Thriving & Surviving in Educational Leadership

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Why Do Some Thrive?
1910: 9% of the eligible population graduated from high school

1950: 59% of the eligible population earned diplomas

Until relatively recently, only 75% of the eligible population graduated from high school

“The dilemma between equity – the belief in equal education for all children, regardless of the disadvantages or disabilities they bring to school – and excellence – the need for all children to reach high standards – caused tension and conflict in public debate” (Sergiovanni, Kelleher, McCarthy & Wirt, 2004, 212).
Control & Public Involvement

No Child Left Behind

U.S. Department of Education

IS THIS THE TEST TO TEST IS FOR THE TEST TO SEE IF WE ARE READY FOR THE TEST?

No child left behind
Increased governmental control and litigation resulted in school systems having to face protest groups who demanded increased parental and community participation in decision-making (Tyack & Cuban, 1995).

The demand for more involvement was rooted in the frustration parents and advocates of social justice had experienced from their lack of voice in schools.

Tyack and Hansot (1982) concluded that “recourse to the courts has signaled a breakdown of other forms of persuasion and a loss of trust that competing groups can bridge their differences or blunt the sharp edges of discord.”
Values-Based Dilemmas & Leadership

Constant flow of contradictory expectations and competing values, resulting in leaders having to make decisions that satisfy none involved.

The ambiguity faced by leaders: with no right decision readily apparent, leaders are forced to find solutions based upon compromise.

Leaders are prone to bureaucratic socialization by the system, which maintains the status-quo making dilemmas worse by perpetuating the status-quo instead of making creative, innovative decisions.
Dilemmas & Stress

Stages of stress are connected by the individual’s cognitive appraisal, decision, performance, and outcomes (Gmelch, 1994):

1. precipitating external situation (demands/stressors);
2. perception of the external situation by the individual;
3. individual response based upon their perception, and
4. resulting consequence for both the individual and the situation.
Role-Related

Administrative Stress Cycle (ASC) identifies four sources of stress (Gmelch, 1994):
1) Role-based stress: perceived from administrator’s role-set interactions and beliefs or attitudes about his or her role in the schools;

2) Task-based stress: arising from the performance of day-to-day administrative activities, from telephone and staff interruptions, meetings, writing memos and reports, to participating in school activities outside of the normal working hours;

3) Boundary-spanning stress: emanating from external conditions, such as negotiations and gaining public support for school budgets;

4) Conflict-mediating stress: arising from the administrator handling of conflicts within the school, such as trying to resolve differences between and among students, resolving parent and school conflicts, and handling student discipline problems.
Sped Teachers: 75% Turnover Rate First 10 Years

I Quit!!

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Small Pools?
Reasons Most Often Cited by Administrators

- Personal reasons: 37%
- Retirement: 21%
- Better salaries and benefits in competing districts: 13%
- Paperwork: 8%
Special educators say their jobs are also made difficult by factors that are well within school and district leaders' power to change.

1. lack of support from principals

2. difficulty balancing competing priorities from various supervisors

3. ignorance (and sometimes disrespect) of the job from peers

4. workload that takes special educators away from what they really want to do: teach children.
Why is it Important for Educational Leaders to Thrive?

_Student mental health, well-being, engagement, and deep learning is tied to teacher wellness._

_Teachers and other school personnel cultivate healthy learning environments for students by:_

- _Using effective instructional methods;_
- _Managing student behaviors using positive behavior supports_
- _Building and maintaining positive relationships with students_
Healthy learning environments begin with those in charge of creating and maintaining them.

AND... Improved relationships are tied directly to teacher retention. Leaders must facilitate improved relationships among general and special education faculty, administrators, and the school-community.
Thriving & Relationships

*Leaders must be thriving to truly support and help others*
Which is more than surviving!

Building Relational Trust with and for your people.

1. **Involve the principal.** For beginning teachers, the quality of one’s relationship with the principal is key for support, success, and retention.

2. **Give new special ed teachers a customized induction & mentoring support:** their job is very different.

3. **Strengthen the relationships between special and general education faculty** by giving them more opportunities to work together and by encouraging them to share responsibility for students.
REFERENCES


