Ethics in Education- Focusing on What’s Truly Important

A Session to Reflect on Why We Work So Hard
WHY ARE WE HERE TODAY?
WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

Crisis in America- we have shifted to compliance and testing from the appropriate focus.

• Focus should be on our ETHICAL TOUCHSTONES and the supporting programs

• A need for Values-Driven Leaders

• A need to create opportunities for students and staff to develop and solidify their core values
WHY I AM HERE TODAY:

– My brief story
  • Felicity- Special Education
  • Tenure as Superintendent
  • Business Perspective

– Several Epiphanies
  • Ray George v. Election of new board
  • Thanksgiving- What am I Grateful for...?

– Finding my PERFECT professional position

– My innate desire to change the world for the better
Objectives

We will...

• spend the next hour focusing on values and ethics
• all look internally, reflecting on how to tweak our time to think more, message better, and provide opportunities around core values for our staff and students
• leave here with a few ideas for our districts that will begin to shift focus in small ways to values and ethics
Poll Everywhere

• Where do we stand-
  On your phones, text........

• Questions on
  – Creativity(Ken Robinson)
  – Character Education
  – Messaging from Sup office (Values to Action)
  – Behaviors of staff and students (Danielson- Domain 4)
  – How we treat our community (Delivering Happiness)
WHAT IS MOST Important to ME as the Leader of my District?

When students leave my district, they

A) Have demonstrated success through academic achievement

b) Are well-prepared for the challenges of college/ life after high school

C) Are well-intentioned, caring people
No child left behind

Is this the test to test us for the test to see if we are ready for the test?
What Do We ALL See?

Ethical lapses in our schools

– Cheating scandals, fraud, ....
– Mix messages to our students, community
– Board members with agendas
– Students cheating
– Staff members not following district initiatives
– Politics clouding decision-making processes
Leading in an ethical way AND Creating opportunities for others

• How do we provide opportunities for people (students and staff) to engage in discussion around ethics?

• How much time do you directly spend on developing good people? (What % of your day?)

• How many programs exist that are directly designed to examine values?

• How much time is spent with your board on values and ethics?
How are teachers thinking about ethics and asking students to critically examine their values in the curriculum?

How frequently and to what degree do ethical considerations impact decisions? How do you include this? How about right now?

Who is pushes your thinking?

We hear “Students first”, but...... this touchstone gets lost quickly- how do we keep this central (in the face of politics)?
PROTESTS
Because the dumbest 1 percent is usually the loudest 1 percent.
What’s come down our way

- NCLB
- PARCC/Smarter Balance
- COMMON CORE
- NEW EVALUATION SYSTEMS
- STATE MANDATES
- FEDERAL MANDATES
- STIPULATED ‘FUNDING’
- SPECIAL ED REQUIREMENTS
- POOR PUBLIC PERCEPTION
- REFERENCES TO GLOBAL TESTS NOT COMPARING APPLES TO APPLES
- LESS FLEXIBILITY
What has NOT come down our way

- $’s for developing the whole child
- Public desire for citizenship development
- Understanding of the additional supports that districts provide—social work, psych services...
- Movement for ethics courses
- In-service for developing values-driven people
- Additional flexibility to meet the needs of your students
- Curriculum designed to apply ethical lessons to core content
Quiz

Student:

Name: ____________________________________________

School Board

1. Childhood obesity has reached epidemic proportions in the U.S. 
   True. False. Don't care.

2. National standard for physical education frequency is between 150 and 225 minutes per week. 
   True. False. Don't care.

3. Physical activity has a positive impact on academic performance. 
   True. False. Don't care.

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Our Boards

- Clip from Daily show-
Values in Conflict

• Kolhberg- some research reference
  – In school terms... academic situation--- reasoning for decision... are there any higher levels of concern for humanity in public education

• Examples
  – Safety and Security
  – PR
  – Marketing
  – Messaging of tough decisions
  – Defining constituents
  – Others
What do YOU believe?
Village of Crestwood

English is our language

No exceptions

Learn it

Mayor Chester Stranczek
Why is this SO IMPORTANT?

• We are losing sight of our values, integrity, citizenship and school leaders must refocus us!
Resources to Consider

• The Josephson Institute
  – http://josephsoninstitute.org

• Gallup research
  • http://www.gallup.com/topic/category_education.aspx
  • http://www.gallup.com/poll/165269/worldwide-employees-engaged-work.aspx

• Met-Life Research
  • https://www.metlife.com/metlife-foundation/about/survey-american-teacher.html

• Pew Research

***This demonstrates......
We must be Purposeful!
Values in......

Our Curriculum...
• Ethics Classes
• Scenarios (bookends of units/concepts)
Our Messaging/Communication...
Our Politics- we have to push back more!
Our Focus-
• What do values-driven leaders and conversations look like?
• How does one lead with values?
• How might teachers prompt more conversations about values with students?
Next Steps?

- Create the focus - Talk to our values
- Be purposeful and diligent
- Connect with others

If we are not better than the greater society, how will the next generation learn?
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