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A preferred vision for administering secondary schools : a reflective essay

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A preferred vision for administering secondary schools : a reflective essay

Abstract

The most vital role an administrator can play is that of aiding teachers to enable students to learn. This will be done through giving and coaching unselfishly. The need of an educator in any position is to pass on the key that will enable students to renew their faith and confidence in their own abilities. Once the student finds or accepts this key and uses it, they will unlock the golden door to learning—then the rest is up to them. The constant repetition of learning will be absorbed by that other mind of theirs, the subconscious, and eventually will be applied with self-esteem, faith, confidence, hope and enthusiasm. After restoring these important elements in sufficient amounts, any hurdle can be surmounted.

A PREFERRED VISION FOR ADMINISTERING SECONDARY SCHOOLS:

A REFLECTIVE ESSAY

A Research Paper

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by

Kimberly K. Blakesley

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Henry Drummond wrote that there is no happiness in having or in getting, only in giving; Seneca told us that he who does good to another does good also to himself, not only in the consequence but in the very act; Emerson reminded all of us that the greatest gift we could give another was not gold or silver or diamonds but the gift of ourselves. Educational positions are filled with caring individuals who give of themselves without selfishness. This feeling of giving and its rewards is what keeps individuals in the educational field.

Philosophy of Education

Teachers hold the key to knowledge that the student has not had the opportunity to learn or experience. Through verbal and visual explanation, the student is exposed to new and exciting concepts. Learning evolves from opening young minds to knowledge already gained from life situations. These life experiences will in-turn, benefit the entire class.

Students are welcome to bring their views, problems and concerns to class, no different than teachers are allowed to bring their problems and concerns to their administrator. Rational solutions will be explored to help the students and teachers succeed in both educational and personal endeavors. The main objective of this success is to stimulate individuals into becoming life long learners.

Working within the educational system is a privilege. It will take commitment, patience, understanding and the ability to stay "withit" when dealing with the staff and students.

Kozol (2000) stated that educators understand that almost half a million students are dropping out of high school every year. Twice that figure graduated, although they can scarcely read their names. Both the parents and communities must share the blame. More than fourteen million children live in poverty and one out of every three employable blacks is not working. We as educators, will find a way to change these devastating figures.

Educators will teach not only book knowledge, but knowledge of childhood and life situations to elicit this change. With the commitment of a proactive administration, this challenge will be met with uplifting statistics.

Purposes of the School System

Almost every day, another exotic gadget is introduced to society. These gadgets promise to make our lives easier. Instead, we are discovering that we need all those new and expensive gadgets in order to increase our productivity. Mother has permanently joined the workplace. The children try to fend; as best they can, for themselves. The results are tragic. Walk into any large high school, and you will discover that half of the students are children of divorced parents . . . and that group of confused kids will be the adults of tomorrow. (Mandino, p.80)

As the 21st century commences, the question arises: What is the role of the school in today's society? As educators, we need to provide an environment for students to acquire the knowledge they need to proceed forward and become productive members of society. By offering and supporting this environment, we establish a place not only for book learning but moral and value setting, multicultural exposure, vocational training, college preparation, and a competent counseling service where personal problems can be solved.

A challenge for the educational system during the 21st century is to achieve higher levels of learning for all children. Professor Howard Gardner of Harvard University challenged the traditional notion of Intelligence Quotient (IQ) and defined intelligence as a series of independent capacity, which work together as an integrated whole. His definition of intelligence is "the ability to solve problems, or to fashion products, that are valued in one or more cultural or community setting" (Gardner, 1993). He believes that everyone is born with potential in a number of different intelligences. This potential develops in many ways, depending on the environment where a person lives and learns. It is the responsibility of teachers to find the appropriate way of teaching, to enhance each student's ability to succeed.

There are many facets that must be provided in the school curriculum and setting. The aim of education is not merely to make better parents, citizens, workers, or even to surpass the Russians or the Japanese, but ultimately to

develop human beings that live life to the fullest. Education continually adds to the quality and the meaning of the students' experience and to their ability to direct that experience. By constant repetition of the curriculum, it will be absorbed by the student's subconscious. Self-esteem, faith, confidence, hope, and enthusiasm will be restored. Which helps students participate actively with their fellow human beings in the building of a healthy society.

If we look at all children as future adults who will carry the torch of the future, the school system affords teachers the opportunity and responsibility to mold and shape the future of our world. An educator, regardless of the position, needs to pass on the key that will enable students to renew faith and confidence in their own abilities. Once they use this key and manage to finally unlock the golden door, the rest is up to them. This is an unbelievable opportunity that school systems need to take very seriously. The students look to teachers for knowledge, encouragement, acceptance and praise. They also look for discipline and structure to help them form acceptable values and morals. By taking the proper lead, the school system can help the students' shape themselves into well-rounded individuals.

Vision of a School Leader

All great leaders look at a situation and then complete it, with as much ease as possible. School administrators accept their role and use many avenues to accomplish the task. Communities look at administrators as the ultimate

authority for the educational system. They expect respectable decisions that follow the Constitution of the United States, the laws of the State, and the feelings of the community. The community also wants to feel informed and involved with decisions that are made. This need is the responsibility of the administration using effective communication skills.

Administrators must actively engage in communicating. Persuade, instruct, direct, request, present, stimulate, or develop understanding... administrators must communicate (Gorton & Schneider, 1991). Within this communication, a message is not only sent, but also received, by the intended audience. An administrator trusts that the message or information they are communicating to others is heard in the way intended. Communication is not effective if the message is not understood. Ubben and Hughes (cited in Gorton & Schneider, 1991) proposed four questions which administrators can utilize to assess communication techniques.

1. If the message was received, was it read?
2. If it is read (heard) was it understood?
3. If it was understood, was it understood in the right spirit?
4. If it was understood in the right spirit, will it be acted on in a positive manner? (p.70)

Principalship and administration roles are always in the spotlight. This, at times, may be a very bothersome thing. Being under the scrutiny of school personnel as well as the public's eye can be taxing on an individual's personality. With a strong support system, a person in an administrative role can handle the pressures this role may present. Rossow observed (cited in Kowalski & Reitzug, 1993):

The behavior of principals as authority figures, communicate what is really valued to both teachers and students. Teachers and students tend to imitate the actions, attitudes, and beliefs of those in authority, such as the principal. (p.34)

Communicating effectively is the key to all administrative roles. Blasé & Kirby (1992) cite an example of powerful modeling using communication when discussing the power of praise. Teachers, whose principals used praise, frequently and sincerely found themselves emulating positiveness with students and each other. Praise is an effective tool that should be used, not only in administrative roles, but also with teachers and students. By setting an example with staff, the domino effect will occur to help teachers deal better with students. This tool will elicit a more positive learning environment. By developing a better learning environment for the students, positive praise will encourage the students to praise one another as well as other people in their lives. This approach will help create a society that will better understand each other in the future. As

Campbell (1990) stated, "positive teacher morale translates into more productive teachers, which in turn translates into more productive student learning" (p.4).

Administrators need to set high expectations for staff. In turn, teachers will set higher expectations for students. Attainable expectations will increase the quality of education and bring test scores to a higher level as a residual result. Setting high expectations is essential to any administrative position. These expectations need to be reinforced through repetition, clarification, and consistency (Blasé & Kirby, 1992). As a principal, and future superintendent, modeling effective communication skills will help to "seek first to understand, then to be understood" (Covey, 1989, p.237).

In Kowalski & Reitzug (1993) state that an administrator's purpose consists of evolutionary selection, intended rational choice, trial and error, politics and bargaining, diffusion and regeneration. These categories include all of the areas in which administrators are involved throughout professional employment. Administrators must be able to deal with individuals at many different levels. The role of administrator demands a tremendous amount of energy from an individual, due to numerous problems and decisions that need to be made. Regeneration seems to be the role that proves most vital. Following regeneration, no matter what transpires, the administrator can find a way to make logical and rationale decisions.

Kowalski & Reitzug (1993) also state that the administrative role consists of eight parts -- including representing, planning, organizing, leading, managing, facilitating, mediating, and evaluating. These eight components encompass every decision and situation with which an administrator is faced. They are all of equal importance. Each is essential to the other. As an administrator, these eight components will be used to make sure that no point is overlooked and they are correctly implemented.

Leadership implies keeping sight of long-term goals and guiding a school in that direction (Rallis & Highsmith, 1986). This requires vision, flexibility, and common sense. Leaders know where an organization is heading. Good leaders take this knowledge and move others in the organization toward the goal. By transforming specific ideas into actions, the school will become a place of learning that can make a difference in the lives of children. Leaders must understand that the only constant in education, is change. By anticipating that change, leaders can utilize change to guide schools into the future.

An effective educational leader needs to support the implementation of a curriculum by seeking out the values and morals of the community. To help with this implementation, seeking adequate resources is necessary. These resources could include money, personnel strengths, community beliefs, materials available,

and the time needed for preparing and implementing the curriculum. The administrator must assure "that the curriculum specifies what students are to learn, what skills are to be mastered, and what values, attitudes and habits they are to acquire" (NAESP, 1991, p.10). The administrator needs to work with staff and community to develop a viable curriculum that meets the needs of the student population. It is extremely important that the curriculum reflect the values and morals of the community.

Effective administrators "lead the way toward creating a learning environment in which teachers truly teach and students truly learn" (NAESP, 1991, p.11). Students should be active in all aspects of the learning process. The simple fact remains that students learn by doing, not through being "dictated to" by authority figures. Students need to have physical manipulators and visual stimuli to help them understand the concepts being taught. Instruction also needs to be relevant to the students' personal life experiences. Without personal application, students will not understand the purpose of learning the material, thereby creating a lack of motivation.

As effective administrators, the staff needs to be stimulated constantly. Staff members are no different than children when it comes to the relevancy of what is being taught and how to teach it. In-service and staff development days continually expose teachers to new and innovative ideas. This confidence and

enthusiasm will carry through to the students and make their learning environment a more interesting place.

Effective administrators use a variety of techniques and strategies to assess classroom instruction, student performance, and progress toward achievement of curriculum goals and effectiveness of the overall instructional programs. Not only principals should be involved in this process, but the superintendent should be involved as well. By making themselves visible to students and staff members, educational leaders will feel more comfortable about having others observe classes, and therefore speak and interact with students outside of an office setting. This is considered an "open door" policy. The door swings both ways, and teachers as well as administrators need to be willing to share themselves with each other to establish a better learning environment.

Encompassing all administrative roles is vital. School board members, principals, superintendents, and all assistants need to follow the same guidelines. These positions are all looked at as positions of respect.

The Ability to Learn

The basis for all learning is established through the movement of "line". Goldstein (1984) stated the definition of "line" is the path of a moving point. This definition encompasses every aspect of the learning process. Without line, words could not be written, equations could not be solved, plans could not be drawn and all that is known today would not exist in the present manner.

Howard Gardner looks at intelligence as encompassing everyone's personality. These categories include:

- Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence: the control of body movements and the capacity to handle objects skillfully.
- Interpersonal intelligence (Personal Intelligence): sensitivity to the moods, desires, motivations and feelings of others and the ability to respond appropriately.
- Intrapersonal intelligence (Personal Intelligence): self-knowledge and understanding of personal feelings, and the ability to access these feelings to guide behavior.
- Linguistic intelligence: sensitivity to sounds, rhythms and meanings of words, and to different uses of language.
- Logical-mathematical intelligence: the capacity to recognize logical or numerical patterns and handle chains of reasoning.
- Musical intelligence: the ability to perceive, appreciate and produce rhythm, pitch and forms of musical expression.
- Naturalist intelligence: the ability to recognize and classify flora and fauna.
- Spatial intelligence: the ability to perceive the visual-spatial world accurately and act on initial perceptions (Hopper, 1997).

With these potentials, Gardner believes human beings have evolved with several distinct intelligences, not just one. Each intelligence is relatively independent of the other. Any significant achievement involves a blend of intelligences, and these intelligences are valued by cultures around the world, though not always to the same degree.

Because of this belief, Gardner criticizes the present educational system for its bias toward the linguist and logical-mathematical intelligence -- the two components of "IQ" as it is commonly understood (Grow, 1997).

The theory of multiple intelligence does not deal with such concepts as motivation, attention, persistence, learning strategies, learning styles, adaptability, practical intelligence, inspiration, and wisdom (Grow, 1977). Instead, it looks primarily at cognitive operations. It is strong on intellectual operations and weaker in accounting for emotional, creative, and spiritual life. The educational system should seriously counsel his theory. His approach offers an enrichment viewpoint rather than an overwhelming theory by supplying unrelated bits of data.

Within Howard Gardner's Book, *Frames of Mind*, (2000) he presents the theory that there is no general "intelligence" that can be measured on today's IQ tests. Instead, he feels that the human mind is organized around several distinct functions called "intelligences". Even though these intelligencies overlap with the left brain/right brain hemispheres, Gardner feels that the brain should be looked at wholly to investigate thinking at a deeper level of complexity (Arnheim, 1969). These intelligencies are seen throughout the world, no matter what the environment, lending proof to the fact that these intelligences function independently of one another and unite to help all individuals learn.

Gardner's theory suggests that individuals are smart in many different, often surprising ways. It is suggested that some of these ways are seldom recognized in the normal school systems of today. As administrators and teachers, it is our responsibility to determine and utilize the multiple ways children learn. By seeing individuals are smart in different ways, a better learning environment will be accomplished. By using Gardner's theory, this will also remove stress from teachers and help administrators provide a smooth running organization.

Use of Authentic Assessment

John Frederikson and Alan Collins, two nationally recognized assessment experts, remind us that assessment should not simply monitor achievement or report scores. Assessment should lead to instructional action. Policy makers, administrators, and teachers recognize the importance of meaningful, useful assessment and they are working together to create new approaches (Day, 1997).

The purpose of Standard Assessment (which is most often reported in numbers) is to obtain information that can be easily reported to the public, school boards, administrators, and parents. Obviously, such assessment has limited potential for influencing teaching and learning in a positive manner.

Authentic Assessment, on the other hand, promotes portfolios of learning and allows the teacher to see the progress of the student through a visual

manner. The past ten years have witnessed a revolution in this type of assessment. As a result, the definition of assessment has been expanded in two important ways. It is acknowledged to have many different purposes and audiences. For example, assessments are used to qualify students for special services, to report status to school boards, states, and parents, to evaluate program effectiveness, to monitor student learning and adjust teaching strategies, to evaluate each students' growth over time, to engage students in self-evaluation, and to understand a students' strengths and needs. Each of these purposes and audiences may require different kinds of assessment and different types of information (Farr, 1992).

The importance of classroom-based assessment has been recognized, giving it a central position in meaningful assessment discussions. Classroom-based assessment is close to actual learning and to the children; therefore, it is most likely to influence instructional decisions and to engage children in evaluating their own work. It is more specific to individual children and to instruction, and it occurs more frequently than formal norm-referenced testing. When assessment and instruction are blended, both teachers and students become learners. Teachers become more focused on what and how to teach, and students become more self-directed, motivated, and focused on learning. Classroom assessment puts teachers and children in charge. Consequently, it is

imperative to understand the elements of good classroom-based assessment (Graue, 1993).

Authentic Assessment is one of the tools used within a school system. The student's imagination will be stretched and ideas will translate into standardized meaning through portfolio assessment. Its' aim is to assess several different types of literacy abilities in visual context. Cross-curricular, multicultural, and differential activities will be utilized to help enhance the students' awareness of the world. These activities will produce a portfolio that will be filled with creative and explosive ideas and promote the relationship of several subject areas.

Cognitive -- Based Instruction

After studying extensive models of instruction, cognitive-based instruction is seen as an excellent tool for use within the school setting. Bruning, Schraw, & Ronning (1999) cited the fact that cognitive-based instruction focuses on understanding human perception, thought, and memory. It portrays learners as active processors of information and assigns critical roles to the knowledge and perspective that students bring to the process of learning. How students enrich and process information determines the level of understanding they ultimately achieve. Within the concept of cognitive instruction, the staff must incorporate not only what the students have learned at school, but what they have learned in their "real life" outside of the classroom.

Within cognitive-based instruction, general thinking, perception, memory and the students reasoning skills are the focus. This means that cognitive skills can be learned. With proper instruction and time, the students' needs will be met. This includes taking into consideration the students' learning style, the special needs of each student, and their need for respect and personal involvement.

Cognitive psychology emphasizes the importance of structuring knowledge, self-awareness and self-regulation, motivation and beliefs of the learner. The role of social interaction in cognitive development stresses the contextual nature of knowledge, strategies, and expertise. Teachers will be instructed on cognitive-based instruction along with the importance of nurturing the knowledge and experiences of the students. This knowledge should be massaged in as many ways possible, to encourage new learning and broaden present knowledge (Bruning, Schraw, & Ronning, 1999).

Through staff in-services, suggestions will be made so staff will incorporate cognitive-based instruction into their classroom setting in several different ways. Teachers should understand that learning is a product of the interaction between what learners already know and what they incorporate from new learning experiences. From a student's point of view, their present knowledge, their specific approach to learning, and the new information they encounter creates their individual learning arena.

Teachers will be encouraged to know their students, and construct a learning environment that will help instill new concepts. Methods on sensory, short-term, working, and long-term memory exercises will be emphasized. The teachers should also be instructed on the encoding and retrieval process.

As an example, teachers could assign a written project, with explicit directions, where the students would have to draw on a body of knowledge in memory, making sure it is age appropriate. The teachers should recognize that students use several cognitive abilities to carry out assignments. Students will first extract meaning from the written instructions to meet the assignment criteria, then translate thoughts into plans of action, combine stored and newly acquired information into words and sentences, then guide their attention toward important information, make sense of details and finally get information in and out of their memory. In addition, they must master the equipment that is being used to produce the report. The students will draw from a body of knowledge already in memory. Language will be used to express the information and finish the assignment successfully. They must make appropriate decisions about whether the emerging document "solves the problem"... that is, meets the assignment criteria (Bruning, Schraw, & Ronning, 1999).

With cognitive-based instruction, short-term memory refers to the place where information is processed for meaning. It is limited to capacity and

duration. The teachers need to repeat skills and information, so the meaning of the situation moves into long-term memory. Teachers will be made aware that according to Miller (1956), individuals retain approximately seven meaningful units of information in memory at one time. Peterson and Peterson (1959) showed that information in short-term memory is forgotten very quickly. Lack of retention is due to interference caused by other information as stated by Greene's study (1992). Because of these factors, teachers use encoding and retrieval processes along with the central role of beliefs about self, intelligence and knowledge to enhance their teaching style (Bruning, Schraw, & Ronning, 1999).

Long-term memory involves memory traces developed over time - days, weeks, months, and years. It is the permanent repository of a lifetime of information accumulated in each individual. The framework for long-term memory (Anderson, Squire, Woltz, 1988) includes declarative knowledge (knowing what) and procedural knowledge (knowing how). Tulving (1972) distinguishes between memory of a general knowledge and memory of personal experiences. Semantic memory refers to general concepts and principals and their associations. Episodic memory refers to the storage and retrieval of dated personal experiences (Bruning, Schaw, & Ronning, 1999).

Learning is the result of interacting variables, which is the theory behind Bandura's (1991) reciprocal determinism. Inactive learning is when one learns

a task by doing, while vicarious learning occurs when one learns about a task by observation or discussion. A student's self-efficacy should be taken into consideration. This self-efficacy is the students' judgment of their ability to perform a task within a specific domain. A teaching efficacy refers to the belief that the process of education affects students in important ways, so the teacher should use modeling to demonstrate appropriate and correct components of a skill or concept (Bruning, Schraw, & Ronning, 1999). This, within itself, can be a powerful source of renewed enthusiasm and excitement about learning and achievement. To foster a students' autonomy, a teacher should let students make meaningful choices, scrutinize teacher/student expectations, minimize extrinsic rewards, incorporate criterion-referenced evaluation, and provide intrinsically motivating reasons to perform a task.

Implicit beliefs, which are unconscious and personal beliefs about the world, should be encouraged in reaching goals by:

- Promoting the view that intellectual development is controllable.
- Reward effort and improvement while de-emphasizing native ability.
- Emphasize the process rather than the products of learning.
- Recognize that mistakes are a normal and healthy part of learning.
- Encourage individual - rather than group - evaluative standards.
- Use reflective judgement (Bruning, Schraw, & Ronning, 1999).

These processes will help staff to achieve a positive learning environment that will promote learning and raise student achievement. Through the use of cognitive instructional skills, what the student already knows will be taken into consideration and expanded upon. By understanding the different ways in which students learn...the teachers will have an easier time by building on what is known, and the students will have an easier time expanding on what they already know.

Educational Leadership

Kozol (2000) stated that Franklin Pierce was born in 1804: the son of the governor of New Hampshire. His education transformed him into a brilliant young attorney. When he was only twenty-five he was elected to the New Hampshire state legislature and became the speaker at twenty-seven. He was elected to the United States House of Representatives two years later. He became the youngest member of the United States Senate at the age of thirty-three. During the Mexican War, he rose to the rank of brigadier general. He was elected president of the United States in 1852 at the age of forty-eight.

The story of Franklin Pierce is one of the most heart-wrenching in American politics. Under different conditions he might have been one of our greatest presidents. In his personal life, he was married and had three children. All of them perished! Without his inner circle, the group of individuals that he worked with in politics, did not give him the support that he needed to succeed.

He certainly had the necessary leadership qualities and integrity to deal with any challenge, but during his presidential reign, his leadership succumbed to the perils of his personal life.

It is nearly impossible to serve as a great leader unless one has personal and professional support on which to lean for constant support and encouragement. Franklin Pierce had no one, and the man who was so strong-willed and spirited, gradually lost all semblance of those qualities along with his once-powerful drive and confidence.

This is a prime example of how an individual needs numerous support groups in order to fulfill their duties. One must never forget the tremendous responsibility accepted as an educational leader.

Lambert's (1998) Leadership Capacity Matrix states an administrator should fall primarily within Quadrant 3, with tendencies towards Quadrant 4. The administrator should implement a broad-based and skillful participation in work of the leaders within a school. An administrator should also use inquiry-based information to inform the staff, and influence decisions and practices within the school setting (Kowalski & Reitzug, 1993).

The Path-Goal Theory by House (1971) indicates that a leader's behavior is acceptable to subordinates when they view it as a source of immediate or future satisfaction. Because of this, a principal should offer rewards for achieving

performance goals, clarify paths towards these goals, and remove the obstacles to desired performance. There are four leadership styles within this theory.

- Directive Leadership: Specific advice is given to the group; ground rules and structure are established. This leader should clarify expectations and specifying or assign certain work tasks to be followed.
- Supportive Leadership: Good relations are promoted with the group and sensitivity to subordinates needs to shown.
- Participative Leadership: Decision making is based on consultation with the group and information is shared with the group.
- Achievement-oriented leadership: Challenging goals are set and high performance is encouraged while confidence is shown in the groups' ability (House, 1971).

The most successful administrator will combine the attributes of the Directive and Supportive Leader. They will also combine the multiple dimensions of leadership behavior which include: leader initiating structure, consideration, authoritarianism, hierarchical influence, and degree of closeness of the supervision. By selectively combining these dimensions, an administrator will find the road to success.

Within the Fiedler's Contingency Model (1967), Fiedler states that the most effective leadership style depends on the nature of the situation. A leader can only be effective if the individual's personality style is appropriately matched to a given set of situational variables. Within this model, a good leader will change a situation to achieve effectiveness, rather than changing personal

leadership style. By striving towards maximizing group performance and exerting influence on decision making, without dictating to a group, a school system can run more effectively (Kowalski & Reitzug, 1993).

Hershey's and Blanchard's Situational Theory of Leadership (1977), uses four quadrants to indicate leadership style. The framework weighs interplay of three variables. These variables include the amount of direction and guidance a leader gives; the amount of support they give; and the readiness of followers to perform the task. This theory provides a useful and understandable framework for situational leaders. The model suggests that there is not one best leadership style for all situations. The leader's administrative style must be adaptable and flexible to meet the changing needs of employees and situations. (Kowalski & Reitzug, 1993).

As cited within Draft (2002), Hershey and Blanchard's Situational Theory of Leadership indicates that an individual, who floats between the four quadrants, as the situation requires, is the most effective leader. These levels include:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------|----|
| ➤ High task, low relationship | TELLING | S1 |
| ➤ High task, high relationship | SELLING | S2 |
| ➤ High relationship, low task | PARTICIPATING | S3 |
| ➤ Low relationship, low task | DELEGATING | S4 |

Looking at these levels, Hershey and Blanchard feel the most effectively run school would have a leader who is high in Selling and Participating (also

known as Coaching and Supporting). These individuals help others to move easily through the process of the Follower Readiness scale. This scale includes:

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|----------|----|
| ➤ Unable and unwilling or insecure | LOW | R1 |
| ➤ Unable but willing or confident | MODERATE | R2 |
| ➤ Able but unwilling or insecure | MODERATE | R3 |
| ➤ Able and willing or confident | MODERATE | R4 |

It is the job of an educational leader to use their leadership style to help move their teachers up the scale of Follower Readiness from the R1 to the R4 area. This will be accomplished the easiest when the leader is adaptable in their approach (Draft, 2002).

The Situational Model of Vroom and Yetton (1973), centers on the interaction between situational variables and the characteristics of the leader and/or follower. A "roving leader" who uses personal talents and responds swiftly to the situation at hand, would be an excellent leader. (The "roving leader" terminology refers to indispensability as a leader because they are available when the staff needs them.) The five decision-making styles, in varying degrees, should be used as a situation warrants. Solving the problem at hand by utilizing the information available, is the key. When needed, the staff should be asked for additional information. This is utilized when the staff is part of the decision making process (Kowalski & Reitzug, 1993).

Reflection

In conclusion, the most vital role an administrator can play is that of aiding teachers to enable students to learn. This will be done through giving and coaching unselfishly.

The need of an educator in any position is to pass on the key that will enable students to renew their faith and confidence in their own abilities. Once the student finds or accepts this key and uses it, they will unlock the golden door to learning--then the rest is up to them. The constant repetition of learning will be absorbed by that other mind of theirs, the subconscious, and eventually will be applied with self-esteem, faith, confidence, hope and enthusiasm. After restoring these important elements in sufficient amounts, any hurdle can be surmounted.

Administrators with the greatest success jump into their work head first. Instead of dallying in the shallows, they swim off with sure strokes until almost out of sight. When it is time to plow, they harness themselves and strain in the mud and muck to move things forward, and do what has to be done. When emergencies arrive they work diligently to solve the problem. The work of the world is as common as mud. When it is botched, it smears the hands and crumbles to dust. Beautiful vases, after centuries go by, are placed in museums. However, we know vases were made to be used. Just as the pitcher cries for water to carry; a person cries for work that is "real". The administrator will never

be placed in the museum of time, they will always be here to march forward and carry both old and new knowledge forward.

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