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Leadership Platform

Leadership Core Beliefs

I believe every student has the right to equitable opportunities in education that empower them to reach their full potential. The purpose of education is not only academic but also helping students discover their passions, grow socially and emotionally, and prepare for meaningful futures. This requires us, as educators, to challenge and support all students, especially those historically underserved. We must ensure that our systems are not reinforcing inequities, but actively stopping them. As TNTP writes, “Ensure equitable access to opportunity for all students, and adjust your strategy when you see inequities” (Unlocking Acceleration, 2022). Our work must be driven by a belief in each student’s full capacity and a passion to create systems that support the student’s whole journey.

During my undergraduate years, I set a personal challenge to meet and genuinely learn the story of one new person every day for a semester. These conversations opened my eyes to the diversity of human experiences. I began to understand the privilege I have been given in my life and struck by how universal the need for connection is. People shared with me their joys, their traumas, their hopes and desires; and, in doing so, they taught me that human beings are shaped by both opportunities and resilience. This realization ultimately led me to education.

In my first years of teaching, I carried this commitment to connection and equity into my classroom. I saw how strong relationships unlocked the potential in students who often felt unseen or underestimated. I also saw how systemic barriers stemming from unconscious biases, inconsistent expectations, and the lack of supports undermined students' belief in themselves. These early experiences shaped my values as an educator and now as a leader. I learned that we must foster the spaces where every student is respected, challenged, and supported. As Fisher writes, "Students work hard, understanding it's never too late to learn, because their teacher assumes they can" (Fisher, 2012). My belief in connection, equity, and high expectations for all students is not just theory but shaped by deep conversations, real connections, and lived experience.

In my current role, I lead professional learning communities that identify areas for improvement, test new ideas, and apply continuous improvement processes to instructional practice. I support colleagues in designing and implementing Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycles that turn equitable practices into measurable evidence-based outcomes. This work has built my credibility among peers not just as someone who believes in equity, but as someone who helps my team act on it. For example, in my co-taught classroom, my co-teacher and I tested and improved our practice so that we were able to provide rigorous, differentiated instruction that enabled students with IEPs to meet or exceed the performance of their peers without IEPs. Our shared data showed that with intentional scaffolds and high expectations, students with IEPs regularly earned comparable grades. This reinforced for me that "...when students fall behind, providing access to grade-level work with appropriate support (learning acceleration) is the best way to help them catch up—and that delaying access to grade-level work (remediation) practically guarantees they will fall even farther behind." (Unlocking Acceleration, 2022). As a

result, we focus on learning acceleration such that all students have guaranteed access to grade-level content with the proper supports.

Through this experience, I have come to see my role as helping others translate theory into practice. As Fullan and Kirtman, we must continue improving “instructional quality and spreading the best instructional practices and ideas to achieve learning goals across the system” (2019). I use improvement science as a method of improving systems and leading equitably through focusing on inquiry, measuring impact, and refining practices that work.

My leadership style is rooted in inquiry, communication, and continuous improvement. I believe leadership begins with understanding and creating the conditions for others to feel heard and valued. This level of inquiry is essential for increasing buy-in, surfacing different perspectives, and creating shared ownership over change. Furthermore, communication builds trust; and, thus, I strive for clarity and consistency in my interactions with staff, students, and families because trust is the foundation of any high-functioning team.

Continuous improvement is the outcome of a culture where inquiry and communication are norms. I lead with a growth mindset, encouraging my team to test ideas, learn from errors, and strive for improvement. As Fullan emphasizes, coherence “is not static—not something that one can achieve and it’s done—but continuous” (2019). I see myself not as the source of all solutions, but as the facilitator who helps others make sense of complexity and move forward together. Leadership, to me, is about understanding and empowering others to lead from where they are and doing so through clarity, curiosity, and meaning.

With all that said, these are the core leadership beliefs I hold that are non-negotiable. First, every student must be seen, heard, and supported. Students cannot learn if they feel unseen or unsafe. Second, equity is not optional. It must be built into every system, structure, and

decision. Third, inquiry drives improvement. We must ask the hard questions, look at the evidence, and reflect honestly to make progress happen. Fourth, communication builds trust. Without transparent communication, teams cannot function or grow. Finally, outcomes are shared. Success and failure must be collective and not for one individual to hold.

These non-negotiables are not just values but daily commitments. For example, when a student comes to me visibly upset after receiving a low grade on an assignment, rather than disregarding his frustration, I take the time to listen and validate his experience. Together, we can explore solutions and set up a plan of success for the student. This is how I live my belief that leaders must stay grounded in their values even when the situation is complex. As the Opportunity Myth states, “Continued inaction in the face of that evidence—given that we can point to the relationship between different access to high-quality academic experiences and different outcomes for students—is no longer defensible” (TNTP, 2018). My leadership is driven by a refusal to be passive when faced inequity so that every student has the right to equitable opportunities in education that empower them to reach their full potential.

Curriculum and Instruction

I believe curriculum and instruction must be equity-centered, student-driven, and grounded in high expectations for all learners. Equitable instruction is more than just how we teach. It includes how we assess, how we respond, and how we empower students to take ownership of their academic journey. This belief is driven by a commitment to dismantling traditional practices that reward compliance over learning and exclude students from meaningful opportunities to grow.

One example of this belief in action was our PLC’s implementation of mastery-based grading. We shifted from traditional grading to a system where students had clear success criteria

and multiple opportunities to demonstrate learning. This was inspired by the research of Joe Feldman, who reminds us that in the real world, “retakes are often available; you just might have to ask for them and put in some additional work.” (Feldman, 2018). Our grading practices became more measurable, equitable, and student-centered. As a result, we observed students begin to meet higher expectations, take ownership of their learning, and show measurable academic growth. Grades became a reflection of their learning and no longer a measure of compliance.

At the systems level, as mentioned earlier, I have worked with colleagues to embed improvement science into our PLCs. By using Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycles to guide our continuous improvement, we built teacher capacity and collective efficacy. As Hattie’s research shows, collective teacher efficacy has an effect size of 1.01, making it one of the most powerful influences on student achievement. Through this work, our team became more unified, improved our practice, and increased student outcomes.

Instructional leadership, to me, means fostering the conditions where this type of teacher learning is the norm. I am committed to leading through shared inquiry, creating structures for collective planning and reflection, and ensuring that every student receives high-impact and equitable instruction. As Fisher notes, “Teaching for transfer requires a clear process for establishing purpose, exposure to the thinking processes of experts, scaffolded instruction, and ample opportunity to clarify understanding through productive group work” (2012). My vision for instructional leadership closely aligns to my leadership beliefs. To strive for equity means we are required to create a culture where students consistently experience this level of intentionality and support regardless of which classroom they walk into.

Parent and Community Involvement

I believe families are essential partners in a student's educational journey. Families are the child's first teachers and often the bridge between school and community. When schools truly honor this role, they build systems that create space for listening, partnership, and shared responsibility. Unlike how it is often treated, engagement is not about attending events. It is about cultivating trust and valuing families as partners in their child's growth. One of my core beliefs that every student must be seen, heard, and supported extends also to their families. When families are seen and heard, students thrive.

In my leadership practice, I have come to understand that family engagement must be proactive, inclusive, and relational. One of the most meaningful shifts I have made is in how I communicate with families. Rather than calling home only when something is wrong, I have prioritized ongoing and affirming contact that builds relational capital. This approach reflects Fullan's statement that a leader "builds trust through clear communications and expectations" (Fullan, 2019). Families deserve to hear from school leaders in ways that reflect respect, cultural humility, and care. As I wrote in my initial reflection, engagement cannot be a one time event; it must be embedded in how we think, plan, and lead.

Ultimately, my view on family engagement is aligned to my core beliefs. In *The Opportunity Myth*, students emphasized that they "want to be challenged in school, enjoy their learning, and be treated with respect, care, and dignity" (TNTP, 2018). We cannot achieve this vision if we do not engage families as partners in that experience. My leadership is driven by the belief that connection and clarity, when extended to families, build the foundation for trust, learning, and growth. As a leader, I am committed to building systems of family engagement that are transparent, collaborative, and grounded in the belief that all families bring value so that all students may have the equitable opportunities to reach their full potential.

Discipline and Climate

I believe a safe, restorative, and relational school climate is essential for student learning and growth. My core value applies most urgently to how we respond when students make mistakes. Discipline is not about punishment but about restoring relationships, repairing harm, and ensuring that all students remain connected to the school community. A positive school culture is not the absence of misbehavior but how we respond when it happens.

In my experience, the most effective discipline systems are built on relationships. I have seen how students respond differently when they feel respected by adults and when adults lead with empathy rather than power. Punitive systems often reinforce unequal systemic issues and biases, while restorative approaches prioritize dialogue, accountability, and reintegration. Restorative schools do not only ask students to reflect and repair. Rather, they require every adults to do the same. Modeling these expectations is critical to creating a culture of professionalism and trust.

At the systems level, I have participated in the implementation of a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) that centered student dignity while maintaining classroom learning environments. When staff followed shared structures such as restorative practice, clear routines, and proactive check-ins, students were more likely to succeed. But systems only work when relationships are strong and expectations are consistent. As Fisher once again reminds us, students want to “be treated with respect, care, and dignity” (TNTP, 2018). My leadership approach to discipline is focused on building a culture where that is true for every student, every day.

Conclusion

Throughout my leadership platform, I have returned to a single core belief: every student has the right to equitable opportunities in education that empower them to reach their full potential. This belief has shaped how I teach, how I lead, and how I envision systems of support for both students and adults. Whether through curriculum design, grading practices, restorative discipline, or family engagement, my work is grounded in the idea that equity is not an ideal but an everyday necessity. It is a deliberate choice to remove barriers, amplify voices, and build systems that support the whole child.

I have learned that equity-centered leadership demands action. It asks us to reimagine instruction to reflect high expectations and diverse pathways to mastery. It asks us to engage families not as spectators but as partners. It asks us to respond to student behavior in ways that heal rather than harm. And, it asks us to create cultures where adults are continuously learning and improving for the sake of their students.

My vision of leadership is about creating the conditions where growth is possible for everyone from the student to staff to family. I will continue to lead with clarity, empathy, and urgency, guided by the belief that students are capable, brilliant, and deserving of a system that reflects those truths. This is the leadership our students need and the leadership I am committed to providing because every student has the right to equitable opportunities in education that empower them to reach their full potential.