

# 11 Habits That Build a Culture Staff Don't Want to Leave

This resource is designed for immediate implementation. The habits below cost almost nothing but deliver maximum retention return by addressing the key reason educators leave: ***feeling unappreciated***.

Habit	Actionable Step
Praise	<b>Say thank you often and specifically.</b> Example: <i>"Thanks for how you handled that tough parent conversation this morning" is impactful.</i>
Connection	<b>Ask how they're <i>really</i> doing and wait.</b> Make space for something deeper than "fine."
Empowerment	<b>Include them in decisions early.</b> Don't just announce changes. Invite feedback first.
Feedback	<b>Coach privately. Praise publicly.</b> It's the simplest way to show respect and encourage growth.
Respect	<b>Protect their time.</b> Skip the late-night messages and last-minute asks. Let breaks be breaks.
Proactivity	<b>Schedule regular 1:1 check-ins.</b> Don't wait for a reason. Make space just to connect monthly.
Listening	<b>Ask for honest feedback.</b> Try questions like: <i>"What do you love about working here?"</i> or <i>"What's been frustrating lately?"</i>
Support	<b>Celebrate effort, not just outcomes.</b> Acknowledge the hard work even when things don't go perfectly.
Morale	<b>Make space for small wins.</b> Start meetings with shoutouts or moments of joy.
Motivation	<b>Know their "why."</b> Ask each team member what motivates them and protect it.
Integrity	<b>Own Your Mistakes.</b> Show vulnerability and accountability; trust begins to rebuild immediately.

## Immediate Action Checklist-The 72-Hour Challenge

Before leaving your office today, commit to one of the following high-impact steps:

Focus Area	Reflection Prompt	Your Next Step (Commitment)
Visibility & Appreciation	<b>When was the last time you gave a staff specific, authentic praise that wasn't tied to fixing a problem?</b>	<b>Implement the "Shout-Out" Board:</b> Launch peer recognition this week by setting up a dedicated board or email channel.
Trust & Retention	<b>Do staff come to you with small frustrations, or do they wait until they're ready to quit?</b>	<b>Schedule a "Stay Interview" Trial:</b> Pick two staff members and ask only: "What keeps you here?" and "What would make you consider leaving?"