INCORPORATING BEST LEADERSHIP PRACTICES IN MANAGING AND LEADING EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

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Professional Background

- Social Studies Teacher/ Camden Catholic High School – 10 Yrs.
- Guidance Counselor / Triton High School – 3 Yrs.
- Assistant Principal / Collingswood High School – 5 Yrs.
- Principal / Kingsway Regional High School -15 Yrs.
- Superintendent / Woodstown-Pilesgrove Regional - 8 Yrs.

Associated Professional Development

- Stephen Covey: Principle Centered Leadership – Valley Forge 1995
- Disney University: Creating Motivational Environments – Orlando, FL 1996
- Franklin Covey: Speed of Trust – Sundance, Utah 2012
- Disney Institute: Disney’s Approach to Leadership Excellence Orlando, FL 2014

Resources

- Disney – Creating Magic by Lee Cockerill
- 7 Habits of Highly Effective People by Stephen Covey
- Principle Centered Leadership by Stephen Covey
- Good to Great by Jim Collins
- Winning by Jack Welch
It’s more than just the mouse...
“NO ONE KNOWS BETTER HOW TO SELL POPCORN ON MAIN STREET THAN THE PERSON WHO IS SELLING THE POPCORN”

“Learning is our Mission”
“Good Will” is the single most important investment that an organization can make in its employees, investors, customers, and constituents. But …

It’s is like nitroglycerin…it has tremendous power but, if you drop it, it can do incredible, lasting damage that will take significant time and resources to rebuild.
In the realm of education, the students and parents are our customers and education the service we provide them. All enterprises take great pride in understanding and respecting the needs of their customers and in turn providing them with the ultimate service. We should aspire to do the same.
Learning Is Our Mission
Seek First to Understand ... then to be understood
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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7 Habits of Highly Effective People/ Organizations


2. Begin With the End in Mind – “True North” Concept. Know where you are going, understand where you are, what you need to do to get to your destination. (Diagnostic/Prescriptive Approach)

3. Put First Things First – Align priorities with organizational mission statement (True North).

4. Think Win/Win – Achieving organizational goals supersedes individual triumphs and all or nothing victories.

5. Seek First to Understand, Then to be Understood – Prioritize understanding the needs and dynamics of the customer/client first... then own the perception as much as you do the reality.


7. Sharpen the Saw – The greatest threat to an organization’s success... is success.
"It's more than just the mouse.

Disney's consistent business results are driven by overmanaging things that most organizations ignore. That is what differentiates us. We have learned to be intentional where others are unintentional."

<table>
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<td>Customer Service</td>
<td>Train Staff – Parent Friendly / Service Orientated</td>
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<td>Environment</td>
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<td>Play to the Positive</td>
<td>Inherent belief and faith in people’s goodness</td>
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GREAT LEADERS:

- Proactively Establish Values.
- Interdependence Between Personal and Organizational Values.
- Communicate Vision as a Story...In A Passionate, Vivid, Imaginative Way.
- Hire, Orientate and Immerse Staff with Organizational Vision.
- Believe That Most People are Leaders.

EXAMPLES

- True North Vision Statement
- Academic Doctrine (Artifact #1)
- Honor the Past, Confront the Present, Embrace the Future
- Inclusive Involvement in Development of Vision/ Mission Statement
- Teaching Philosophies Training. (Artifact #2)
- Actions Are The Greatest Validator Of A Mission
- Play Hard, Play Smart, Play Fair
Academic Doctrine

We will work to our maximum ability, not to our minimum acceptability.

We are to solve problems, not identify them as obstacles to performance.

We will strive to achieve the highest common denominator for excellence—not the minimum demonstration of proficiency.

We will set expectations that will maximize our potential, not lower our standards to meet minimum capabilities.

Class attendance is an absolute requisite for successful learning.

All assigned work shall be completed in a timely manner and characterized by quality and integrity.

A grade is something we achieve, not receive. If we fail to do the work, we will “achieve” failure...it’s as simple as that.
Teaching is both an Art and a Science. *Good* teachers excel at one of these, great ones excel at both.

The best tools of discipline are a well-planned lesson and the power of your personality.

Teaching in its truest sense is basically storytelling... Good teaching is good storytelling, captivating, compelling, comprehensible, and enjoyable to the listener. If you tell a story well, the listener can retell that story to others. That's the essence of teaching in a nutshell.

In a classroom time is a valuable resource; use it wisely, judiciously and economically. Downtime is deadtime.

It is an important goal of our teaching that our students perform in a manner that makes us proud of them. More importantly is that we perform our role in a manner that makes them proud of us.
Expect respect, but first make sure you earn it.

In the realm of education, the students and parents are our customers and education the service we provide them. All successful enterprises take great pride in understanding and respecting the need of their customers and in turn providing them with the ultimate service. We should aspire to do the same.

No one knows better the operational needs of a school than those who operate within it every day: the teachers and the students.

In teaching, the small steps can be equally as valuable as the big ones over the course of time. In many instances, little things do count. They set the tone, solidify a foundation and cultivate a future. Remember that the BIG PICTURE is made up of many little pieces.

A school’s climate is the pathfinder for its success. Without a positive one you’re just a building, an innate object. With it, the school is a living, breathing, dynamic institution occupying a building. It is its soul.

Teaching is a vocation as much as it is a profession. As a teacher, the classroom is your domain … own it, cultivate it, manage it.
The Four Key Basics

- **Safety** — Practice safe behaviors, put safety first, demonstrate and encourage the actions for the safety of others.
- **Courtesey** — Smile, be approachable and make eye contact. Be courteous and respectful to all guests. Go above and beyond to exceed expectations.
- **Show** — Stay in character and play the part, ensure area is show ready at all times.
- **Efficiency** — Perform role efficiently, get most out of experience.
- **School Climate** — Safe, secure, accommodating and enjoyable. Cultivate pride and sense of ownership.
- **Scholarship** — ”Learning is a Discipline”. Promote and cultivate a climate for learning.
- **Service** — We are service providers to the community, that service being education.
- **Partnership** — All stakeholders in a school; students, parents, staff and administration must have a sense of ownership and pride in the institution and its purpose.

Artifact #3: ”Learning Is our Mission” Newsletter Article
“No one knows better how to sell popcorn on main street than the person who is selling the popcorn.”

- Everyone is a Leader
- Ground Level Empowerment
- Leader Engagement/ Work Area Inclusion
- Inclusive Decision Making
- Think Like the Customer
- Know your Product
- Create the “Process” to carry out the mission

- Teachers know best what works in a classroom and how best to deliver it.
- Engage staff in the decision making and “Imagineering” of the organization
- Successful Referendums
- Successful Implementations of State Mandates (CCCS)
- Vertical Experiences
“Speed of Trust”

Trust in an organization is a force multiplier ... the more there is the quicker things are accomplished. The less trust, the harder it is to get things done.

**Developing Trust 6 Principles**

- Establish Credibility
- Declare Your Intent
- Listen First
- Create Transparency
- Keep Commitments
- Practice Accountability

**Funding Crisis 2009 Agreement on Net Zero Raise**

- Respect staff, don’t create hysteria with preemptive declarations
- State, Prioritize a Realistic Strategy
- Talk with Teachers Association
- Open the Books
- At all costs, don’t stray from your promises
- Inclusive Sharing of Outcomes
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Artifact #3 “The Dividends of Good Will”
The Dividends of Good Will

2009-10: In the face of a $3M budget deficit the teachers association came forward and offered to take a 1-yr net zero pay increase. First district in NJ to do so.

Since then 2 cycles of 3-yr contracts with our 3 bargaining units have been successfully negotiated prior to expiration of existing contracts.

2012-13: One of 8 school districts chosen to be part of the new teacher evaluation pilot known as EE4NJ

After 3 failed referendums over a period of 5 years...successfully passed 2 referendums over a span of 2 years.

Nationally recognized by USDOE at Labor Management Collaboration Conference in St. Louis in 2010.

Past 7 years private contributions paid for numerous facility improvements including new irrigation on the athletic fields.

Revitalized our Ag. Science program with help of Ag. Community. Received State award for such.
Initiated new schedules that significantly increased academic time at elementary and middle school levels. We are in the process of doing the same at the High School.

High School rated “A+” by Inside NJ Magazine. In the top 5 of average SAT scores in South Jersey.

Successfully implemented all facets of Achieve NJ Principal/Staff Evaluations, SGO’s, Common Core Curriculum Standards. Had one of the highest implementation rates in the State.

In the process of instituting new standards aligned grading system district wide to better align the measurement of student performance with the new CCCS and the requisite PARCC assessments.

Voters passed 3 consecutive budgets prior to change in law that no longer required voter approval if election moved to November.
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- Teaching is a vocation as much as it is a profession. As a teacher, the classroom is your domain... own it, cultivate it, and manage it.
In contemplating the beginning of the new school year, our challenge, as always, is to reincarnate our commitment to academic excellence as embodied in our Academic Doctrine. As a school community, parents, teachers, administration and students alike, it is important that we remain devoted and committed to the idea that "Learning is our Mission" and that everything we do in our school life is aligned to that end. This is a comprehensive commitment that not only includes pedagogical/instructional facets but also the philosophical, social, extracurricular, and public service elements that serve to facilitate a climate that is conducive to, and cultivates learning. School Climate, Scholarship, Partnership, and Service are the tenets that provide the foundation for Learning as Our Mission.

- **School Climate:** First and foremost, a school must be a place that is safe, secure, accommodating, and enjoyable. This is most evidently accomplished by providing, implementing and enforcing policies and regulations that ensure a safe and orderly environment. Also, by infusing the curriculum and providing programs that promote character values such as honesty, kindness, understanding, politeness and concern for others. In a subtler vein, it is also achieved by implementing practices that cultivate a sense of pride and friendliness in the school environment. Simple things like morning songs of the day before homeroom, the promotion of school spirit through the prolific exposition of Dragon murals and inspirational messages, and the emphasis on ceremony and tradition in many of our activities, are employed with this purpose in mind. It is important that we create an atmosphere that everyone, staff and students, feel comfortable in and want to come to every day. A place that parents want to send their children. Absent this foundation, "Learning" will struggle and flounder. With it, "Learning" will flourish.

- **Scholarship:** The emphasis on learning must be complemented and provided for by a competent and dedicated staff that envisions what they do more as a vocation than an occupation. That we instill a belief system based on high expectations, a rigorous curriculum and a healthy and honest work ethic that is shared and promoted by all the educational stakeholders; students, parents, staff and administration. A good school climate alone, without the belief and practice in the aforementioned convictions, is just a playground. With it, it is a place where learning prospers ... a place we call School.

- **Service:** A school must not forget that we are service providers to the community, that service, being Education. A "Learning" environment will more likely benefit when that service is provided in a way that is friendly, accommodating, and communicated in an articulate manner. Learning can be hindered when the customer (parents) are frustrated by an environment that impedes their understanding about the progress and assessment of the service they are providing (Education). In essence, Learning is enhanced when the organization informs and communicates to its parents and community about how our service is being provided and how our clients (students) are progressing. This must occur in concert with school climate and scholarship for Learning to thrive.

- **Partnership:** This is the culminating facet for a maximized "Learning" environment. All the stakeholders in a school; students, parents, staff and administration must have a sense of ownership and pride in the institution and its purpose. They must communicate amongst each other in pursuit of our shared and agreed upon goals. Procedures and processes must be in place to facilitate this. Without it, fragmentation and inconsistency thwarts the learning environment. With it, and in sync with the aforementioned beliefs, our "Learning Mission" will be accomplished.

May we remain mindful of and reinvigorate our commitment to these tenets as we embark upon the new school year and continue our tradition of Academic Excellence.
Superintendent’s Message

2011-2012 School Year

“The Dividends of Good Will”

“Good Will” is the single most important investment that an organization can make in its employees, investors, customers, and constituents. In a school organization, that translates into the staff, students, parents, taxpayers, and community at large. All are shareholders in the productive capacity and success of our organization. In this sense, where there is good will amongst these groups, built on trust, fairness, honesty, and transparency, insurmountable problems and challenges are overcome through a climate of optimism and cooperation. There becomes an abiding faith in accomplishment and success within the organization. Good will paves the way for solutions, progress, and prosperity. Absent good will, problems become harder to solve, success harder to define and achieve, and organizational goals more difficult to reach.

In the upcoming 2011-2012 school year, Woodstown-Pilesgrove will be emblematic of a school district that, as a result of a climate of good will, has come back from the economic abyss of 2010. This district was able to come from a $3 million deficit two years ago to being able to return to the taxpayers the maximum amount of additional state aid we received this past June, in the amount of $184,595. We were one of only 20 of the 580 districts throughout the state who did so, and among only three in South Jersey. This was possible because we were able to make sacrifices and consolidate our operations to become more efficient, and we settled on collective bargaining agreements with all three of our represented groups that were fiscally fair and balanced for all parties and provided significant savings to the district. Accordingly, our taxpayers overwhelmingly approved the last two budgets. In the upcoming year, we will be restoring many of the programs and staff eliminated in 2010 and addressing many of our infrastructure needs. In this latter regard, the Board has made a commitment to dedicate an annual portion of our budget to address the much needed facility improvements in order to restore and preserve our beautiful historic building. This investment will prove to be cost efficient in the long run and, equally important, be in keeping with the valued tradition of historic preservation in our community. These feats are a testament to the good will that currently exists amongst all of the constituents in our school community. It has cultivated and perpetuated a spirit of cooperation that produced dividends in our ability to overcome the many challenges the fiscal crisis presented us. In comparison to school districts statewide, we have attained a unique and exceptional status in that we have not only survived, we have prospered.

As we move forward and into the future, I attest that we value and preserve this “Good Will” as one of our greatest assets and resources. For from “Good Will” great dividends come. Let us continue to nurture and cultivate it through the practice of truth, fairness, and transparency in all that we do.