Philosophy of Instructional Leadership

My leadership style is one of collaboration; observing, listening, clarifying, problem solving, discussing, reflecting, and making adjustments as needed. There is always room to learn, reflect, grow, and change. Although an administrator does have different job responsibilities than a teacher, everyone should have a shared responsibility for improvement of the school. The administrator’s role should be one of empowerment, guidance, and nurturing, both of students and staff; however, they are not all knowing. Trust and a mutual respect between an administrator and teacher are needed to create a positive relationship that fosters growth. High expectations lead to high achievement and personal commitment is essential for success.

A school leader needs to create a great school, which is a learning environment for all in it, teachers, students, parents, and administrators alike. The supervisory process is similar to what happens in a classroom. Teachers work to improve their students and school administrators work to improve their schools and staff. By following the supervisory process, they are creating a community of learners among the adults in the building, which in turn fuels the learning of the students, the climate of the school, the development of community, and thus, school improvement. Strong, professional teachers, administrators, and support staff are the core of the school building. The administrator of the school needs to be the head learner, maintaining knowledge of current teaching practices and what creates effective instruction, helping teachers to develop instructional strategies, and fostering teamwork, motivation, good morale, and open communication. School leaders create a plan for improvement through collaboration and then follow-up and make adjustments as necessary.

All children should be given the opportunity to learn, both socially and academically, in a safe, secure environment that fosters respect and caring. Students should have the chance to be empowered with skills and knowledge through comprehensive, innovative, and diverse educational experiences, enabling them to achieve self-fulfillment and to become productive, responsible citizens who contribute to the world community. They should feel a sense of belonging, that they are part of a learning community and nurtured by the school. Much student learning comes from interacting with others; therefore the relationships they develop must be kind, caring and respectful. They need good role models in relationships they view as well, so the staff needs good morale and to feel as if they are part of a positive community. Student’s individual needs should be met to make sure they are ready to learn. They need to have adequate materials, supplies, space, and support services. The school building needs to be maintained, safe, clean, and well-organized. If children are not supported emotionally and physically, they are not working to their best potential to learn. Children should feel that they are part of something greater than themselves; that they belong to a community of learners and it’s a life-long mission. It is the administrator’s job to be the head learner and foster and maintain this atmosphere.

Leaders need to create a vision for their school, establishing achievable goals that the staff, students, parents, and community believe in. They need to be committed to achieving that vision when faced with tough situations and setbacks. Getting everyone on board, participating, and working towards a common goal, creates a safe haven and a strong learning environment. The school itself becomes its own community. The leader must work collaboratively with the teachers, parents, and students to create a set of values that will be practiced in the school. They need to know their clientele, their neighborhood, and who they are working with, in order to do this. Once the mission or culture of the school has been agreed upon, everyone needs to live and breathe these values themselves, become models for the learning community. Positive reinforcement of these values will further engrain them in the school, thus creating a community of its own that reflects back into the public in a constructive and affirmative way. If the climate of the school is conducive to learning for the students and the morale is high among the staff, it opens the door for positive change and improvement. Learning is a lifelong journey. When a school becomes a learning community, all participants have the opportunity to learn, grow, and succeed.