Study of the Principalship

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Secondary School Principalship

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It is believed that one major reason for the failure of educational reform over the past 50 years is the attempt to bring about change by administrative. Teachers cannot be expected to carry out mandates they do not comprehend or agree with. [1]

Leaders are managers and facilitators

Successful educational leadership depends on the leaders' ability to facilitate and open the path the growth and development of teachers, staff members, and students to successfully achieve the goal of education. Leadership is to inspire others to greater personal and professional satisfaction and achievement, to energize a school to recognize and honor needs, dignity, and abilities of all people. It is also the ability to expand people's horizons by allowing them the freedom to seek what they need. [1]

Remove barrier, do not expect conformity.

The person-centered requires a way of working with people's built-in needs rather than opposing or controlling them. The simpler, speedier, and more efficient road to motivation is to use an already existing personal need. When people feel challenged, they are motivated. Threat results in two very negative consequences: 1) Mobilization for self defense and 2) Tunnel vision that restrict attention to the source of threat. The degree to which people have creativity is directly related to the degree of freedom they are provided. Creating an environment people want to work in and feel comfortable in can only lead to greater productivity and job satisfaction. Happy teachers lead to happy students. [1]

The learning process requires feeling and emotion in classroom, school or program. Information overload can stop the learning process. There is a need for school leaders who can think and problem-solve, express empathy and embody a strong moral and ethical character.

It is important for a leader to develop a healthy self and assist in the development of a healthy self in others. As educational leaders, we have the responsibility to continue to improve ourselves and to provide avenues for teachers to improve. Leaders have the role to model what they want and encourage creativity. Leaders with the staff will create a school to be proud of inside and out. [1]

Healthy leader personality requires: 1) knowledge to function even passively in our complex technological society requires a great deal of knowledge, 2) positive view of self, 3) acceptance of reality, and 4) feeling of oneness or identification. [1]

Educational Platform

One way leaders express their values and beliefs is through the development of an educational platform, which articulate what they value and believe about teaching, learning and leading. Such a platform can help school leaders increase their self-confidence, open to experience, reflect about beliefs and actions, and be sensitivity to others' viewpoint. [1]

Teachers and students' self concept

 It is believed that grades and discipline methods diminish rather than enhance or maintain student self concept. Students generally will strive to create a cooperative and safe environment when given the chance and trusted to do so.   School leaders have a responsibility to encourage students' risk-taking and provide experiences that challenge them to problem solve,

think critically, evaluate data, and support their decision. Ultimately, students will be inspired to debate critical issues with classmates, principals and teachers in a non-threatening, respectful manner. [1]

When fear is removed from the evaluation system, teachers begin to view themselves as good teachers, and enhanced growth emerges. Having regular drop-in visits can also allow the focus on the evaluation process to be diminished.   It can change the process of instruction improvement from being an event to something much richer and an ongoing process. It allow the leader to see the teacher in a more natural and relaxed state and allows students to be more comfortable and natural in their behavior. One common tool in many school districts is the required development of an individual growth plan, sometimes called a Professional Development Plan (PDP). The PDP includes a goal or objective the teacher wants to achieve and the appropriate procedures for achieving the goal. [2]

Peer coaching: contribute a great deal to the growth of teachers and administrators. [1, 2]

Collaborative research: administrators can encourage teachers to initiate projects in a non-threatening manner. This can reinforce collegiality and collaboration among staff. [1, 2]

Mentoring: help the new teacher and enhance the teacher's sensitivity toward the needs of others. [1, 2]

Scheduling options

Block schedule (90 to 120 minutes): allows teachers and students to interact for a longer period of time. [1]

Belonging: teacher staying with the students for several years leads to closer interpersonal relationships between and among students and teachers and families. [1, 2]

Rotational: Allow the teacher to have the students at different times of the day. [1, 2]

Organization as living systems

People do not respond directly to forces exerted on them; rather, they behave according to the meanings that exist for them at a given time.

Organizations are living systems. They 1) operate in cooperative atmosphere that encourage and facilitate personal involvement, 2) are breading places for ideas and innovations, 3) are model of facilitation of learning and growth rather than control and direction, 4) are made to facilitate the personal and societal growth of citizens. [1]

A greater linkage between K-12 schools and institutions of higher education will be necessary to better prepare future students and school leaders. This linkage is often in the form of partnerships where universities develop ongoing relationships with selected school sites where graduate students can creatively be involved. [1,]

Leadership preparation program need an atmosphere of challenge, discovery, freedom from threat, and personalization. That task is enormous, but desperately needed. [1]

School Dynamics

Understanding the dynamics and relations in a school is one of the essential element in successfully working to improve any aspect of the school, especially morale. Teacher leadership (superstars) is an area that may be the most important to the change/improvement process of the school. One of the essential skills that a principal must have is the ability to identify key teacher leaders and use these individuals to assist with the change process of their schools. [2]

When implementing a rule or a policy, leaders need to give themselves quick three questions. 1) What is my true purpose in implementing this rule or policy? 2) Will it actually

accomplish the purpose? 3) How will my most positive and productive people feel about this policy? [2]

The key to building morale in a school is for the leader consistently to recognize the efforts of everyone in the school and then model the praising for all to see. An educational leader looks for opportunities to find people doing things right. There are five characteristic of effective praise: authentic, specific, immediate, clean and private. Positive reinforcement is a valuable tool for change. [2]

When deciding upon the vision, mission, or goals of the building, principal must keep in mind that everyone has a part to play, everyone can make their personal contribution, and everyone must feel that their contribution is important. [1, 2]

Listening, nonverbal communication, showing a sincere interest, and getting feedback are simple but effective ways to improve the knowledge of the principal of how the staff perceives him/her. [2]

One tool to support the efforts of leaderships and management is to have a staff memo with can provide leadership and management. Some guidelines to beneficially develop a memo are: 1) create an attractive format, 2) use colored paper, 3) make sure it is in staff mailboxes at the same time each week, 4) post it in the teachers lounge, 5) collect quotes, inspirational thoughts, and cartoons, 6) make notes of events you see when you are "out and about", 7) in your planner, keep a running list of items that you want to include each week. [2]

School Climate

Two essential elements of an effective school are a positive school learning climate and a principal who supports the establishment and maintenance of this climate. Positive climate

consistently promote high expectations of staff and students. [3] Climate is defined as "the collective personality of a school or enterprise, the atmosphere as characterized by the social and professional interactions of the individuals in the school." [4] There are five types of administrative support that affect school climate; 1) recognizing achievement, 2) backing up teachers, 3) encouraging teachers, 4) caring, and 5) administering school rules fairly. Teachers surrounded by this environment will give the most of their time and talents.

There are eight key elements for the principal to affect the school climate:1) responsibility for the climate, 2) visibility, 3) knowledge of staff beyond school, 4) regular communication, 5) positive and productive staff meetings, 6) knowledge of teacher strength, 7) role modeling, and 8) attractive physical environment. [1, 2]

Leadership by walking around

Being available and being accessible are very important quality of effective leadership. Being "out and about" also provides for opportunities to support, reward and acknowledge students and teachers in their environment. Some ideas for managing the time so that principals can visit classroom regularly: 1) Set time in the planner for visits to classrooms, 2) Vary classroom visiting time to have the opportunity to see different activities and teachers, 3) In large building, set up a rotation, 4) Be in areas when large groups of students are together, 5) Classroom visit my be ten- or two minutes visits, 6) Use this time for specific positive feedback, 7) Write a note to a teacher or student and put it on their door or desk, 8) Fill out forms, set up meetings agendas, outline grants and so forth in the classrooms, 9) Use the library for quiet work, 10) Eat in the lunchroom, 11) Use this time to take breaks from your desk. [2]

Meetings

Making the meetings the leader facilitate exciting, informative, and productive is essential to the success of the school and to the enhancement of positive staff moral. [2] The following are ideas for the principal to have great staff meetings:

1- Keep topics and issues that can be handled in writing out of the meeting.

2- Build an agenda with the staff (grade-level meeting, professional development meetings).

3- Make sure that discussion affects most of the staff, most of the time.

4- Fun and productive meeting (stick to the agenda and timeline, supply food and drink, always start and finish on a positive note, change locations, have different teachers facilitate and present at the meetings.

5- Have a drawing or gag gift to lighten the tone.

6- Laugh

7- Set up your meeting in a comfortable, relaxed and non-threatening setting

8- Set up meetings with different format

9- Make the holiday meeting extra special

10- Set up a way to get feedback on your meetings.

Staff participation and input are two of the concepts that could help enhance a positive school culture. [5] Principal can develop supportive building level committees such as:

a- Administrative advisory council (AAC): the AAC is designed to allow for faculty input into the daily operation of the school. The purpose of the committee: throughout the school, numerous problems arise that have implication for the professional staff members

and the overall school program. The AAC function so that the thoughts of the professional staff members may be adequately and clearly expressed to the administration" [6]

b- Instructional improvement council (IIC): the IIC provides faculty input into the curricula and instructional aspects of the school: The IIC provides for coordination, facilitation, and evaluation of the ongoing curricular and instructional program in order to ensure the most effective instructional environment for students. [2]

Leadership teams are essential to the success of the school. Their objective is to provide direction for the school and promote collaboration among the entire staff. These teams cover topics such as professional development planning, cross-grade learning activities, and curriculum development. [2]

The principal Advisory team is similar to the leadership teams. The difference is that this team provides direction and ideas for the principal. In large schools, the team may consist of department or grade-level representatives. This group promotes communication and collaboration and assists the principal by representing the school at district and state meetings when appropriate. [2]

Technology

Technology is not a product. It is a process. We are living in an era of "Exponential Growth". We have new technology paradigm upon us before the previous paradigms are understood. Our "mind set" constantly lags behind technological development. We suffer from "Paradigm Paralysis". Our thinking lags behind the developments. In 33 years, we went from a main frame to a desk-top mind set. [7]

Trends are changing our lives. Trend #1: Moore's Law: Processing speed and power doubles every 18 months while the cost and price are basically cut by 50%. Growth and power in computation was pretty limited until electronics. [7]

Technology we use in the next 10 years has already been invented. Tomorrow's students will be at a horrible disadvantage if they don't use technology. This all forces us to rethink why kids should come to school. "We must prepare children for their futures, not our past" [7]

New Structure for school leadership

Standard based reform has a deceptively simple logic: schools and school systems should be held accountable for their contribution to student learning. Administration in education has come to mean not the management of instruction but the management of the structures and processes around instruction. [8]

There are five principles that lay the foundation for a model of distributed leadership focused on large scale improvement: 1) the purpose of leadership is the improvement of instructional practice and performance, regardless of role; 2) Instructional improvement require continuous learning: leadership must create conditions that value learning as both an individual and collective good. Privacy of practice produce isolation; isolation is the enemy of improvement, 3) Learning requires modeling: leaders must lead by modeling the values and behavior that represent collective goods, 4) The roles and activities of leaderships flow from the expertise required for learning and improvement, not from the formal dictates of the institution, 5) The exercise of authority requires reciprocity of accountability and capacity: Table 1 describes one possible way of defining leadership role. [8]

Large Scale Improvement of Schools

Many well intentioned reformers argue that large scale improvement of schools can be accomplished by recruiting, rewarding and retaining good people and releasing them from the bonds of bureaucracy to do what they know how to do. Other argue that what is missing in this view is any recognition that improvement is more a function of learning to do the right things in the setting where you work that it is of what you know when you start to do the work.

In a study of large scale improvement of instructionally effective school districts in California found evidence of common strategic elements in the way these districts managed themselves. Their superintendent were knowledgeable about, and the key initiator of, changes in curriculum and teaching strategies. Superintendents and system-level staff were active in monitoring curriculum and instruction in classrooms and schools, as well as active in the supervision, evaluation, and mentoring principals. Superintendents in high-performing districts were also more likely to dismiss principals on the basis of their performance. Despite strong leadership, these districts were less bureaucratic than their counterparts. [8, 9]

Promising Practices

According to An Exploratory Study, National Association of Elementary School Principals, National Association of Secondary School Principals, Educational Research Service, 1998, there is a 50% shortage of qualified principal candidates. [10]

Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC): Mission: help create leaders for student learning by grounding criteria and standards for school leaders' professional practice in a deep knowledge and understanding of teaching and learning. [10] www.ccsso.org

Principals' Executive Program (PEP): Provide in depth training on numerous school issues. [10]

www.ga.unc.edu/pep

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Technology is not a product….it is a process

Some notes and comments from the 2000 presentation by Futurist Ian Juke address, "living on

the Future Edge"

But now they must do more. As studies show the crucial role that principals can play in improving teaching and learning, it is clear that principals today also must serve as **_leaders for student learning_**. They must know academic content and pedagogical techniques. They must work
with teachers to strengthen skills. They must collect, analyze and use data in ways that fuel excellence.
They must rally students, teachers, parents, local health and social service agencies, youth development groups, local businesses, and other
community residents and partners around the
common goal of raising student performance.
And they must have the leadership skills and
knowledge to exercise the autonomy and authority
to pursue these strategies.

State and local school systems, higher
education, businesses, and principals themselves will need to work together to fortify the professional "pipeline" to ensure that, in the coming decade, schools have the highly qualified leaders they
need.

 "Learning doesn't happen without leadership."

Shortage of Qualified Principal Candidates

Superintendents who had filled at least one principal position in

the past year were asked if there was a surplus, shortage or the

right number of qualified candidates for the principal positions

they needed to fill.

Source: Is There a Shortage of Qualified Candidates for Openings in the Principalship:

Shortage = 50%

Right Number = 42 %   **Surplus = 8%**
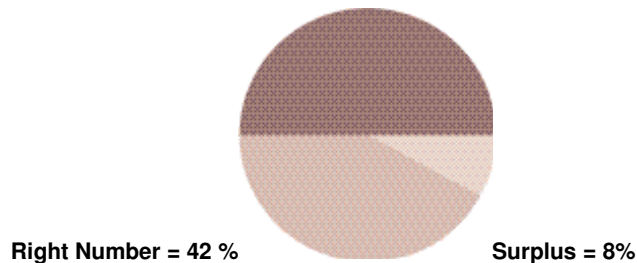
Promising Practices: Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium

Because the U.S. Constitution leaves the primary responsibility for public education to the states, many people
look to state governments to lead the way in school reform. Many states, in fact, have launched pioneering
efforts to improve schools by strengthening leadership, some of which are described in this report. Perhaps the
single-most influential initiative in this area, however, is one that transcends state boundaries: the Interstate
School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC).
Organized by the Council of Chief State School Officers in partnership with the National Policy Board for
Educational Administration, ISLLC has brought together dozens of states and education associations to voluntarily
develop model standards, assessments and licensing procedures for school leaders. ISLLC remains focused
on the central mission of The six ISLLC Standards for School Leaders are:
"A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by 1) facilitating
the development, articulation, implementation and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported
by the school community; 2) advocating, nurturing and sustaining a school culture and instructional program
conducive to student learning and staff professional growth; 3) ensuring management of the organization, operations
and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment; 4) collaborating with families and
community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community
resources; 5) acting with integrity, fairness and in an ethical manner; and 6) understanding, responding to and
influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context."

ISLLC principles, standards and indicators have been published and distributed during the past few years,
with funding from The Pew Charitable Trusts, the Danforth Foundation and member states. Additionally, five
states and the District of Columbia have contracted with a national test-maker to develop assessments for the
licensing of beginning principals. Since its creation in 1998, the School Leaders Licensure Assessment has been
adopted by eight states.
In May 2000, ISLLC took its work a step further. In addition to raising the bar for school leaders through
model standards and assessments, ISLLC released a report that helps link the consortium's Standards for School
Leaders, now used in more than 30 states, to professional development for school administrators. Standards
Based Professional Development for School Leaders recommends strategies, provides models and promotes collaboration
in the professional development process.
For more information, contact Amy Mast, Senior Project Associate, Interstate School Leaders Licensure
Consortium, Council of Chief State School Officers, One Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Suite 700, Washington, DC
20001-1431, (202) 326-8692, amym@ccsso.org, www.ccsso.org.
Source: Council of Chief State School Officers Web site (www.ccsso.org), September 2000.

Promising Practices: Principals' Executive Program

One state getting serious about supporting the principal profession is North Carolina. The Principals'
Executive Program (PEP) of the University of North Carolina's Center for School Leadership Development provides
a unique array of professional development supports for principals, assistant principals and other leadership
personnel from all grade levels in the state's public schools.
Created in 1984 by the North Carolina General Assembly with the ultimate aim of improving student performance,
PEP has patterned its professional development program after Harvard University's renowned leadership
training program for business executives.
PEP offers training in two forms: "residential" and "topical." Residential programs at the Chapel Hill campus,
which provide in-depth training on numerous school issues, span from three to 20 days. Topical programs
are one- to three-day sessions focusing on particular topics.
PEP also provides free telephone consultations on school law issues for all North Carolina public school
administrators and maintains a library of books, videotapes and audio cassettes on a wide range of education
leadership topics. The program recently published Education Law in North Carolina, a 32-chapter compendium

that translates complex legal issues confronting schools into plain English.

Finally, the program is involved in a handful of research initiatives aiming to deepen understanding about
what it takes to lead schools to success. PEP recently studied five North Carolina "turn-around" schools —
where physical and demographic characteristics resembled those of traditionally low-performing schools but
where students achieved at high levels — to develop case studies that administrators can draw upon in their
work. Other research efforts, conducted in partnership with groups such as the Center for the Improvement of
Early Reading Achievement and the Center for School Leadership's Lighthouse Project, seek to build knowledge
of leadership topics such as school-home-community connections, serving at-risk students and professional
evaluations.

For more information, contact Ken Jenkins, Director, Principals' Executive Program, Center for School
Leadership Development, University of North Carolina, CB 3335, D-3 Carr Mill, Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3335,
(919) 962-3360, jenkinsk@ga.unc.edu, www.ga.unc.edu/pep.

Source: Principals' Executive Program Web site (www.ga.unc.edu/pep), September 2000.