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Living a Legacy of Leadership

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Living a Legacy of Leadership

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legacy is often thought of as money or property bequeathed to another by will. It can be something handed down from an ancestor or a predecessor or from the past. A synonym of “legacy” is “heritage” – practices that are handed down from the past by tradition or hereditary succession to a title or an office or property. Both of these depict images of death or loss of what was. When applied to leadership we think of one educational leader leaving the school district and another picking up where they left off. The verbs that describe this scene are in the past tense, of leaving a legacy.

When we speak of leadership in education we should use vibrant, living verbs that speak of a proactive educational leader. We should envision educational leaders as

Living a Legacy of Leadership where every action taken is purposeful and with intent, and addresses the vibrance and potential of today.

Living your legacy of leadership instead of

leaving your legacy is the difference between being “action oriented” and “state of being” oriented. Leaders who cannot break away from a “state of being” leadership are recognized by the verbs that surround them—is, are, was, were, am, be, been, being. These tend to be RE-active to what is or was, not PRO-active for what can be.

Educational leaders who want to live their legacy now seek the right tools to leverage the opportunities to lead powerfully today – thereby also creating a lasting and living legacy for tomorrow. They become Legacy Leaders[®]. These are leaders who have moved beyond “being a leader” to “leading,” and are known by action verbs that describe what they do—hold, create, influence, advocate, and calibrate. Legacy Leaders[®] have no time to waste on pondering the state of their leadership; they are too busy living their leadership with purpose and intent.

- Legacy Leaders[®] tenaciously hold onto and hold out, for everyone to see, their vision and their values. They are uncompromising about building the vision of the school, and achieving objectives, based solidly on the foundation of core values.
- Legacy Leaders[®] actively create opportunities for collaboration and dialogue. They know that in

this fertile environment true innovation occurs.

- Legacy Leaders[®] positively influence others to be inspired and to understand and accept leadership roles. They are builders of people – trail blazers in education excellence with a positive influence so that everyone achieves his or her best.
- Legacy Leaders[®] tirelessly advocate for the differences in people as essential building blocks to creating a learning community. They have a stubborn mindset that all staff and students have unique and compelling contributions to make to education.
- Legacy Leaders[®] consistently calibrate their journey into excellence by modeling 100% accountability and responsibility for their leadership roles, and encourage others to do the same. They stay focused on progress toward the vision with an eye for flexibility and mid-course correction where needed.

Legacy Leaders[®] live and breathe leadership. Nothing they do is by chance; everything they do is by plan. Their tools for

holding, creating, influencing, advocating and calibrating give them the solid input to make decisions about when to step

up, to step

back, and to step

off the action. They read the “lay of the land” with the skill of a surveyor who examines or looks at the scene comprehensively to determine the boundaries, area, or elevations by means of measuring angles and distances and identifying leverage points.

Successful educational leaders,

all leaders, lead by living a legacy of the NOW, not leaving a legacy of WHAT WAS. And in so doing, they leave a path for others to follow, and so on, and so on....this is Legacy Leadership^{®*}.

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