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The role of instructional supervision in district-wide reform

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This article represents an example of how supervision of instruction can be an integral part of a coherent plan for district-wide reform. The author argues that instructional changes can be most effective if introduced in a system that has first put in place the personnel and structures needed to support them. The article highlights the role of cooperative strategies involving all school stakeholders in achieving measurable educational improvements in a context which promotes ongoing adaptation and change. The specific role of curriculum maps and lesson plans in enhancing instructional supervision is also discussed.

The role of instructional supervision in district-wide reform

For school and system-wide reform efforts to be truly effective, educational leaders need to take an active role in ensuring that every aspect of school life (including policies, structures and systems) is enhanced, that students are taught consistently and effectively, that there are no major discrepancies between the written and the taught curriculum, and that teachers receive the support they need to develop and enhance their professional skills (see, for example, Corcoran *et al.* 2001, Waite 2002, Elmore 2004, Leithwood *et al.* 2004, Schmoker 2004, Fullan 2006). Supervision should take place in a professional environment which values instructors' contributions and promotes experimentation (Glickman *et al.* 2007, Shulman *et al.* 2008). Further, supervisory strategies for improving teaching and learning need to be systematically revised and broadened (see, for example, Sergiovanni and Starratt 1993, Wolf *et al.* 1996, Sullivan and Glanz 2000, Oliva and Pawlas 2004, Marshall 2005, Zapeda 2006, Glickman *et al.* 2007).

In this article, we discuss and analyse the programmes and policies in instructional supervision introduced in the Elmont school district between the years 2000 and 2005. These innovations were part of an overall design effort for district-wide reform that would also put the district in a better position to fulfil its educational mission in an ever-changing world. My account as superintendent of schools between 1998 and 2005 will be complemented

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by a discussion of the results of a survey administered in 2007 to teachers and administrators who worked in the district during the last year of my tenure. The views offered by these professionals provide additional insights for the reader on how the programmes and policies introduced at the time continue to be perceived now.

The Elmont school district

The Elmont elementary school district is adjacent to New York City, with demographic characteristics not very different from those of the largest city school system in the USA. There are six elementary schools in the district, ranging in size from approximately 350 to nearly 1000 students. In 2005, according to the New York State Education Department, 40% of the students qualified for free and reduced-price lunch, 84% were counted as racial and ethnic minorities, and 7% were identified as English language learners. During the years examined, Elmont was also characterized by steady increases in student enrolment and high student turnover. The fact that district resources were modest and that per student allocation of funds was lower than what other districts in the county could afford limited in no small measure the policies and programmes that could be put in place to benefit students and personnel.

Changes in the instructional programme and in supervision were brought about mainly in the third of a three-stage process and only after the district had developed structures and strategies to sustain them. As we shall see, the three stages, while sequential in nature, were characterized by some overlap; this nonlinearity is rather common, as Senge (1990) and Fullan (1996) point out. We were all too aware that educational initiatives may fail or be unevenly implemented, unless a system of support and accountability is in place (Elmore and Sykes 1992, Fullan 1996, Cuban 1998, Datnow *et al.* 2000). Under my leadership, as a new superintendent in 1998, Elmont first had to confront a severe shortage of classroom space, failed budgets, unsettled labour contracts, and lack of trust and credibility with the staff and the larger community. A climate of trust and transparency needed to be established within the school system and in the school community to counter the negativity that surrounded the district and which made it difficult for voters to approve budgets (on trust and transparency in schools and districts see, for example, Schein 1996, Nomura 1999, Lakomski 2001, Mortimore 2001, MacNeil *et al.* 2009). The change in climate was fostered by holding frequent and open meetings in which plans of action were discussed and the suggestions received were often incorporated and highlighted. Budgets and a bond referendum for the construction of 40 classrooms were approved by the community. All pending labour contracts were settled. In so doing, the superintendent and the board of education showed their appreciation for the employees.

Having accomplished these major tasks in Stage 1, we subsequently, in Stage 2, endeavoured to establish a cohesive administrative team, capable of actively and expertly supporting effective instruction. Several actions contributed to making the administrative team more cohesive. Employees

who had appropriate credentials were encouraged to apply for administrative positions within the district. The organizational chart was adjusted to reflect the equal status school principals shared with central office administrators. Lines of communication were enhanced by reducing the hierarchical reporting system. Principals featured prominently in district-wide instructional and managerial decisions through their active participation in setting goals and in establishing a strategic plan for the district. This was facilitated by a Carnegie leadership training programme in which the entire administrative team participated. The training helped in focusing the team's high professional expectations and to communicate them consistently and unanimously to staff and students.

As a group, we endeavoured to assemble the best possible teaching staff. We did so through the careful selection and evaluation of new teachers to avoid choosing and retaining those who were least suitable for the needs of our students. The selection process was conducted centrally and involved the direct participation of all school principals. We re-established a successful practice used years earlier according to which candidates would be evaluated using two sets of interviews, a writing sample, and a sample lesson observed simultaneously by all school administrators, the director of curriculum and instruction, the director of pupil personnel services and the superintendent of schools. Teachers who qualified through this process became part of a pool of candidates from which principals made the final selection for their individual schools. Principals discussed their main ideas and beliefs on teacher evaluation and their understanding of the attributes that a good teacher should possess. While agreement was reached on these attributes, principals and administrators differed in the assessment and rating they would assign to the candidates being observed. We agreed that no teacher would be placed in the pool of candidates unless he or she was endorsed by all administrators. Because of the relatively strong collegial climate in which we worked, school administrators felt comfortable in expressing their disagreement. The lessons were given on a rotating basis in each school, a practice that offered colleagues the opportunity to visit each others' schools and to share their thoughts and experiences as school leaders. As a result, greater camaraderie developed among the principals and they were much more open to consulting each other on issues and problems that surfaced during the normal course of the school year.

Each year we reassigned a portion of the teaching staff to schools and grade levels that best utilized their expertise. This practice contributed to maintenance of a balance in terms of staff seniority in each school and to spreading expertise district-wide. The adjustment was difficult for some, but most teachers accepted the challenge willingly.

In Stage 3, the district's efforts focused on the instructional programme and on supervision of instruction. Attention was directed at the entire supervision continuum, from its formative dimensions directed at the professional development of the entire teaching staff, to its summarising functions, which emphasized personnel decisions (Holland and Adams 2002, Oliva and Pawlas 2004). As an administrative team we saw supervision and evaluation as inextricably connected. In Sergiovanni's words

(2006: 279): 'When the focus of supervision is on teaching and learning, evaluation is an unavoidable aspect of this process.' Perhaps the definition of supervision that best reflects our district's practice is the one offered by Oliva and Pawlas (2004:11): supervision is a means of offering to teachers, in a collegial, collaborative, and professional setting, specialized help in improving instruction and thereby student achievement'. The analogy of supervision as 'the *glue* of a successful school' offered by Glickman *et al.* (2007: 8) conveys correctly our desire to link together all the elements that comprise effective instruction.

We focused on supervision of instruction since in previous years the supervisory and instructional practices used by principals and teachers had yielded uneven results. In general, when planning for instruction, skilled teachers knew how to select from the written curriculum the contents and skills most appropriate for their students; they also knew how to successfully utilize instructional materials and how to assess student learning. But less-experienced and less-skilled teachers were not always able to make choices that were as beneficial. We needed to find a way to guarantee that all students received meaningful instruction every day throughout the district. To promote educational excellence in a school district characterized by high student mobility and racial, ethnic, and economic diversity, we needed to develop a clear and well-defined curriculum, help teachers plan effectively for instruction, and adequately monitor student learning. In the past, supervision of instruction was, for the most part, limited to traditional formal and informal classroom observations, during which time principals could not assess adequately if the curriculum was taught consistently. Marshall (2005) argues that principals evaluate an infinitesimal amount of instruction and that the isolated lessons they typically observe are not sufficient to show to what degree curriculum standards are met. To have a wider view of the instruction students received on a daily basis we developed curriculum maps—in all major subject areas, from kindergarten through the sixth grade—to be used by all classroom teachers in the district. We also designed a standard format to plan daily lessons. These two initiatives permitted principals to be more involved in helping teachers plan for instruction. (Both initiatives will be discussed in details later in this article.) Underlying our designs was the goal that students acquire the knowledge, competencies and attitudes necessary to meet future educational requirements and challenges in an atmosphere of excellence and inclusion.

In the climate of renewal and professional excellence that ensued, school administrators were challenged to increase their own competencies as educational leaders. Their direct involvement in redesigning the curriculum to meet new learning and assessment standards and the pivotal role they were called to play in the professional development of teachers district-wide prompted them to rethink their own competencies and their supervisory strategies. They did so by working with each other, by sharing lessons learned at conferences and workshops and by reading the professional literature. Most importantly, they became intimately familiar with the lessons teachers planned and with the way the curriculum was being implemented on a daily basis. The effect of these

changes on principals is conveyed by what one of them shared with me recently:

> I have become better at helping teachers plan their lessons and at individualizing supervision. Teachers talk more about curriculum and instructional strategies with each other at curriculum meetings which I facilitate so that I listen to them. These professional conversations are very helpful to me; they help me help other teachers who are still developing their skills. Before the maps and the lesson plan format, I used to ask teachers to send me the teachers' guides so I could have a better sense of what they were teaching. It is much easier now to know where they are in the curriculum, the specific skills they emphasize, and what the essential questions are that will lead instruction. (Hope Kranidis)

Further, principals were encouraged to use more than one method for the evaluation of teachers, rather than relying exclusively on the formal observations they routinely conducted each year. The new practise of choosing among a wider gamut of evaluation modalities gave instructional leaders the opportunity to focus their efforts on those teachers who needed their guidance most, and to challenge senior teachers (through the use of portfolios, professional development plans, inquiry, team teaching and other strategies) to explore additional ways to reach their students, as well as sharing their practices with each other and with less experienced teachers (for a discussion of differentiated models see, for example, Glatthorn 1984, Danielson and McGreal 2000, Glickman 2002, Holland and Adams 2002). Principals were also involved in enhancing teachers' confidence in their own instructional abilities. Teachers needed to gain the confidence necessary to overcome uneasiness over environmental difficulties which are not under their control, such as student academic, cultural, social and linguistic background (Hallinger and Heck 1996, Ebmeier 2003) and to develop a shared outlook towards instruction, which has been associated with more active student learning (Strahan *et al.* 2003, Lewis *et al.* 2004).

In the words of one principal:

> The shared vision to educate each child gave us cohesiveness and brought us together as six principals. We worked effectively with staff; we learned together, became better as educational leaders and provided better supervision for our staff. (Dr Margaret Pleta)

As the superintendent, I worked with principals in evaluating the lessons planned by teachers and frequently visited classrooms. I was not as much interested in the instructional strategies teachers used as I was on what children learned from the lesson. My ongoing concern was that children be exposed to meaningful and challenging work and that they learn incrementally each day. These visits also gave me an opportunity to review students' notebooks and the homework they completed. Notebooks offer a great view of what children do over the course of the school year and the feedback they receive from teachers. I also reviewed at designated times the progress of individual students with each principal, who in turn choose the other school personnel comprising his/her accompanying team. Principals came to the meetings prepared to discuss how each student was being educated. These reviews facilitated discussions on the treatment of students with special needs, gifted children, students learning English as their second language and those requiring academic support. We also

tracked how new and long-term students fared on New York State tests and equivalent measures. As the superintendent of schools, I could gain first-hand knowledge of how educational resources were being used, of the efficacy of the services offered to children, and could give principals immediate feedback and assistance.

The evaluation process for school principals was also modified. The 10 areas on which principals were evaluated (instructional leadership, supervision of instruction, learning environment, interpersonal relations, problem-solving and decision-making, professional behaviour and knowledge, management, building management, personal characteristics and communication) did not have equal weight. While a checklist and a brief comment summarized their performance in each area, instructional leadership and supervision of instruction were evaluated more in depth on the basis of specific and substantial goals principals would set with the superintendent of schools at the beginning of each school year and which formed the basis of school-wide goals for teachers and students. These goals were reviewed periodically at scheduled individual meetings. The demands in terms of time required to manage a school building could be very absorbing, often compelling principals to take a marginal role in the supervision of instruction and the professional development of teachers. By designating instructional leadership and supervision of instruction as the main areas on which principals would be evaluated, we sent a clear message of the expectations held. Principals, who had more extensive instructional background served as role models for those whose strengths was primarily in the daily administration of the school. All intensified their efforts and made instructional supervision and teacher development their priority.

Also, in the quest for best practises, segments of the administrative council meetings were set aside for the discussion of educational issues. The whole administrative team was involved in the study of suitable educational practices that would enhance learning for all students.

While the entire set of changes, including the systematic reduction of class size (which was brought down to levels similar to those of most other districts in the county), contributed to modifying the instructional climate in the Elmont school district, two initiatives reached the classroom even more directly: 'curriculum maps' and 'lesson plans'. It has been documented (see, for example, van Tassel-Baska *et al.* 1996 (cited in Strahan *et al.* 2003), Fullan *et al.* 2006, Schmoker 2006) that systemic excellence will not occur until curriculum and instruction are intelligently restructured.

Curriculum maps

The high mobility of our student population, who moved not only from district to district but also from school to school within our own district, made evident the need for a common core curriculum that could be fully understood by all teachers. In the summer of 2001, the administrative team worked with some of Elmont's master teachers to develop curriculum maps from kindergarten to Grade 6. This joint effort led to the establishment of a core of knowledge in English language arts, mathematics, social studies and

science to be covered in each of five phases, one for every two months of the school year, with page-specific reference to commercially prepared teacher guides, text books and supplemental materials. Teachers were also encouraged to go beyond the required content and to add to it, as long as all students had had an opportunity to learn the contents and skills included in the curriculum maps. Teachers received extensive and ongoing in-service on the use of the curriculum by their colleagues and school principals. This training was prominent in the induction of new faculty members and continued throughout the school year, thus promoting continuous learning and sharing.

The curriculum maps were adjusted yearly to continue to align ever-evolving curricula, instruction and assessments. They provided the principals with a means to ensure that the major contents and skills were covered in each classroom at a pace appropriate for the educational level of the students. Teachers, particularly those new to the district and those who had moved to other grade levels, found the maps very helpful in making daily instructional decisions. By using curriculum maps, we reduced the chances that the curriculum would be covered unevenly and that student achievement would become more uneven over time, in line with the view held by Gamoran (1997).

The maps covered core knowledge in the four major areas of the curriculum, where students were expected to strive to the highest possible level. These were not the only focus in their instruction. A series of enrichment classes was made available to selected grade levels, with the intent of expanding them at a later time to all students. These classes included, among others, maths games, law, science exploration and debate, and extended into the summer programme to give all students an opportunity to partake in an advanced enrichment programme. Various musical ensembles, a marching band and a jazz band were formed. The art programme was enriched by a partnership with The Long Island Art Museum. A world languages academy offering Italian, Spanish, French, Urdu and Latin was made available to all students K-6 and took place on Saturdays during the fall and spring semesters. This initial academy was designed to include at a later stage a sports programme and a centre for the arts. The intent was to make available to all students a well-rounded programme and to develop in them a desire to learn that would grow with them. Our emphasis on enriching learning helped us avoid the pitfall of focusing too much attention on test scores.

Lesson plans

Curriculum is rarely implemented as planned for a variety of reasons, including lack of accountability (Datnow *et al.* 2000). While teachers acknowledged the fact that the curriculum had been developed by respected colleagues and opportunities to discuss curriculum issues with co-workers abounded, no one could be certain that once in their classrooms they would actually implement the maps as intended. It has been documented (Manouchehri and Goodman 2000 cited in Fernandez and Cannon 2005) that teachers make instructional decisions on the basis of what makes sense

to them. Even short and frequent classroom observations were not sufficient to give school principals a good sense of what was being taught in the long term and how the material selected contributed to augment student knowledge. A review of student work and homework was helpful to understand how students summarized what they had learned, but could only be a small part of the instructional supervision we were aiming for. We were interested, among other things, in understanding the process that teachers followed in planning their lessons. Over the years we had observed two models: the elaborate lesson plans teachers prepared for their supervisors on the occasion of the announced yearly visit[s], and the sketchy weekly plans in which teachers would write the page number of the materials used and a short notation about the content to be covered. The first type of lesson plan was so elaborate and detailed that teachers could not realistically spend the time to prepare one for each class segment, each day. The other type offered such scarce information that anyone was unlikely to glean from it the thought process teachers followed in making instructional decisions. Good planning is essential and should involve an analysis of learning needs as well as the creation of a system to meet those needs and to assess the degree to which they have been met (Jacobs 2004, Marzano 2007, McMillan 2007). Panasuk and Todd (2005) demonstrated that teachers who used the planning strategy outlined in their four-stage model developed lessons with a high degree of consistency and coherence. But the practice of lesson planning on the part of American teachers is very uneven. It has been stated that many teachers in the USA do not plan, or do not plan effectively (Stigler and Hiebert 1999). When compared with a group of Japanese mathematics teachers, their American counterparts reported spending significantly less time in lesson planning and preparation, characterizing the process as less complex (Fernandez and Cannon 2005). The poor quality of lesson planning has also been identified as one of the most frequently perceived causes of teacher ineffectiveness by school principals (Torff and Sessions 2005).

The decision to introduce a standard lesson plan format in the Elmont school district was met with enthusiasm by the board of education and the administration and with cautious scepticism by teachers, even though representatives of the teaching staff had ample opportunity to contribute to its development. Teachers were challenged to think about what they expected students to learn as a result of the lessons they taught, to list the learning experiences they planned for students (including work to be done at home), to select essential questions they would use to motivate and challenge students, and to identify the criteria and procedures they would use to determine what learning was occurring. Finally, teachers were asked to reflect on the lesson they just taught.

The planning decisions teachers made, using the district's newly-introduced lesson plan format, rendered clearer to themselves and to school principals the difficulties some instructors encountered in designing effective lessons. There was no doubt that we needed to provide extensive assistance to teachers in the planning process and to facilitate cooperation among them. Extensive training in lesson development ensued. Most of the professional development was provided by teachers, principals and assistant principals. Lesson plans helped principals identify

areas in which teachers needed professional development. In turn, these areas became the focus of curriculum meetings, held twice a month, in which principals and teachers discussed instructional issues.

We also established a mentoring programme for teachers with the support and collaboration of the teachers' union. New teachers received professional development in lesson planning prior to the start of the school year. Some teachers looked at the guidance offered by the plans as a great opportunity to think more clearly about ways to enhance learning and an opportunity to have professional discussions with colleagues. Others resisted the process and attempted to revert back to the old way. Some principals used the opportunity to promote lesson study among teachers and thus succeeded in reducing the anxiety that the new task had generated. Other principals placed more emphasis on compliance rather than stressing the lesson plans' role in assisting teachers to think not just about what they would teach, but also to question the purpose and the process of their teaching. In such cases, the lesson plans were seen as an unnecessary burden, a perception that became hard to change regardless of ongoing reassurance and praise for the effort shown. The rationale behind this major change needed to be constantly restated and used when discussing with teachers and principals the progress being made in this major area. Over the years I learned that even the best of practices become ineffective when implemented mechanically, a concern that was always present in my mind and that guided my decisions relative to the professional development and accountability of principals and teachers.

Ultimately, the observations of students and teachers (by principals, the superintendent and other central office administrators) made during frequent classroom visits, the work children recorded in their notebooks, the intensified dialogue among teachers on instructional issues, the enhanced and more consistent planning teachers engaged in, and most notably the performance of students on tests (a change of 37 and 27% in English and mathematics, respectively; see Table 1) were very revealing. The standard lesson plan format and the curriculum maps, the more focused supervision and professional development provided by principals, together with the other initiatives undertaken, had to be at the basis of the consistency and the quality of instruction delivered to students.

Table 1. Percentages of students meeting or exceeding standards on New York State tests

School year	English language arts	Mathematics
1998–1999	50%	70%
1999–2000	59%	64%
2000–2001	60%	75%
2001–2002	78%	83%
2002–2003	89%	97%
2003–2004	87%	97%
2004–2005	87%	97%

Anecdotal reports from teachers, parents and students unequivocally lauded the education children received each day. Principals, for the most part, used the lesson plans and the curriculum maps to ensure that purposeful instruction would take place in every classroom. State reports indicated consistent growth in district-wide achievement in mathematics and English language arts. Elmont's standing moved from the bottom quartile in Nassau County to the top 25% among the 56 school districts in the area. The turnaround from earlier years was acknowledged at the local and state levels.

In an effort to ensure that the strides made would continue in the future, a group of teachers, parents, administrators and community members designed, with the superintendent, a plan for the continuation of the initiatives that informed the district renewal process. The recommendations included a continuation of the curriculum maps and lesson plans.

In the spring of 2007, teachers and administrators who worked in the district during the school year 2004–2005(112 teachers and 15 administrators) were asked in a survey to give their opinion about the years during which the major curriculum and instructional changes took place. Sixty percent of the administrators and nearly 42% of the teachers surveyed responded to the questionnaire. The feedback was essentially positive, with great emphasis placed on the benefits derived from the collaboration among stakeholders and from the climate of clear guidance and high expectations that was established. Teachers were asked what the greatest strengths of the Elmont school district were, in their opinion, during the period 2000–2005. Among the most representative statements there were:

- An improved curriculum and highly qualified staff
- Positivity!—Teamwork and constructive criticism were very much appreciated and effective
- Allowing individuals unique opportunities in professional and personal growth
- Excellent leadership, good morale and a solid reading programme
- Community outreach and elevated test scores
- There was great improvement in staff expectations. I feel that the teachers were expected to perform to the utmost of their ability.

Among the greatest obstacles faced by the district during the same time, they listed:

- The turnover of the student population
- The belief that the lesson plan format was excessive and very time consuming
- Budget/funding
- Class size
- Lack of parental involvement and support
- New York State tests

The responses also revealed the ongoing resistance on the part of some teachers to the required planning. This resistance could have been mitigated

had the district been able to provide more time and resources for teams to plan together. More extensive use of lesson study, in particular, could have given teachers a greater opportunity to reflect on their teaching within the comfort of collegial groups.

The difference in response with regard to curriculum maps and lesson plans may have also been influenced by the fact that while curriculum maps facilitate the teachers' task in selecting the content and skills to be taught, lesson plans require substantial time commitment. Those who viewed the plans in a negative light inevitably saw them as routine, time consuming and unrelated to their teaching.

Teachers' responses, compared with those of administrators, rated lower both lesson plans and curriculum maps. (On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is minimally effective and 5 is substantially effective, the average rating given to curriculum maps by administrators was 4.7 and 3.7 by teachers. Average ratings given to lesson plans on the same scale were 4.1 by administrators and 3 by teachers [Tables 2 and 3].)

Of the 11 initiatives outlined in the long-term plan (literacy, equality, excellence and enrichment, technology, professional development, effective staff evaluation and selection, resource expansion, departments' effectiveness and efficiency, school safety, school/community relationship, school facilities), teachers rated 'effective staff evaluation and selection', 'literacy', 'enrichment' and 'professional development' as most important. This is

Table 2. Lesson plan. This table summarizes the frequency rating by each group of respondents to the question: 'On a scale of 1 (minimal) to 5 (substantial), how would you rate the effectiveness of the lesson plan format on the enhancement of teaching and learning?' The mean rating for each group is also provided

		Rating: 1–5				
Group	Number of responses (mean rating)	1	2	3	4	5
Administrators	9 (4.10)			3	2	4
Teachers	61 (2.98)	11	12	14	15	9
Other	5 (4.60)				2	3

Table 3. Curriculum maps. This table summarizes the frequency rating by each group of respondents to the question: 'On a scale of 1 (minimal) to 5 (substantial), how would you rate the effectiveness of the curriculum maps on the enhancement of teaching and learning?' The mean rating for each group is also provided

		Rating: 1–5				
Group	Number of responses (mean rating)	1	2	3	4	5
Administrators	9 (4.66)				3	6
Teachers	61 (3.72)	2	8	13	20	18
Other	5 (4.80)				1	4

hardly surprising since, unlike changes in administration and management, teachers view these dimensions as most germane to their role as educators and value them most (Ebmeier 2003).

Lessons learned

The experience in Elmont led us to believe that the improvement of teaching and learning can take place district-wide. Strategies are bound to vary from district to district, obviously. What worked for us can be summarized as follows:

- *Identify what the district needs.* Confronting the 'brutal facts', as Collins (2001: 81) states, is a necessary step towards the road to success.
- *Develop a cohesive plan, prioritize goals, share them, and act to achieve them.* Knowing the situation is not enough. Do not yield to the temptation of doing what one wants to do, but rather attend to 'what needs to be done' as Peter Drucker has taught (2006: xi).
- *Engage the whole district and community effectively.* As leaders we have the responsibility to help the community understand the educational challenges confronting the district. In turn, we have to be ready to receive the input of the community. A climate of mutual trust and respect has to be established and maintained so as to create great learning opportunities for school administrators, boards of education, community members, parents, teachers and children.
- *Establish a leadership team.* Identify and if necessary recruit the administrative and teaching talent needed to be successful in the short and long term.
- *Promote excellence in administration.* Regardless of administrative function (facilities management, personnel, budgeting), identify criteria and measurements for assessment and work constantly to meet and exceed them.
- *Promote excellence in instruction.* Develop a clear and well-defined curriculum. Demand excellence from administrators, teachers, staff and students. Raise the bar gradually and adroitly, while helping each school to meet higher and higher goals. Monitor instruction relentlessly. Provide high quality and relevant professional development opportunities.
- *Manage change in a climate of trust and inclusiveness.* Districts need to change at all times, both administratively and instructionally. The governance team should do everything possible to maintain serenity and harmony in the district to ensure that all efforts are directed towards the enhancement of teaching and learning.

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