



Reflection Is More Than A Season

Dec. 2, 2019

It is amazing how Thanksgiving break always falls at just the right time. The weeks leading up to the break are always trying and energy draining. I hope that you took some time during the break to downshift and reflect on the things that you are thankful for. I did, and when I started to make a list, I ran out of paper. When we really spend time in reflection, we all have many reasons to give thanks.

Reflection is a powerful tool possessed by all. **By engaging in reflective thinking, you unleash hidden perspectives and new learnings. Most importantly, you are more likely to realize the purpose and significance of your daily actions.** Without reflection, burnout is inevitable and disenchantment is virtually guaranteed. We are left simply going through the motions toward work that could be meaningful, but is not because we are blinded by the day-to-day grind.

I believe that most humans have a natural desire to engage in meaningful work that has a significant impact on others. There is little argument around the importance of every student receiving a high-quality education. The fact that we have an opportunity to change lives with a smile, kind words and engaging lessons should be something that is not taken lightly. Through reflection, we realize that we have hundreds of opportunities to lift up or tear down daily. **I challenge you to be intentional and take personal responsibility in your daily efforts, recognizing that you have difference-making power daily.**

Some will call me naive, but I am convinced that most people have a desire to be a part of a successful team. The leadership challenge we all face is to get well-meaning individuals with different perspectives, histories, talents and skill sets to work collaboratively for a common cause that is significant to all. During my reflection, I realized that we have made significant strides at building a system of great schools within our district. I recognize that we are still in the storming and forming stages of continuous improvement. The foundational work we are engaged in now will pay dividends as we commit to remaining focused, reflecting on our *why*, getting clear about the *what* and remaining open as it relates to the *how*.

I challenge each of you, and myself, to be intentional about asking good reflective questions as we move forward. Why, what and how questions should become a standard part of our toolbox for improvement. Many of you have heard the statement that feedback is the breakfast of champions. I believe the best feedback is the feedback you can give yourself through engaging in reflective thinking.

Sustainable success will only be achieved if we are all intentional about the actions we take and the decisions we make. I hope that we will make Thanksgiving and, specifically reflection, more than just a season. Let's make reflection a way of doing business, a way of learning, a way of growing and a way of ensuring continuous improvement.

With something to reflect on,



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