“Essential Skills to Prepare for School Leadership”

Allyson Apsey, Principal--Quincy Elementary School, Zeeland, MI
Kim Taylor, Principal--Curran Early Childhood Center, Dedham, MA
Session Objectives

Participants will be able to:

• Reflect upon personal and professional values related to being a school leader.
• Name at least 2 essential skills of school leaders.
• Provide examples of how to develop or exhibit these skills.
Essential Skills of School Leadership

Poll

Which of the following values/skills do you feel are the most essential when considering a school leadership position?

• organization
• authenticity
• relationship-builder
• academic preparation
• risk-taker
• innovator/change agent
• life-long learner
“The power of **authentic** leadership is found not in external arrangements but in the human heart.”

~Parker Palmer~
Authenticity

• Who am I?
• Are you the same person as you are a leader?
• Being yourself...now, then, and always.
• Don’t try to be someone else; it doesn’t work--people see through that.
• What do you value as a person? Do you value that as a leader also?
“The fundamental pillars of school leadership are relationships; nothing substitutes for building and nurturing them.”

~Joanne Rooney~
Relationships

• First and foremost
• “People before positions”
• Beginning, middle, and end
• ALL stakeholders; ALL the time
• Without significant relationships, no meaningful work can occur.
• Relationships lead to collaboration and growth
“Collaborate and communicate with people you can learn from.”

~Pharrell Williams~
Collaboration/Communication

• How do you enter a collaborative situation?
• What is your communication style?
• “For students!”
• “For growth!”
• “For change!”
For Students!

For Support!

For Change!

For Professional and Personal Growth
“The way to develop the best that is in a person is by appreciation and encouragement.”

~Charles Schwab~
Motivation/Appreciation

• What motivates you?
• How do you motivate people?
• How do you show appreciation to those around you?
• How does appreciation motivate people in a school community?
**Fabulous February Friday Fun!**

Friday, February 7th—Fantastic Fruit Fondue Bar

Friday, February 14th—Valentine’s Day Staff Breakfast

Friday, February 21st—VACATION

Friday, February 28th—Are You “RED”y for the Weekend?

---

**Principals’ Corona Survival Kit**

Good morning ECEC staff!

As we enter the last full week before vacation, my friends and I wanted to let you know that a number of us will be hiding around the building this week with some surprises for staff.

If you find one of us, please bring it to the office to claim your prize! This is just a fun way to get through to the holiday break.

Happy searching!
GREAT LEADERS DON’T SET OUT TO BE A LEADER...THEY SET OUT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE. ITS NEVER ABOUT THE ROLE-ALWAYS ABOUT THE GOAL.

LisaHaisha.com
Helping Others
Discover the Best
in Themselves

@AllysonApsey

#SerendipityEDU
No place I'd rather be than with you today!

#SerendipityEDU
How do we greet teachers when they enter the building?

Do they know that there is NO PLACE we’d rather be?
This is me.
This is also me.
ser•en•dip•i•ty mindset
Looking for happy accidents and beautiful lessons in every experience
#SerendipityEDU
Helping Others
Discover the Best in Themselves

@AllysonApsey

#SerendipityEDU
There is always more to someone’s story than what meets the eye.
Everyone is fighting a battle you know nothing about. Be kind. Always.

- Brad Meltzer
How does knowing that there is always more to someone’s story help as a school leader?
Even better tomorrow

People need our grace, not our judgement.

Stop seeking perfection. It does not exist.

We may never know the truth behind that smile (or frown) we see.

Do not expect other educators to be like you.

There is always more to someone’s story than what meets the eye.
When we treat students the way they have always been treated, they will behave the way they have always behaved.
When we treat **STAFF** the way they have always been treated, they will behave the way they have always behaved.
Change yourself and the world changes.
Power Struggles
Trauma-informed supports benefit all people.
Why would someone choose fight, flight or freeze over pausing and problem-solving?
“Imagine you're walking in the forest, and you see a bear.”
“Immediately...your heart starts to pound. Your pupils dilate. Your airways open up. And you are ready to either fight that bear or run from the bear. Or you just freeze.”
“That is wonderful if you're in a forest, and there's a bear.”
“But the problem is what happens when the bear comes home every night.

And this system is activated over and over and over again. It goes from being adaptive, or lifesaving, to maladaptive or health-damaging.”

-Dr. Nadine Burke Harris, 16 min TED talk

How Childhood Trauma Affects Health Across a Lifetime
Siegel and Payne include this chart in *The Whole-Brain Child Workbook*, and it is helpful to illustrate how important it is to integrate both parts of the brain.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Downstairs Brain</th>
<th>Upstairs Brain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fight/flight/freeze response</td>
<td>Sound decision-making and planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomic function (breathing, blinking, instincts...)</td>
<td>Balancing emotions/controlling body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensory memories</td>
<td>Self-understanding/ reflections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong emotions (fear, anger, excitement...)</td>
<td>Empathy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acting before thinking</td>
<td>Morality</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Window of Stress Tolerance

Breaking Point

“Andy”

“Billy”

From “Help for Billy” by Heather Forbes
Window of Stress Tolerance for Teachers

Small window for all the additional challenges a day might bring

Breaking point

- Achievement testing
- Student behavior challenges
- Lockdown drills
- School schedule
- Teacher evaluation
- Report cards
- P/T conferences
- Own family challenges
What other stressors might fill a teacher’s window of stress tolerance?

Small window for all the additional challenges a day might bring.
I've invited you to fill out a form:

**Monday Morning Staff Check-In**

**How are you feeling about the week ahead?** *

- I am doing great, looking forward to the week!
- I have lots of work to do, but I am going to be okay.
- I am overwhelmed and need some extra TLC.
- HELP me!! I could really use some help with something. (please comment in "Other" what you could use help with.)
- Other: _

[Review and Submit]

Never submit passwords through Google Forms.
How are you feeling about the week ahead? *

- I am doing great, looking forward to the week!
- I have lots of work to do, but I am going to be okay.
- I am overwhelmed and need some extra TLC.
- HELP me!! I could really use some help with something. (please comment in "Other" what you could use help with.)
- Other: [ ]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timestamp</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/27/2020 11:15:00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I have lots of work to do, but I am going to be okay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/27/2020 11:16:14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>HELP! me!! I could really use some help with something.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/27/2020 11:18:02</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I am doing great, looking forward to the week!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/27/2020 11:25:37</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I am doing great, looking forward to the week!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/27/2020 11:26:44</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I am totally overwhelmed, but I'll make it through - always do. JUST a LOT to get done this week!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/27/2020 11:34:37</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I am doing great, looking forward to the week!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/27/2020 11:34:41</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I have lots of work to do, but I am going to be okay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/27/2020 11:41:20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Report Cards are stressing me out a bit being gone busy on weekends... I'll get done!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/27/2020 11:43:42</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I am doing great, looking forward to the week!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/27/2020 11:44:30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I have lots of work to do, but I am going to be okay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/27/2020 11:45:02</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I have lots of work to do, but I am going to be okay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/27/2020 11:48:37</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Doing my best. having a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/27/2020 12:02:13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I have lots of work to do, but I am going to be okay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/27/2020 12:09:09</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I have lots of work to do, but I am going to be okay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/27/2020 12:22:39</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I have lots of work to do, but I am going to be okay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/27/2020 13:05:59</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Definitely feeling overwhelmed, but don't really &quot;need&quot; anything from you right now. Just need time to get everything done. It would be so nice if elementary teachers could understand just how much work there is on my 3rd day of a splitting headache, but don't really need another assignment...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/27/2020 13:16:56</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I have lots of work to do, but I am going to be okay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/27/2020 14:01:32</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I am overwhelmed. I need time to get everything done. It would be so nice if elementary teachers could understand just how much work there is on my 3rd day of a splitting headache, but don't really need another assignment...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/27/2020 14:11:33</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I am overwhelmed and an</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/27/2020 14:21:14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I have lots of work to do, but I am going to be okay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/27/2020 15:17:15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I am overwhelmed and need some extra TLC.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All behavior is *purposeful*.
William Glasser's Five Basic Needs

- Power
- Fun
- Survival
- Love + Belonging
- Freedom
What need do you have the most trouble meeting for yourself during the school day?
What need do you have the most trouble meeting for yourself in your personal life?
As a leader, how might you make school more need-satisfying for teachers?
We are always impacting each other with our behavior, and that impact can be negative or positive.
What might make a teacher feel unsafe at school?
What is *within* a leader’s control?
The words we tell ourselves have even more power than the words we tell others.
All you need to do is move inch by inch toward the person you want to become; that is enough. YOU are enough.