**Leading Constituents and Collectives**

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Leading constituents and collectives influence the structure of the learning organization. Knowing who we lead is vital to the culture of the school. Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (1996, 2008) states that “a school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.” (Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium, 1996, 2008) According to Ramsey (2006), “What works best for school leaders today is a “coach” style that helps people develop their own solutions rather than hand out expert advice.” (Ramsey, 2006, p. 32) Motivation of the stakeholders is essential to the shaping of the learning organization. Since this is a challenging task, a leader must be comfortable in establishing a transparent environment that will demonstrate his/her human qualities and values such as ethics, accountability, trust, mentoring, openness, honesty, accessibility, and empowerment. Bennis et. al (2008) stated, “The best way for leaders to start information flowing freely in their organizations is to set a good example” (Bennis et. al, 2008, p. 42). A culture of candor promotes positive influences among constituents and collectives where a learning community is established and a volunteering attitude is embraced.

**Constituents**

The following leaders or examples are the internal and external constituents and collectives that play a major role in shaping the culture of a learning organization.

*Superintendent –*

Phillip Schlechty (2002) states that “when the superintendent-principal relationship is strong and mutually supportive, good things can happen” (p. 67). The role of this constituent is to provide the school support required for it to become a successful organization; establishing and maintain direct and vital links to building principal; and trusting that principal to develop an organization that will foster learning.

*Board of Education –*

The Board of Education is the governing body that gives directives to the schools and sets the expectation for teaching and learning. An active school board will enhance the success of the learning organization.

*Developing Change Agent Teachers –*

Teachers that are eager to learn and become better professionals offer great expectations in the learning organization. These educators bring innovative ideas that guarantee students are prepared for the 21st century. These individuals do not mind taking risks by thinking “outside the box” and promoting experiences that students will remember for a lifetime.

*Department Chair Leaders/PLC Leaders –*

Leaders within the learning organization that share the vision, mission, and beliefs become the individuals in the forefront of how the organization should operate. These constituents offer a vast amount of knowledge and experience that will guide their department/team to greater academic success.

*Parents –*

Parents are the most important support system a learning organization has to create a positive reputation in the community. Parents, who assist the learning organization by participating in the academic career of their child, provide a collaborative, external culture that is appreciated by both educators and students. Active parents promote genuine academic and social behaviors in their children; also participating and establishing a voice in the culture of the school, creates a strong relationship where all stakeholders share the same concerns and focus on student achievement. Ramsey (2006) says of parents, “Schools can’t do business without supportive parents and friends. Good leaders take all the help they can get and ask for more.”(Ramsey, 2006, p. 47)

**Collectives**

*Administrative Team –*

A strong, supportive administrative team is vital to the culture of the school. They provide and protect the teaching environment to guarantee a pleasant and effective instructional atmosphere. This collective must work together in developing leaders and provide the tools necessary for a successful organization.

*Professional Learning Communities –*

This collective is responsible for designing effective instructional strategies that will promote student achievement.

*School Improvement Team –*

The School Improvement Team is the “think tank” of the school. Internal and external stakeholders collaborate to make decisions about the major operations involved with school culture.

*PTSA/PTO –*

Parental and student support from this organization is powerful and provisions are made so that parents, teachers, and students have an equal voice and can effectively communicate their educational needs and expectations.

*Business Group –*

The local business community has the ability to assist with acquiring resources that are difficult for learning organizations to access. Their function is to assist schools with external support. These stakeholders may act as Career and Technical Education employers and/or assist schools in developing programs that will provide students with a set of expected skills.

**Conclusion**

Each constituent and collective plays an important and interlocking role in the educational process. Without open lines of communication between all concerned stakeholders, a positive and excellent school culture cannot thrive.

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