



Indicator: The principal celebrates individual, team, and school successes, especially related to student learning outcomes. (5165)

Explanation: The principal has a big job as instructional leaders and capacity builder. The principal's personal relationship with staff is part of the management scheme, and noticing and recognizing accomplishment solidifies the relationship. Celebration is a public way to show that good work is noticed and appreciated, especially when the good work is connected with improved instruction and better student learning.

Questions: How does your principal recognize the successes of individuals, teams, and the whole school? At what points is recognition combined with celebration, a more public expression of appreciation?

According to the National Association of Secondary School Principals (2005), "Collaborative leaders celebrate success. Highlight in the weekly bulletin or e-mail the best strategies observed. Provide opportunities during faculty meetings to watch a brief video of a content-area teacher successfully using a specific literacy strategy. Encourage teachers to share their stories of success with one another" (p. 9).

Although principals usually think that personalization means personalizing the environment for students, principals also need to consider adults in the building, and ask themselves, "What am I doing as a school leader to build a culture of appreciation and recognition for my staff?" (Kinney, 2009). In his book *The Six Secrets of Change: What the Best Leaders Do to Help Their Organizations Survive and Thrive*, Michael Fullan (2008) states that the first rule is "Love your employees." Although he explains that the secret is larger than just caring for employees, showing appreciation on a regular basis is a good place to start. Principals should be asking themselves such questions as: How well do I know my staff members? Do I regularly recognize them for their accomplishments? Do I recognize their efforts to go above and beyond what is expected in their work with students? There are many ways to express appreciation, but the important thing is to remember to do it, and do it frequently (Kinney, 2009).

Parsons and Beauchamp (2012) studied the principals at five highly effective elementary schools. They found significant leadership practices to include communicating a clear vision and priorities, focusing time and attention on what matters most, enabling teachers to develop pedagogical and content skills and capacity, providing instructional guidance, empowering others to make significant decisions, addressing supportive structures and resources, developing school improvement plans, providing instructional guidance and coherence, engaging the larger school and district community, acting ethically, and engaging in continuous learning and growth. The data synthesized from these case studies fell into ten main themes, Theme Six Being "The Principal Is Positive." They defined this as "having fun, celebrating, having a sense of humor, and working with enthusiasm." When teachers talked about "positive" as a concept, they also focused on the kinds of positive, specific feedback they were given by their principals. Teachers noted that they started staff meetings with "bouquets" (kudos) and that their principals acknowledged them and celebrated their successes.

References and Resources

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