Philosophical perspective on education

Michael Doyle
University of Northern Iowa

Copyright ©2000 Michael Doyle

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.uni.edu/grp

Part of the Educational Leadership Commons, and the Elementary and Middle and Secondary Education Administration Commons

Recommended Citation
https://scholarworks.uni.edu/grp/572

This Open Access Graduate Research Paper is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Work at UNI ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Graduate Research Papers by an authorized administrator of UNI ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@uni.edu.
Philosophical perspective on education

Abstract
I believe that education shapes our continuously changing society. We use education to grow, develop, and strengthen the citizens in our society. With the proper use of education we have created the possibilities for unlimited opportunities. I see education as a great challenge to shape our young people into becoming responsible lifelong learners.
PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVE ON EDUCATION

A Paper
Presented to
The Department of Educational Leadership, Counseling, and Postsecondary Education
University of Northern Iowa

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in Education

by
Michael Doyle
This Research Paper by: Michael Doyle

Entitled: EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVE ON EDUCATION

has been approved as meeting the research paper requirements for the Degree of The Master of Arts in Education

11-13-00
Date Approved

Dave Else
Advisor/Director of Research Paper

11/14/00
Date Approved

Dale R. Jackson
Second Reader of Research Paper

11.20.2007
Date Received

Michael D. Waggoner
Head, Department of Educational Leadership, Counseling, and Postsecondary Education
I believe that all students can and are capable of learning. To me, education is one of the most powerful and important tools that no one can take away from you. A person in education is an individual seeking to academically better themselves. I wish everyone would get excited about the possibilities in education. I believe any child growing up can become anyone and anything he/she wants. As I was growing up, I really didn't recognize the importance of an education until my sophomore year in high school. It was then, that I was able to understand the purpose and meaning of an education.

Through education I was able to comprehend the importance of goals and appreciate the hard work involved in achieving those goals. I knew that I needed an education to do the things that I wanted to do. I began to see a vision of what I wanted to strive for in life. In my Foundations of Education class, I was extremely impressed with professor Les Huth. At that point in my life, I realized I wanted to give back to education. Helping others to succeed in their aspirations became my goal as an educator. I was very interested in what teachers and administrators had to say about education.

At first, school was always a place we had to go. I never wanted to be in school and thought that it was a waste of time. School was not a popular place because I never really felt like I was doing what I wanted to be doing. I was an average student at best, and had a low self-esteem. When I started high school, my attitude started to change towards school and education. I realized that I could empower myself to do anything
through the use of my education. I took a lot of pride in doing well and achieving my goals. I had to work extremely hard to achieve a higher standard of education for myself. In college, my focus was much easier, I knew how to use education to achieve what I wanted. I enjoyed school a lot more because I understood what education could do for me in becoming a secondary math instructor.

As I evaluate my philosophy of education, I am constantly referring to the experiences I have had in education. As you can see, I have gone from someone that did not understand the purpose of an education, to someone who wants to make an impact in the field of educational leadership. I believe that education shapes our continuously changing society. We use education to grow, develop, and strengthen the citizens in our society. With the proper use of education we have created the possibilities for unlimited opportunities. I see education as a great challenge to shape our young people into becoming responsible lifelong learners.

As a future administrator, I am willing to take on the responsibility of leading an educational institution. I get excited by the possibilities to educate the young people of today. There are thousands of opportunities that exist for everyone. I think that through education, we have to be able to explore opportunities with the use of the resources available to us. I have to be an advocate for those educational opportunities. I view those within an educational institution as a team with one common goal, to deliver the best possible education.
I envision our educational system assisting young people in developing life skills, becoming responsible citizens, communicating effectively, and processing information. From the material that we are teaching in our schools we need to try and develop skills for living. As a teacher, I see situations everyday that influence some of the decisions I make. I encounter many different personalities each and every day at school and I have to be able to educate the diversity of students within my classroom.

I enjoy the challenges in trying to change a student’s attitude about the importance of an education. It is very difficult when students get little or no support from home. I see school as a place to get encouragement and reinforcement from adults. School may be the only place students interact socially with other students their age. Also, I feel that it is important for students to be able to communicate to other students and teachers about academic material. School also grants the opportunity to participate in extra curricular activities. From participating in these extra curricular activities, a student develops self worth and a sense of belonging to a group. School also provides structure, discipline, and makes students accountable for their actions.

From my observation, school serves a different role for those students desiring a higher education. As a teacher, I love to have a student who knows what he/she wants from our educational system. Their goals are set and they are willing to work hard towards obtaining them. I feel that our schools are encompassed with many of these types
of students. They realize at a young age, that they need to start preparing for college. It is rewarding to see some students take pride in working hard and realizing that with hard work and goals they can achieve their dreams.

The remaining types of students use the educational system as a place to develop work skills. I believe that these students are planning to enter the work force directly after high school. However, more and more employers are requiring some basic educational training beyond high school. Many schools are implementing “School to Work” programs to give these students experience in their projected career path.

I would like to think that our educational system at the secondary level has improved the intellectual and social skills of students. The parents of many students are working and have little time to spend with their children. As a result, little emphasis is placed on school. I feel that the communication between parents and the school needs to exist to allow students to be in position to be successful. Home and school have to develop a partnership in the education of our young people.

I think many people in the public don't understand the problems we must confront and decisions we have to make as educators. I feel that being in education can be very frustrating at times, as well as, rewarding. It is the balance between the frustrations and rewards that make teaching so interesting and challenging. Administratively thinking, I believe that I will encounter many frustrations and rewards. Every job has frustrations, but I believe that the people around you can help reduce
the frustrations and drawbacks. If everyone knows what is expected from them and people work as a team then problems will be minimal.

This is my fifth year in education and each day has presented me with unique challenges and experiences. With the diverse combinations among the staff and students, I feel that there are never two days that are identical. An administrator has to use diversity as motivation to encompass a main belief or purpose of the school.

An administrator has to deal with pressure day in and day out. Also, one has to make many critical decisions quickly. It is also important for the administrator to give the staff some responsibility. On the other hand, the staff may have problems coming to a critical decision. If the staff can not come to an agreement on their own, the administrator has to be a leader in the decision making process. I think that no matter what an administrator does, there will always be some members of the staff that will disagree with the decision. It is important for an administrator to have all the information when making a decision. Obviously, I feel that an administrator has to have support for their decisions. An administrator has to gain the support and trust from the staff. This will develop by building relationships among the staff.

I do not think all administrative decisions will be easy. I think with effective leadership, an administrator can develop an excellent relationship with the staff and students. For me, when making a decision I always have to weigh the consequences of who is going to be impacted the most and the least. What are some possible questions someone
might have about the position I might take? How will these questions effect what was been done in the past or could even change what happened in the past? The same questions can be asked of the future. An administrator has to always be evaluating and changing the process to meet the needs of the students, staff, and the public.

In this paper, I will talk about the areas that are important to me in administration. The six areas that are important to me and my development as an administrator are: change, communication, teamwork, productivity, teaching discipline and responsibility, building culture, climate and interpersonal relations. I often think about what I would do in some situations, and how my beliefs and values in the these areas will influence the entire school.

Change

I am the type of person that likes to see change. I think it is good and healthy to look for ways to make school a better place for everyone. I believe change is always an ongoing process in education. As a building principal, I will need to be the facilitator of change. Change will not begin without my initiatives and goals. According to Haycock, (1998) effective principals set direction, facilitate change and communicate with stake holders; they also solve many problems and monitor implementations.

I think many principals realize that they can not achieve any of their goals or educational outcomes if they do not include the staff and community in their vision. I believe that I may have to look at myself and
change in some situations. I think that if a principal is able to relate to many different types of people and realize that they can not change our society overnight they will be effective leaders. I think it will be hard to be patient at times in the principalship, but I must realize that things take time. If a principal can empower the people around him/her then I believe that good things are ahead for the young people that attend that school.

According to Ediger (1998), administrators, faculty, and staff need to perceive change as a process. Change is something that is ongoing and never absolute. I think that staff members need to try and find ways to change and improve the delivery of education. Staff members and administrators need to be current with what society demands in education so we can prepare students to adapt to our changing society. I do not think a teacher or administrator should be satisfied if they are not making changes in their style or delivery in educating our young people. You always have to be striving to do better and achieve more. I believe the principal has to be an advocate of change. As an administrator, I will always be looking for ways to change in order to make improvements. Change is not the enemy, it has to happen in order to improve the quality of education. Society will continue to change and through education we must prepare individuals for society.

"Schools, teachers, students, and communities must change to develop the creative, adaptive, and purposeful learners required in the next millennium" (Marshall, 1998, p. 50). We are educating the students
of this century and we need to prepare them the best that we can for the changes that lie ahead for them in their lifetime. It is hard to predict what our young people will be faced with in the future. A good education is like the baton in the relay of life. No one can take an education from you and it is something that one must work hard to obtain.

Closer to home, some surrounding schools have changed to block scheduling hoping to improve instructional time and reduce the number of classes taken at one time by each student. “Two suburban Des Moines high schools that have adopted fewer but longer class periods each day have seen improvements in student’s grades and a decline in discipline problems” (Bolten, 1999, p. 1). So what does this mean to the school administrator? I think it means that you can never be satisfied with the way things are.

Improvements can be made and will be made if there is leadership within the school. I think a principal has to look at what is best for everyone, keeping in mind that some sacrifices will have to be made for the rewards in the future. I think it is up to me to try and let everyone around me know how important change can be. I will show the staff and community how we can benefit from change and by working together to make the education of our young people the best we can. I will begin this process by building relationships with teachers and parents to gain their trust. If people believe in you then you are in position to be a great leader to all. As the principal, I believe that you also have to work closely with the staff to identify change. The teachers
are the ones in the classroom everyday and the administration needs to here their concerns. This will allow the staff to have some ownership in what happens at school. The staff has to realize that their input is important and worthwhile.

"Good principals have high expectations for all children and continually work to compare where students are with the goals that they are capable of achieving" (Mezzacappa, 1999, p. 65). Education will continually change and our goals as professionals will need to continually change as well. The perspectives of students will continually change and their educational demands will need to be met. I have to be aware of the educational trends and how we as a school can better serve our young people. A school has to be willing to work towards a common goal, always trying to do better.

Communication

Some people like to be verbal leaders, while others are leaders by example. I feel that the best leaders are those that can incorporate both styles. Some people will understand by examples, and others will understand better with an explanation of the process. As a leader, many people will look to me for advice. I think a good administrator needs to have good communication skills.

Educational leadership is not going to get any easier. There are many challenges ahead and new goals to accomplish. I am excited about being a leader through the challenges and expectations of education. Others are not as excited and may not understand that you
are trying to get them to buy into your philosophy and purpose of education. I will communicate with my staff and the community so they are aware of my philosophy in education. Being the leader, you have to be the first one to accept criticism from others. It is very easy for others to criticize what someone else is doing. As an educational leader, I think that a person has to be ready for those problematic times. I also think that you can not give up on some of the issues that will raise conflict among the staff or public. I believe that I can communicate to others and their views by reaching common ground. Some people get really excited when conflict is present. I am able to remain calm and react sensibly by using common sense.

In order to become a strong educational leader it is important to know and understand what some of the characteristics are of a good principal. According to Griffith (1999), effective principals maintain appropriate relations with parents and community members. Building relationships with parents and community members will require communication skills. I believe I will need to be present in the community and get involved with different organizations to meet people. I will become a member of the community quickly. The principal has to keep up with what is happening within the community. The school can be the center of attention. “Public school administration needs to be concerned about being truthful in their communications” (Martinson, 1999, p. 85).

As a result of many changes, today’s schools need an updated model for principals as instructional leaders. The new principal calls for
a model based on accountability, trust, redistribution of power, communication, coaching, teaching, and learning (Kaplan & Owings, 1999). The principalship is becoming more complex and demanding all the time. As a principal, I will have to be able to communicate with the public and staff members. I think the staff needs to be aware of some of the issues related to school. I feel as a teacher, I really do not realize what is going on until everything is over with. As an administrator, I would like to inform my staff of what is going on as much as possible. I think it is important to know who is involved in the situation and inform those people.

The principal has to keep up with what is happening within the community. The school can be the center of attention for many communities. "Public school administration needs to be concerned about being truthful in their communications" (Martinson, 1999, p. 85). The public needs to be aware of what is going on at school and I believe you have to be careful in explaining different situations to the public so there are no misconceptions of what is happening at the school. It does not take long for the public or other school personal to get a rumor started. If the correct people that need to be involved are presented with the facts, then the rumors can be kept to a minimum.

The communication is not as effective or strong as it could be at times. I believe that an educational administrator has to get to know the people he/she is relaying information to. Administrators have to know the facts at all times, and if they do not know the facts, then they need to be
able to find them out quickly. I will have to access many resources so I can find necessary information.

Communication is a key to the success of an administrator. An article by Dave DeValois (1999), in the Des Moines Register, summarized a report of a survey involving high school students and areas of the school that needed improvement. Ankeny high school, in Ankeny Iowa, was one of ten schools that participated in the survey from Iowa. The Ankeny principal showed a need to improve staff-to-student communication, improve career planning and make classes more interactive. The students were surveyed on their attitudes and perspectives of the school. Students need to have the right to communicate their opinions and the administration needs to listen to these ideas and perspectives. The administration should take these ideas into account when trying to improve the school.

As a high school principal, I will be in a middle management position. I believe that communication will prove to be vital to the success of any school as an administrator. The communication between students, staff, administration, and the community needs to be freely expressed. Everyone that has a hand in the education of a young person needs to be an effective communicator.

Teamwork

I agree with what Blase and Blase (1999), believe that instructional leadership is being shared with the teachers more. They also believe that in coaching, reflection, study teams, and problem
solving instructional leadership is becoming more prevalent. I believe that most successful schools function best when they are a team. It is not a situation where someone is the principal and they do everything and the teachers do whatever the principal does. I think that the teachers and the principal have to work together to create the best situation for our young people. Besides, let's face it, a principal has to do so many things that it is essential to have the help and support of the teachers. The principal has to share some of the management and instructional leadership responsibilities.

This is where the concept of the lead teacher comes in. There will hopefully be some teachers that are willing to work with the principal in leadership capacities. Lead teachers are vital to the success of the principal. They can give the principal feedback as to what the perception is of the staff and they can also take on some of the duties of the principal. I think an educational administrator has to be aware of leadership resources within the district. Being the leader does not mean you have to make all of the decisions and everyone goes along with whatever the principal decides. As a principal, I will want everyone to feel like they can come into my office and tell me what is on their mind. It is my desire that everyone on staff feels comfortable around me as well as with other staff members.

A principal is no longer the “boss”, but instead the principal has become more of a facilitator, building consensus among the staff and creating a desired learning community (Rinehart, Short, Short, & Eckley,
I believe I will be a better administrator under a team approach to leadership. I am very easy to get along with and work well with others. We need to try to function more as a whole staff that has similar beliefs and the same educational values.

DuFour (1999), suggests that principals should lead through shared vision and values rather than rules and procedures. I think that the staff will be more willing to build consensus if the principal leads with a shared vision and the values among the school are on a common ground. According to DuFour, the best strategy for improving the school is to delegate authority, to enlist the faculty in critical decisions and to pose questions rather than impose solutions. The principal has to work with the staff and their decisions should be reached together, instead of the principal telling them the way it is going to be. Most of us do not like to here that we need to teach a certain way or that the way we are teaching is not correct. The principal has to create an environment where teachers feel comfortable and continually develop as professionals.

There are many ways to build teamwork among the staff. The beginning step, which is the most important in building a team, is to have a philosophy that the school is a community of learners. That the education delivered to a student is a collaborative effort. This philosophy starts with me. I will refer to the staff as a team and we will have team meetings. It is almost like we are an athletic team and I'm the coach. Everyone has to believe that the school is a learning community and
everyone involved in that community is important. I believe you have to let others know that they are making a difference and that you appreciate the work they do for young people. Having developed a strong learning community where everyone is part of the team, you have created a powerful educational environment.

Constructing a leadership team composed of staff members, students, parents, and the community is a way to build teamwork according to Alvoid (2000). I would use the leadership team as an advisory team that would make suggestions to the principal on school related issues. Alvoid, also believes teams working within departments will reenergize the curriculum, and improve assessment. These teams will be constructed in an effort to improve the school as well as build relationships. The staff has to have ownership in the learning community. This will happen my getting involved and being an active member of a team.

Mentoring is another concept I would like to implement, to build teamwork among beginning teachers. I remember my first year, and how lost I felt at times. Alvoid, talks about veteran teachers acting as mentors for first-year teachers, and assisting them with school initiatives. I would like to have the new teachers in my building to feel at home in our learning community. The older staff members would teach the beginning staff member the ins and outs of how our community functions.

Staff development could also be used as a way to build teamwork among the staff. This could be done by working as a staff to develop
consensus on school issues. Getting the staff or team together creates an opportunity for team members to interact with one another about what is happening within the learning community. Team members have to be given the opportunity to spend time with each other and staff development is one way to accomplish this. If there is constancy from teacher to teacher and each student is treated fair then the team is working.

Teamwork is very important to me and according to Sheppard and Brown (2000), the essential ingredients for a school are: collegiality, cooperation, and just getting along with each other. Creating an environment where everyone is a team player and everyone believes in one common purpose is my desired state. The word “team” stands for the saying, together everyone achieves more. Sharing power with others is difficult, but very important. There will be others on staff that have wonderful ideas in education. If the principal wants to have a shared vision, then he/she must learn to give up some power. I do not want people to feel like their input is not important in the decisions we as a school make. I will go out of my way to help make others feel like they are important and they are an essential part of the team.

Productivity

The principal’s role has changed over time. The principal is held accountable for the effectiveness of schools (Rinehart et al., 1998). Schools are evaluated on its effectiveness or productivity, as measured by student achievement, the school’s commitment to academic goals,
and the creation of a quality learning environment. I realize that many schools are evaluated on whether or not they have improved student test scores. Test scores should be important to a school in order to measure their productivity.

"Governance structures must be altered to give administrators, teachers, and parents real power and authority if they are truly to work together to make major changes in established educational practices" (Guskey & Peterson, 1995/1996, p. 11). I believe having a productive school is very important to the community served. If I am perceived as lazy and unproductive, then staff may be that way too. If I am upbeat and willing to work hard, then most likely the staff will be more like that. I believe you have to demonstrate the behavior you want your staff to have. As a leader, you have to be a model and let the staff know what it is that you think is important and then hold them responsible to achieve it. It is pretty hard to accomplish a goal if you are not motivated. A person with the right goals and motivation can do whatever they dream of doing.

Hanks, Pulsipher, and Pulsipher (1997), have a six step plan that helps someone focus on what is important to them. The first step is to leave the comfort zone. Everyone has a comfort zone and it is hard to leave a place we are all at ease with. A principal has to continually leave the comfort zone in order to be productive. It does not have to happen overnight, but with little steps at a time, progress will be made.

The next step is to choose your values. "Imagine your ideal self. How do you want to act, feel, think?" (Hanks, Pulsipher, & Pulsipher,
A person’s values will effect a person’s productivity. I believe you have to know yourself very well and you need to know what is important to you. What I value most is where I need to spend most of my time. Just as the staff should concentrate most of their energy into what is important to them or what is important to the school.

The third step is to make long range goals. Not only decide what the staff wants to accomplish, but they must write it down. Their goals need to be visible to them. The goals must be present so the staff is continually reminded of what it is that they are working towards.

The fourth step is the intermediate step. The staff will take their long range goals and break them down into smaller tasks. These smaller tasks must be specific and detailed. By breaking down a big goal into many smaller ones, will allow them to focus on what they want to achieve. The staff must also evaluate the progress they are making on a continual basis.

The fifth step is the daily tasks that the staff is doing to achieve both their intermediate tasks, as well as, their long range goals. I think that the more productive a person is, the more detailed they are. Someone that knows what they are doing on a daily basis in order to achieve a long range goal will be more productive and more determined to reach these goals. Each days work needs to be a reflection of the staff’s goals.

Step six, the pinnacle of inner peace, is the final step. “This pinnacle is reached when our daily actions are in line with our
appropriate beliefs-when our navigation through time is guided by our governing values” (Hanks et al., 1997, p. 39). When a person concentrates all of their energy into their values and works hard in achieving goals they will be productive. I believe that is what a principal has to do in order to be productive and at the same time have some inner peace among him or herself.

Teaching Discipline and Responsibility

If our students are not achieving up to our educational standards then we need to look at ways we can improve the quality of education. I believe all students can receive a quality education if they put forth their best effort. I believe, as an educator, that we must focus on getting students to try their hardest and take pride in doing their best. “A quality education means that all students—even the most educationally challenged—are accountable for learning and are continually improving on their current level of achievement” (Walker, 1998, p. 15).

The endless hours of education and the development of countless programs setup at a school are all in an effort to help educate our young people. Bussler (1998), explains that we do not need principals or custodians. The point of the article, was to show that the students can learn responsibility and be disciplined if we let them. I thought the article was interesting, in that the author made reference to the way things were in the one room school house back in the so called “old days”. The students had to virtually take care of everything. They learned how to be responsible. Students knew how to work hard and they did not talk back
to the teacher. The students did what they were told and the daily chores were done with pride.

"Having students clean their own school can transmit the cultural value of being responsible in our space; it can also transform our culture, which appears to be in the process of losing that value" (Bussler, 1998, p. 317). We want our students to grow up and be more responsible, so why do we not let them be more responsible? It is just easier for the teacher to clean up after the students, but what does that teach our students? No responsibility, no respect, and no discipline for the things a person does for them. Students often take many of lives little treasures for granted. It is not hard to teach our young people about responsibility if we start at an early age and continue the process throughout their education. I am not saying students should be the one to pick up the school. I am simply saying if we have an opportunity to teach students a lesson about discipline and responsibility then we need to do it.

For example, when I have lunch room duty and I see a student drop a wrapper or napkin on the floor, I do not pick it up for them. I ask them to please clean up their own mess. Some other teachers just go around and pick up after students. How are they ever going to learn if someone is always picking up after them? We have to show our students discipline and responsibility when the opportunity presents itself.

"Students incivilities include coming to class late and leaving early, eating, conversing, reading newspapers, talking on cell phones, sleeping, watching portable televisions and directing verbal abuse at
teachers" (Will, 1998, p. 84). I do not think that our students have changed that much and the quotation is a little extreme. However, there are many distractions that a principal has to be aware of within the school environment. These distractions have to be addressed by the entire school. Students need to be disciplined so they are able to conform to the school's rules. I feel that there needs to be consistency among the staff and administration in disciplining students.

Students need to know their limits and what is expected of them within the school setting, as well as, in the community. The classroom teacher will be responsible to make sure students conform to the expectations they have for their classroom. In most situations, the teacher will intervene if there is a problem first. If the problem persists, then as the principal, I would have a meeting with the student and their parents before the student could return to class. If the problem continues then we would need to find an alternative location or structure for the student to be successful.

As an administrator, having to potentially handle many of the discipline problems in the school, I think it is important to realize that many students do good things in school. Not all students cause problems in school and some students really believe school is a good place and value their education. A study by Tice (1998), on American youth found that over 65% of the students rated their school with an "A" or "B", and nearly three-quarters of them tended to agree with the curriculum they were being offered. I think for the most part students
believe in the education they are receiving is very worth while. It does not take very many students to cause the school a lot of problems and headaches, but with everything said, I believe the majority of people think the school is doing a good job.

Building Culture, Climate, and Interpersonal Relations

To improve the school, culture, climate, and interpersonal relationships will need to change in a positive direction according to Rinehart, Short, Short, and Eckley (1998). If everyone is comfortable in the environment and the relationships are good among teachers and other staff members, then good things will happen for our young people. Some schools can have a very negative environment or atmosphere, which causes the students to dislike attending school. Consequently the overall production of these schools will be low. The principal needs to instill within the staff that the climate and interpersonal relationships are very important. The principal is the advocate for the type of climate desired within the building. As a principal, I will need to foster the type of climate I wish to have in school. School climate is define by Peterson and Skiba (2000), as the feelings that students and staff have about the school environment over a period of time.

Improve the culture is the opinion of a principal at Cottontown High School in Dallas Texas, when asked how to improve the attitudes and academic achievement among students. Wren (1999), states culture as the values and symbols that affect organizational climate. The principal at Cottontown, was described as a person with high energy, goal
focused, positive, gave credit to others for their successes, and pay
attention to details while following up (Reavis, Vinson, & Fox, 1999). The
principal at Cottontown used his personality to improve the culture of the
school. The principal recognized that there was a problem with the
culture of the school and used his attitude and desire to create the culture
he wanted.

I think a good principal has to be able to do so many things well. A
principal has to be present around the school, work well with people, be
a leader, be an advocate for better academics, be able to handle a crisis,
and most of all use common sense. “High school principals should pose
a global perspective on their schools and should be problem seekers as
well as problem solvers” (Foster, 1997, p.72). A principal has to be open
to the concerns the staff may have about the culture and climate of the
school. The principal has to have a global perspective because he or
she has to look out for everyone in the school. Everyone that a child
comes into contact with is a part of the education that young person will
receive. Educators have to see the big picture and not let their personal
opinions get in the way of an education.

I will create the type of learning environment I want by teaching
others about the following: parent community involvement, character
education, violence prevention, conflict resolution, and peer mediation.
These are some of the topics that will enable a school to improve the
environment says Peterson and Skiba. These types of programs would
be implemented by using staff development and inservice days. With the
commitment of others we can make school a safe, positive learning environment for everyone.

Though the implementation of these programs students will learn desired behaviors. Having parent community involvement will increase the degree of ownership and decision making at school. I will create opportunities for parents to be involved with the decisions as well as volunteer to participate in programs related to school and community. Though character education programs students will learn: trust, respect, honesty, self discipline, responsibility, to be fair, caring, and good citizens. Violence prevention and conflict resolution will teach students to make better choices. Students will have the opportunity to learn that they have alternatives to violence and conflicts. Peer mediation is another tool that will teach students an alternative set of skills that they can apply in crisis situations.

Summary

In summary, education means many things to many different people. I feel that I have to be open to new revolutions in education and use the resources available to implement new changes. An educational leader has to have a common goal and purpose that everyone believes in. The students and staff must be presented with educational opportunities and encouraged to try new things. Our educational system can be tailored to meet the needs of many of our students and we are going to have to have a continued effort to keep making improvements in our profession.
Keeping in mind, that the principal will have to keep doing many of the same things they do now. "Principals remain the key individuals as instructional leaders, initiators of change, school managers, personnel administrators, problem solvers, and 'boundary spanners' for the school" (Portin, Shen, & Williams, 1998, p.1). The principal will always need to be devoted to making improvements to the school. As a principal, I will take pride in making a difference in the education of our young people.

The principal is a key individual that has a lot of responsibility in many areas. I believe that a principal has to be very compassionate about the profession and the rewards it has to offer. A principal has to handle many complex situations at school and is the center figure that is often called upon. A principal has to use common sense and not panic in a crisis situation. Remembering that you are one person and that you alone will not change the world of education overnight. It will take many people working together for an extended amount of time to improve the education our young people are receiving.

I believe that as an administrator it will be important to find a school that is interested in the same ideas that I believe in. I think many schools have their own philosophy, but the ultimate objective is the quality of education that each child receives. The most important component of an education is the children. They are the ones that make us strive to do the best we can each and every day.

My morals and values will play a very large part in making decisions. I have a tremendous trust in education and believe in it.
Education shapes the individuals of our society. I want to have a large influence in the shaping of our community and the people that exist within it. I think that each person should value their education because no one can take it away. I believe that each student is capable of learning and bettering themselves. It is my goal to make education meaningful to everyone. Helping individuals motivate and educate the young people of today will be something I will do each and everyday as a principal. As Vincent Lombardi said, "Leaders are made, they are not born. They are made by hard effort, which is the price all of us must pay to achieve any goal that is worthwhile" (Motivation Lombardi Style, 1992, p.13).
REFERENCE LIST


DeValois, D. (1999, January 13). Ankeny high principal: Survey supports improvement plan students, parents and staff would like to see improved communication, career planning and interactive classes. Des Moines Register.


