



Leadership Development

Anywhere, Anytime

Practical Tips for School Leaders – #28

July 10, 2020

The Brian Dassler Leadership Academy (BDLA)

The Brian Dassler Leadership Academy (BDLA) formerly known as the Commissioner's Leadership Academy is facilitated by faculty from the Center for Educational Leadership (CEL) at the University of Washington. A number of Principals in SJCSD have had the opportunity to attend with other Principals and District personnel from all of the counties in Florida. The guiding principle of the work from the CEL is that "school leadership is second only to teaching in its potential influence on student learning". The role of school leadership is extremely complex, however, one of the most important aspects of the role is serving as instructional leader.

Today you are wrestling with how to bring students back safely to your school while following the health guidelines set by the CDC. As you develop plans, I am sure one issue you are thinking about is the possibility of a wider achievement gap. What strategies will teachers need to help students? Will there be a need for professional learning in pedagogy? You may also be thinking about the mental health of the students, teachers, staff and your school community. The norm is different, and many things taken for granted in the past will come under review.

What is an instructional leader? An instructional leader ensures that in every classroom, everyday all students have a prevailing learning experience. Why is instructional leadership so important and what are the processes instructional leaders focus on? Each leadership practice must emphasize improving instruction yielding an improvement in student learning.

How do school leaders' model and guide teachers and students as instructional leaders? The CEL defines 4 Dimensions of Instructional Leadership as:

- A focus on learning, by building capacity of the team, monitoring improvement in instructional practice and in the quality of student learning.
- The principal serves as the "leader of leaders" to a team of instructional leaders; PLC teacher leaders, APs, ILCs, specialists, etc.

- The principal demands a culture of public and reflective practice.
- The principal continually addresses the cultural, linguistic, socioeconomic and learning diversity of the entire school community. The principal understands, models and expects cultural responsiveness within the school.
- The principal uses data to achieve equity and close the achievement gap.

The Florida Principal Standards Domain 2: Instructional Leadership includes: Instructional Plan Implementation, Faculty Development, and Learning Environment which correlate to the research of the CEL. As you reflect on these components consider which ones you identify as your strengths, those you could provide support to a colleague and others where you may benefit from the assistance of a peer.

The Center for Educational Leadership (CEL) @ University of Washington. 2015