

## **Reviving the Professional Culture**

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### **Scenario Summary**

After reviewing the case study, I believe the next year will be challenging. However, there are a lot of exciting changes that can be made that will improve the culture of Maynard High School. Maynard High School is a large high school starting its second year of existence. This will be the first year with an entire high school grade 9-12. The teaching staff will be growing by nine teachers next year and seven current teachers will be leaving. There are also two positions on the administration team that will need to be replaced and a counseling position that will be added. Being the school was in the first year of existence last year, I'm sure there were several obstacles that hindered the admin team from performing observations and evaluations on all teachers. There was also a lack of clarity and follow through in regard to professional development. Instead of having a clear plan to ensure that students would receive the best possible educational experience, the transition was slightly rushed and that left teachers and students without clear expectations and support. I found out in February that I was hired to be the next principal to lead this school, and my goal is to revive the culture.

### **Mission, Vision, and Outcomes**

Before expectations can be clearly communicated to staff and students, the mission, vision, and outcomes must first be determined. On July 1<sup>st</sup>, I would meet with my administrative team to start the process of creating the mission and vision statements for the school, along with the desired outcomes. Since I knew I was going to be taking over as the principal in February, I would have worked with the district administrators who hired me to have two surveys sent out in the spring to all current employees at the school. The first survey would have been a satisfaction survey. I would want to know how my staff felt, because that will determine much of my future

plan. I would ask very specific questions, but I would also include open ended questions on the survey, so that I could receive honest feedback. The second survey would have been a survey to solicit feedback in regard to what teachers wanted to see in the mission and vision statements. At the same time the teacher surveys were sent out, I would have had student and parent surveys sent out as well to gauge the culture and climate of the school and to solicit feedback that could be used to help create the mission and vision. It is extremely important that the mission and vision statements are written collaboratively with input and feedback from all stakeholder groups. (Bolling, 2022) The spring and first part of summer would be spent analyzing that data and starting to formulate a plan of action. On July 1<sup>st</sup>, I would share the results with the rest of my admin team and then share with them some key points that I wanted to address in the mission and vision statements. We would spend the entire day creating the preliminary mission and vision statements. I would then encourage the admin team to enjoy their 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday and we will make necessary revisions and finalize the statements when we return from the holiday.

The following statement would be the finalized version. The mission of Maynard High School is to create a tradition of excellence by empowering students to become responsible citizens who make sound personal choices and decisions. The vision of Maynard High School is to prepare and motivate our students for a rapidly changing world by instilling in them critical thinking skills, resiliency, responsibility, honesty, and integrity. Students will experience success today and be prepared for tomorrow.

Once the mission and vision statements are created, we would work to establish desired outcomes for the year. One short term goal would be to match or exceed the average graduation rate of the other high schools in the district. Another short-term goal would be to receive a higher percentage of satisfied employees on the satisfaction survey that will be sent out again in the

spring. One long-term goal would be to see test score improvements on state tests each year for four consecutive years. Another long-term goal would be to have the best staff retention rate in the district over a four-year span

### **Collaborating for Data**

As previously stated, I would work with the district administration who hired me to send out surveys in the spring to staff, students, and parents. This would be part of my plan to form a collaborative relationship with all parties in order to improve the school's educational environment and create a student-centered culture. I would also establish PLCs for Maynard High School. Each department would be split up into their own PLC in order to collaborate and ensure that the best curriculum is being taught with effective instructional strategies. I would use the professional development days before school to outline clear expectations for admin, teachers, and support staff. I would also take the first day of school to communicate clear expectations for students. As students enter the building for their second year, they should feel a noticeable difference. They will see a very visible principal and my staff will see me modeling the expectations that I have for them.

### **Productive Family Relationships**

Not only will surveys be sent out to engage the families of Maynard High School, an open house event will be held prior to school starting. This will be an opportunity for parents and families to come into the school and meet myself and our staff. I will open the night by giving a brief presentation of the mission and vision statements that were created, as well as sharing the expectations that will be communicated to students. Along with those details, I would also share a little bit of my heart. I would share how excited I am to be leading this school and I would

encourage families that our school will have a positive, student-centered environment. After my presentation, I would be very diligent about trying to meet people and have conversations with as many stakeholders as possible. I would make sure the rest of my admin team and as many of our teachers as possible are doing the same. Maynard High School would also hold a freshmen/new student orientation to engage the families of new students and freshmen. There would also be a Sports Night event to communicate clear expectations for our athletic programs and engage families of student-athletes. Lastly, we would host a “back to school picnic” before the first football game at Maynard High School. This would be a great event to meet people, grill some burgers, tailgate, and cheer on the football team. This would also inspire school spirit and pride.

### **Productive Community Partnerships**

It is also very important to establish productive community partnerships. The first step I would take would be to reach out to local business to see if anyone wanted to sponsor some of our family engagement events. This would be an opportunity for a business to provide food, waters, and have a presence in the community. I would also work to establish a cooperative work study program, so our students can earn credit for working in the community at different businesses, organizations, and agencies. This would allow students to gain valuable work experience to help guide them in choosing their future career while earning high school credits.

### **Public Advocacy**

When it comes to publicly advocating for my school, the students, and their families, it is important to first listen and learn. I would diligently listen to my stakeholders and try to gain perspective and understanding of what my school needs me to advocate for. Once I gain a thorough understanding, I would provide information to stakeholder groups to help build support

for my school. Successful advocates frame the cause or issue by relating it to a bigger picture. (Williamson, 2010) The first thing I would do would be to create a one-page fact sheet that outlines the facts for the cause that I am advocating for. On this sheet, I would include my position, what action I would like to see taken, three key reasons why actions must be taken, research to back up my position, and powerful closing statement. (Williamson, 2010) I would use this to communicate effectively with local and state leaders to try and enact change.

### **Rationales**

When determining my action plan, I looked to the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders PSEL Standard 1 states “Effective educational leaders develop, advocate, and enact a shared mission, vision, and core values of high-quality education and academic success and well-being of each student.” (NPBEA, 2015) This is the reason I went so in depth into my process of creating the mission and vision statements of the school. In order to be an effective leader, the mission and vision need to be extremely clear and communicated effectively to all stakeholders. Another key standard that impacted my plan was PSEL Standard 5 which states “Effective educational leaders cultivate an inclusive, caring, and supportive school community that promotes the academic success and well-being of each student.” (NPBEA, 2015) In closing, I believe that by enacting a shared mission and vision, empowering and supporting my teachers, and emphasizing the importance of relationships, I will be able to raise the morale of my teachers, improve the learning environment for students, and ultimately change the culture.

**References:**

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