



The Ideology of the Just Principal Serving Oppressed Communities

An addendum to Martin Hamberman's "Ideology of the Star Principal"

- *The natural disposition of children is to learn and thrive. It brings me joy to be part of and enrich their lives.*
- *My students are a gift to me. I am not a gift to them. I am responsible everyday for being worthy of them.*
- *If children at my school do not learn and thrive, I have failed, not the children.*
- *For any real learning to occur, students must not only feel physically and emotionally safe and secure, but empowered to fully and honestly express themselves.*
- *The teachers are not here to help me be a principal. I am here to help them improve students' learning.*
- *In order to improve the learning of children in oppressed communities, the students and their families must be connected to all kinds of health and human services, access to food, clothing shelter, and the world wide web.*
- *The reason I am paid more than teachers is not that I am smarter, work harder, am the best educator, or hold a state license as an administrator. I am paid more because I am accountable and responsible for the effectiveness of the total school. I take the weight of this obligation without passing it along to my staff.*
- *Teachers who seek control over students lack the disposition to help them reach high academic standards, let alone challenge them with grade level content. Student engagement is the criterion for deciding teachers' "goodness."*
- *Engagement is determined by the degree of student choice, the amount of student collaboration, the depth of thinking, and the relevance of content.*
- *Parents are partners and contributors in the educational process.*
- *When parents are engaged in the school community, it means that they contribute where, when, and how they can. It cannot necessarily be measured by the number of parents who attend events / meetings.*
- *Inside and out, our school building should reflect both the rich cultural traditions of the community and the great talents of our students.*
- *Everyone who visits our school has to be treated with the highest respect and enthusiasm.*
- *Recognizing mistakes and honest reflection are indispensable to the improvement process. I admit the shortcomings of the school program.*
- *Establishing systems, studying problems, and closely monitoring performance is more valuable than superficial goal-setting or problem-solving. Steady, sustainable progress should be the goal; not arriving at a destination.*
- *Progress is measured through data, especially those that reflect the perceptions of students, staff and parents (ie. street data).*
- *There is no greater benefit to the school than getting rid of bad teachers and ineffective staff.*
- *For me to be accountable for instruction, I must be involved in the selection of new teachers to the building.*
- *The disposition and mindset of prospective teachers / staff is more important than the skill they possess. Second only to my commitment to ridding the school of bad teachers, there is no greater benefit to the school than when I develop teachers and staff to perform their roles more effectively.*
- *Every important decision I make should include input from my school community, including students.*
- *It is my job to protect this school from the chaos in which we must operate. I understand that the systems and structures surrounding my school community usually hinder, obstruct and deny access to needed resources. I can keep this school focused on the kids and their educational needs. I make every decision in the interests of students, even at the risk of noncompliance with district mandates.*
- *It is my job to prioritize what I ask my teachers and staff to do. As I discover additional school needs, or new mandates flow from central office, my staff are not given more time to work.*