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## HOW I HANDLED...

### How I Handled... Keeping Teachers Motivated As Budgets Tighten

As budgets tighten -- and teaching positions are cut and class sizes grow -- it is important to go the extra mile to keep teachers motivated. In spite of looming difficulties forced by budget cuts, the atmosphere was upbeat as our teachers left for summer break.



#### The Problem:

Our district is in a financial crunch. Teaching positions have been cut. Pupil/teacher ratios are soaring. The teachers in my school wonder how larger classes will affect them. They worry how they might possibly meet the academic needs of their students and are concerned that maintaining classroom discipline will be more challenging than ever. As an inner-city school principal, I know the validity of their concerns.

#### The Solution:

Our business community has always had an interest in our schools and our students. We approached the business community and they have agreed to sponsor a 3-day presentation this summer of [Capturing Kids Hearts](#). The program focuses on accepting the "givens" and working in harmony with the students using loving, successfully proven methods.

All of us are excited about attending the training. As a follow-up to the training (and for those teachers unable to attend the 3-day summer session), we have contracted the presenters to come to our school for a 1-day staff development workshop on the first day teachers return from summer vacation.

#### The Reflection:

I am indebted to our business community for having their priorities in the right place. I know how fortunate we are. I know that principals in many communities do not have the same enviable position with local businesses. Our relationship with our business partners has been carefully cultivated; this is one example among many in which they have supported our schools.

In spite of looming difficulties, as teachers departed for summer break the atmosphere in our school was positive with anticipation about the upcoming workshop. This summer, I intend to plan some special ways in which I can encourage the themes on which the Capturing Kids Hearts program is built. I




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will purchase some inexpensive "heart" items that will be passed around from teacher to teacher as encouragement and reminders of the training. I also will purchase printer paper that features a heart motif and other items that will keep the theme in the forefront all year long. My goal is to begin the year with a *heart* full of helpful ideas.

### About the How I Handled... Team of Principal Problem Solvers

*The How I Handled... series is intended to be practical resource for all principals and principals-to-be. Each week, members of Education World's How I Handled team share how they solved actual problems relating to school leadership, parent involvement, professional development, and a host of other "principal" responsibilities. Six principals comprise our How I Handled team; two of them are elementary school principals, two work at the middle level, and two are high school principals. Team members remain anonymous; in that way, they can share freely the range of issues/problems they are called on to solve each day.*

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08/31/2004

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