignoring all the informational content in the exchange and focusing on a handful of belonging cues.
- In the 1990s, sociologist James Baron and Michael Hannan analyzed the founding cultures of nearly two hundred technology start-ups in Silicon Valley. They found that most followed one of three basic models: the star model, the professional model, and the commitment model. The star model focused on finding and hiring the brightest people. The professional model focused on building the group around a specific skill set. The commitment model, on the other hand, focused on developing a group with shared values and strong emotional bonds. Of these, the commitment model consistently led to the highest rates of success.
- Researchers discovered that one particular form of feedback boosted student effort and performance so immensely that they deemed it "magical feedback."
  1. You are part of this group.
  2. This group is special: we have high standards here.
  3. I believe you can reach those standards.
- … most of us instinctively see vulnerability as a condition to be hidden. But science shows that when it comes to creating cooperation, vulnerability is not a risk but a psychological requirement.
- … trace any group's cooperation norms to two critical moments that happen early in a group's life. They are:
  1. The first vulnerability.
  2. The first disagreement.
- … the most effective listeners do four things:
  1. They interact in ways that make the other person feel safe and supported.

2. They take a helping, cooperative stance.
3. They occasionally ask questions that gently and constructively challenge old assumptions
4. They make occasional suggestions to open up alternative paths.
- … the most effective listeners behave like trampolines. They aren't passive sponges. They are active responders, absorbing what the other person gives, supporting them, and adding energy to help conversation gain velocity and altitude.

Concepts
- Status management- figuring out where we fit into the larger picture
- Belonging cues- behaviors that create safe connection in groups. They include, among others, proximity, eye contact, energy, mimicry, turn taking, attention, body language, vocal pitch, consistency of emphasis, and whether everyone talks to everyone else in the group.
- Psychological safety- brains can stop worrying about dangers and shift into connection mode.
- Before-Action Review
    1. What are our intended results?
    2. What challenges can we anticipate?
    3. What have we or others learned from similar situations?
    4. What will make us successful?

Quotes from the author
- "One misconception about highly successful cultures is that they are happy, lighthearted places. This is mostly not the case. They are energized and engaged, but at their core their members are oriented less around achieving happiness than around solving hard problems together."
- "In the cultures I visited, I didn't see many feedback sandwiches. Instead, I saw them separate the two into different processes. They handled negatives through dialogue, first by asking if a person wants feedback, then having a learning-focused two-way conversation about the needed growth."
- "Creating safety is about dialing in to small, subtle moments and delivering targeted signals at key points."
- "… it's important to avoid interruptions. The smoothness of turn taking, as we've seen, is a powerful indicator of cohesive group performance."
- "In any interaction, we have a natural tendency to try to hide our weaknesses and appear competent. If you want to create safety, this is exactly the wrong move. Instead, you should open up, show you make mistakes, and invite input with simple phrases like 'This is just my two cents.' 'Of course, I could be wrong here.' 'What am I missing?' 'What do you think?'"
- "If you have negative news or feedback to give someone - even as small as a rejected item on an expense report - you are obligated to deliver that news face-to-face."

- "Skilled listeners do not interrupt with phrases like '*Hey, here's an idea*' or '*Let me tell you what worked for me in a similar situation*' because they understand that it's not about them. They use a repertoire of gestures and phrases that keep the other person talking."
- "Creative leadership appears to be mysterious, because we tend to regard creativity as a gift, as a quasi-magical ability to see things that do not yet exist and to invent them."

Quotes from others
- "Your first conclusions are always wrong, and so are your second and your third. So you have to create mechanisms where teams of people can keep working together to see what's really happening and then work together to solve the problems." - Ed Catmull

Organizations/schools working on answers
- Upright Citizens Brigade

Gateways to further learning
- *Experimental Generation of Interpersonal Closeness*
- *Red Balloon Challenge*

Referenced books with the potential to impact leading and learning in education

Author(s) Last Name	Title
Abrashoff	*It's Your Ship*

The applicability of this book to education is ….

Abstract ←——————————————→ Obvious