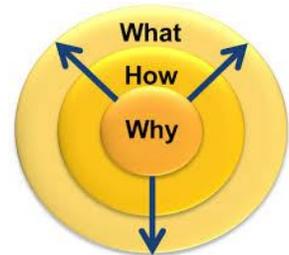


Leadership Vision Statement – Laura Weakland

Simon Sinek in a TED talk entitled "*How Great Leaders Inspire Action*" (2010) speaks of a leadership idea he calls the "*Golden Circle*." According to Sinek, all great leaders communicate from the inside out. These great leaders inspire others to act by giving people a sense of purpose or belonging. It all starts with "Why?"



My leadership vision statement begins with my "Why" or my purpose, cause, and beliefs about education. The "Why" is broken into two parts – "Who Am I" and "Where Am I Going?" It is then followed by "How Do I Plan to Get There?" and "What will Success Look Like?"

Who Are You?

There are several primary core values and beliefs that I possess that I feel will drive the "Why" I do what I do as a leader. These core values and beliefs are as follows:

- **Knowledgeable** – I have always considered myself a lifelong learner with a growth mindset. I am always striving to increase my knowledge surrounding education and school matters. I feel it is very important for a leader to be competent and knowledgeable in what they do. I also feel a leader needs to challenge the status quo and to look for new and innovative ways of doing things to improve the organization.
- **Reflective** – Reflection is a key ingredient that distinguishes a mediocre leader from a great one. At the end of every day, I always reflect on what's working and what isn't. A leader needs to always keep an eye on their vision and reflect on what adjustments need to be made on the way.
- **Compassionate** – Compassion and kindness for others is another core value of mine. It is critical that a leader is aware of others' personal needs and feelings and treats others with compassion and kindness always. I also believe in the importance of recognizing other's accomplishments and celebrating successes.

- **Honest** – I have always prided myself on being an honest person. Integrity and trust is built on honesty. It is a critical core value of a good leader.
- **Positive and Passionate** – Positive and passionate energy is contagious. It is one of the highest priorities as a leader to model and radiate positive energy always!

Where Are You Going?

I believe in establishing a culture of learning in a school where all students and staff see themselves as capable of learning and take ownership for their learning journey. One of my favorite words at the core of Carol Dweck's work on "The Growth Mindset" is the word "**YET.**" This simple word sends a message that everyone is at a different part of the learning journey and they may or may not have learned a particular skill or content area "YET." This sends a message to all students and staff that learning is a continual progress and all students and staff are capable of success.

Secondly, my vision includes a school where students, staff, and leaders work together for the common vision of establishing a culture of learning. Staff needs time to develop a professional learning community where there is opportunity to practice strategies, reflect, and engage in conversations about teaching and learning.

Lastly, I envision a school where students and staff are compassionate and kind and reach out to help one another learn. I believe in character education and developing habits of mind to enhance the culture of learning. Educating the "whole child" and empowering students with social-emotional skills is critical for successful learning.

How Do You Plan to Get There?

The plan of action for how I will attain the vision of where I am going as a leader has six core components as follows:

1. **Build Trust and Lead with Integrity** – I will build trust and lead with integrity by being a good listener, being visible and accessible, attending to people's needs and wants, providing positive and timely feedback, sharing in the decision-making, and sharing and distributing leadership. Megan Tschannen-Moran in her book, *Trust Matters* (2004), says "By acting in

trusting and trustworthy ways, you can create a school that reaps the rewards of a culture of trust." It is my belief that an effective leader must begin here.

2. **Invest in People** – I once heard someone say that schools were about the “people” inside them not the “stuff.” I wholeheartedly believe that an effective leader must invest in their people first. Emotions matter and people (adults and kids) can’t learn if their emotions aren’t regulated. Accordingly, schools must invest in relationship-building and teach staff and students how to take care of themselves and each other.
3. **Lead with A Clear Purpose** – Effective leaders must lead with a clear vision and always begin with the “why?” Leaders must then establish a shared vision of “what” we want to achieve and ensure a clear path or “how” to get there.
4. **Create a Culture of Learning** - I will set standards for excellence, set goals, and celebrate success along the way with all stakeholders. Focus will always be directed toward creating and maintaining a culture of learning. This will be done first and foremost by being the “lead learner,” and then building a community of learning and investing in the learning of others. In addition, it will be important to keep a close eye on what resources, tools, and supports teachers and students need, for the attainment of creating a culture of learning. Supports may range from “time” necessary to enact change to “tools” such as access to technology or instructional materials.
5. **Believe in the Team** - Creating a team of educators who believe in the vision of the organization to share in the building of the structures and processes that get things done is a critical step. From beginning with quality interviews, to providing ongoing feedback and professional learning to teachers, to providing teachers with collaborative learning time, to the encouragement of staff to participate in meaningful decision-making, leadership must be participative.
6. **Radiate Passion and Positive Energy** -- Modeling passion and positive energy at all times and maintaining a clear vision that is shared by all stakeholders will be a critical part of my plan.

What will success look like?

ALL students and staff will be engaged EVERY day in quality learning opportunities and work together to support a culture of learning.