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A vision to lead elementary school : a reflective research paper

Chad D. Hageman
University of Northern Iowa

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A vision to lead elementary school : a reflective research paper

Abstract

Leadership is a characteristic in which I believe strongly. I would rather initiate an idea than just be a follower of one. I have shown this with my current role as a teacher, and feel that I can make a smooth transition into the position of administrator. I have identified personal characteristics that I believe will make me an effective leader. Through my experiences and my character I will be able to lead an elementary school effectively and efficiently. I will lead and instruct the teachers into a direction of great achievement. Together we will create a safe and fun learning environment. Relationships will be a key to our success. All of this will be done to enhance the education of the students.

A VISION TO LEAD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL:

A REFLECTIVE RESEARCH PAPER

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A Research Paper

Presented to

The Department of Educational Leadership, Counseling

and Postsecondary Education

University of Northern Iowa

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Masters of Arts in Education

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By

Chad D. Hageman

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A REFLECTIVE RESEARCH PAPER

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Dave Else

5- 22-2003
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Date Approved

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Advisor/Director of Research Paper

Gregory A. Reed

5/28/03
_____
Date Approved

_____
Second Reader of Research Paper

Michael D. Waggoner

5.27.03
_____
Date Received

_____
Head, Department of Educational
Leadership, Counseling, and Postsecondary Education

Leadership is a characteristic in which I believe strongly. I would rather initiate an idea than just be a follower of one. I have shown this with my current role as a teacher, and feel that I can make a smooth transition into the position of administrator. I have identified personal characteristics that I believe will make me an effective leader. Through my experiences and my character I will be able to lead an elementary school effectively and efficiently. I will lead and instruct the teachers into a direction of great achievement. Together we will create a safe and fun learning environment. Relationships will be a key to our success. All of this will be done to enhance the education of the students.

<div align="center">Personal Characteristics, Beliefs, and Philosophies</div>

Throughout my life, one of the most important aspects has been my family. From an early age, they instilled some of the key components of my make-up; the importance of a strong religious belief, the ability to make wise decisions, the value of hard work, and the ability to enjoy myself and others. These characteristics, along with others that I have acquired, have made me the person that I am today.

Religion was exposed to me at an early age. I was taught to be passionate about my vision of religion, because it would guide me throughout my lifetime. I was exposed to my religious community as much as possible. Because of this, I learned to value and realize the importance of believing strongly in something, needing others, and working together as a community.

Another characteristic that I learned was that of decision-making. I was expected to make wise decisions in my life. I realized that a solid decision could only be made when options were weighed from all sides. Often this decision-making involved the help and opinions of others.

A strong work ethic was something that I acquired through example. Both of my parents have worked very hard for what they have in life. My father owns his own business that he built from the ground up. I worked with him from a very early age. My mother was a factory worker and decided to go back to college when she was in her forties. It was a struggle for her, but with hard work she established a career as a nurse. Balancing both work and education was instilled in me. As a result, I value the importance of initiative and perseverance.

The final component of my make-up that I can attribute to my parents is that of taking time to enjoy myself. Fun, relaxation, laughter, and time away were important qualities in my home. The productive part of one's life can be enhanced by setting aside time for enjoyment. Participating in activities that make me happy helps to reduce stress, build relationships, and promote concentration.

Along with these characteristics that I developed throughout my upbringing, I have also come to appreciate other values in the building of my character. My personal beliefs go hand in hand with that of my educational beliefs. The feelings of success underlie the entire core of my teaching. Each

student that I see needs to feel success in what he/she is doing to be motivated enough to continue, and to continue with energy. This success will give the student the confidence required to make long-term, high reaching goals.

I also feel that as a teacher, I have made it very evident that I value personal relationships. I enjoy knowing the students I work with on a deeper level. I believe that if I can connect with the student, he/she will be more interested in engaging in the work that needs to be done. Individualizing each student has proven to bring a lot more success to the classroom. Students feel I care, and therefore, they care.

Another trait that I carry with me is that of a positive attitude. Believing that all students have unique qualities, that each new day has a fresh start, and that each one of us can make a difference helps me to maintain optimism. I do not like to focus on the negative and this is evident in my teaching. Students in my room are geared to focus their attention on the positive aspects in life. When this is not possible, I emphasize how a student can learn from the situation.

A culminating belief that I strongly feel centers around my experiences that I had when I was a child in my parent's home. I want to create for students and staff a "schoolhome", instead of a "schoolhouse." Just like when I was a child and would feel secure, comfortable, and free within my parents' home, I want students to feel like their school is their home. Students spend a lot of their

time within a school. Why not make it an enjoyable, safe, and nurturing environment.

Experiences

I have had a wide variety of teaching positions within my seven years in the profession. I started in the rural setting of Colo-NESCO Community Schools. This was my first job out of college and it opened my eyes to what was out there. I was offered a full-time job with a combination of teaching both my specialty area of art, and something unfamiliar to me -- talented and gifted education. Adding to that, I traveled between three different towns with three different levels of students (elementary, middle, and high school), and I would say that this job gave me a lot of experiences.

Time management and organizational skills were a necessity. I balanced varying schedules, different mentalities of students, three staffs of colleagues, and three different administrators. I began to enjoy the busy routine of my life and the fact that I had a part of each building within the Colo-NESCO District. I got to know three very different administrators and their styles. I noticed personality and leadership traits in all of them that I wanted to emulate. The middle school principal was the one that I admired the most. He was one of those principals that was always very straight forward with his approach. He would let me know where I could stand improvement. However, he had a way of making me realize it first. I would also get praise from the man. He knew what was going on in my

classroom because he stopped by. It gave him validity in his recommendations and compliments. The most impressive quality that he had was a wonderful sense of humor. He would make light of situations, and himself, when appropriate, to set the tone for the day. This principal knew how to lead effectively, manage time, and be personal; three characteristics that I will carry into the principalship.

My second experience with teaching brought me to Cedar Rapids, Iowa and the Holy Family School System. I was the K-5 elementary art teacher for both the St. Jude's and the St. Ludmila's sites. I taught roughly 450 students, most came from middle to high income families, since these schools were in the private sector. Once again, I worked for two very different principals. It is interesting working for several principals at one time, especially when their philosophies and approach to people are so varied. I had to adjust my personality and style to work with both of them. I found it challenging, yet it offered me more experience with the flexibility that has become one of my strongholds as an educator.

Currently I am teaching art to first through fifth grades in the Cedar Rapids Community School District at Erskine Elementary. I have reached that point in my career where I am now in one building, working with one staff, one principal, and about 400 students. It is enjoyable to have a "steady" classroom. I feel more connected to the students and people that I work with, but I do miss the diversity that I often felt before. I am working with the sixth administrator in my

career and I realize that there are many styles and approaches that exist. Through the examples that I have been given I feel I am beginning to know what it is that works and does not work administratively. My current principal is very organized and does a lot with collaboration throughout the school. Through the school district, she has set up a portfolio style evaluation where goals are set and worked on throughout the year. This replaced the formal evaluation process of years ago. I respect this form if done correctly. Responsibility is placed on each individual teacher to set his/her vision on high reaching goals that will enhance their skills.

Working with many different individuals has taught me the value of flexibility. I now look to understand people before I make predetermined opinions about them or their work. I have seen characteristics and styles that work well in the administrative setting. I will take with me what I have learned through experience and mold it to fit whatever situation I am placed in.

Research

Throughout my experiences there are certain characteristics that I have found in successful principals. These are the elements that I wish to carry with me and that I find important for my successful work as an elementary principal. These elements are a shared vision, strong instructional leadership, solid and genuine relationships, and a sense of ethical standards. These are the four elements of a strong leader that I am going to focus my research on and formulate my ideas with. These elements will be needed as a successful leader of a school.

Shared Vision

Vision exists when people in an organization share an explicit agreement on the values, beliefs, purposes, and goals that should guide their behavior. It could be analogous to an internal compass. This internal compass within a school system is needed to guide the staff, students, and parents in the same direction with the same common goals. People need to be speaking the same language, they need the same kinds of informal expectations and common ground for one another within the school setting (Conley, Dunlap, & Goldman, 1992). With this in place the ultimate goal of educating our students will be done more efficiently and effectively.

Education World recently held a survey of forty-three principals around the United States to discover what they consider the most essential traits of successful school leaders. Having a stated vision for the school, and a plan to achieve that vision, was unanimously the most important quality for school leaders. As Bonita Henderson, assistant principal at Roselawn Condon School in Cincinnati compares it, "Every trip needs to have a plan, or you can get lost and have an unproductive trip" (Hopkins, p. 2). Organized plans will produce organized trips and if nothing else will provide time for handling obstacles that arise (Hopkins, 2000). All too often dilemmas occur throughout the day and our plan will not accommodate those, however with the plan in place ahead of time,

there is the flexibility and time needed to take care of the unplanned incidents in our normal lives.

A vision is not something that can be developed overnight or by one person. It is necessary for a vision to take form through an evolutionary process. The vision may change or need to be altered along the way. Written statements are a good first step in the road to a vision, but action is more important. Robert Fritz (1996) suggests acting on a vision several years before articulating it in writing is key to success. In this way it will be easier to see what has been accomplished successfully and where areas of improvement need to be made.

Personal ownership of the vision is very important when it comes time for implementation to occur. Teachers and other members of the school community need to be given a voice in the writing of the school vision (Conley, 1996). Jean Etheridge, a seventh grade teacher at Mountain Gap Middle School in Huntsville, Alabama feels that having a hand in helping to write the vision statement within her school helps her take a sense of ownership in the project. A vision statement can often be looked upon when having daily frustrations and feelings of heading off course. If the vision statement is visible, understood, and discussed by the faculty and the students, it will be used. It can be very motivating to get oneself back on course with the beliefs of the school and its members (Bafile, 2001).

I will implement a vision when I become principal because it is a driving force within a building. Having that vision will ensure that our school is

reminded of our beliefs and philosophies. Our direction will always be in clear view. To develop this vision I will call upon many. A joint effort by teachers, staff members, parents, and community partners will comprise our school's vision. Having each of these stakeholders involved will get the ownership and drive that will be needed for success of the plan. The first year that I am principal in a building is a rebuilding and acclimation year. I will not be able to come in and shake up the direction of the building on everything. I will take the first months, and year if needed, to discover where the school is, where it was headed, and where I want to make change. Throughout this crucial year I will have discussions with each of the different categories of stakeholders to discover their feelings about the building as a school community. I will take their suggestions and incite, and learn from them. This will help me to decide in which directions I will need to focus the most needed attention. I will have my own ideas on how I feel the vision of the school needs to go, but will be open to the thoughts and viewpoints of others when drafting our vision. I will use the power of influence to help maintain the best for the school. Together we will make a vision that will be the guiding force of what we do and believe.

Within the building the vision will not only be on the office wall, but it will be in each classroom, in the cafeteria, the gym, and any other area where faculty and students will meet. It will be read and understood by the faculty and the students. Each person will know how he/she plays a part in the success of that

vision. The vision will be reviewed and altered on a yearly basis if need be. It will be clear to all that teaching and learning in an educational environment will be of the utmost importance.

Instructional Leadership

Instructional leadership is another aspect that I will work on through my time as administrator. Student learning is the fundamental purpose of a school. Within the building I lead there will be the philosophy that all students can learn and will learn. It is thought that the instruction within a building comes from the teachers that are instructing the students. But without a principal caring about and working with staff on curriculum, instruction, staffing, and assessment, well-designed instructional systems are unlikely to exist (Peterson, 1999).

One of the biggest tasks that I will undertake as principal is that of hiring new teachers and staff members. The reason this is such an important job is these are the people that will carry out the instruction to the students. Parents are trusting that I will have the best possible teachers for their children. Before hiring a teacher, issues such as teaching philosophies, team activities, parent interactions, management strategies, and multi-level learning will be discussed, just to name a few. The top candidates need to interviewed by the principal, along with a team of current teachers in the building. This way the decision is a joint one and the teachers will have a sense of ownership to help the new teacher succeed in the building. Honesty with contracts is a great policy to have with all

staff members, but especially rings true to new hires. It needs to be clear that growth is expected out of the teacher for the renewal of their contract the following year (Communicator, 2001).

One of the most important aspects of instructional leadership comes from visits to the classroom. Visits to the classroom,

> . . . become occasions for principals to clarify the primary
>
> mission of the school (teaching and learning), validate this
>
> mission for others (students, teachers, and parents), engender
>
> excitement and high expectations for teaching and learning,
>
> and infuse the daily routines of students, teachers, and support
>
> staff with meaning and significance (Bredeson, 1995, p. 14).

The San Diego School District has taken a great stand on putting their principals in the classroom. Like many other districts they are working to transform principals from building managers into master teachers. One way that they are doing this is to require principals to spend a minimum of two hours a day in classrooms evaluating instruction. District leaders argue, ". . .only then will the administrators know whether students are learning, a teacher's lesson plans are strong, and the material is age-appropriate" (Stricherz, 2001, p. 6).

After getting a feel for the teachers within a building it is important to recognize weaknesses and work for improvement. Part of the position as instructional leader is to bring the best out of each teacher within the building, to

ensure academic performance. This can be done in a number of ways. For starters, being in the teacher's classroom more often will enable the principal to better understand what it is that the teacher needs to improve. It is a necessity to offer feedback and suggestions to the teacher after observations. Other things that can be tried include setting the teacher up with a mentor, having him/her observe other classrooms, giving the teacher time and resources, giving solid deadlines to make improvement, and recognizing the improvements as they happen. The teacher needs to continue to make small gains in the improvement of their teaching, or the principal will need to face the choice of not renewing the teacher's contract (Communicator, 2001).

In recent years, data is a driving force behind much of what happens instructionally in a school. The leaders in the building, as well as the teachers, need to be aware of and understand the data of evaluations taken by their students. This information can help to make decisions about curriculum, student grouping, student discipline policies, and almost any other facet of the instructional part of the school. It is important to examine the scores by gender, ethnic background, and free and reduced lunch. These will offer insight on where the school needs to make its focus on the yearly school improvement plan (Hopkins, 2002).

I will implement instructional leadership during my time as principal starting from day one. I feel that it is important for the principal to be a master teacher. This does not mean that I will be an expert in every content area, but I

will need to be knowledgeable and up-to-date with each curriculum. It is true that I do not directly teach the students in the building, but I do have influence on the learning that takes place. This influence starts from the hiring process, which I look at as one of the most important tasks of my job. It is crucial to select the best candidates available for the job. The interviewing process will not be under my sole control in the building. I plan to set up interviewing teams for each position that needs to be filled. The teachers know what is needed to make their grade level team a success. I will trust in those I work with. It will give the ownership of the hire to many within the building. After interviewing, if there is not a worthy candidate for the position, more time will be spent looking for the best candidate. I will not settle with someone just to fill the position. If an excellent teacher is found, it will ensure that quality education will be given to the students.

I will make time in the classroom a necessity when I am principal. Unfortunately, meetings and appointments take up much of the time during a principal's day, but if I vow to spend at least one hour per day in a classroom it will allow me great insight into the school. I will be able to evaluate the teachers informally, it will give me more opportunities to see what it is that they teach and how they teach it. It will also allow for students and teachers to become more comfortable with me around the building and in their classroom. The main reason of my visits will be to promote the best teaching and learning that can take place in the school.

I will be working with the staff as a team of educators to ensure that all students receive an education of the highest quality in the least restrictive environment. Students learn in different ways, thus varying teaching styles and strategies will be the focus of school-wide in-services. Teachers and parents alike will understand that all students need specific knowledge, skills, and values to become successful and productive adult members of society (Butz, 2002). As a community we can teach our children.

Data will drive much of what is done in the school improvement plan that is devised by the faculty and myself. We will go over the school improvement plan monthly to guarantee that we are staying on target. Our school improvement plan will continually need altering to fit the needs of our students. Data will be studied to see where we are succeeding and where we need to change paths.

The school needs to act as an integral part of the larger community. For this to happen collaboration and relationships amongst teachers, parents, students, community leaders, and administrators must be in effect. As an administrator, collaborative leadership will ensure an even better education for the students because of the vast amount of resources that are out in the school community. After reading articles in Canada's Network of Innovative Schools, I found that innovative schools of today need to meet the growing challenges of educating our students by drawing on the wealth of talent, insight and expertise of the community members that comprise our schools. They suggest forming "learning

organizations" (Network of Innovative Schools, 2001, p. 1) where issues of

education can be brought, discussed, and a plan of what the school and

community can do comes forth.

A school needs to stay visible as a part of the community, instead of as a

separate entity. In this way the school and community can serve each other as a

resource. There are definite gains for schools with community partners, yet the

community also gains in the long run with investing its time and care into our

students, or their future community members. The future of a community is often

in the students that are currently in the local schools. For this reason business

partnerships are an asset to have. Within every school improvement model,

business and community partnerships/relationships should be a priority. As stated

in the Institute for Urban Education Partnerships website, "Communities know

that they have a major stake in how well schools achieve their education goals."

They also know that they will see these young leaders in the workforce and

therefore want to bring them up as responsible, hard-working citizens (Institute

for Urban Education Partnerships, 2001, p. 2).

Creating a community with the students, parents, teachers, and

administration is also an important aspect of collaboration. In a recent survey of

middle school parents and teachers from California it was found that, "when

parents, teachers, and students all feel surrounded by a caring and supportive

school environment they are more likely to respond favorably to school-wide

challenges such as the pressure for students to perform well on tests" (Belenardo, 2001, p.1). The relationships and school climate make a difference on the performance and achievements of both teachers and students. There were six main aspects of a school community that the survey found necessary for success – shared values, commitment, belonging, caring, interdependence, and regular contact. These characteristics should be similar and consistent for a stronger sense of community to take place. The survey went on to discover more about the leaders of these middle schools and what they are doing to make the school more of a successful community based on their teacher's insight. The survey found that the principals who have the ability to set school goals, assign responsibilities, form meaningful relationships, and efficiently manage the school's resources were more likely to foster the school's sense of community amongst others (Belenardo, 2001).

Relationships are important within the building as well. The principal needs to have a solid relationship with staff and students to bring a culture of success to the building. Principals should know their students by name, and should work hard to get to know the families of the students as well. The students and their families should be made to feel as individuals by those at the school. Families are a huge part of the success of our students, academically, socially, and physically. If they feel that we are working together, instead of against or in place of, to best educate their child, more will be accomplished. Principals also need to

show students and parents alike that they have a human side, this may be through humor or by sharing about a part of his/her life outside of school. Making positive connections with students in this way will promote them in their education (Dahl-Veenstra, 2002).

Principals need to treat the staff members in their buildings as co-professionals rather than simply going with the traditional roles of supervisor and subordinate. Being on an equal playing field is important. It empowers the teachers and makes them validated on their beliefs if they are listened to and taken seriously. If principals are able to work along side of the teachers to find out what is best for the students, instead of doing it alone or delegating it all to others, it will show that they do care and want what is best for the teacher's students. They will be working with the unified team concept of all players versus the team concept of players and manager. It will take extra time and energy on the part of the principal, but the building will run much smoother and more efficiently in the long run (Fleming & Leo, 2001).

Relationships are a key element to the person that I am now and to the person that I will continue to be as an administrator. Treating people like human beings that are equal to me is what I do best. Parents, students, community members and teachers will work with you when they don't feel like they are below you. Making others feel important and needed in the school community will guarantee involvement. I will make these connections in the school I lead.

People will want to be there because of the accepting, compassionate, stimulating, and fun environment that will make up the school climate.

I will be an advocate of my school throughout the community. I will quickly make positive connections within the community and will call upon those to better the school that I am working to create. I will express the importance of partnerships/relationships to staff and parents and use the resources that they know of as well to better our school. Our school will be appreciative of the generosity of time, talents, and resources that will come to our school from the business partners, volunteers, and concerned community members that will make up our wider school family.

Overall, families are a huge key to the success of our school. It is my belief that we at school are a continuation of the family unit. Therefore, there needs to be open communication between the school and the home. Families will have a voice within the school I lead, they will be listened to and we will try to meet their needs. We, as schools, have to trust in our families for that trust to return. When this trust is not equal we will need to educate the families to get them to see where we are headed with their students and how they can help us get there.

Sense of Ethical Standards

"Real leaders concentrate on doing the right thing, not on doing things right" (Lashway, 1996, p. 1). This quote sums up my philosophy on ethical

leadership. The day-to-day life of a principal is filled with difficult ethical dilemmas. "Schools are moral institutions, designed to promote social norms, and principals are moral agents who must often make decisions that favor one moral value over another" (Lashway, 1996, p. 1). How is it that all of this can work out in a school without benefiting some at the expense of others? As an administrator, I need to have my values and morals determined before these situations come to me. I need to stay consistent in my policies, yet realize that each case that comes across my desk is individual.

One way of raising ethical awareness is to form ethics committees in the schools. These committees may not necessarily make the final decisions, but they would raise awareness of ethical issues, formulate ethical codes, and advise educators struggling with ethical dilemmas. This committee could consist of teachers, support staff, parents, business partners, and even students. They would act as the committee that works with the administration on dealing with the ethical situations that arise. Together the committee would help in orchestrating the decisions made and how to go about implementing those decisions to the rest of the involved parties in the building (Sichel, 1993).

Since the devastating tragedies that happened at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado, there has been a stir throughout the nation in education to bring back values in the classroom. Teachers, principals, and volunteers have always worked to promote good values through example to the students, but the

push is to now to teach these specific morals and values to the students directly. There are many programs that get this message across. One incorporates many games that get the students actively participating in how to handle certain situations. Others involve using cooperative learning strategies that have been around for some thirty to forty years in education (Unmacht, 1999). Other programs such as *Character Counts!*, promote teaching six character traits deemed important to the success of one's values. These characteristics include trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. Regardless of the program, it is easy to see that something needs to be done. Unfortunately, some parents are not bringing the ethics, morals, and values that will make our students prepared to be good citizens into their homes. This puts the burden on teachers. Therefore schools must be allowed the freedom to teach about values in the classroom without imposing them on the students (Etzioni, 1995).

Ethics will be a hard part of my position, yet an element that I feel I have a strong background with and will do what is necessary for the right of the student and the school. I need to be honest with my values and morals and hope that those portray the values and morals of the general public. I need to treat all that come into my office as human beings, understanding that they make mistakes, but they must learn from those mistakes. I will enforce the laws and policies of the school, yet I will work hard to not impose my control over others.

I want character education to be a part of our school's curriculum and daily learning. The teachers in the building I am in will feel comfortable teaching and discussing with students morals and values. We will have a committee of parents, community members, and teachers that will decide in what ways the building will promote character education. We will hold seminars for parents on good parenting skills and will educate them on the ways in which they can enhance the values and morals that are being taught in their children's school. The school in which I am principal will be a place where ethical decisions are made through an evolutionary process of careful, joint decision making.

Professional Vision

Through my work as an administrator I will focus my vision on making the school I lead the central part of the community. The way to make this happen is to involve many stakeholders in the decisions and happenings of the school. The students, parents, staff, and the community members need to take ownership of the school. There needs to be strong interest in what goes on for the programs to be successful. This occurs when each of the stakeholders is treated like an individual and feels that they are valued. I feel strongly in this. Forming meaningful and genuine relationships with the people involved in a school will benefit the well being of the school and ultimately, the students.

I plan on treating the staff with professionalism, respect, and a nurturing attitude. Each of the individuals that work within the school are specialists in

their field and should be looked upon as that. I will offer respect to others' works, ideas, and opinions. Through teamwork, we will bounce ideas off of each other to get the best decisions made for our school. I want to remember what it is like to be in the classroom and have that empathy with the teachers. It is my goal to have staff members that are proud to work in our school.

Students will find their school a nurturing environment where they feel safe and comfortable. They will learn in a friendly and fun atmosphere. Students will want to come to school because it is a happy place for them. They will engage in activities where they feel success. Some of these will build up their confidence and in others they will be challenged by new concepts. Students will have a voice on their likes and dislikes of what is going on in the school. Also, students will know who I am. I will make frequent stops in their classrooms and will not only be seen as the disciplinarian, but as a person that they can connect with.

I will lead by example to others. I only expect out of the school's staff and students what I am willing to put in myself. Collaboration will be a driving force within the school. I do not want the school to be weighted down with decisions that are based solely from me. I want others to find responsibility and equality with the decisions that are made.

The school I lead will be filled with as much state of the art technology that is allowed by the budget. Teachers will not only have the equipment in their

rooms, but they will have ample time for training so that it will all be put to good use. Students will have plenty of exposure so they will be able to learn as well.

Overall, I will run a very organized, clean, nurturing, knowledge-filled school, where people are excited to be. The individuals involved with the school will gain respect for it because of the manner in which they are treated. Each person will be an individual and will take some form of ownership with their school.

Conclusion

I have talked about the values, beliefs, and philosophies that I have acquired throughout my lifetime. These characteristics will stay with me when I am an administrator. I will continue to lead a success-based program where the students and staff have a personal relationship with me. I will have high expectations for all in the school and I will lead this by example. The school I lead will be the center of the community, where all stakeholders will feel they have equity. My experience over the past years has exposed me to diversity, not only with student population, but with the styles of many administrators. I have been flexible in my nature with those I have worked with. I stand firmly on the elements of a shared vision, strong instructional leadership, solid and genuine relationships, and a sense of ethical standards. These are the guiding principals that I believe are needed to be a principal today. They will steer me in the direction of my goals to be an effective and genuine school leader.

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