

LaQueshia White

EDEC5324

Reaction Paper

New Thinking About Instructional Leadership

April 12, 2012

Hornig, E. & Loeb, S. (2010) New thinking about instructional leadership. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 92(3), 66-69.

While reading the article, I first began to think back to this week's discussion thread in which we stated what we felt were core qualities of an effective instructional leader. I realized that I tend to think of what may apply to for elementary level, as opposed to all levels of education. One of my core qualities was knowledge. Of course a good instructional leader should be knowledgeable, but can't be expected to know everything that pertains to the content areas at their campuses. The article gave me insight to those limitations for leaders in secondary education. When I think of great educational leadership, I have been more prone to think of the leader's effect on classroom instruction and interactions with the teachers more so than their impact in the aspects of organizational management.

At times we see teachers not being successful in the classroom, and notice that the next year there are moved to another grade level. The whole campus knows that a particular teacher is struggling or not being effective and when they are retained, yet another year, we ask, "Why are they still here?" As a teacher of a test taking grade, we ask ourselves whether or not teachers in the grades below ours effectively taught the prerequisites as they were required. I have personally heard the principal state that the second grade teachers weren't or hadn't been teaching from our Comprehensive Curriculum and express her dissatisfaction, yet nothing is done to change things. Instead of being overly concerned with people on personal level, effective instructional leaders make staffing decisions that will lead to improvement of the students. It's nothing personal.

The portion of the article that addressed value-added methods drew my attention, because my state is undergoing changes that use this as a premise to legislate change in our educational

system. Our schools are not being successful, and officials have decided to take teacher tenure to weed out the bad teachers in addition to tying the students' test scores to teacher retention. The few schools that are being successful will attract higher quality teachers, but what are those that have not experienced success to do to keep from having a revolving door in terms of teacher retention?

I agree completely that personnel management should be dealt with strategically so that administration is able to support and develop teachers as well as removing those teachers that are not cutting the mustard. In my current teaching assignment, I feel that our principal has so much going on that she tends to allow others to manage her responsibilities to the point where she is not able to use much time for organizational management. She spends a lot of her time in meetings with her supervisors, talking to parents, or observing teachers. I have no doubt that she is extremely skilled when it comes to instruction and classroom management, and in traditional practices of instructional leadership that is a component of a good leader, but after reading this article, I wish more emphasis would be placed on organizational management. This could very well be the reason that we are not experiencing the success that we all feel that we should be.