

Historical Overview of Clovis Unified School District

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EDUCATIONAL ROLES

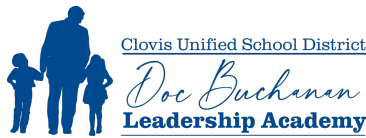
Preface

The establishment and operation of a school district must be the responsibility of the district's leaders, teachers, and parents. Without a smooth working relationship among all members of a school community, problems develop which can erode confidence in the educational system and ability of the practitioners to complete their job, which is education of the community's youth. Consequently, it is important for all members of the school district community to understand what each member's job entails, why it is important, and how it relates to the overall effectiveness of the school district.

Education is an all-encompassing endeavor. Without strong, effective leadership, it is not possible to achieve far-ranging goals. Administrators must have a cohesive, comprehensive plan to implement, so there is a continuity to the program offered to students. Classroom teachers must develop goals and objectives that meet school district criteria and must maintain established standards and expectations for all students. Parents must prepare their children to meet the day's tasks, support the school program, and send their children to school rested, fed, and ready to learn. Then, and only then, can the student begin to play his role in the learning process.

Clovis Unified School District has developed a system of delivering education to its students that is precise, yet flexible, traditional, yet creative. The foundation of this program is the recognition that each individual who touches a child's day has a role to play in the overall educational experience of Clovis Unified students. It is realized that each role is important and critical to the overall effectiveness of Clovis Unified's program. With that in mind, it is significant to the evolution of Clovis Unified to understand the interplay all C.U.S.D. staff has with each other, parents, and students.

Implied in this basic understanding of what the role of each person is is the fundamental, yet essential, trust that each member of this community perform his duties as capably as possible, in the interrelationship necessary to help the school district operate efficiently and educate thoroughly. Several levels of trust and understanding of individual roles must be established to assure students of the best education possible. These roles involve the relationships between administration to site principal; principal to teacher/parent/student; teacher to student/principal/parent; and parent to teacher/principal/administration. By analyzing the roles of administration, teachers, and parents in the Clovis Unified School District, it is possible to examine and understand what makes this school district so effective in meeting



its goal 1) of educating all children to a level where they can function in society and 2) of helping all children become true Sparthenians.

Role of a Leader

“The job of a leader is to keep focusing the attention of the people on the task that needs to be done and their responsibility to that task...If you want to be able to furnish leadership, you have to identify with the program, you have to be the heart and soul of the program; but, you have to be able to turn it loose.”

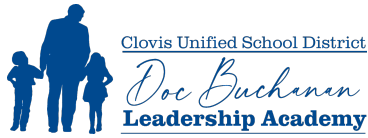
Floyd B. Buchanan, Ed.D.
Superintendent, C.U.S.D.

An educational leader must be able to assemble and to motivate a staff that believes in the educational program offered and that wants to do what is required to educate children, not because they have to do it, but because they want to do it. To create an environment where this thesis is allowed to flourish, a leader must establish the tone of the district’s policy, must recruit and develop qualified staff, and must communicate these goals to the community. In turn, the community of parents, private sector industry, and the Governing Board must provide feedback to the superintendent for him to be able to determine if the program in place is, indeed, effective in achieving the stated goals.

A superintendent is responsible for planning the direction of and means by which a school district will meet its primary goals of educating the children of its community. Such planning requires to superintendent to be flexible and a risk-taker, if the program is going to grow and adapt to an ever-changing world. Additionally, to be successful in maintaining a creative environment for administrators and teachers, the superintendent must compel these individuals to be responsible for their own areas and continually demand greater levels of performance from them. This contributes to a vital, productive program.

When planning the direction of a school district, the first step is to set major goals. Dr. Buchanan has indicated, “The superintendent has to look at, evaluate and mesh facts, trends, rumors, emotions, thinking and ‘climate’ within the district, and then try to set goals, always moving ahead, maintaining and encouraging the will of everyone to make these goals...If making changes, do so to make things better: don’t throw things out unless you know why and have something better to take its place.” Planning is a key leadership function, sine it requires telling people where the district is going to go, while beginning to prepare for the change. Further, it requires to leader to anticipate the kind of support (material, personnel, financial) people will need to achieve new goals.

Once goals are set, the superintendent needs to determine if the goals are being met or if they are the goals the district truly intended. To this end, a leader must get feedback on his program, to scrutinize and analyze it, to evaluate what appears to be successful and what doesn’t If something seems wrong or not to be as intended when the goal was set, the superintendent must recognize this, make appropriate changes, and try something else.



“When you don’t know what to do, do something. At least you’ll know what to do or what not to do the next time! You never gain experience by just sitting there...No one is in danger when making forward progress: part of living is failing a little, succeeding a little. You can’t stay at zero; you have to go plus or minus. Zero is only the fulcrum of the lever, and you can either be on the end, moving the weight, or you are the weight.”

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