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Elements of reflection for secondary principals : a reflective essay

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Elements of reflection for secondary principals : a reflective essay

Abstract

Are future administrators ready to stand up for what they believe is right for kids? Most administrators would probably respond with a yes. Two central questions that all administrators must ask themselves before taking that first administrative job: Do I have a personal vision of educational beliefs that are important for all children? Secondly, to what extent am I able to stand by my beliefs for children, even if it means leaving a principalship position because of philosophical belief conflict with peers and/or superiors?

ELEMENTS OF REFLECTION FOR SECONDARY PRINCIPALS

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

Masters of Arts in Education

by

Brian R. Phillips

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A REFLECTIVE ESSAY

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Personal Characteristics

Throughout my life I have enjoyed leadership roles varying from Boy Scouts, junior college class president, volunteer police officer, basic training squad leader in the U.S. Air Force, resident assistant at the University of Northern Iowa, and a learning disabilities teacher. I have always reached to accept new roles of responsibility in an advanced leadership role. I have always sought to be actively involved in communicating with people to share ideas and to solve problems.

The major influence on my decision to enter into a greater leadership role within the school setting came from the report *A Nation at Risk* prepared by the National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983). This report gained most attention when its authors stated:

If an unfriendly foreign power had attempted to impose on America the mediocre educational performance that exists today, we might well have viewed it as an act of war. As it stands, we have allowed this to happen to ourselves. We have even squandered the gains in student achievement made in the wake of the Sputnik challenge... We have, in effect, been committing an act of unthinking, unilateral educational disarmament (1983, p. 12).

The following is a list of recommendations for which there appeared to be a general consensus among the report: a) revising the curriculum and strengthening subject area requirements; b) revising vocational courses; c) offering special help for gifted and talented students and for slow learners; d) emphasizing reasoning and thinking skills, and e) setting high expectations for students (Gorton & Schneider, 1991, p.14). Other recommendations which appeared, unlike the general

ones, were quite controversial and engendered lively public discussions because they challenged the traditional public school system and the means of assessing teacher and student performance.

Introduction of Topic Areas

There are five areas which call for more research and discussion. These correlate and sometimes go beyond what was discussed in *A Nation At Risk*. These issues are as follows: 1) children do not invest themselves in their schooling, they want the “American Dream” but do not commit to the effort required; 2) rule enforcement in schools should be rethought; 3) teachers feel overburdened and unsure of their role (strictly teacher? role model? guidance counselor?); 4) changes in the make up of the American family and 5) community building within the school setting. These five topics encompass the schools today and will help determine the needed shift in the teaching paradigm of the future.

Child’s Investment In Schooling

The first issue was children do not invest themselves in their schooling, they want the “American Dream” but do not want to commit to the effort required. More and more adolescents are working after school instead of involving themselves in extra curricular activities in school (Appendix A). A survey was administered to 50 educators at West High School, Waterloo, Iowa. The survey was intended to provide current data on issues discussed throughout this paper (Appendix A). It was beneficial to get a sample of what educators believe is important and to learn about their “reality” of students and school. Intriguing results from the survey

were the high ratings teachers gave to the statements regarding attendance and jobs. These issues may be luring students from school activities and academics. Obviously teachers believe student attendance is important by the score of 9 to the statement, "Any form of absences for class, reaching 10 or more (a semester) is too many" and a score of 7.2 on the statement, "Jobs lure students away from school activities and academics." Therefore, to what extent do we owe it to students to motivate them to be involved in activities at school and also talk to their parents about their child's participation at school?

There are limits on both the number of hours and the time of day that a 14 or 15 year old can work: They may not work during school hours, they may work up to three hours on a school day, eight hours on a nonschool day, and 18 hours a week during a school week; they may work no more than forty hours in a week that school does not meet. There are also periods of time which 14 and 15 year old's may not work: They may not work before 7:00 a.m. or after 7:00 p.m., except between June 1 and Labor Day when the end of day standard is 9:00 p.m (Bosworth, 1996, p.45). Do these facts mean that when a teenager turns 16 that they can handle more working hours during school? Is not this the time that they should be taking advanced course work in school and be actively involved in school activities or is the emphasis instead on reaching for the short term goals of buying wants instead of focusing on what a student really needs (intense academics and school teamwork building activities)? Is working to buy name brand clothes instead of "average"

priced jeans or the purchase and/or continual upgrading of a “super” stereo system more beneficial to kids rather than school? What part does the parent and should the teacher play in advising students to reduce employment hours or not working at all? Being at school for eight hours should be a demanding task for anyone if they are putting effort into their learning process. If, after a cognitive drain of 8 hours of school, students are stopping at home and then leaving again to work 3-4 hours, where is the time for homework and family?

The high visual stimulation on television and the “go-go” mentality of today’s technological society inhibit the child’s and adolescent’s attention span and long term reinforcement satisfaction. They see and hear the things they are “supposed” to have on the T.V. and radio. For example, the commercial on the radio discussing the feeling of “having arrived” when you give your wife that one karat diamond (having arrived meaning living the “American Dream”). The fixation of having “stuff” becomes the driving force in determining one’s worth. The idea of saving over a long term of time in acquiring “stuff” is compromised by lack of structure in the home, societal pressures and giving in to children’s belly aching for “stuff”. This can be seen in the fact that the average credit card balance currently in America is \$5,000.00 dollars. This issue not only affects adolescents but adults as well. These issues spill over into the school classroom setting as the student stretches their commitments from school related functions to worrying about money to buy clothes, cars, drugs and others.

Rule Enforcement in Schools

The second issue deals with the idea of rule enforcement in schools. Arlis Swartzendruber, the Superintendent of Waterloo, Iowa schools, recently stated (Personal Communication, April 2, 1998) that old style crackdowns do not seem to work with students whose pattern of disruption has become "habitual behavior." "What some are actually calling for is to remove these disruptive students from the educational setting," he said. "We can't. Removal ignores one problem while it creates dozens of others. Plus, they seldom return to education" (Stanton, 1998, C3).

The vision of helping disruptive students in school should be to utilize knowledge about the essentials in every young persons life, then apply that knowledge to help every student be an involved, well-behaved learner. Having in-school suspension could be one vehicle to reach a student one-on-one and listen to their concerns and problems facing them. If this time is not taken and commitment is not made when we have the student in school for eight hours a day, can one be sure the issues or problems will be addressed? Are parents capable of discussing and counseling their children about problems or is an outsider, neutral to the problem, more apt to make a positive difference?

A former student named Jon was always talking about getting drunk, taking drugs, stealing and skipping classes. It was not unusual for this student to be given out-of-school suspension (which he seemed to enjoy). His lifestyle and problems were not adequately being addressed

by myself because I only saw him once a day, for 50 minutes, and out of school suspensions only served to further alienate him from the support and structure of school. From what I gather in talking with him, his home life, while living with his mother, was non-structured and communication between the two was minimally effective. In 1996, Jon was charged with second degree burglary that stemmed from a fight between two other people, one of which he was just “hanging” with at the time of the incident. If the school setting would have had an in-school suspension program, Jon could have been counseled on dealing with his drug problems, social friendships and making positive choices before the 1996 incident happened. As previously stated by Dr. Swartzendruber, “removing a student from school only serves to create more problems.”

Phay and Cummings (1970) found that students who misbehave are usually students with academic difficulties. Therefore, school separation would be a poor method of helping a student achieve academically. It is understandable that administrators would need to use the options of suspension and even expulsion to protect the welfare of other students, yet these methods of “kicking” a kid out of school are most likely counterproductive in relationship to changing a students overall behavior at school (Gorton & Schneider, 1991, p. 440). It is not uncommon in my school setting at West High School, in Waterloo, to have kids openly state, “I don’t care if I get suspended and my parents don’t either”. Many students I come in contact with see a suspension as a

holiday from school: They have a "I don't want to be in school anyway attitude", and the parental repercussions are negligible.

I believe that in-school suspension should be an option if out-of-school suspension is not changing the attitudes and behaviors of those who receive it. There are two options that can be employed with in-school suspension. First, if the purpose of the suspension is for punishment the student is isolated for most if not all of the day and monitored. Secondly, if the purpose is to remediate the cause of the misbehavior social and academic assistance is given to the student (Radin, 1988).

The main emphasis during the in-school suspension time should be to assist the student to analyze his/her previous behavior, to consider alternative behaviors to him/her, and to select a more appropriate behavior to be implemented after returning to the normal school setting. (Chamberlain, 1980, p. 6).

In-school suspension should be used as a vehicle to get to the "root" of the students problems, not as a device to get the student out of the regular classroom, or to modify the student's behavior to meet the teacher's or school's goals" (Neill, 1976, p.47).

As administrators, one needs to take a close look at helping students solve their personal problems. The current practice of an administrator talking to a student in their office about such things as: drug problems, social friendships and positive choices is not enough. There is neither the time nor the training available for, mostly assistant principals, handling most of the discipline situations (Gorton and Schneider, 1991, p.127) (Appendix B & C). Therefore, in-school suspension could be used as a vehicle to get to the "root" of the students problems, not as a device

to get the student out of the regular classroom or to modify the student's behavior to meet the teacher's or school's goals (Neill, 1976).

The Teacher's Role in Education

The third issue is teachers feel overburdened and unsure of their role. Is one strictly teacher? Role model? Guidance counselor? There is no doubt that teachers for the most part, come into teaching with a good idea of how to teach students who are ready to learn. But, as educators in 1998, we are faced with a new breed of student: Students not eating breakfast, students staying up late or working at jobs, students having a need for immediate gratification, students not respecting teachers, and students rarely getting homework finished. And further, where does a teacher begin to relate to a student with emotional and/or physical problems? Also, for some adolescents school is not a warm, friendly place: "Some students who are unsuccessful academically and who receive insufficient positive attention from peers and adults start to act as though they were quietly invisible" (Testerman, 1996, p. 364).

The statement, "I believe the primary duty as a teacher is instructor of curriculum", was scored a 7.7 on a scale of 10 on the West High School survey (Appendix A). This concerns me because educators may be placing curriculum ahead of students. If a student is not ready to learn geometry for example, at the beginning of the day (7:45 a.m.), does the teacher forage ahead anyway, staying with the curriculum? What about the other students that are ready? Should we take the time to listen to kids needs within the class period? This issue deals with the *in loco*

parentis aspects of being an educator. "The courts have intended that school authorities or teachers stand fully in the place of parents in control of their children. School official's and teachers' prerogatives are circumscribed by and limited to school functions and activities."

(Alexander & Alexander, p. 282, 1992). Yet, on the West High School survey statement, "It is my role as a teacher to be a student's parent figure," gave way to a rating of 3.4 on a scale of 10 (Appendix A). Many educators seem to feel this issue is not part of their job. If more and more children are not getting the structure and role modeling at home and educators do not give it to them at school, where will they get it? From TV, gangs and peers? Future administrators need to keep pace with the changing family structure. One should get to know where a child is "coming from" and be open to talking to that student about his/her problems and successes! Many educators feels this issue is not part of their job. One should get to know where a child is "coming from" and be open to talking to that student about his/her problems and successes!

Our schools have many problems today, we are facing problems like: lack of discipline, use of drugs, poor curriculum, overcrowding, difficulty of getting good teachers, and lack of interest. Many students are coming into school with numerous problems on their minds that overshadow their ability to think in academic areas. An Area Educational Agency consultant in my school recently told me that she has seen more special education students with mental distress requiring counseling than in any year before (Personal Communication, Mary Weisen, March

1, 1998). This shows the need for preparation in the social relations area. In essence, the teacher is not prepared for the guidance counselor role and sees it often as an infringement on their teaching time and personal emotional well being.

Children are not coming to school ready to learn due to excess baggage. As in Maslow's hierarchy of learning, basic needs such as food, shelter, security must be met prior to educational and spiritual growth (Coleman & Glaros, 1983, p.127) (Appendix D). Should schools provide breakfast, counseling, daycare, or just be educators? Can these learning and the other basic needs even be separated?

If there is emotional "baggage" that students do bring to school, how do administrators get students to want to do well in school? Dale Carnegie believes that the "big secret" of dealing with people (students included) is to make them feel important. It is the desire to feel important that lures many boys and girls into joining gangs and engaging in criminal activities (Carnegie, 1986, p. 67). In essence, we cannot afford to just expect students to come to school ready to learn. And if they do not, we cannot do anything to help them overcome or cope with their situation. Students want administrators to listen to their side of the story. This is evident in an effective school survey I helped distribute, explain, and analyze with my principal at West High School (Appendix E). The building of rapport does not stop after the student walks out of the administrator's office, but whenever the administrator has a chance to speak to him/her. This could be in the hallway between classes or, just a

greeting of "Hi, Robert good to see you." At first, the administrator may have to be the initiator of the conversation to show the student that they are not holding a grudge against them for previous misbehavior(s). Building a positive relationship, instead of holding a grudge will only serve to show the student that you notice and care about him/her. In turn, their behavior will most likely "swing" towards the positive instead of trying to "get back" at the administrator or school property for a prior punishment.

Establishing a relationship with the student on an individual basis is imperative. By reaching out to a student to establish a relationship you tell that student "I care about you as a person". I dislike your behavior, but care about you. It sounds easy but it is not and many educators resist it once they realize the effort it takes. Naturally, there will be highs and lows to any relationship and it may seem easier to give directions (expecting them to be followed without discussion) rather than dialoguing about the issue. Those educators who believe that students readily recognize the affection and concern that they do give may be surprised to find out student perceptions of teacher's attitudes toward students are less than glowing.

Gary Whelage and Robert Rutter used data from "High School and Beyond", a longitudinal survey of approximately 30,000 sophomores from 1,105 public and private high schools nationwide, to study student alienation and rejection of school (Whelage and Rutter, 1986, p. 374). One of the variables in their analysis was teacher interest in students.

“When those who eventually became dropouts were asked to rate teacher interest in students, marks of fair to poor were given by 56 percent of the Hispanics, 50 percent of blacks and 59 percent of whites,” Whelage and Rutter reported, “Non-college-bound students were not much more positive, in view of the fair-to-poor ratings given by each racial group: hispanics at 49 percent, blacks at 47 percent and whites at 49 percent (p. 377).”

The hard part of establishing relationships of caring, understanding and support to students is the number of students that require this nurturing and the length of time needed for student success. Establishing a relationship with a troubled student will not be a “quick fix” but will require one to touch base again and again with him/her. The one thing that must not be done is take these issues home with you. That will only lead to you living your students problems and burnout. There is a lot of research on burnout and I have included a burnout survey I completed over the internet and it’s recommendations, concrete ideals and suggested readings to handling burnout issues (Appendix F & G).

As administrators, one must remember that teachers have to come prepared with lessons plans for five classes and then correct papers with only one planning period, and be involved with committees meetings and after school functions. At this point, many teachers are asking, “what about instruction of the curriculum? I’m here to teach, not be a social worker.” This is where the crux of the issues lay for teachers and future administrators. Existing (traditional) methods and ideas of teachers and

administrators may be ineffective: The paradigm must shift.

Administrators must provide the leadership (Appendix H) and support needed to help students coming to school ill-prepared to learn.

Bob McCarthy wrote that "the love of learning is an acquired taste, an addiction for the tart rather than the sweet" (Peters & Austin, 1986, p. 480). To learn to change can be exhilarating and wrenching, with the wrenching part normally coming first. We are all resistant to change because we get comfortable in our situation and to change requires effort and usually sacrifice. Many deal with students who have developed "bad habits" (ex. skipping class, using drugs, insubordination etc.) it is difficult to change behaviors because what is asked of them to do is step out of their individual comfort zone. Furthermore, attempting to adjust behavior through order giving does not build a positive relationship between student and administrator, only resentment.

Good administration comes from being passionate about their job. One has to love what he/she is doing because of the time and commitment it takes to do it well. An administrator with a family needs to believe that he/she is positively influencing children to make time lost with his/her family justified. If an administrator is just working the minimum hours and resenting any additional work load, how can he/she be passionate?

Changes in The American Family

The fourth issue concerns the changes in the American family: There are far fewer nuclear families and there is the near disappearance

of the extended family (Crowson, 1992, p.77). Many forces draw today's children away from the influences of both school and family: The television set, the peer group, the automobile, the job in a fast-food restaurant (Gordon & Schneider, 1976; Goodland, 1981). "Educators are well aware that latchkey situations, single-parent families, unemployed-parent households, and frequent-mover families can all display home-to-school learning effects" (Crowson, 1992, p.192). We're living in a no-parent culture now, and teens leave school with no one to talk to but their friends and the T.V. So what do they do (Cawelti, 1998)?

Vast numbers of American teenager's do nothing after school but hang together, socialize, fantasize, and catch each other's illnesses, both physical and mental. That's when they plot random acts of vandalism, roam streets and neighborhoods proving themselves, experimenting with all manner of chemical substances and behaving like outlaws from after school to mid-evening (Cawelti, 1998, p. F2).

Many of the values, work ethic and general personality traits of children are shaped by the parent(s) of children. If the exposure to the home environment with adults is reduced then children are left to their own notions of what they view as right and wrong. Nancy Dickerson, a National Association of Elementary Schools Principal board member, believes that "character education", the teaching of such virtues as honesty, responsibility and self-discipline, is something nearly all school principals are grappling with now (Dickerson, 1998, p. A1). "We are all a microcosm of society", Dickerson states, "All of the issues society is facing are creeping into the schools." A growing number of children,

however, are not learning core values and conscience at home. She states, "I think families have gotten away from that." Dickerson believes it has everything to do with economics and the changing structure of families.

Teachers scored the statement, "Most of a student's problems in school would be eliminated if their home-life problems were remedied," with a 7.2 on the West High School survey. How can educators help parents and their children problem solve together? Staying in touch with parents by phone might be a good place to start. Making appointments to have the student and parent(s) come in and discuss problems with a school counselor and even having more parent-teacher conferences allowing for in-depth and continual discussion of problems and concerns. This issue may be hard to instill in the faculty at West High if the perception is a teacher "teaches" curriculum and stays out of relationship building and problem solving with parent(s) and kids.

Stephanie Coontz, a family historian at Evergreen State College, asks us to just look at the school day: totally out of sync with working parents. As a result, "kids don't just come home to an empty house but to an empty neighborhood (Coontz, 1992, p. 102)."

The above societal forces advocate for new approaches to community-school relations and are frequently topics of discussion, Coleman (1987), for example, has argued that there are indications of a serious crisis in the exercise of parental responsibilities in America.

...there is strong evidence that the public schools are more effective for children from strong family backgrounds than for children from weak backgrounds. In short, the schools are at their best when they operate from strength, and there is now less and less family-background strength to draw on (Coleman, 1987, p. 34).

For most Americans, the question of whether to stay at home is a theoretical one. Respondents in a recent gender roles survey by the Washington Post said the need for a second paycheck controlled the choice (Grimsley, 1998, p. A8). Therefore, many students have both parents working outside of the home as a normal situation. As mentioned, most of the values, work ethic and general personality traits of children are shaped by the parent(s) of children. If the exposure to the home environment with an adult is reduced then children are left to their own notions of what they view as right and wrong.

Jim Fox a retired journalist who writes a column for the Suburban Journal of St. Louis is another advocate for placing some responsibility on parents' shoulders. He states, that many parents "dump" their children into the public school system and say, "Educate them in the basics, teach them the social graces, teach them to drive a car and to cook and sew, and give them some understanding of ethics. We don't have time (Fox, 1993, p. 119)."

Roger Everett a principal at Community Christian School in Dubuque, Iowa believes that schools are directly impacting the stability of the family unit (Personal Communication, June 15, 1997). Roger stated, "We give students breakfast, we keep them for 8 hours and then keep

them for practices in sports, drama, music and other extra curricular activities." The child arrives home at 4:00 p.m. and before they can shed the "hand" of the school they do their homework. This does not include time on the phone with friends, TV or any other activities outside of the family. When is it the parents' responsibility to teach their child? The work responsibility is of great importance in school today. At West High School children are taught to be "responsible" for their behavior. The BoysTown model of behavior management is for all students receiving any type of special education services. This teaches adolescents how to: follow instructions, apologize, accept feedback, greet someone and give someone a compliment. Are these themes ones that should have been learned at home in the first place? If not, who is responsible for them to be learned? Is it the school, the church, cub scouts or even gangs?

Community Building in School

The combination of family breakdown, coupled with the relationship between family strength and school quality, suggests to many individuals that the schools should now be community creating institutions (Crowson, 1992, p. 32) (Appendix I & J & K). This is the subject of the fifth area of reflection. This type of community building is evident in the placement of the Success Street Offices in a couple of schools in the Waterloo School District. According to Shirley Anderson, a counselor at Logan Elementary, the Success Street Program, was adamantly opposed to by the community when it was first suggested. The primary services of Success Street are in mental health counseling and

minor medical care inside the school. Both areas were seen as unnecessary and intrusive. Now parents of children who themselves might receive its services can not imagine the school without the Success Street Program (Shirley Anderson, Personal Communication, May 10, 1998). As Coleman (1987) words it, the public school now must consider its job to be an investment in the "social capital" of society instead of the creators of "human capital." "What I mean by social capital, defines Coleman (1987, p. 36), "is the norms, the social networks, and the relationships between adults and children that are of value for the child's growing up." This building of communication of a sense between child and adult was evident in student self-directed conferences as explained by Gretchen DeVore, a peer in the principalship program (Personal Communication, January 15, 1998). She stated, "it was obvious during conferences which parent(s) and students were able to communicate with each other about poor grades: some students and parents could not discuss much of anything together because the other person was a "stranger" to them and the student would look to me for help."

Andrew Vachss, an author on abused children, believes that "the family is self-destructing--destroying itself from within by its failure to nurture and value its offspring" (Vachss, 1998, p. 4). Administrators need to be supportive of programs like Success Street that allow parents and their children to come together to discuss problems that will reduce the "baggage" they bring to school. Establishing relationships by talking and

listening to students can only serve to make our schools a better place for learning. The reasoning is simple and compelling, as illustrated in a quotation by James Coleman (1988, p. 35): "If there is one thing that recent research has shown, it is that a child's education depends on what goes on in that child's life, not merely on what goes on in that child's school."

Stephanie Conntz believes there is not great mystery about what it takes to help a troubled child or family. In study after study, she finds that two things stand out in the histories of kids who make it against the odds. The answers do not lie with labeling kids social scourges (conservative rhetoric) or workshops on self-esteem (liberal myth). The first factor is access to a second chance to succeed at something the person failed at before--going back to school, being helped to pass a class (as opposed to being passed though it), getting a chance to correct a wrong and make it right (as opposed to being punished or excused for it), receiving concrete aid and an opportunity to reciprocate it. The second is the intervention of just one caring person from outside the family (teacher/administrator). That person's role is not to moralize or even to motivate, but to get involved in the child's life (Coontz, 1992). Administrators need to provide that second chance to kids and open up to being involved in a child's life. To quote Kari Gunderson the Vice Principal at West High School in Waterloo, "I'll give every kid a second chance, a third chance and a fourth chance, but at some point you draw the line and move on." (Personal Communication, February 5, 1989).

One can be involved in a child's life by simply watching them at an extracurricular event or taking a moment to talk to them in the hallway. A student's problems in school might be reduced or remedied if less baggage from their home life is dragged to school with them. Teachers scored the category, "Most of a student's problems in school would be eliminated if their home-life problems were remedied," with a 7.2 on the West High School survey. How can educators help parents and their children problem solve together? Staying in touch with parents by phone might be a good place to start. Making appointments to have the student and parent(s) come in and discuss problems with a school counselor and even having more parent-teacher conferences allowing for in-depth and continual discussion of problems and concerns. This issue may be hard to instill in the faculty at West High if the perception is a teacher "teaches" curriculum and stays out of relationship building and problem solving with parent(s) and students.

Final Reflection

In conclusion, President Clinton refers to the report, *A Nation At Risk* in saying, "The risk, now, is that we'll fail to follow through after coming so far" (Bacharach, 1990, p. XI). In essence, we know what some of the problems in schools are, what are we going to do about it? West High School's principal expressed this same situation with the effective schools survey (Personal Communication, May 2, 1998). A faculty member asked if problems identified would be "worked on", his response was, "yes and if not, that is one of the most tragic things we could do in

education.” Are future administrators ready to stand up for what they believe is right for kids? Most administrators would probably respond with a yes.

Yet, administrators often find themselves in positions where to do what their training or the literature of the field or best interest of their students says is right and proper would be detrimental to their enjoyment of their careers (Imber, 1995, p. 120).

Remediation of and monitoring of an inadequate teacher can take a minimum of six months (Robert Decker, Personal Communication June 20, 1997). Every step of this process can be time-consuming and painful and has the potential to create friction between the teachers, union, parents and even the school board. In many situations, transferring the teacher or doing nothing at all are far less likely to further complicate an administrators job. “Administrators are bureaucrats who must preserve their own place within an organization. And for most educational administrators, survival requires that career knowledge be put first” (Imber & Scheurich, 1995, p. 97).

Two central questions that all administrators must ask themselves before taking that first administrative job: Do I have a personal vision of educational beliefs that are important for all children? Secondly, to what extent am I able to stand by my beliefs for children, even if it means leaving a principalship position because of philosophical belief conflict with peers and/or superiors?

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Your opinion is needed. I am currently writing my master's paper and I wanted to include the opinions of practicing teachers. Please take a minute to rate these statements and drop this back in my box. No names necessary. Thanks! Brian Phillips Rm. 222a

Rate each of the following items from 1 - 10 (with 10 being the highest).

1. I believe my primary duty as a teacher is instructor of curriculum. 7.7
2. I believe I spend more than 30 percent of my time counseling kids. 5.6
3. I believe children come to school ready to learn. 5
4. Jobs lure students away from school activities and academics. 7.2
5. Expectations of teachers have changed since I was a student. 7
6. I feel ineffective at teaching because of student's emotional baggage they bring to school. 5
7. It is my role as a teacher to be a student's parent figure. 3.4
8. Immediate gratification is a need for today's student. 6.3
9. Any form of absences for class, reaching 10 or more (a semester) is too many. 9
10. Most of a student's problems in school would be eliminated if their home-life problems were remedied. 7.2
11. I believe parents do not do an adequate job of modeling good problem-solving skills. 6.5
12. Two income households could be a major reason kids aren't thriving at school. 4.5

Thank you for your time!

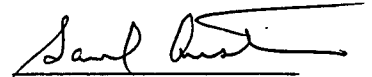
Administrative Staff,

1-28-98

I'm currently researching the topic of discipline for an administrative class with Dr. Decker at U.N.I. Could you please provide me with a "ball park" estimate of how many student discipline situations you handle in your office during a one month period?

Number per month 200 +

Administrator



Just drop this in my mailbox. Thanks!

Brian Phillips

WATERLOO WEST HIGH SCHOOL SCHOOL YEAR 1997-98

1ST SEMESTER (AUGUST 21, 1997 to January 16, 1998)

Discipline Report for
Mr. Bruce Sperry, Assistant PrincipalReferrals/Concerns Reported to the Office

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| Classroom Misbehavior | 61 |
| Noon Hour Problem | 13 |
| Inappropriate Clothing | 06 |
| Study Hall Problem | 17 |
| Tardies | 65 |
| Detention | 27 |
| Auto Violations | 07 |
| Insubordination | 26 |
| Harassment | 32 |
| Tobacco | 13 |
| Fighting | 33 |
| Drug Violation | 02 |
| Alcohol Violation | 05 |
| Bus Problem | 15 |
| Cut Classes/Attendance | 262 |
| Transfer/Drop Classes | 61 |
| Theft | 24 |
| Before/After School Problem | 36 |
| Problem/Concern | 143 |
| Athletic Problem/Concern | <u>134</u> |
| | 982 TOTAL |

(196.4 per m

Breakdown of Students

| | |
|--------------|-----|
| White Male | 317 |
| Black Male | 191 |
| White Female | 297 |
| Black Female | 177 |

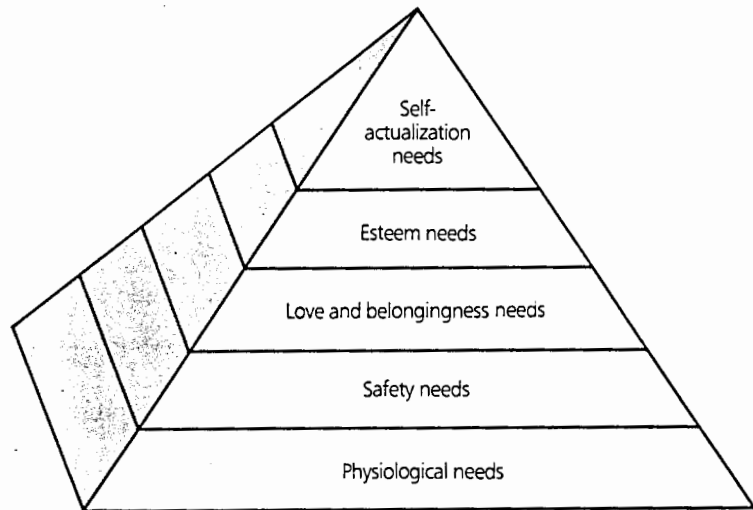
Basically, In charge of the Junior Class and one-third of the Seniors.

Waterloo West High School was involved in 241 1st semester activities. (106 at West High).

Insight

According to the findings of Maslow (1969, 1971) so-called lower level needs—such as needs for food and security—tend to dominate our behavior. When lower level needs are met, however, our behavior tends to be dominated by “higher” level needs, such as various forms of actualization strivings.

HIERARCHY OF NEEDS



Deficiency vs. Growth Motivation

Maslow has emphasized the distinction between **deficiency** and **growth motivation**. Behavior motivated primarily by maintenance needs—hunger, safety, social approval, and so on—is deficiency motivated. That is, it is motivated by the lack of something the individual needs for stability. In contrast, growth motivation is aimed at increasing our long-term capabilities. Gratifying our deficiency needs releases us from their domination and frees us for self-actualization.

People who are dominated by deficiency needs despite adequate resources or who have not found anything else worth striving for tend to be maladjusted and unhappy. Maslow (1954) has summarized it this way: “I should say simply that a healthy man is primarily motivated by his needs to develop and actualize his fullest potentialities and capacities. If a man has any other basic needs in any active, chronic sense, he is simply an unhealthy man.” In a comparison of deficiency-motivated and growth-motivated people, Maslow discovered that the latter showed more efficient perception of reality, could tolerate uncertainty better, were more spontaneous and creative, were more accepting of themselves and others, were more problem-centered and less ego-centered, had deeper than average relationships with other people, had a philosophical, unhostile sense of humor, and felt kinship with and concern for all humanity.

deficiency motivation:
domination of behavior
by maintenance needs
and strivings

growth motivation:
domination of behavior
by actualization needs
and strivings

WEST HIGH
RESULTS/INTERPRETATIONS OF EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS SURVEY
STUDENT PERCEPTIONS (195)

AREAS OF CONCERN:

1. Item #27: The administration /principal of this school listens to students and their concerns.
2. Item #25: This school makes me enthusiastic about learning.
3. Item #2: Students treat each other with respect.
4. Item #30: My parents know the principal well enough to call him when they have a question.
5. Item #22: My test scores are explained to me.
6. Item #26: Teacher and staff take a real interest in my future.
7. Item #3: Students obey the school rules.
8. Item #20: Teachers inform me of what must be done to get the grade that I want.
9. Item #23: This school focuses on helping students learn.
10. Item #19: I am given comments on my assignments and suggestions for improvement.
11. Item #29: The administration/principal is frequently in my classroom.
12. Item #4: Our school is kept neat and clean.
13. Item #1: School rules are enforced equally and fairly.
14. Item #12: Teachers in my classes try different kinds of instruction to help students learn (discussion, group work, lecture, activities, etc.)
15. Item #14: Teachers offer time before and after class to give additional help to students.
- Item #10: Students are frequently rewarded and praised by faculty and staff.

ISSUE: #59 Not Burning Out In These Challenging Times

DISCUSSION / RECOMMENDATIONS:

- discussion of being the only one in that position
- feeling of waiting for changes to be over to go back to "normal"
- coupled with personal issues: home, family
- we are not responsible for everything
- not comfortable to say no, but if it's necessary we must do so
- acknowledgement that we care, but we don't have to care beyond our limits
- sometimes choices have to be made
- personal/professional attitude shift
- financial responsibilities can sometimes get in the way of creativity, but we need to give ourselves permission
- rather than working individually, work as part of a team: increased support and ideas
- it takes courage to say no to increased workloads because of the pressure: awareness of our limits
- we encourage people in the community to speak up for themselves, but we have trouble doing that very same thing
- we often get support from the community rather than co-workers
- if we lose passion, it can be replaced by compassion
- burnout vs. compassion fatigue (people with compassion fatigue show symptoms of trauma victims eg. withdraw from society, sleep problems, etc.)
- maybe burnout equals wisdom
- is the stress that we face worse than what is faced in other countries or at other points in history?
- continuation of work into home: need to look at self-care
- use humour
- relinquish responsibility of saving the universe
- need to be clear as to what we can offer
- bridge between what we can do and what we must do
- take energy from our work, rather than it draining us of energy
- saying no can give us energy
- dichotomy of being forced to use volunteers/workfare vs. what we are comfortable with
- taking on extra work does not do the community any good
- statistic: when levels of job stress go up, so do rates of maternity leave
- problem of not being permitted to take time to manage stress: of not feeling supported in our attempts to manage stress creatively
- flex-time OK in theory, but not widely supported in practice
- does this involve women for the most part, or do men working in this field also experience this?
- everyone working in this sector seems to be affected by these issues
- union agreements concerning flex-time not honoured
- important to distinguish between essential and non-essential when saying no
- possible to develop peer consultation groups
- stress of clients' lives and our own lives coming closer together: the worlds are not so far apart anymore
- unreal expectations of the '90s: ie working straight through lunch is the norm (even in this conference)
- no one will thank you for burning out, so don't bother

CONCRETE IDEAS:

- don't get set up (by ourselves, by other staff/managers)
- create back-up systems: develop procedures with other staff
- start small: no need to do everything at once

Click here
to enter!

MyPoints Millionaire Sweepstakes Appendix G
With one of 550 prizes

Results of your Burnout Inventory

(This test yields one overall score and four subscores.)

Overall Burnout Inventory score: 51 (possible range: 0 = for no burnout signs, to 100 = for extremely high risk/presence of burnout)

You show no major signs of burnout. People who score as you did are usually able to cope adequately with emotional charge of their work. In general, you seem to have enough energy for relatively efficient and personalized work with your clients. Nevertheless, you might need to relax a little bit more and take a critical look at your workload. Both your clients and yourself would probably benefit if you were less on the edge and more rested.

The subscores below might help you to identify potential problem areas.

Emotional exhaustion

Score: 53 (possible range: 0 = no emotional exhaustion, to 100 = extreme emotional exhaustion)

The emotional charge of your work might be quite heavy, leaving you emotionally exhausted. Either you or the quality of your work may suffer. You should try to identify ways of reducing your workload or its impact on you. If you can, reduce the number of clients or diversify your work (eg. work with clients for 3 hours and then switch to paperwork for an hour). Take breaks, try to be physically active during the day - do some exercise (take the stairs, walk during lunch break).

Detachment/dehumanization of clients

Score: 44 (possible range: 0 = fully in touch with clients, to 100 = extreme detachment/dehumanization of clients)

No problems were detected at this level. You don't seem to be very much in touch with the needs of your clients. According to your answers, you seem to have some difficulties providing personalized service. To certain degree, you might be ignoring your clients' needs and failing to satisfy them to the best of your ability. It is not yet at a critical point, but your attitude towards clients might be taking on an unhealthy flavor. (Quite likely, all this is a result of an overload of work and a lack of rest (physical and emotional).)

Overwhelmed feeling and Loss of interest!

Score: 55 (possible range: 0 = feeling in control and interested in one's work, to 100 = feeling overwhelmed and without

ISSUE #35: Leadership

DISCUSSION / RECOMMENDATIONS:

Historical developmental continuum of leadership:

- By position-spheres of influence-team building-collective leadership-capacity building-potential for leaders.
- The more chaos there is the more leadership comes out.
- Leadership skills are not the same as management skills
- Leadership is not necessarily hierarchical it is organic (wherever you are in an organization or a community you can exert leadership)
- Effective leadership tends to be synergistic rather than zero sum (there is no limit for the capacity for leadership or influence among any group of people)
- Leadership can be verbal, physical, quiet, visual

Definition of leadership skills:

- Team Building
- Risk-taking
- Courage
- Values
- Vulnerability
- Intuitive
- Proper timing
- Ability to influence, create trust, admit mistakes
- Can share decision-making
- Is credible through follow-through
- Self-Confident
- Has vision (personal vision is essential in the context of organizational vision, need capacity to share vision rather than impose it)
- Can accept other people and ideas but only in an ethical context
- Ability to know your limitations as a leader person and the limitations of the person you're trying to help become a leader

How to grow leadership in others

- share power
- to affirm others
- to listen
- allow for differences of opinion
- support risk
- support passion
- that mistakes can be an opportunity for growth
- give others the big picture

When we look at leadership the group agreed it was the thing to do. The question is, in today's environment can we practice these aspects of leadership?

SUE: #13 Creating A Community To Raise Healthy Children

DISCUSSION / RECOMMENDATIONS:

es

- children and youth are undervalued in society
- Children and youth should be central issues
- making society feel more aware of their responsibility to raise healthy children is important
- children are seen as chattels rather than individuals with their own rights
- prevention starts with children
- how do we define communities as they have changed, the supports that used to be there are no longer there.
- how do we go beyond children's services and get agreement on a vision?
- how can we get local governments to put more emphasis on children's needs?
- it is important to make raising children everyone's issue.
- family unit is crucial, support has to be to the family
- difficult for youth in these uncertain times - their future is not clear
- how do we help our kids to feel secure?
- at what point in the cycle do we intervene? some youth find it difficult to articulate their feelings of depression and fear that may lead to substance abuse.
- owe children that sense of comfort, that life is worthwhile. Children are growing up too fast, for example career choices.
- important to define what we value in our society Child Poverty
- children growing up in poverty may face damage we cannot undo, poor children come from poor families
- multiplier effect: poverty includes poor housing, difficulties with coping etc. poverty impacts on a child in many ways.
- it is also important to understand that poverty is different now and it is different for children growing up in poverty today than it was before.

Reasons why poverty has a greater impact now than before include (these are issues for all parents but exacerbated by poverty):

- community not raising children
- no extended family
- parents are parenting in isolation
- parenting less
- values erosion
- experts know better
- media makes it harder to cope with poverty
- class is more of an issue, children see peers with significant material goods
- social marketing by media on unhealthy lifestyle choices.
- types of families seen on TV
- poverty makes undervaluing of children worse
- however, poor societies can nurture children very effectively
- children in these societies are not seen as burdens

Return to Issues

Technology

Parental responsibility to raise children

Business targets children and youth with impunity and are not challenged.

America's public schools can be traced back to the year 1640. The Massachusetts Puritans who created these first schools assumed that families and churches bore the major responsibility for raising a child. The responsibility of the school was intended to be limited, i.e., focused on:

- 1 Teaching basic reading, writing, and arithmetic skills,
- 2 Cultivating values that serve a democratic society (some history and civics implied).

America's schools stayed focused for 260 years. At the beginning of this century, society began to assign additional responsibilities to the schools. Politicians, business leaders, and policy makers began to see the schools as a logical site for the assimilation of newly arrived immigrants and the perfect place for the social engineering of the first generation of the "INDUSTRIAL AGE." The practice of increasing the responsibilities of the nation's public schools began then and has accelerated ever since.

From 1900 to 1920, we added:

- nutrition
- immunization, and
- health

From 1920 - 1950 we added:

- vocational education
- the practical arts
- physical education, and
- school lunch programs (We take this for granted today. It was, however, a significant step to shift to the schools the job of feeding America's children 1/3 of their daily meals.)

In the 1950s we add:

- safety education
- driver education
- foreign language requirements are strengthened, and
- sex education introduced (topics escalate through 1990s)

In the 1960s we add:

- consumer education
- career education
- peace education
- leisure education, and
- recreational education

In the 1970s, the breakup of the American family accelerates and:

- special education is mandated by federal government
- we add drug and alcohol abuse education
- parent education
- character education, and
- school breakfast programs appear (Now, some schools are feeding America's children 2/3 of their daily meals. In some cases these are the only decent meals these children receive.)

In the 1980s the flood gates open and we add:

- keyboarding and computer education
- global education
- ethnic education
- multicultural/non sexist education
- English-as-a-Second-Language and bilingual education
- early childhood education
- full day kindergarten
- pre-school programs for children at-risk
- after school programs for children of working parents

- stranger/danger education
- sexual abuse prevention education, and
- child abuse monitoring becomes a legal requirement for all teachers

And finally, so far in the 1990s We have added:

- HIV/AIDS education
- death education,
- gang education in urban centers,
- bus safety, and
- bicycle safety education

And in most states we have not added a single minute to the school year in decades!

Please note that as new responsibilities were added, few of the existing functions were ever removed; most of the added functions are highly valued by many Americans; and arguably, all of these things may need to be taught.

As Americans we must decide the role of parents, schools and communities, if we are to effectively prepare our children to succeed in the 21st century.

**THE BOTTOM LINE:
SCHOOLS CANNOT DO IT ALL.
SCHOOLS CANNOT RAISE
AMERICA'S CHILDREN.**

Thanks to Dr. Pancrazio, Dean, College of Education, Illinois State Univ. for her part in compiling the items on this list. All dates are approximate.

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40 Developmental Assets

Search Institute has identified the following building blocks of healthy development that young people grow up healthy, caring, and responsible.

| PE | ASSET NAME AND DEFINITION |
|---------------------------|--|
| SUPPORT | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Family support—Family life provides high levels of love and support. Positive family communication—Young person and her or his parent(s) communicate positively, and young person is willing to seek parent(s) advice and counsel. Other adult relationships—Young person receives support from three or more non-parent adults. Caring neighborhood—Young person experiences caring neighbors. Caring school climate—School provides a caring, encouraging environment. Parent involvement in schooling—Parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person succeed in school. |
| EMPOWERMENT | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Community values youth—Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth. Youth as resources—Young people are given useful roles in the community. Service to others—Young person serves in the community one hour or more per week. Safety—Young person feels safe at home, school, and in the neighborhood. |
| BOUNDARIES & EXPECTATIONS | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Family boundaries—Family has clear rules and consequences, and monitors the young person's whereabouts. School boundaries—School provides clear rules and consequences. Neighborhood boundaries—Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young people's behavior. Adult role models—Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior. Positive peer influence—Young person's best friends model responsible behavior. High expectations—Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well. |
| PRODUCTIVE USE OF TIME | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Creative activities—Young person spends three or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theater, or other arts. Youth programs—Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs, or organizations at school and/or in community organizations. Religious community—Young person spends one or more hours per week in activities in a religious institution. Time at home—Young person is out with friends "with nothing special to do," two or fewer nights per week. |
| COMMITMENT TO LEARNING | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Achievement motivation—Young person is motivated to do well in school. School engagement—Young person is actively engaged in learning. Homework—Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day. Bonding to school—Young person cares about her or his school. Reading for pleasure—Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week. |
| POSITIVE VALUES | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Caring—Young person places high value on helping other people. Equality and social justice—Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty. Integrity—Young person acts on convictions and stands up for her or his beliefs. Honesty—Young person "tells the truth even when it is not easy." Responsibility—Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility. Restraint—Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs. |
| SOCIAL COMPETENCIES | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Planning and decision-making—Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices. Interpersonal competence—Young person has empathy, sensitivity, and friendship skills. Cultural competence—Young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds. Resistance skills—Young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations. Peaceful conflict resolution—Young person seeks to resolve conflict non-violently. |
| POSITIVE IDENTITY | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Personal power—Young person feels he or she has control over "things that happen to me." Self-esteem—Young person reports having a high self-esteem. Sense of purpose—Young person reports that "my life has a purpose." Positive view of personal future—Young person is optimistic about her or his personal future. |