

Leadership Impact Plan Paper

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Leadership in an educational setting is vital to multiple levels of a school district. The school board establishes district policies and evaluates the success of the district. The superintendent identifies the needs of the district and deals with the day-to-day operation. This is the highest level of leadership in our district. As teachers and administrators, we determine the need for professional development that will help us reach the goals of the district and fulfill the policies set by the board. No one continues to achieve without taking the time to reflect. Looking in the mirror allows us to give our teaching a proper assessment. After each one of us reflects, we can all connect with these experiences. Our district is full of educators and administrators who can collaborate with professional development knowledge while connecting.

Another part of educational leadership is risk-taking. "Teachers can incorporate risk-taking into the curriculum to create a culture where students feel safe. Doing so encourages students to experiment and persevere if they fail, according to Everfi. Teachers can implement risk-taking in the classroom in small ways, known as micro-risks. (*The benefits of risk-taking in the classroom*, 2020)" Risk-taking can be scary. As long as your decisions are ethical then it will be worth it. We should be guided by our morals and principles in this educational world. It enables us to make important decisions but also lets us be examples to our young students. With an ethical mindset and a willingness to take risks then initiative comes next. A true leader develops initiative through trial and error. We use previous knowledge to make choices about future situations. This then builds knowledge and experience. Our school districts need these qualities to lead our schools into the future.

Reflection

In my first years of teaching I was too busy trying to survive to do all the other important things. One of the most important things is reflection. “Effective teachers are first to admit that no matter how good a lesson is, our teaching strategies can always be improved—oftentimes it’s why we seek out our colleagues’ opinions. (Cox, 2020) This program is a grand example of reflection. In 13 years of teaching I still see weakness in my teaching. Educational Technology needs of the pandemic and our diverse learners led me to this program. It was a big look in the mirror. I saw my students’ needs now and also 5 years down the road. Our decorators are being asked to do more with less. So I look to a balance of technology that helps me be more productive and the students achieve more. Student engagement is a huge goal of mine. My struggling students with their rough backgrounds and home lives motivates me to find more ways to connect with them.

Connections to Experience

This master’s degree Journey has provided plenty of opportunities to connect with experience. Even in 13 years of teaching I felt inexperienced. I was not the prototype student that took education classes in college and then right into teaching. I did not join teaching until my 30’s. I felt like this was a disadvantage. I took teaching methods classes in my early 30s and attempted to teach in a tough urban environment. However I soon learned that the experience I gained with the corporate working world gave me different insight. So when I joined the teaching world I offered a different experience to share with my students. I shared with them what it took to be successful in the working world. So after 13 years of teaching I am able to share my educational

experience and my real world experience with a classroom of diverse students. Many of them have only seen the ugly side of life. Rough home lives and parole officers are not motivational. This experience is also shared with my fellow educators. A school district thrives on the collaboration of teachers. The school district needs to create an environment where this collaboration is welcome. An environment like this will create that connection of all teachers' experiences. Our experience will connect with new teachers too and give them a guiding structure for future success.

Connections to Discipline

In my time at my current school district I have taken on a number of leadership roles. I started with a number of committees across multiple disciplines. One of those disciplines is guidance counseling. During my time on the Student Assistance Program (SAP) team I found appropriate assistance for at risk students struggling with drugs, mental health, identity issues, and other topics. Secondly I was on the Principal's Advisory Committee. Multiple school groups and organizations collaborate with students to implement character education and discuss school climate issues. In my program that I teach in we specialize in the students with attendance issues, criminal issues, and behavioral issues. We have one teacher each for English, Science, Math, and Social Studies. We create interdisciplinary lessons to connect our subjects. I believe it opens their eyes to how subjects can treat while solving a problem or answering a question.

Risk-Taking

Risk taking is not always negative. For educators it is about getting out of our comfort zone and learning new delivery methods. During this program I took a few risks of my own. The first risk was to take a 55 week, 12 course graduate master's degree

program while teaching high school science, being there for my kids events/practices, being a great husband, and helping with my sick father. However the risk came with a great reward. This program connected me with educational technology and the future of reaching. Another positive result of risk-taking is inspiring students. “By modeling risk-taking, teachers can inspire students and give them confidence. Teachers can model risk-taking by acknowledging their own shortcomings. (*The benefits of risk-taking in the classroom*, 2020)” Many students in my classroom are too embarrassed to participate in class due to their unsuccessful school years. In past years I removed test questions due to too many students getting the answer wrong. I told the students that I looked back on lessons covering that question and I did not cover the topic enough. The students were impressed and thankful.

Ethical Perspectives

Ethical behavior is one of the keystones in my classroom. My students know that the ethical behavior I expect from me is the same I expect from myself. Leadership needs to lead by example. Over the years I get to see the students start to mature and exhibit better ethical principles. Sometimes it is just a reduction in profanity but other times it is an improvement in their study habits. My ethical behavior also connects me to the other teachers, paraprofessionals, and even the higher administration. Our ethical perspective provides an open minded behavior that helps us build great relationships with colleagues. “Ethical teachers deliberate on their decisions; they evaluate, review, and reflect on their practices and policies, and refine and improve them accordingly. As they engage in ethical decision making, they learn to view the problem from others’ perspective and invite others to give constructive feedback (Mathur & Corley, 2014) One

time I was accused of HIPPA violation while talking to a student. I discussed the situation with a union leader and took the time to present my case in front of an administration team. I present the facts in a firm but ethical way. I stood up for myself in a respectful manner when all I wanted to do was scream at them for trying to back the student over their own employee.

Initiative

President Obama once said, "When we succeed, we succeed because of our individual initiative, but also because we do things together." Many teachers prefer to be alone in their classroom. They keep their lesson plans to themselves and do not change with the times. As a science teacher evolution can also be applied to my teacher's style and knowledge. I will take initiative and lead by example for the other teachers. The knowledge I have gained has given the tools to research new educational technology and determine if it is worth investing in. As I research and test new digital tools it will provide me with an opportunity to create a professional development for other teachers. I have presented teachers apps/websites to a few teachers but I would like to create one for a much bigger audience.

Conclusion

Leadership is a quality we need more of in our school district and the world. I do not tell my students what to think. I teach them how to think. As a school leader I must create a vision and a direction for the students and my fellow educators. This leadership must be inspiring and diversified to reach the entire student body and staff. I will start my daily leadership with a reflection. As I look back it will provide me with a picture of my experience and knowledge. This experience and knowledge allows me to reach

across disciplines and create a bridge between departments. A larger team of collaborators will provide us with more knowledge sharing. It can give us the confidence to take more calculated risks and still be true to our ethical perspectives. This all leads to our educational leadership taking initiative in creating a better school district for the years to come. After the initiative motivates the staff we can then return to reflection. The reflection will keep us motivated to keep growing and serving our amazing student body while supporting our staff

References

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