

Determine the phases of creating a shared school vision, mission and goals that emphasize learning for all students and are consistent with that of your school district, including strategies and timelines for implementation.

The purpose of using phases to create a shared vision, mission and goals is to involve all the school stakeholders to have a voice in what the future of school should look like and be like. It is a process that puts into words what the desired and preferred future should be for the school district or school building. The process draws upon the beliefs of the stakeholders and breaks the line of thinking to examine what an ideal school would be like. Stakeholders develop a shared understanding and common values. The process allows for establishing goals and indicators of success. "Focusing on change as a continuous process, rather than a one-time event, the concept of change is presented in three phases: (1) developing a shared vision or goal, in essence establishing a standard of excellence; (2) determining the state of current reality in the schoolhouse; and (3) analyzing the discrepancy that lies between the vision and current reality" (Green, 2009).

Questions to consider:

- What would be the essential content all students must know upon graduation from high school to be a life long learner?
- How will the essential content be sequenced and organized for all students to have the opportunity to learn it?
- What will need to happen to ensure all teachers address the essential content?
- How will instructional time be protected?
- How will community members be involved?

- How will the plan be implemented?

All of these questions have to be answered by a collaborative team consisting of community members, teachers, administrators and students. The timeline for the phases to be implemented would be annually. The reason being is to determine the effectiveness of the plan.

At Dyer County High School, a leadership team determines the phases that create a shared vision, mission, and goals. The leadership team provides guidance for the entire process. Again, this team is compiled of various members from community members, faculty and students. Leadership behavior and organizational structure are important factors to bring about change (Chance, 2009). Strategies that aide in the implementation of these phases are annual accountability assessments that include data from test scores, attendance rates, dropout rates and AYP.

There are numerous obstacles to effective school improvement. Chief among these obstacles is that, even though school improvement efforts target schools, a school is a collection of individuals. To the extent that the needed changes involve the behavior of the members of the organizations, change must ultimately occur at the individual level. That is, individual teachers, administrators, and parents must in some way change what they are doing with the belief that this will change what students do (independently and in interaction with teachers) to improve student learning. The Dyer County School System's Mission Statement is based on the belief that all children can learn. We believe

that they can gain knowledge and develop the skills necessary to be successful productive citizens (DCHS Website, 2009). Timelines?

Identify the demographics of your school population and school community and determine the significance of this data to the instructional program.

Student Characteristics

The student enrollment of Dyer County High School for the 2009 school year is 1023. The demographics include 88.8% white, 8.8% black, and 2.4% other. The percent of females is 48.4. Approximately 49% of the student population is participating in the free and reduced lunch program. Fifty percent of our students surveyed responded that they live in a single parent household with the mother being the head of the household (Dyer County High School SIP, 2009).

Parent or Guardian Demographics

Eighty-five percent of the parents or guardians of the students at Dyer County High School is ethnically white while 14% is black or African American, 1.9% is Hispanic, 0.6% is Asian, and 0.2% is American Indian. The percentage ratio of single or divorced parents or guardians to married is 65/35. The percent of parents or guardians with less than nine years of schooling is 8%; 54% have a high school diploma or equivalent. Sixty-six percent of the parents or guardians graduated high school, 12% have received a Bachelor's degree or higher. The average income level is \$32,788. Seventy two percent of the parents work during the day (DCHS SIP, 2009).

Community Characteristics

Dyer County High School is located in Northwest Tennessee, in Newbern, nine miles north of Dyersburg, the county seat. Thirty-two percent of the residents of Dyer County have school-age children. Dyer County is a growing community in Tennessee with a population of 37,886. There are 24% under the age of 18, 63% are between the age of 18 and 65, and 13% are over the age of 65. The percentage of females is 52%. Eighty-five percent of the population is white, 14% is African American, 1.9% is Hispanic origin, and 1.5% is ethnic minority. The average income is \$35,447 with seventeen percent of the community living below poverty. Agriculture also impacts our community and school. Over fifty percent of land in Dyer County is agricultural. Agriculture products, which add \$50 million dollars to the economy, include soybeans, corn, wheat, and cotton. The county's 526 farms average 445 acres (DCHS SIP 2009).

DCHS is a primarily rural school. Agriculture is very prominent throughout the community, so it is very important that the school offers career and technical paths to reach the students who will choose the vocational path. I think that the demographics at DCHS show a definite minority group that should not be left out of the curriculum cohort. Instruction should also bring about change to decrease the poverty line and help students break the low income barrier. Robert Balfanz emphasizes that the high school experiences of many U.S. students continue to be separate and unequal due to the imbalance of school demographics. (2009). I make this point to show how instructional styles should be developed to reach all students and not just the majority. I feel at DCHS, the goals of reaching

all students, are pertinent in helping everyone learn regardless of income, race, or social status. Our school has been in good standing with AYP due to the amount of programs that meets the needs of all students. Each year evaluations are done to determine what type of programs we will need to reduce or increase to keep up with the pace of our demographics. The DCHS staff performs educational assessments on all students to be able to provide an IEP for everyone. This is very unique considering we have over 1000 students. Inclusion is at its all time high in our classrooms due to federal mandates and NCLB (Fleischman, 2009).

Identify at least two specific actions or behaviors that new administrators would be wise to consider upon moving into a new leadership position.

There are many actions/behaviors that a new administrator would be wise to consider upon moving into a new leadership position. Two distinct actions that I think are important are: instilling trust to the people you have to lead and having conflict management skills. But are these skills not necessary for all administrators? How are they specific to new ones? Becoming an effective leader is not a easy task. According to Donald Thomas (2002), there is no single way to prepare leaders or to prepare for leadership. Leaders come from every segment of society and have a variety of styles. There is no set of characteristics that leaders possess and there is no single educational program that will produce individuals who possess leadership qualities.

Trust is a key value that an administrator should have when trying to lead a group of individuals. Without trust I believe it would be difficult to motivate, communicate, and facilitate to the people that a new administrator would serve.

When my father gave me my first dog he told me that, if the dog trusted me, he would never bite me, but I would have to earn the dog's trust. I think of that lesson in a practical since in becoming a new administrator. If I did not have the trust of the staff it would not allow me to be very effective. To gain the trust of the faculty, staff, and students, I would need to understand their values. Respecting their values would help gain trust and direction for a new administrator. I have compiled a list that would aide in getting groups to feel trust within a new administrator.

- Ability to listen effectively -- understanding both content and feeling
- Ability to be positive about life, about self and about one's work
- Ability to motivate self and to inspire colleagues
- Ability to try new ideas, take risks and encourage others to do so
- Ability to understand and respect principles/values.
- Ability to be truthful and trustworthy.

Trust is something people need to feel to believe in the work that is being asked to accomplish. With trust, respect is gained and allows someone to work hard to accomplish task that meets the goals of the system. As a coach, I know if my players do not trust me, that they will not work hard or do the things I ask them to do.

Lastly, conflict management skills are a necessity in becoming a new administrator. Conflict can be healthy when it brings differences out into the open so they can be talked about. Differences of opinion help people develop a

sense of who they are, a sense of self. Conflicts help people to take responsibility for stating how they feel. Conflicts can lead to people being more motivated and creative due to being open to new ideas and ways of thinking other than their own. To be able to manage conflict, a clear line of communication must exist that includes: negotiation skills, consensus building, and ethical framework. On any given day an administrator could be faced with several conflicts, with a wide variety of issues, so it would be important to understand the many different types of conflicts that could arise along with the style to handle them. Conflict management can be categorized in four styles: competition, avoidance, accommodation, and collaboration/compromise. Most people have one style of managing conflict that comes naturally to them. It is important to be able to use any of the four styles (Scheingold, 2008). Handling conflict is crucial because making a mistake could result in a loss of accountability and damaging to one's career. Conflict management is important because everyone in the building could be involved in some type of conflict. As a new administrator, It would be wise to display a professional code of ethics and various ethical frameworks to decrease the possibility of conflict (Green, 2009).

In conclusion, I chose the two behaviors because I feel that they are very important. Most of all the two behaviors work together. If people trust you, they will respect how decisions are made. I know that not everyone will trust you nor like how certain situations are handled. But the bottom line is that a administrator has to lead in the best interest of the faculty, students, community, and the system.

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Good paper overall, but there were some issues you failed to address.