



5 Minute Activity

Autonomy with Responsibility - Small Risks Authority

Read the following excerpt and value statements from *Leadership Philosophies of the Clovis Unified School District* (p. 23, 25, and 26). Then, discuss one or more of the prompts below.

Small at heart...

Large organizations must remain small at heart to thrive. Clovis Unified's area concept and site-based management philosophy places great responsibility in the hands of area, site, and department leaders to make decisions that meet the unique needs of their students, staffs, and families. Leaders close to their communities know what will work well and what won't, and they are charged with decision-making based on that knowledge.

- Take risks if they will benefit kids.
- You have the authority to solve problems at the appropriate level.

Prompts:

Emerging Leaders (101): Let's look at the statement, "Leaders close to their communities know what will work well and what won't, and they are charged with decision-making based on that knowledge." There are expectations the district holds tightly, like improved student achievement and balanced budgets. How does this quote play into a school site/department/division making the best decisions for their community based on district expectations?

Tenured Leaders (201): Most Clovis leaders pride themselves on handling their own problems. In fact, former Superintendent, Dr. Walt Buster, would often ask "if I have to solve problems for your site/department/division what do I need you for?" which is a great question. Notice the value statement says, "You have authority to solve problems at the appropriate level." Look at the list of "problems" that may arise in the workplace. Identify who should be the one to address the problem behavior and the steps that should be taken to "solve/remedy the problem":

- An employee is late to work 3 out of 5 days.
- A community member calls to express concern that one of your employees hit his child.
- You suspect one of your employees is stealing from the district.
- An anonymous caller leaves a message that two of your employees are having an affair.
- An elementary/intermediate/high school student tells you his teacher hugged him.

Established Leaders (301): Reflect on the statement, "take risks if they will benefit kids." Clovis leaders are risk takers, but most take calculated risks. Create a list of risks you have taken on behalf of students and determine if each risk resulted in a positive outcome. When is taking a risk not in the best interest of students and/or the district? Provide examples. Identify one risk you are willing to take to benefit students.