“School Culture” has become a popular term in education, but what does it truly mean, why is it so talked about and why is it so important?

School culture can be defined as the core values, beliefs, and ideals seen in how a school is run where positive relationships are built among students, teachers, staff, and administration.

It is very easy to identify a campus that has a positive school culture. From smiling teachers, to a warm and welcoming front office staff, and nicely decorated hallways, the efforts are endless. And while it seems simple, positive school culture is not something that happens overnight.

“Post pandemic, school culture is more important than ever,” said Harmony School of Excellence (HSE) – El Paso Principal Adela Lannutti, who has made school culture a top priority at her campus.

“Their goal is to provide a risk-free, family-oriented environment that fosters learning and builds character in our students,” she said.

Not only is HSE focusing on its students but on their teachers as well, by offering SEL and team building workshops along with recognizing teachers of the month. “HSE teachers are the engine that drive our school. It’s my role to make them feel heard, seen and that they are significant. I want to inspire them to understand that their work is essential and valuable.”

Harmony School of Excellence - El Paso has six core values: Caring, Honest, Accomplished, Motivated, Prepared, Self-Confident, (C.H.A.M.P.S.) that drive everything that it does.

These core values can be seen throughout the school from the moment you walk in the doors; from the large sign on the walls to the classrooms where teachers integrate them into their lesson plans.

HSE also has two areas in the halls where students can celebrate reaching their goals. If a student reaches their goal they get to ring a bell and write their name on the wall (without getting in trouble!). This motivates the students and allows their peers to celebrate each other’s successes.

Often, you’ll find Principal Lannutti excitedly interacting with students and her staff throughout the day.

This positive school culture is spreading to the community, and Harmony could not be more proud of the effect it has had on everyone. Recently, Harmony School of Excellence - El Paso was voted one of the top charters in the annual El Paso Times “Best of the Border” poll where they poll the community to select the best local businesses and organizations.

With a commitment to character and culture, HSE-El Paso, shows no signs of slowing down. Their efforts are felt not only in the hallways of the schools, but the classrooms and communities. And that is what Harmony and School Culture is all about.