2007

What I believe about leadership and education: a reflective essay

Thomas Keegan Knight

University of Northern Iowa

Copyright ©2007 Thomas Keegan Knight

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/1020

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.
What I believe about leadership and education: a reflective essay

Abstract
The leadership quality is more of an art than a statement. A leader is a server and a debtor, whose first responsibility is to define reality and last responsibility is to say thank you (DePree, 1989). This paper will communicate my educational beliefs, the role of reflective practice in an educational setting, steps to follow in the change process and models, current research for improved learning in the classroom, as well as the importance of being a leader of service in a community. All of these elements are related to the Iowa Standards for School Leaders (ISSL) and are pertinent in the role of an educational leader.
What I Believe about Leadership and Education:

A Reflective Essay

A Research 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

Thomas Keegan Knight

May 2007

Dr. Pace
APPROVAL PAGE

This Research Paper by: Thomas Keegan Knight

Entitled: What I believe about Leadership and Education

A Reflective Essay

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

3-5-07

Date Approved Advisor/Director of Research Paper

Victoria L. Robinson

3-6-07

Date Approved Second Reader of Research Paper

Michael D. Waggoner

3/6/07

Date Received Head, Department of Educational Leadership, Counseling, and Postsecondary Education
Ever since I can remember, I observe and even sometimes subconsciously analyze the leadership role on television, through readings, and most important through real life-experiences. I have always seen something different between teams or companies that succeeded and those that failed, leadership. As my thoughts developed, I realized the impact and effect the leader steering the ship had on the company's fate.

I have been motivated to be successful in a leadership role, so I began by developing a code of ethics and leading by example, just like I witnessed my leadership role models. Being team captain in high school basketball and head manager for the men's basketball program at the University of Northern Iowa allowed me to implement my code of ethics and leadership qualities in the role of a leader. My leadership peaked while leading classes as a teacher, teams as a coach, and programs as an athletic director. Now my desire and motivation is to continue developing my leadership and channel those qualities into the educational leadership role.

My passion and commitment to education stems from my experiences as a student and an athlete. The impact from my teachers and coaches was so powerful and lasting, that I developed a genuine interest that led to a passion for this field. I often envisioned myself in their roles while a student as well as an athlete. Through their guidance, I worked to develop similar qualities and characteristics; communication, organization, sense of caring, trust, problem-
solving, and being a team player. These teachers and coaches also instilled valuable beliefs such as: count your blessings, have a passion for what you do, work together for a common cause or goal, go the extra mile, develop a vision, and set plans to achieve your goals. As a teacher, I inspire these beliefs in students. As an administrator, I will model these qualities, characteristics, and beliefs.

The leadership quality is more of an art than a statement. A leader is a server and a debtor, whose first responsibility is to define reality and last responsibility is to say thank you (DePree, 1989). This quote pertains to me because it is in my personality to assist others and be a debtor through my actions. My diverse leadership experiences have been opportunities to serve others since my youth from being team captain in basketball to an Athletic Director at a middle school. I can also remember organizing neighborhood tournaments during the summer time. My ability and desire to serve other people and lead by example has been very fulfilling.

This paper will communicate my educational beliefs, the role of reflective practice in an educational setting, steps to follow in the change process and models, current research for improved learning in the classroom, as well as the importance of being a leader of service in a community. All of these elements are relate to the Iowa Standards for School Leaders (ISSL) and are pertinent in the role of an educational leader.
I believe that a full education goes well beyond the knowledge attained in a textbook. Students should show cognitive progress, skill improvement, and social and emotional growth. Each of these areas is important in life. The schools have become responsible for diverse curricula because we can no longer solely rely on education to occur at home. Schools must take the initiative and instill a plan to improve each facet of the student and optimistically gain some support for implementation at home. This has led to a broad curriculum including health issues and concerns.

I also believe that the teachers and administrators in schools are responsible for being positive role models for students. I work in a low socioeconomic status school and our students do not have many positive role models in their lives. Many of my students do not have high self-esteem or positive self-image, so I need to instill a self-belief and self-interest. I believe that I can take the principles that we are studying and combine them with the leadership qualities I possess and effectively lead a school.

Another educational belief comes from Max DePree who wrote *Leadership is an Art*. He believes that the signs of outstanding leadership are not in the leader, but in the followers (DePree, 1989). Is the staff willing to change? Can they manage conflict? Are the teachers and students reaching their full potential? Motivation can be measured by the actions demonstrated. Collaborative goal setting can enhance motivation and increase performance.
Goals improve performance by directing staff attention, mobilizing efforts to improve, increasing persistence, and encouraging the development of new strategies (Smith & Piele, 1997). Leaders need to establish short and long-term goals for the school. There is a funny thing about people who set goals they tend to reach them. (Wilmore, 2002)

The principal is responsible for being the leader of learning as a reflective practitioner. In this section, I will introduce what is learning, the implications of psychologist B. F. Skinner and author M. Kay Alderman, using reflective practice, and how I will use these implications in the administrator's role.

Driscoll (2000) defines learning as a persisting change in human performance or performance potential. This means that learners can perform actions that they could not perform before the learning occurred. It is the responsibility of the evaluator to provide an opportunity for the learner to demonstrate what they have learned. The implications for learning can be subjective. For example, a student performing a fine motor skill in P.E. can be attributed to maturation and not be considered learned. Learning requires not just experience, but experience that is essential and accepted as a change in performance.

Psychologist B.F. Skinner researched the relationship between environmental variables and behavior. He discovered that the environment sets
the condition for behavior and that behavior can be understood in terms of environmental cues and results.

Skinner's approach to understanding learning and behavior is commonly described using a metaphor of a black box. That is, the learner is a black box and nothing is known about what goes on inside. However, knowing what's inside the black box is not essential for determining how behavior is governed by its environment antecedents and consequences (Driscoll, 2000).

Reflective practice is a tool I will encourage the staff to use through the implementation of engaging tasks. According to M. Kay Alderman in *Motivation for Achievement*, "engaging tasks are meaningful, valuable, significant, and worthy of one's effort". Common features of these tasks are the focus on higher order thinking such as analysis and synthesize knowledge. Reflecting on the Iowa Teaching Standards, criteria, and descriptors can be a self-assessment process used to improve best teaching practice. Meeting the requirements of the Iowa Teaching Standards will be a reflective, engaging task for educators.

Leaders need to use strategies that will promote effort and require higher levels of thinking. The reciprocal relationship model, created by Alderman, consists of behaviors, environment, and personal. Teachers will reflect on each element assessing their strengths and areas of improvement. Executing the reciprocal relationship model requires a task interest, task practice, goals, values,
and cognitive engagement. Maintaining strengths in these criteria while improving weaknesses will bring about more engagement. Considering the similar beliefs of Skinner's black box and Alderman's tasks in reciprocal relationships, the behavior, environment and personal are key components. Authentic tasks, such as the ITS requirements, bring about more engagement and success.

I can apply this research in the role of the principal because it will be my responsibility as a principal to lead a school environment that is non-threatening and beneficial to student learning. Skinner and Alderman reveal a connection between environment, behavior, and learning. Understanding these views has opened my mind up to the strong correlation between the environment and the learning potential and learning performance.

I can also apply this research in the role of the principal by evaluating the behaviors of students and teachers to determine learning. For example, I might observe student A using the computer with slow movements and asking several questions while using power point. In a month, student A is working diligently creating a power point for a different class. From behavior observations and an increase in student performance, it can be said that student A has learned the concepts of creating a power point. I will inform the teachers of Skinner's views pertaining to environment, behavior, and learning. I will ask teachers to assess all the environmental variables in order to establish a climate that will benefit the
students. In addition, the teachers will be aware of assessing behaviors and tracking learning progress through observations as a secondary assessment tool.

Using observations to evaluate student learning as a reflective practitioner will be valuable. Student learning can be observed using Skinner's theory through assessing student behaviors. I will also be able to use Skinner's research while assessing the classroom climate and environment. If the environment is not stable, then student learning could be hindered.

B. F. Skinner's approach to understanding learning through environment variables and behavior responses connects with standard three of the ISSL standards; a school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment. The ISSL wants administrators to lead a school that has a learning environment where students feel safe and are not distracted in order to focus on learning concepts.

Standard two relates with creating a climate and culture that values enhanced performance. Standard two states, "An educational leader promotes the success of all student by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional development." Part of the positive school culture is to acknowledge goal success. When assessing student progress, part of the school climate and culture will be to
celebrate the baby steps forward. What gets recognized gets reinforced. We want to reinforce positive behaviors and progress towards the vision (Wilmore, 2002).

Change is something that occurs with great regularity in our lives, yet so many of us are surprised when we face this element. We are usually most concerned about how a change will impact our own lives. The potential for educational change is also inevitable. For example, the inclusion of technology advancements in the educational setting has created a need to change the way the curriculum is taught. In this section, I will discuss the educational change process and 5 key elements that I will use in a leadership role to facilitate change, as well as the use of synectics to relate information to the staff. I have also analyzed an educational change with regard to the balanced calendar initiative at Hayes School using the Level of Use model.

According to DeWitt Jones, superintendent of the Waterloo School District, only 5% of the staff will change immediately, 80% will remain stagnant, and 15% will be reluctant for an extended period (personal communication, Spring, 2006). With these estimates in mind, it becomes even more important as school administrators to positively express how the change will benefit our staff.

To effectively implement new products and strategies into your instructional setting, a process of change must occur (http://staffweb.esc12.net/~lmccray/techintegration/docs/change.pdf). According to Thousand and Villa in *Creating an Inclusive School*, there are five key
elements to consider in the process of change. They are vision, skills, incentives, resources, and action plan (Thousand & Villa, 1995). Ambrose developed this method as a way to conceptualize the process of complex change in an educational setting and help those involved in implementing change to understand both the process and the ways in which their reactions to change might be understood (Shortland-Jones, B., Alderson A. & Baker R. G., 2001). If I am to be an effective administrator, incorporating these 5 elements will be essential.

The first element in the process of change is vision. The vision is important because it is the overall goal. It provides the staff a purpose for the change. If the vision is not established, people will not be sure what they are working towards and can result in a lack of focus. Leaders may form the vision with input from the staff while incorporating core key values. Other leaders may compose the vision and motivate the staff to follow the vision. When people work together, coordinating their efforts, they accomplish more than they can achieve alone. In schools, "collaborative norms enable teachers to request and offer advice and assistance in helping their colleagues improve (Smith and Piele, 1997). All staff members need to work in the same direction towards the same goal and vision. The vision should be communicated very clearly to the faculty and staff. The vision element connects with standard one of the ISSL Standards. The ISSL wants schools with direction and a purpose for their actions.
Once an effective vision has been developed, our next challenge as administrators is to help our staff develop the appropriate skills to meet their goals. The teachers need to have the appropriate skills to execute the change process. If teachers do not have the appropriate skills, expect a lot of anxiety. It is the responsibility of the school leader to identify the skills needed and provide professional development training and opportunities for those in need. I also believe the school leader should attend the professional development training and acquire the necessary abilities in the change process.

Appropriate skill level and professional development aligns with standard two of the ISSL Standards. The ISSL wants staffs that are skilled and properly trained to implement change.

The third step is to focus on the incentives. Incentives are motivators for people to execute their role. They are important because it notifies the people involved in the change process what they have to gain. Incentives include, but are not limited to, increased development opportunities, financial bonus, and a free luncheon. Another reward could be promoting someone to a leadership role such as promoting a teacher to the head of a committee or allowing a student to be principal for the day.

To accomplish our goals as a school, we also need to have the appropriate resources. Resources are books, computers, technology, and supplies that are necessary to complete the change initiative. Resources also consist of emotional
or social support. It is important to have the necessary resources because it allows the educators to fulfill their role and effectively perform their job. If the perceived resources are not accessible, then the participants will feel frustrated.

The resources element in the change process relates with standard three of the ISSL standards; an educational leader promotes the success of all students by ensuring management of the organization, operations and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment. The school leader should take inventory of the resources needed and available in order to be successful during the change process. I will be proactive and either order more of a resource or compose a plan for accessibility. Most importantly the educators will have the resources to perform the change.

This brings us to the last element of change, the action plan. Once the vision has been established, appropriate skills have been developed, incentives have been determined, and resources are made available, the action plan is ready to be developed. An action plan is a visual that illustrates how the change will occur. A lack of an action plan will result in several false starts. Negative feelings and emotions inflict the teacher and staff if each element of the educational change process is not addressed. The action plan should relate to learning goals pertaining to graduation requirements.

Standard six of the ISSL states that an educational leader promotes the success of all students by understanding the profile of the community and
responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal and cultural context. I believe that the action plan should be 1) measurable, 2) well thought out, and 3) tested in order determine the effectiveness of the initiative.

This model and research directly applies to me as a leader because educational change is prevalent and I, in the role of the principal, will be responsible for the overall development and implementation of the change. Having a thorough, efficient, and effective change process will help achieve the desired change. New reading programs and assessments, supplemental programs, budget, and technology enhancement are a portion of the issues that are affecting the need for educational change in schools. As an educational leader, I will be consistently reading the modern research pertaining to educational change and continue to evaluate the need for any change in our school. I believe that the five elements are a very effective way of implementing change in schools.

One of the ways I plan on incorporating the change procedures in the role of the principal is by tying them into the teaching principles of synectics. Synectics is derived from the Greek word *synecticos* meaning, “understanding together that which is apparently different” (Gunter, Estes, & Schwab, 2003). In synectics, metaphor is broadly defined to include all figures of speech (e.g., simile, personification, oxymoron) that join together different and apparently irrelevant elements through the use of analogy (Gunter, et. al 2003). It takes knowledge to make knowledge and this instructional strategy will allow the staff
to relate the change process to something they already know in order to gain a better understanding.

A lack of an action plan in the change process can result in starting over. This statement may seem vague and insignificant to many staff members at first, but the use of synectics will create a relationship that will emphasize the importance of the action plan. The lack of an action plan is similar to a false start in track. What happens if an athlete false starts in track? They need to start over. Similarly, what happens if the leader does not have an action plan during a change process? They need to start over. If the athlete false starts twice in the same race, they get disqualified and do not win. If the leader gets caught not having an action plan twice in the change process, it is pretty certain that the students will be far behind and not be successful. Athletics are something that the staff could relate to and use as a stepping-stone to build on prior knowledge. Synectics will be very useful making something unfamiliar seem familiar.

The Levels of Use (LoU) is a tool of measurement that is used by leaders to measure how and to what degree the desired change has been realized. The LoU deals with behaviors and portrays how people are acting with respect to a specified change (Hall & Hord, 2006). A critical method to determine if a new approach is working is to determine the LoU of a change. Hall and Hord define LoU as being divided into two main categories, users and nonusers, which then contain eight classifications:
Nonusers
0- Nonuser- little or no knowledge
1- Orientation- recently acquired information
2- Preparation- user is preparing for first use of the innovation

Users
3- Mechanical Use- user focuses effort on short-term, day-to-day functions
4A- Routine- use of the innovation is stabilized. Few changes are being made
4B- Refinement- state in which the user varies the use of the innovation based on knowledge of both long and short-term consequences.
5- Integration- User is combining own efforts to use the innovation with related activities of colleagues.
6- Renewal- User re-evaluates the quality of the innovation and seeks major modifications.

The eight classifications help distinguish behavior differences among people that are at different levels within each category. To classify a change, the LoU label as a user only tells me that the innovation is being used, not at what level it is being utilized. When I am a principal and evaluating the LoU, it is more precise and beneficial to classify the use such as, routine or refinement.

The Level of Use (LoU) model can be used as a principal to measure the balanced calendar initiative in the Davenport Community Schools. The balanced calendar initiative had supporters and others who were hesitant to embrace change. Balanced calendar provides a variety of benefits for schools. For example, rather than a longer summer like the traditional calendar, shorter breaks are given to improve retention. The school was nonusers and in the orientation stage because of the newly acquired information.
Selected schools in Davenport were recommended the balanced calendar schedule for a trial. Several issues would need to be addressed such as transportation when the traditional schools were on break. Administrative issues regarding contractual days would also need to be resolved. Once addressed, the schools then progressed from orientation to preparation, and are still considered to be nonusers.

As we progressed along the LoU, certain issues that were not essential were sacrificed for the sake of implementation. For example, air conditioning was not going to be available for the first year. Faculty and staff were disappointed, but the advantages of the balanced calendar outweighed the need for air conditioning. At this point, the LoU was a borderline 2, preparation, or 3, mechanical use because of the short-term thinking. In other words, the LoU was a borderline user and nonuser contingent upon their financial commitment of providing air conditioning.

Balanced calendar is now part of the everyday routine of selected schools in Davenport. The LoU has progressed to a user in the routine classification. Teachers broach major issues immediately and log minor issues for staff development later in the school year.

Using the LoU model to trace the progress of the balanced calendar initiative at Hayes School connects with standard 3. Principals must make data-driven decisions and evaluate based on fact. The LoU model is a valuable tool
that I can utilize to determine if the change innovation is being used and to what extent.

It is naïve to believe that we will perfect every educational change and decision. Dailey and O’Brien argue in their article, entitled, “When Smart People Resist Change”, speak to how set backs are inevitable.

The inability to quickly learn is a huge obstacle if the key players can’t step up to handle failure and adopt a personal learning ethic that others can model. Unfortunately, the norm is far more often that people finger-point, play the blame game, and generally back away from owning what are reasonable and predictable missteps along the way.

The schools that have a team approach usually are flexible by adjusting the action plan and become successful after experiencing failure. When faced with the inevitable set back, the schools without a team approach “become defensive, screen out criticism, and put the blame on anyone and everyone but themselves” (Dailey & O’Brien, 2002). Reflecting on this article reassured me of the necessary cooperative team approach within schools and ability to evolve a change process through analyzing “reasonable and predictable missteps” (Dailey & O’Brien, 2002). As a former professor stated, “sometimes it is more efficient and effective while being an evolutionist, not a revolutionist for school improvement”.

The LoU model as well as the five elements of change developed by Ambrose will be excellent tools to implement, monitor, and evaluate change in an educational setting. The models help to understand the change process and the degree of implementation. Without just one ingredient from the process of change model, the outcome will not be successful.

Current research for classroom learning is supported by the new ITS, how using kinetics in the classroom to enhance learning, and reading interventions. One of the primary effects of higher standards is the improvement of learning for both students and adults. The Davenport Community School District has seen encouraging changes in these areas over the last four years. The state of Iowa adopted the eight ITS and 42 model criteria on May 10, 2002. These standards were adopted to help teachers take accountability for what they are doing in the classroom. Administrators use the standards as a tool to fairly evaluate teachers. Before these standards were adopted, evaluations were subjective because administrators did not have a universal objective tool. Administrators evaluate teachers based on the implementation of the Iowa teaching standards demonstrated in class.

All teachers will be evaluated on three-year cycles using the same eight standards as guidelines (http://www.state.ia.us/educate/ecese/tqt/tc/doc/itsmc030122.html). According to the ITS an effective teacher is one who:
1. Demonstrates ability to enhance academic performance and support for implementation of the school district's student achievement goals.
2. Demonstrates competence in content knowledge appropriate to the teaching position.
3. Demonstrates competence in planning and preparing for instruction.
4. Uses strategies to deliver instruction that meets the multiple learning needs of students.
5. Uses a variety of methods to monitor student learning.
6. Demonstrates competence in classroom management.
7. Engages in professional growth.
8. Fulfills professional responsibilities established by the school district.

The implementation of the state teaching standards is intended to improve both teachers and students, which relates with standard two of the ELCC standards. One important aspect of the evaluation is teacher self-reflection. The teacher evaluates what they were doing in the classroom, and identifies areas of improvement to ensure that the standards are being met. Administrators now use the same method to evaluate teachers in the Davenport Community School District. By having all teachers on the same evaluation process, the evaluation role has become an easier and more efficient task.

Research also illustrates how movement can improve and enhance learning for both students and teachers. Eight-five percent of school children are kinesthetic learners, while children in poverty rely primarily on their kinesthetic abilities for learning (Hannaford & Pert, 2005).

The reason why people learn through movement is because exercise increases blood flow to the brain increasing the needed brain nutrients, oxygen and glucose. Glucose is brain fuel. Each time we think we use brain fuel. We
exchange ten percent of oxygen in a normal breath, leaving ninety percent of the oxygen stale until we exercise. A lack of fresh oxygen results in disorientation, fatigue, concentration and memory problems (Blaydes, 2003). Will you be able to maximize learning in this condition?

Movement can be applied to classroom learning by taking brief exercise breaks to increase blood flow to the brain, using cross lateral exercises to work both sides of the brain, and incorporate body mapping. As a principal, I can infuse changes to attain these benefits to maximize student learning through: daily physical education, movement activity breaks in the classroom, and encourage more movement teaching strategies (85% kinesthetic learners). The learning through kinetics research connects with standard two of ISSL standards. Movement enhances learning is conducive to student learning and professional development for teachers. This research reinforces the need for multiple teaching strategies in the classroom to improve learning for students.

Reading intervention programs such as the Reading Recovery is an opportunity to enhance student learning and meet the diverse needs of our students. The Reading Recovery Program is geared towards at risk students who are approaching grade level reading skills. These students meet with the reading specialist and meet everyday for 30 minutes. The reading specialist reinforces the skills that are tested and provides the needs of the students. Teaching the
weaknesses allows the students to gain more repetitions while having their needs met.

Research show that students with just 12 to 20 weeks of 30-minute daily individual Reading Recovery tutoring, eight of ten students who complete the full series of lessons can read and write within the average performance range of their class (Cunningham, P.M. & Allington, S.R., 1994). Follow-up studies indicate that most Reading Recovery students also do well on standardized tests and maintain their gains in later years. Comparing unit test scores and itemized skills can disclose the amount of learning and benefits from the Reading Recovery Program.

In addition to the increased learning through the Reading Recovery, research shows that the program, in the long-term, is also cost effective. Public school administrators have estimated cost savings associated with Reading Recovery when compared with retention and referral to special education programs. A study by the Massachusetts State Legislature reported that every $3 invested in Reading Recovery saved $5 in other costs (Moriarty, 1997). Another study from Network News, estimated a five-year cost avoidance of $1.7 million through implementation of Reading Recovery in Fall River, Massachusetts (Condon & Assad, 1996). With these research based learning and cost efficient benefits, the Reading Recovery Program is significant in its scope.
Along with the skills to evaluate teachers and multiple learning strategies, the principal must be leader of service in the building and community. This role of service entails possessing positive qualities and life skills. In this section, I will discuss the role of being a community builder, a tool for ethical decision-making, as well as the importance of establishing trust and demonstrating strong character. The administrator will establish a respected school climate and culture by implementing each of these components.

A leader of service builds a community with all people involved in the school. This includes central office, parents, neighborhood and business partnerships. Regardless of parents' marital status, or a family's economic background, research shows positive results in student achievement, attendance, health, and discipline when parents are partners in their children's education (Boal, 2004). Connecting schools with families is a three-way street: families connecting to schools, schools connecting to families, and communities connecting to both schools and families.

Building a community as an administrator relates with standard four of the ISSL standards which states, an educational leader promotes the success of all students by collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs and mobilizing community resources. The leader can facilitate each of these partnerships by offering opportunities and engaging in open communication. Examples of opportunities include:
homework, planner with school policies and procedures, host a school cookout celebrating the achievement of a school goal, lessons plans reflecting high expectations, develop a variety of ways for students to share what they have learned. Successful partnerships can result in greater student achievement and overall performance at school.

An administrator should also strive to be morally and ethically right in their decisions. Ethical actions can result in gaining the respect of others, addressing the issue, and an increased self-esteem. Elaine L. Wilmore, author of *Principal Leadership*, points to a Four Way Test pertaining to ethics and modifies it to be used in difficult situations. They are:

- Is it the truth?
- Is it fair to all concerned?
- Will it build goodwill and facilitate greater student learning and success?
- Will it be beneficial to all concerned?

This test makes it easier to identify what is important and make decisions that will correspond to our code of ethics. I believe that every administrator should compose a code of ethics, which will consist of beliefs, values, and ethics.

My personal code of ethics in no hierarchy order is as follows:

1. Treat people with respect and integrity
2. Good will and better understanding in all decisions.
3. Lead by example, there is always someone watching you.
4. Prioritize student interest and learning first.
5. Demonstrate class, handle yourself with humility, and strive for excellence.
6. Be an educational leader.
The code of ethics will be observed through our actions. Standard 5 of the ISSL standards connects with ethical decision making and states, an educational leader promotes the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.

Two important characteristics a principal must possess is the ability to establish trust and lead a school with strong character. Trust in a person means that you feel he or she can be counted on to do something important, will not shirk from duties, and will take personal pride in what he or she does (Kurtus, 2004). For example, if the school administrator is at a meeting, the teacher in charge, as well as the staff, will be trusted to carry out the school day responsibilities. I believe that those administrators who can establish a sense of trust in the building are more successful and can be counted on during difficult situations because each person holds themselves accountable for their role.

Having strong character is a quality that is necessary to become a principal. It means to act in a manner that is honorable, courageous, compassionate and ethical (http://www.school-for-champions.com/character.htm). The character of a person is seen through their actions. I will model strong character while keeping in mind that someone is always watching the leader of the school. Leading by example with strong character is a method to gain the respect and trust of the staff.
Building a community, striving to be morally and ethically correct, and establishing a school of trust and character are all qualities that the leader of service disseminates through their actions. Although the responsibility of leading includes communication, the leaders actions may be the best communication and approach to gain the trust of staff, students, parents, and community.

Conclusion

Being in a leadership position can be very challenging and rewarding. It is important through the day-to-day operations to never lose sight of making decisions that are in the best interest of the students, while motivating the staff to achieve our goals. This can be done by establishing a positive school climate that values life skills and has open communication.

I believe that by striving to be the best in the course of everyday actions will result in the staff following the lead. I have a strong desire to lead a school instilling the aspiration for all the staff to strive for their best daily while learning and fulfilling student and teacher potential. My fulfillment as an administrator will be when all students are learning through the multiple teaching strategies from the educators and becoming properly prepared to lead a successful life within society.
References


