Philosophy of School Leadership

An effective school leader is someone who views their school as a family. They foster a community of caring amongst the staff, students, and parents. Teachers and students are provided with a level of autonomy that allows them to shine while feeling guided and supported by their school leadership team. Everyone knows that the principal "has their back," and they feel respected. The systems put in place by school leadership are flexible, so everyone can learn in a safe and supported environment.

In order to cultivate such a school culture, the principal is a transformational leader who creates leadership roles throughout the school. Teachers, parents, and students are active participants in all school decisions, and problem-solving structures are set up to assist with deconstructing challenges as they arise. When problems and solutions are presented to leadership teams, the principal serves as an active listener and guide. Decisions are made as part of a process where everyone has a voice.

Student success is the driving motivation for all decisions. As such, meaningful data should be collected, dispersed relevantly, and used to track growth, or the lack of it. The school leadership team will determine the best way to collect academic data and measure formative learning cycles prior to collecting summative data. Conversations about student progress occur with students and teachers regularly. Such conversations are always delivered with a focus on making sure students understand what they need to do to be successful. Any struggles a student has will be met with the question, "how can we make this struggle a success?"

When it comes to decision making, communities, families, school staff, and students are all consulted when applicable. It is their school, and they should be able to provide input on any decision that will directly impact their relationship with the school. School leadership will solicit input at all levels using a variety of tools from surveys to meetings; everyone will have a voice.

Finally, reflective practices will be used by school leaders, teachers, and students. It is next to impossible to determine if one should continue on a path or make changes without the reflective process. Reflection is effective at all levels because it requires one to look through the lens of change. If something went well, one may ask how they can change other aspects to also go well. Conversely, if something did not go well, it opens discussions for why it did not go well, how to avoid it, and what change(s) should occur so it will go well next time. Reflective practices are the ultimate catalyst for success, and effective school leaders reflect often.

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