

Final Exam - A Plan for School Improvement

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Collegiality on Campus

Teacher isolation, a negative school climate and dysfunctional teams are major obstacles facing schools today. In order to improve teaching and learning administrators must partner with school stakeholders to develop collegial campuses where purposeful adult interaction is the norm (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2001, p. 5). Change will not occur by accident. Strategic planning and implementation and assessment are needed to ensure school improvement. My plan for improvement includes: building rapport and recognizing contributions, creating a covenant of learning, developing an innovative and collaborative school culture, fostering professional development, and engaging teachers in the continuous evaluation of teaching practices.

The Plan

Step One: Build Rapport and Recognize Contributions

Theodore Roosevelt once said, "Nobody cares how much you know, until they know how much you care" (Brainy Quote, n.d). In order to enact change on campus in ways that improve teaching and learning the administrator must first build relationships. By building trusting relationships with students, parents, staff, and teachers, administrators lay the foundation necessary to collaboratively address challenges.

Objective

To communicate to staff and faculty that they are valued and important members of the team.

Expected Outcomes

Faculty and staff will feel valued, trust the school's administration, feel comfortable sharing their struggles, and feel safe challenging the status quo.

Plan for Implementation

My first step would be to improve the school's climate by working with the school's leadership team to actively show appreciation to the faculty and staff and to get to know them on a personal level. In this way we will satisfy their needs for belonging and love and esteem in hopes that they will achieve self-actualization in the workplace (Glickman, et al., 2001, p.82).

We will engage teachers as professional members of a collegial learning environment and discourage isolation. We will encourage them to share their struggles and provide the needed support. We will also embolden teachers to do what they know is best for their students, try new ideas, and to share successes with fellow teachers for the benefit of all learners.

Step Two: Create a Covenant of Learning

Kouzes & Posner said leaders must, "communicate hopes and dreams so that others clearly understand and share them as their own" (2012, p. 100). It is impossible for school leaders to improve schools on their own; they must inspire stakeholders to engage in the change process. Administrators should listen, empower those around them, and share responsibility. All stakeholders should actively participate in the creation of the school's mission, vision, goals, and norms.

Objective

We will partner to create a covenant of learning which includes mission, vision, goals, and norms.

Expected Outcomes

Faculty, staff, parents, and students will understand the mission, vision, and norms and the role they play in reaching our goals.

Plan for Implementation

Once efforts to build trust are underway, we will work as a collective to form goals that transcend our own self-interests and focus on the needs of our students (Glickman, et al., 2001, p. 38). We will solicit help from parents and students in the formulation of goals and to establish school norms. These plans will serve as a framework to guide our decisions and actions. The development of school norms will help us hold each other accountable for school improvement.

Step Three: Develop an Innovative & Collaborative School Culture

Enacting academic change on campus is directly tied to an administrators success in improving school culture. School culture is, ‘a set of commonly held beliefs, values, norms, and assumptions’ (Glickman, et al., 2001, p. 457). In order to develop a collaborative and innovative culture organization administrators must empower individuals.

Objective

We will empower individuals to create a culture of innovation and collaboration.

Expected Outcomes

Parents, teachers, and students will collaborate to improve educational outcomes and opportunities for students. Teachers will value the input of their peers and share ideas. Faculty and staff will feel supported by administrators.

Plan for Implementation

With an established covenant of learning in place, the day-to-day collaboration on behalf of students will take place. To do this we will form healthy parent/teacher organizations that complement the school’s improvement plan. We will implement professional learning communities during the work day to provide instructional support to teachers and to encourage collaboration. We will form teams of teachers, parents, and students to develop and implement innovative solutions for school improvement.

Step Four: Foster Professional Development

Quality instruction and successful schools are the result of the actions of professional educators (Glickman, et al., 2001, p. 360). Schools must protect their investment in human capital by providing professional development that supports and inspires teachers and results in student success.

Objective

We will provide a myriad of professional development opportunities for teachers that meet their individual needs and result in improved outcomes for students.

Expected Outcomes

Teachers will develop new skills that increase their capacity to engage in professional dialogue that impacts student learning.

Plan for Implementation

To provide targeted professional development to teachers, teachers will be assessed and surveyed to determine the appropriate learning opportunities. Teachers will be afforded the opportunity to make decisions about their professional development.

Teachers will work together to help each other grow professionally. Teachers will have the opportunity to observe their fellow teachers, to be mentored or to serve as a mentor, and to lead workshops. Teachers will be encouraged to share lesson plans, instructional materials, and the critical attributes of their lessons.

Step Five: Engage Teachers in Continuous Evaluation of Practices

As traditional schools develop into collegial schools it is important to continually evaluate change efforts to understand their impact on student learning and teacher development. This will ensure that schools are employing not just “best practices” but the practices that provide the best service to the students and teachers in specific schools. It is essential to involve teachers

in determining “the criteria, procedures, and use of evaluative data” (Glickman, et al., 2001, p. 277). Engaging teachers in this way acknowledges their expertise and value as a professional educator.

Objective

We will guide teachers to “appraise, reflect, and adapt their current practices to future instruction” (Glickman, et al., 2001, p. 52).

Expected Outcomes

As teachers reflect and adapt their teaching practices student outcomes will improve and teacher efficacy and abstract thinking will increase (Glickman, et al., 2001, p. 51-52).

Plan for Implementation

The final step in this plan will be to evaluate its effectiveness and to instill in teachers the value of continually evaluating their teaching practices. Teachers and administrators will determine what areas of teaching and learning to assess. They will work together to determine methods for collecting data, evaluating it and how to act as a result.

Teachers will be encouraged to reflect on their individual practices, research new methods, and to partner with other teachers to assess their teaching.

References

Brainy Quote, (n.d.), Theodore Roosevelt Quotes, retrieved from <https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/t/theodorero140484.html>

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