



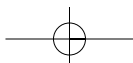
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Leadership

A leader is someone who has the capacity to create a compelling vision that takes people to a new place, and to translate that vision into action. Leaders draw other people to them by enrolling them in their vision. What leaders do is inspire people, empower them. They pull rather than push.

—Warren Bennis

There was a time when America's schools were young and principals could be successful by primarily emphasizing good management skills. While these skills remain necessary, the elementary school principal of today is challenged with far-reaching responsibilities that focus on creating a learning organization to enable all children to experience success. This is a huge undertaking and transcends managerial duties to being able to integrate complex leadership behaviors that address student diversity, change processes, a growing knowledge base, technology, personnel decisions, curriculum, and instruction, to name only a few. Joseph Murphy and Amanda Datnow (2003), in *Leadership Lessons From Comprehensive School*



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Reform, emphasize a crucial link between principal leadership and successful reform implementation by noting the “importance of a principal in bringing a reform design to the school” (p. 265). In fact, it is only with the principal’s leadership vision FOR change and commitment TO change that implementation of an innovation is likely to succeed. It is the leader who creates “the state of mind that is the school” (John W. Gardner, quoted in Blaydes, 2003, p. 141).

When these award-winning principals submitted ideas about leadership in their schools, they emphasized the importance of a shared and purposeful vision. They also noted the importance of creating, nurturing, and sustaining this vision by spending quality time with faculty and students and by drawing a distinction between being a collaborative leader and being a boss. Paul Young even challenges principals to lead by integrating a “show business” approach into much of what we do in our schools. Clearly, for these award-winning principals, leadership is focused around a vision for education that provides an environment where children have every opportunity to be successful and support is maintained for the faculty to lead them in this endeavor.

THE NEED FOR A SHARED VISION

Kim Boelkes
Canton, Illinois

I don’t know a dedicated educator anywhere in the nation that doesn’t want his or her students to succeed. Yet, one of the most confounding and perplexing challenges we face as educators continues to be why some schools succeed where others fail. Why do some students succeed and others stagnate? In the end, we can look at all of the data, all of the research, and all of the experimentation. We can make excuses or we can make our own judgments and develop our own strategies that will help ensure our success.

Before the judgments, before the strategies and the plans, there must be a vision, a goal. What do you want your students to achieve? How do you define success? Then, and only then, can you decide how you're going to get there and what obstacles you must overcome on the way.

When I began at Eastview Elementary School, there was no clear vision driving our organization. All the staff wanted students to succeed, but many of our students weren't successful. Why? After looking at data, statistics, and teacher performance, we determined it was not due to lack of effort. Our staff worked very hard each day, every day.

We realized teaching methods needed to be changed. We needed to empower our students to learn. No longer could our staff, students, and parents just let education happen. Teachers were using teaching methods that were outdated and obsolete. The staff did what they had done for the past several years—even if it didn't work. Teachers didn't try new teaching methods, because new methods came with too much risk. No one was encouraged to reach beyond the status quo.

Our curriculum wasn't aligned. How could we expect students to score in the "exceeds" category if they were being assessed on a concept they had not been taught? It didn't take a scholar to determine that this approach wasn't working. Faced with this dilemma, and being tired of hanging our heads when test scores were released, we decided to change our future. The futurist Alvin Toffler said several years ago that in the 21st century, the uneducated won't be those who cannot read or write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn again. We focused our attention on success. We began with a vision: "To empower all students to succeed in a changing world." We adopted a set of beliefs and a set of values reflective of our learning community and defining in terms of what we wanted for our clients.

Essential to success was the active involvement of our stakeholders—parents, staff, and students. This commitment began to drive our organization. Decisions on spending,

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staffing issues, and curriculum needed to revolve around our goal. Empowering all students and empowering all parents required us to think differently. Empowerment can either be slick sloganeering or it can be a real change in behavior. We made it the latter. The staff was introduced to the analysis of data. New teaching methods were tried. We embraced and encouraged collaboration and teamwork. Teachers needed to change their teaching to allow students to be empowered in the classroom.

Inservice became part of our everyday life. After allowing our staff the opportunity to spread their wings, we focused on our stakeholders. We invited parents in, fed them, and asked them for help. No longer can schools assume the entire responsibility for learning. All stakeholders must work together to achieve success. Among the beliefs we embraced was that all children could learn. Our challenge became how to find the methods that worked for each student. We embraced the value of encouragement, of positive interaction among administrators, teachers, staff, students, and parents. We committed ourselves to teamwork and mutual respect. If you respect the role each must play in the education process, if you look at yourselves as companions on the same road, then, as the Irish say, the road rises up to greet you. Encouragement breeds like bacteria. The staff feel empowered to teach, students feel empowered to learn, parents feel empowered as citizens and parents.

Education has become a shared responsibility. We fondly call it the $33\frac{1}{3}$ rule. Parents, students, and staff each have one-third of the responsibility for education. Each role has no greater or no less value than the others.

H. L. Mencken said that for every human problem, there is a neat, simple solution—and it is always wrong. I know that better than most. I realize these are simple words, that my message is simplistic. The way you implement a vision of empowerment, of stakeholder responsibility, is anything but simple. It is difficult. We have struggled and we are still learning, unlearning, and relearning again, but we are making progress and we believe the risk is worth the reward.

Our goal includes change. This is constant. My vision as an educator has changed drastically over the past 20 years. In 1980, who knew that technology would become a basic teaching tool like the textbook or the chalkboard? What person predicted that our students would have to fear attacks from foreign countries? Who would have thought that it is possible for children to be shot at school? Not I. Adjusting to change means managing change. Don't let it manage you. Revisit your plan each year. Rethink, realign, shift directions if need be and include staff, students, and parents. Don't retreat from your goal or abandon the basic values that form the foundation of your commitment to excellence in education.



CREATING A VISION TO IMPLEMENT YOUR MISSION

Ann Porter

Grand Forks, North Dakota

When I arrived at Lewis & Clark School, the mission statement was a paragraph, something no one knew and much less could remember. At the end of my first year there, I invited five teacher leaders and five parent leaders to a meeting. I asked them to describe Lewis & Clark five years into the future. I wrote their ideas on a *big* piece of paper. It was this exercise that helped us to develop a common vision for our school, to identify our strengths and weaknesses, and to start on a journey together toward that vision.

Also at this meeting, one of the parents asked about our mission statement. Where she worked, everyone could repeat the mission statement. She offered a shortened version of our school's mission: "The mission of the Lewis & Clark School Community is to develop lifelong learners and responsible students." This was shared at staff and parent meetings, as well as in the school's newsletter. Through our school's improvement process, the shortened mission statement was adopted.

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The mission statement was posted in every room, including the lunchroom. Every newsletter included the mission statement. At an assembly, I taught the words and their meanings. At our weekly assembly lessons, I introduced students and staff to people who exemplified lifelong learners and responsible citizens. These included veterans, musicians, former students, and civic leaders. These assemblies were opportunities to tell stories of lifelong learners and responsible citizens such as Ben Carlson and Scott O'Grady, whom I had heard at the 2002 NAESP National Convention. When the space shuttle *Columbia* exploded during reentry in October 2003, our next assembly was a solemn one, naming each astronaut and honoring them as lifelong learners and responsible citizens. In the lunchroom, in the hallways, whenever and wherever possible, I would ask students, "Why do you come to school?" They knew! They were becoming lifelong learners and responsible citizens.

As part of our ongoing school improvement process, our mission statement has since been revised to be inclusive. "The mission of the Lewis & Clark School Community is to develop all students into lifelong learners and responsible citizens." It is simple but powerful and meaningful. It is easy to understand and is a grounding influence for all. Our mission statement emphasizes who we want to be.



HAVING A GRAND MISSION

Ramona S. Trevino
Austin, Texas

The story of Zilker Elementary School is a story of academic success within a nested learning community. If there is a common characteristic of excellent principals, I believe it is the ability to inspire, encourage, and set the stage for a school's staff to achieve at high levels. My focus has always

been clearly directed toward our ultimate mission: the academic achievement of all. One Zilker teacher said it best by stating, "I have never worked at a school where the mission was as grand and majestic as ours." While Zilker was once a school that often lost students to an affluent neighboring school, it is now the pride of South Austin and the Austin Independent School District, with a waiting list for transfer students.

Qualities of good principal leadership stem from a variety of sources. I am a lead manager who facilitates the decision making on my campus. My career has been greatly impacted by the work of Hank Levin and the Accelerated Schools movement. Three basic philosophies that I continue to articulate and encourage are that of unity of purpose, empowerment coupled with responsibility, and building off strengths. I have encouraged creating systems that help facilitate the communication and decision making of the organization. New mental models were created to address the needs of the school. The highest priority was given to teaching and learning, and a diagnostic prescriptive approach was adopted. Data analysis, campus planning, and parental outreach were keys to our strategic approach to addressing the achievement gap. With a diverse population of 48% White, 46% Hispanic, 6% African American, 50% economically disadvantaged, 17% special education, 15% limited English proficient, and 9% gifted and talented, we had our challenges to address.

Systems thinking identified the need for a clear road map necessary for guiding our school with successful communication. Being an ex-special education teacher, the development of goals and objectives to meet desired outcomes was a concept I embraced. I stressed the importance of the Campus Improvement Plan and the full participation of the staff and community in its development.

An important piece to this development was the analysis of data. Results-based planning soon became an integral part of Campus Advisory Council discussion. I streamlined the process for input in planning by creating a Campus Planning

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Packet. This packet, which contained survey results, Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) data, campus data, current campus mission, beliefs, goals, objectives and action steps, and teacher recommendations, went out to all Campus Advisory Council representatives, who received input from represented groups before meeting at a retreat to piece our new plan together. Parent and PTA representatives went out of their way to call special sessions to gather information. Our lengthy annual meeting produced a draft campus plan that went back to groups for review and feedback and later to the Campus Advisory Council for Adoption. Every member of the staff committed to the final draft plan by signing off on it. The plan guided each leadership group represented in the school, including the PTA executive board, team leaders, and Campus Advisory Council. Unity of purpose was established early through this system of planning and has continued to be valued as a high priority.

Other systems of organizing include the development of our yearly calendar. In early summer, I meet with the PTA president and outline a draft calendar of all events, meetings, deadlines, and celebrations. This gives order to our year and paces our work. Meetings involving team leaders, grade-level faculty, vertical teams, technology staff development, student leadership council, Campus Advisory Council, PTA executive board, and community coffees are held on a regular schedule, with agenda items often repeating themselves for full discussion and input from all stakeholders. It is evident at Zilker that whatever the issue our school is facing, there is an appropriate place and time to discuss it openly, gather data, and recommend a solution. This empowers both the staff and parents in decision making. All parties contribute and feel respected in their input into the development of the school. Throughout the organization, procedures and routines have been established to ensure implementation of initiatives and quality performance and results.



A LEADERSHIP ACTION PLAN FOR IMPROVING PRACTICE

Karen Lyon
DeLand, Florida

As head of school, I see myself as a resource, a facilitator, a supporter, and a mentor for the entire St. Barnabas Episcopal School community. In addition, I must be a master diagnostician. The head of school's role necessitates that he or she be able to "diagnose problems" and "analyze available resources and solutions." These tasks require an ability to "read" a school's goals, commitments, context, and resources. Diagnosis requires understanding a school's strengths and weaknesses. It means setting priorities, spurring others to act, and thinking for the long term. Understanding and delivering what the school needs is the leader's core job: *A leader must be concerned with initiating changes in established structures, procedures, or goals.*

Over the past year and a half, I have spent a great deal of time examining my own leadership qualities through prayer and study, visiting other schools, reflecting on best practice, and strategizing ways of initiating change. I looked at both the strengths and weaknesses of my leadership and sought ways to implement change in a positive and motivating way. The priority was to find ways to energize the faculty, bring unity and cohesiveness to interpersonal relationships, and learn new ways of sharing leadership with my peers.

In the April 2004 *Educational Leadership*, Portin identified seven core functions of school leadership in an article titled "The Roles That Principals Play." These roles were the following:

- Instructional leadership: Ensuring quality of instruction, modeling teaching practices, supervising curriculum, and ensuring quality of teaching resources
- Cultural leadership: Tending to the symbolic resources of the school (its traditions, climate, and history)

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- Managerial leadership: Overseeing the operations of the school (its budget, schedule, facilities, safety, and security)
- Human resources leadership: Recruiting, hiring, firing, inducting, and mentoring teachers and staff; developing leadership capacity and professional development opportunities
- Strategic leadership: Promoting vision, mission, and goals—and developing a means to reach them
- External development leadership: Representing the school in the community, developing capital, tending to the public relations, recruiting students, buffering and mediating external interests, and advocating for the school's interests
- Micropolitical leadership: Buffering and mediating internal interest while maximizing resources (financial and human)

I practice all of these tenets on a daily, weekly, and yearly basis, but after an in-depth examination of leaders and leadership functions, I concluded that my most effective leadership should be concentrated on developing a yearlong plan to ensure harmony, cooperation, and trust among and between faculty. It was important that I ignite an enthusiasm in them that would foster their internal value of their love of helping others, especially children, to succeed. Graciously accepting our inevitable human interdependency and deliberately nurturing a personal network of supportive others enhance our ability to involve people in our lives in wholesome ways that not only affirm our respect for them and acknowledge their importance to us but also improve the quality of our personal effectiveness. The following vision specifically focuses on instructional and strategic leadership functions.

Last year, I had the opportunity to visit Independent Day School and Dr. Joyce Swarzman, headmistress of the school. She introduced me to strategies that she had used with her faculty and with the Florida Council of Independent School Academies held twice a year at Independent Day School. I chose to follow her lead, and I improvised these strategies to accommodate the

corporate needs of my school. I became aware that the faculty needed to input ideas and create a vision for the school. Then they needed to be actively involved in carrying out the vision. The vehicle I chose was the FISH philosophy based on the following books by Lundin, Christensen, and Paul: *FISH!* (2000), *FISH! Tales* (2002), and *FISH! Sticks* (2003).

Pike Place Fish is a world-famous market in Seattle, Washington, that is wildly successful thanks to its fun, bustling, joyful atmosphere and great customer service. Once I read the three books, I knew that I could energize those around me and hopefully effect a transformation among the faculty and staff.

The theme for the 2003–2004 school year has been Vision With Action. The faculty participated in workshops and self-study to develop the vision for the school and in so doing took the required actions to make the vision come into focus. During postplanning (June) and preplanning (August) sessions, the faculty reviewed the videos *Fish* and *The Power of Vision*. Then they broke into small groups and categorized changes or additions they would like to see made in the school's vision. The result of this survey served as the beginning of this year's inservice plan, which is outlined below.

How the Vision With Action Works

General Objectives

1. To develop a schoolwide Vision With Action plan
2. To give the faculty an opportunity to develop their interpersonal relationships
3. To give the faculty methods and skills to more effectively communicate with staff, parents, and students

Specific Objectives

1. The faculty will continue to develop a true vision for the school.
2. The faculty will develop action plans to carry out the vision.

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3. The faculty will have an understanding of the FISH philosophy.
4. The faculty will develop real-time actions to carry out and practice the FISH philosophy.
5. The faculty will become more cohesive across grade levels and school levels and buildings (preschool, primary, elementary, and middle school).
6. The faculty will be able to demonstrate techniques for promoting professional behavior, using examples and nonexamples.
7. The faculty will be able to identify strategies for using teacher expectations, the vision of the school, and the FISH philosophy to encourage student achievement.
8. The faculty will be able to identify strategies for using teacher expectations, the vision of the school, and the FISH philosophy to encourage and increase parent support for the school as a whole.

Activities

- The faculty will be reintroduced to the vision precepts.
- Vision is emotionally charged and intellectually challenging to produce.
- A vision is a picture we can see with the mind's eye.
- A vision engages your heart and spirit.
- A vision taps into embedded concerns and needs.
- A vision asserts what you and your colleagues want.
- A vision provides meaning to the work you and your colleagues do.
- A vision is simple but not always clear.
- A vision is a living document that can always be expanded.
- A vision provides a starting place from which to get to more and more levels of specificity.
- A vision is based on two deep human needs: quality and dedication.

1. The faculty will be reintroduced to the FISH philosophy:
 - a. **Choose Your Attitude:** You have the privilege of choosing your attitude each day. "When you are doing what you are doing, who are you being? Are you being impatient and bored, or are you being world famous? You are going to act differently if you are being world famous." Who do we want to be while we do our work?
 - b. **Play:** Fun is energizing. You must have fun while you work. How could we have more fun and create more energy? You have a choice: whistle while you work, sling FISH, or whatever other fun and creative ideas you come up with.
 - c. **Make Their Day:** It is important to include your customers in the good time. Engage the customers in ways that create energy and goodwill. Our customers are the students, parents, grandparents, friends of the school, the community at large, and yes, even ourselves. How can we engage them in a way that will make their day? How can we make each others' days?
 - d. **Be Present:** Be fully present at work. What can the FISH guys teach us about being present for each other and our customers?
2. The faculty will be divided into four groups (heterogeneous groups across grade levels) matching the four components of the FISH philosophy (Choose Your Attitude, Play, Make Their Day, Be Present), and in a group over the period of six weeks, with a budget of \$100 per group, they will study and develop an action plan in their particular component of the FISH philosophy and show how it relates to their everyday personal lives and to school.
3. In October, the teachers developed professional goals for the year around the four precepts of the FISH philosophy. They developed these guided by the following questions:

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- a. How can you integrate the FISH precepts into your personal life?
 - b. How can you professionally integrate the FISH precepts?
 - c. What are the three or four ways you can bring the FISH precepts into the classroom for your students?
4. The individual groups made a presentation to the faculty, including a positive action plan that the entire faculty could incorporate into their daily lives.
5. Each group made a presentation to the entire faculty about their part of the philosophy and how it is brought into their daily lives at school. They incorporated real-time activities that could be done by all on a daily basis. All activities were guided and grounded by scripture chosen by the St. Barnabas School Prayer Group. These scriptures were titled *Fish Philosophy From the Ultimate Fisherman*.
6. Using the Master Teacher Literature Program, the study groups continued after Christmas to study individual topics and present salient information to the entire faculty, giving examples of how to incorporate the information and suggestions into their daily classroom setting. This was done through a PowerPoint presentation. These were the topics chosen:
- a. Tapping the Instructional Power of Symbolic Thinking
 - b. Eight Guidelines for Keeping Class Discussions Moving
 - c. Secrets of Teaching That Your Students Want You to Know
 - d. Seven Commandments for Communicating With Parents
 - e. Creating Lesson Plans That Work Every Time
 - f. How the Arts Impact Learning in Your Classroom

- g. Six Ways to Help Students Remember What They've Learned
 - h. Six Daily Actions That Motivate Students to Learn
7. The final activity was to have peer evaluations. Cross-grade-level teachers were selected to evaluate a lesson that was based on Bloom's Taxonomy and the theory of multiple intelligences. As part of this evaluation, the teachers were to meet for a preconference before the observation and a postconference after the observation. The evaluator was to also complete a Multiple Intelligences Environment checklist, which helps to verify that all intelligences are represented in the classroom environment. The teacher being observed was to also fill out a teacher reflection inventory, which was shared with the peer evaluator during the postconference.

Evaluation

1. Each teacher has had an opportunity to look at himself or herself and develop individual goals for the 2004–2005 school year based on the conferences, teacher reflection inventory, Bloom's Taxonomy, theory of multiple intelligences, and the FISH philosophy. Each teacher has met with the administration reviewing the evaluation and discussing the goals for the upcoming school year.
2. At the postteaching, the faculty will present the vision, identifying ways the school's vision can be expanded and enhanced by the action plans presented by the faculty.
3. A plan will be formulated by teachers and administration to create a road map showing the extension of the vision to the next level.
4. Strategies will be developed to keep the FISH philosophy alive in the coming years, with the ultimate goal of keeping morale and unity among the faculty at high levels.

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5. *Quantum Teaching: Orchestrating Student Success* by DePorter, Reardon, and Singer-Nourie (1999) will be assigned to all the teachers as a summer read. The faculty will participate in reading groups during the next school year to develop teaching strategies that can be applied in the classroom.

The goal of leadership is to create an idea and present the idea in such a way that the participants are inspired and motivated by unity of purpose and mutually shared values. I believe that this has been a pivotal year of study that has been inspirational for the entire staff. We have been transformed to live in a workplace that is filled with energy and enthusiasm. Our schoolwide philosophy has become "As you enter this place of work, please choose to make today a great day. Your colleagues, customers, team members, and you yourself will be thankful. Find ways to play. We can be serious about our work without being serious about ourselves. Stay focused in order to be present when your customers and team members most need you. And should you feel your energy lapsing, try this surefire remedy: Find someone who needs a helping hand, a word of support, or a good ear—and make their day."

In Stephen Covey's book *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* (1995), he outlines strategies to help individuals realize their full potential. The seventh habit is "sharpening the saw," which includes taking time for study, reflection, goal setting, and retooling. This is very important for administrators, as so much of the job is consumed by day-to-day responsibilities and reacting to minicrises. It is important to take time periodically to take advantage of professional development opportunities, visit other schools to collaborate with peers, and study and reflect on best practices. These opportunities enable all of us to be better leaders.

Most leaders want to accomplish goals that matter, inspire others to join them in working toward these goals, and leave a legacy after they have gone. I believe that important life-changing goals have been accomplished this year, and I am proud of and love the outstanding faculty and staff at

St. Barnabas Episcopal School. The administration has full confidence that there is a true vision, purpose, and meaning that has been developed this year and that we are entering the future with a solid foundation that is undergirded by love, mutual trust, and prayer.



A VISION FOR IMMERSION LANGUAGE EDUCATION: BECOMING BILINGUAL

Ursina Swanson
St. Louis Park, Minnesota

At Park Spanish Immersion School, we believe that elementary schools benefit greatly from having a clear, strong focus and vision. Our school is unique in that, as a public school of choice, we teach the entire curriculum in Spanish, beginning with the first day of kindergarten. Only in second and third grade do we begin some minimal formal English language instruction. Spanish is used as the vehicle to teach course content. Families come to our school because they wish their children to be bilingual. They value global education, and they want their children to gain an understanding of other cultures and to be taught in this unique and innovative educational setting. In fact, because our students, most of whom are from English-speaking homes, learn the language at such a young age, their accent and intonation in Spanish is flawless and thoroughly natively like. The school has become increasingly well established and known. Many parents who want to enroll their children in our school are unable to do so; because of this, PSI has been obligated to establish a lottery system for selecting incoming students.

The mission of PSI is to “provide bilingual education which promotes academic excellence, intellectual curiosity and cultural understanding. The school involves family and community in the development of lifelong learners who hold themselves and others in the highest regard.” Everyone on

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our staff supports this goal of Spanish language acquisition. This includes our secretaries and custodians, who also support this mission to the best of their ability. For example, though our secretary is not completely bilingual, she does know many Spanish phrases and uses these whenever she has the opportunity to do so. All PSI staff are focused on the same objectives. It is the principal's role to continuously hold forth this mission and vision to the staff.

Academics, of course, are just as important at our school as at other public schools. In Minnesota, the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA) is given in the third and fifth grades at the elementary level. Consistently, our immersion students have attained some of the highest scores in the state, even though the test is given in English and the students have learned all their lessons in Spanish.

Even though we teach the entire curriculum in Spanish, we also offer solid English language instruction beginning in the third grade. At PSI we do not have a longer school day than other schools, even though we teach a dual curriculum. In order to gain time, teachers are encouraged to integrate what has been learned in Spanish during English instruction. For example, when teaching punctuation in English Language Arts, students are reminded about what they learned in the Spanish Language Arts class and that punctuation rules are almost the same in English. This teaches children in the early elementary years to look closely at language and to recognize the parallels that exist between languages. Another time enhancement that we support is to ask our parents to commit to reading to their children daily in English at home.

Behavioral and discipline issues are another area where we are careful not to waste time. To help us with this, all staff integrate Responsive Classroom principles into the classroom and school day. (Responsive Classroom is a practical approach to creating safe, challenging, and joyful elementary schools.) This helps students acquire social skills, which

support their academic learning. When students have clear expectations and guidelines to follow, there is less time spent on behavioral management and more time spent on teaching and learning.

The premise of Responsive Classroom is that social development is as important as the academic development of the child. We guide children throughout the day in this balanced approach to learning. We also believe that how children learn is as important as what they learn. Therefore, students are given parameters in learning to be responsible citizens. For example, we emphasize self-control by encouraging and supporting students to behave in an ethical way. When students do not act responsibly, there are logical and clear consequences, such as time-out or restitution. It is important that these are implemented in a clear, consistent manner.

One challenge at PSI is to find faculty who are natively or native speakers of Spanish. I spend much energy and time in recruiting qualified teachers throughout the year who must pass a stringent Spanish language assessment that we give. Minnesota state law requires that all teachers have a Minnesota teaching license. This means that I must work closely with new faculty to help them earn this state teaching license. Furthermore, it is important that the principal leading a language immersion school have foreign language skills, particularly in the language being taught. As a French speaker, I have made ongoing efforts to acquire Spanish language communication skills myself.

In leading our school, I emphasize the importance of building cultural appreciation. In fact, it is through the learning of another language that an appreciation of other cultures is made possible. Our faculty represents 14 different nationalities from Latin America and Europe. As students learn the language, they also acquire strong cultural competencies.



PURPOSEFUL LEADERSHIP

John Ciesluk

Longmeadow, Massachusetts

Principals articulate and instill in others a strong sense of purpose. Their vigorous pursuit of sound educational values and goals elevates the status of their schools and moves others closer to fulfilling their schools' missions.

We have a motto at Wolf Swamp Road Elementary School: "Eyes on the child learning." This motto guides decisions the school makes as it considers new initiatives. During the past three years, learning about the Baldrige Framework for Continuous Improvement has added resonance to this phrase. It has truly led to a continuous improvement culture in which all practices are reviewed on a regular basis using a PDSA (Plan, Do, Study, Act) cycle. A teacher study group meets monthly to ensure that the Baldrige efforts are refined and best practices are documented in a three-ring binder. Through the three years of Baldrige work, staff and students have moved to new levels as lifelong learners. They are committed to high expectations for all, and schoolwide alignment is emerging in a variety of ways.

A first step toward improvement was the revision of the school's mission statement. All staff participated in the development of a new mission statement: "To provide a safe, caring, respectful learning community that encourages every child to achieve at his or her full potential."

In addition, teachers translated the three school improvement objectives into "kid-friendly" terms. The mission and improvement objectives are posted for all to see, and students, as well as teachers, are expected to articulate what they will do to advance the objectives. Students demonstrate greater understanding of learning expectations, develop their own learning plans based on the school's objectives, and self-assess their progress on a weekly basis. Students are working harder and learning more.

Regular communication to parents documents work on the improvement targets, and parental input is solicited

regarding the school's success in addressing them. In addition, even the custodial staff has surveyed the staff to see what they can do to better address the school's mission.



QUALITY TIME WITH STAFF

Gloria L. Kumagai
St. Paul, Minnesota

Our school, Museum Magnet Elementary School, has a diverse population, with 33% of our children African American, 33% Asian American, and 33% White. In addition, 59% of our children are on a free or reduced lunch plan.

Every year, at the beginning of the new school year, I meet with all of our staff individually. At this meeting, we identify individual and professional goals for the new school year and different ways that these goals can be met. From this meeting, I am able to assess staff strengths and interests so that appropriate mentoring, resources, and opportunities can be offered to them during the year. Then at the end of the school year, we meet again with each staff person to revisit these goals and review how they were accomplished.

Another especially helpful way that we have quality staff time is through a team-building exercise that I use during our staff development days. For this activity, we form a circle beginning with the person who has been at the school the longest and ends with the newest staff member. The first question each person answers is, Why did you come to this school? The second question is, Why do you stay? The last question is, What do you have to offer? By participating in this activity, staff members are able to see similarities and differences between themselves, and at the same time, passion for and commitment to the school are reflected.

Examining data is also a part of the quality time that I spend with faculty. At the beginning of each school year,

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teachers examine the previous spring's test results to analyze baseline data. This includes disaggregated data for each of the students in our school. Using this information, teachers develop a plan describing how they will strengthen areas of weakness. Then teachers meet with me individually to review the plan to ensure that they have resources, both human and material, to assist with implementation. We also have an ongoing assessment when teachers assess students every six to eight weeks so that their instruction is directed all the time at student instructional levels. Then I meet with teachers throughout the year so that we are continually assessing student progress and allocation of resources.



NOT THE BOSS . . . THE LEADER

Exerta T. Mackie
Houston, Texas

In John Maxwell's book *Developing the Leader Within You* (1993, pp. 5–6), he emphasizes the differences between a leader and a boss. The boss says "I" and blames others when things break down, but a leader says "we" and helps correct what breaks down. While the boss may *know* how something is done, a leader *shows* how it is done. These are some of the concepts that have inspired and governed my leadership method. I operate on the premise of being a leader rather than a boss, and this principle has manifested itself in the staff members that I lead. My key role as a leader is to chart a course and provide directions to those I lead. The principal is at the core of everything that goes on in the school and provides the vision and lays out the expectations of the school. He or she must then practice the right blend of management and human relations to get the job done. The idea is to get the staff to do the job and enjoy it at the same time. Effective school leaders must operate on the belief of enabling staff members to actuate

campus improvement. The principal, the instructional leader of the school, progressively empowers staff by letting them share in the decision-making process.

I firmly believe that principals must concern themselves with controlling the conditions that enable employees to function in ways that will increase the likelihood that shared goals will be realized, rather than controlling what they do and how they do it. It is this empowerment of staff that creates increased self-confidence and leads to new perspectives on what works to improve teaching and learning.

I perceive the school as a learning organization not for students only but for all staff members, parents, and the community as well. Successful leaders are perpetual learners and have the ability to instill in others the desire to learn what is necessary to help the organization to reach its mission. The leader must model for all within the workplace what lifelong learning means.

Triumphant principals are effective managers. They listen, communicate, and develop relationships with staff, students, parents, and other stakeholders connected to the school and its operation. As managers, it is critical to display respect for every individual who contributes to the success of the school. Principals must always remember that some employees may appear to be on the periphery, but everyone involved contributes in his or her own way to the school's success. In sum, successful principals lead by example and model expectations.



RESPECT FOR ALL

Gina Segobiano
Belleville, Illinois

All good administrators make an effort to get to know each and every faculty and staff member on a professional basis as well as on a personal basis. It shouldn't matter if you are a

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teacher or a crossing guard—the principal must strive to build positive relationships with all school employees. Developing sincere and supportive relationships is essential to maintaining positive morale and establishing an educational climate that is one of mutual respect and appreciation. Teachers and staff members need to know that you not only care about them but that you take a special interest in them, regardless of their position.

Take a look at your relationships with your building staff. Do you know everyone's name? Make sure you know at least three important things about each employee: spouse or significant other's name? Kids' names? A sports fan? A runner? A cook? A traveler? A scrapbook fanatic? Engage in meaningful conversations that focus on personal interests and recognize accomplishments made by your employees and their families. Make a special note to congratulate a teacher's husband who just retired or post a newspaper article featuring one of your teacher's kids in the sports section. It is okay to not talk about educational topics all the time. Share with your staff personal interests of your own. Everyone on my staff knows my husband, my kids, my unhealthy eating habits, my excessive attendance at soccer games, and my getaways to the lake. By the way, it is also okay to attend an afterschool social with the faculty once in a while. You need to know your staff as individuals, just as they need to know you as an individual. Just make sure you are not the last to leave!

Aside from building professional and personal relationships with all staff members, every administrator should fully understand the job duties of all employees and, when needed, fill in when necessary. By lending a helping hand in a time of need, the principal sets a good example for all the students by showing them that the principal is not "too good" to perform the job duties of any staff member in the building. In addition, your staff members appreciate the help. By performing the duties of all staff members, the principal engages in conversation with surrounding employees, students, and parents—again, building relationships with all stakeholders.

If you are the principal, you have not fulfilled your responsibility unless you have done the following: served food in the cafeteria, filled in for the crossing guard at the busiest intersection at dismissal, answered phones in the office, checked out books for the kindergarteners in the library and put back library books on the shelves, cleaned up a wet spill in the hallway (by the time a custodian could have arrived on the scene, the mess would already be cleaned!), checked for lice (that is not my favorite), monitored the playground, set up 200 chairs for the PTO meeting, picked up litter on school grounds, and my favorite: directed the school band! Immerse yourself! Get to know all employees and all job duties! You might have fun!



**LEADERSHIP BY SHOW BUSINESS: IT'S TIME FOR
"SHOW BUSINESS" TO REPLACE "SHOW AND TELL"**

Paul Young
Lancaster, Ohio

Like the well-worn elementary school activity, many education practices simply show and tell our customers, the public, often lacking any significant human interaction or emotional connection. Instead, the business of education could be dramatically improved by integrating a show business approach into much of what we do.

What Scott McLain suggests to business leaders in his book *All Business Is Show Business* is also applicable for educational leaders. Most people working in the field of education would assume that their business is focused on teaching, learning, or providing some related support service. But what we must learn is that the real business of education is that of creating relationships and emotional connections with people: students, staff, parents, and the diverse members of the community. When that focus is mastered, our customers (the public, including students)

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know that someone cares for them, they are treated with respect, and the positive experiences and interactions lead to improved service, teaching, and learning. Good teachers have always known this. It is time that we let all school employees, from all levels of the organization, in on the secrets. And what are those secrets? Nothing novel—just good common sense and concern for people, which successful businesses have mastered for years.

McLain uses a simple example and points out that for over 30 years, children have been taught their ABC's by Big Bird, Bert, and Ernie. Consequently, when they come to school, even on their very first day, they expect to be entertained while they are being educated. Principals see this being played out in classrooms every day. Where teachers can hold students' attention by entertaining, developing personal, emotional connections with their students, student attendance, behavior, and achievement are often higher. Where the classroom environment is blah and boring, students don't take long to show and tell their lack of interest. Whether we choose to acknowledge this phenomenon or not, this is the reality of schools.

High-stakes testing has driven school personnel to focus on standards, realign curriculum, and teach to the tests. Resulting test data are often disappointing. Yet, there are many shining examples of master teachers (performers in the classroom) who instinctively connect with diverse learners, overcome the odds, and achieve success. The study of these relationships, and how they can be implemented throughout all levels of the school business, can lead to the high level of performance the public expects and demands.

Educators often cringe when business practices are cited as improvement models for schools. But a show business philosophy is far different from the typical models of business of the corporate world. The purpose of school show business is to create emotional connections that are so satisfying to customers and employees that loyalty is ensured. Moreover, it will work and produce results, and it won't add to already strapped budgets. Some simple tenets of the show business philosophy, focused on product, service, and experience, can be implemented everywhere.

For the Public

1. Enable customers to connect with the product: teaching and learning. It must be of the highest caliber.
2. Focus on human emotional connections and experiences. These experiences must be satisfying to the customer. Employ receptionists or greeters (even volunteers) at all levels of the organization.
3. Meet the needs of the customers, whatever it takes.
4. Provide the public with a story they can tell others. The story will stick in their minds far longer than a list of facts and data.

For Students

1. Teachers must emulate strategies of entertainers; students have continuous exposure to these strategies in their real world.
2. Focus less on the technical aspects of mastery of information and more on the mastery of teacher-student interactions. Develop a personal, emotional connection with each student, no matter the size of the classroom or school.
3. Prepare for each lesson as an actor does before going on stage.
4. Provide service to all students that meets needs and extends beyond the classroom.

For Employees

1. Employees are the show business of schools from the public's point of view. They are the school. Invest what it takes to make employees loyal to the organization so they will create amazing emotional connections with customers.
2. Enable all employees to feel important, valued, and a part of the team. Encourage social interactions.

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3. Provide professional growth opportunities and networking within and outside the organization.
4. Continuously develop strategies that enable employees to enhance their abilities to perform their jobs.

As school personnel meet the requirements of No Child Left Behind, IDEA and other federal, state, and district mandates and expectations, working harder at an old plan will likely produce many of the same results. A different, bold new plan is needed. The answer is right in front of us. We have almost 24-7 exposure to opportunities. Perception is reality. If our customers perceive we are blah, boring, and failing to meet their needs—we are!

Let's learn what many already know. Let's get past our traditional show-and-tell attitudes and determine that the business of education, in every aspect and level, will be dramatically improved when we are all "on stage" and create experiences and service that will "wow" the public.



SNAPSHOTS

Leadership by Being Visible

Robert W. Fowls
Bend, Oregon

During my weekly planning, I intentionally block out periods of time when I personally wander around the school visiting classrooms, labs, playgrounds, and hallways. I made a point of always speaking with the children, and many times I just give out a bunch of hugs, which helps them feel comfortable with their administrator. The teachers appreciate my visibility, since it goes a long way in supporting the positive climate of our school.



Lots of Leaders

Marla W. McGhee

Austin, Texas

Our campus developed *lots* of leaders among the staff and parent community (assistant principals, principals, and teacher leaders). Some of these folks have gone on to become renowned staff developers, lawyers, experts in various educational fields, instructors in teacher education programs or alternative certification of teacher programs, university instructors, and doctoral candidates. We accomplished this through strong and steadfast collaboration and support. This even meant occasionally nudging people past their comfort zone and telling them they could do it, even when they felt they could not go on or wanted to quit. Then we fully celebrated their accomplishments!



Leading Change on a Campus

Elizabeth Neale

Pittsfield, Massachusetts

Rarely do new principals get assigned to a perfect school. Principals have a window of opportunity within the first 18 months to make serious changes on a campus regarding cultural shifts, faculty thinking, and so on. After all, when a new principal comes to a campus, people are expecting changes. Do lots of consultation and listening, then jump in and make changes. If you wait too long, it becomes harder to bring about change. In fact, a sense of complacency sets in and it is harder for everyone, including you, the principal, to address needed changes.



Leadership Direction

Dawn Smith

Warm Springs, Oregon

Leadership in a building, especially a building undergoing change, moves along a continuum—from very directive at the beginning of the process to a shared leadership model once positive results begin to become apparent. It's critical, then, that principals be knowledgeable about their school communities and be able to identify and articulate areas of need. They must also be able to clearly articulate and model the vision for the school—especially during the first year or two—until everyone in the school community is on board with the vision, goals, and direction of the school. The building leader creates the momentum, pulling everything together and setting the direction while developing the leadership team within the building—those master teachers and parents or community members who understand the building needs and goals—and then begins stepping more into the role of securing the resources the team determines are needed to keep the process moving in the right direction.

I have been able to use the reservation media (tribal newspaper, radio station) from the beginning of our school's change process to talk about our vision and direction for our school and keep community members updated along the way. I also take advantage of every speaking opportunity that comes my way, both within and without the community, to talk about what we are doing, where we are headed, and how we plan on getting there. Once we went to the shared leadership model, teachers, parents, and community members began taking on that "visible" role within the school and district, in the community, and as they traveled to conferences and gatherings throughout the state.



LEADERSHIP REFLECTION

1. Where is my leadership strong?
2. What are leadership needs at my school?
3. Does the school community have a shared vision for our school?
4. What am I doing now to promote a shared vision?
5. What ideas in this chapter will be helpful to strengthen our commitment to a shared vision?
6. Which ideas in this chapter do I especially like?
7. How can we implement these ideas in our school?
8. How might these ideas need to be revised to be successful at our school?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Accelerated Schools movement

<http://www.acceleratedschools.net>

Baldrige Framework for Continuous Improvement

<http://www.quality.nist.gov>

Bloom's Taxonomy

http://www.ops.org/reading/blooms_taxonomy.html

Multiple Intelligences

http://www.newhorizons.org/strategies/mi/front_mi.htm

Responsive Classroom

<http://www.responsiveclassroom.org>

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