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Special Topics: Advanced Composition ENGL 4900-00

Final Paper

June 27, 2021

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The purpose of a school district is to provide education to the youth in hopes that they grow to live happy lives and leave positive contributions to society, no matter how big or small. This in part, is not possible without teachers. Teachers are staples in the district and surrounding community because they hold the power to directly influence and change the trajectory of students' lives. Because they play such a crucial role, as a superintendent it is important that I prioritize investing in the success and well-being of my teachers in order to maintain the entire school district. I'd do this by utilizing a combination of modern best-practices and innovations for teachers to partake in as they work. These methods would include: agile meetings for teachers and administration, leaving the majority of curriculum building and decision making in the hands of teachers, having success coaches, professional therapy, and intensive drug research.

To start things off, agile is commonly used in software development and is a collection of beliefs that teams can use for making decisions on how to develop software. According to Collier (2011), agile "practices involve discovering requirements and developing solutions through the collaborative effort of self-organizing and cross-functional teams and their customer(s)/end user(s)." It advocates adaptive planning, evolutionary development, early delivery, and continual improvement, and it encourages flexible responses to change. Due to the nature of the agile ideology, it can scale to be utilized in fields other than software development such as education. By adopting agile teachers, administrators, and other faculty members would place more focus on individuals and interactions, working teaching methods, student collaboration, and responding to change. Instead of placing emphasis on "what to do" or "how to do", emphasis would be placed on giving teachers the ability to make their own good decisions. With its implementation teachers and administrators would have recurring meetings(weekly or bi-weekly) in teams with other teachers and admins from their respective departments. In these meetings they would share

and discuss their goals for their class, what strategies they're implementing, what's working and what isn't, any issues or struggles they may be going through, how to improve on them, and so forth. Having an agile environment in our school district would improve morale amongst teachers, establish continuous improvement amongst administration and in classrooms, give faculty better control over situations, increase flexibility, and ultimately improve the work-life of not only teachers, but all employees within the district. With that being said, the agile system is only a tool and must be used in part with other practices for it to be truly effective. One of which should be placing the majority of the power to create and establish curriculums in the hands of teachers and administrators.

Allowing teachers to create and use their own curriculums would give them the autonomy to teach in ways that best suit learning trends, teaching styles, personalities, and necessities of students in their respective grade levels. This in turn creates a more enjoyable experience for both the teacher and student as well as a more efficient one. The model that would be followed for this would be curriculum as inquiry, which according to Short (1996) is the, "theoretical and practical shifts in how educators view teaching and learning within school contexts. As educators examine their beliefs and actions, they take control of their learning and work with their students in creating more democratic learning environments." When combined with an agile system in place, our educators would be able to give and receive constructive inputs on creating the best possible curriculum for their grade level. In a system like this, instead of being forced by higher ups to teach unfavorable lessons oftentimes perceived as useless by both teachers and students, teachers would design the curriculum according to their strengths and students' needs in order to teach in the best manner that they see fit.

Furthermore, the addition of success coaches for students and teachers would do well for both parties involved. A success coach in this scenario would be someone trained in aiding students and teachers with their work life and personal life if possible. Their purpose would be to assist teachers and students in whatever it is they may need in order for them to function in mint condition when they're at school. From personal experience I can say that having a success coach or someone of a similar role there to carry the load with you if need be helps put one's mind at ease. In the current internship I'm in we have a success coach for our team and his sole purpose is to do just that. It is assuring to have someone like that in our corner who wants us to be successful just as badly as we want to be, and is also prepared to lend a hand whenever we need it. Success coaches in the schools would work well due to the fact that they'd be another shoulder for students to lean on if need be, which in turn reduces the load on teachers, while at the same time providing the teachers with a shoulder to lean on as well if they need it. Even if teachers don't utilize the coaches for themselves, sometimes knowing that someone is there for you in case things do get out of control for one person is enough assurance to put oneself at ease.

As we've transitioned into a more inclusive and accepting era, we've realized that mental health is just as important as physical health. Working as a teacher can be very taxing on one's psyche, therefore along with the addition of success coaches, school's in my district will provide a certified therapist and or cover the cost of therapy programs for teachers. According to Nancy Barile (n.d.), "The National Alliance on Mental Illness estimates that one in five people live with some sort of mental disorder or disease. Despite the fact that the average age of early signs of mental illness is 14, most individuals don't seek help until adulthood. Society as a whole has started to realize the importance of prioritizing mental health both in crisis and as a preventative

measure. Therefore, our teachers will always have the option to seek professional help regarding mental health paid for by the district.

Lastly, as the superintendent I'd invest heavily in the research of drugs and rewrite the entire drug screening for teachers. As time progresses and studies improve, more states are legalizing marijuana and allowing recreational use of the drug. Oregon, according to Scott Akins and Clayton Mosher (2020), "had voters pass on a reform to decriminalize all drugs including heroin, cocaine, and methamphetamine." It is becoming more evident that there may be some drugs that are heavily stigmatized and were criminalized for reasons other than abuse and health concerns. In some states drugs such as marijuana are undergoing reclassification into something less sanctioned so that the public will be able to reap the benefits of safe, controlled use of the drug. According to S. Watson from WEBMD (2016), studies have shown that, "marijuana can reduce anxiety, reduce inflammation and relieve pain, relax tight muscles in people with multiple sclerosis, and stimulate appetite and improve weight gain in people with cancer and AIDS." As the superintendent I want to make sure through intensive research that any drug legalized due to medical benefits or reclassification will not be screened for in the drug screening. Ensuring that any drug backed by medical studies being used by my teachers for health purposes will not inhibit them from working in my school district will be a priority.

To sum everything up, teachers are a staple in their community and school district, therefore as the superintendent I will do what I can to ensure they are treated as such. Through drug research for screenings, a focus on mental health, success coaches, agile implementation, and autonomy, teachers in my school district will be provided with the tools necessary for them to have a successful and happy work-life. Because they play such a crucial role in building up the

future of tomorrow's society, it is imperative that we heavily invest in our teachers and set them up for success.

## References

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