

Leadership for Educational and Organizational Advancement



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Article by Dr. Derrick L. Campbell, Ed.D.

Leadership Qualities that Promote Positive Racial Teacher-Student Relationships

Several years ago, as I sat in my office, I wondered if working as an educator was worth it. I was spending most of my time processing disciplinary infractions which did not allow time for instructional leadership. I knew that the time students spent in my office and in the in-school suspension program resulted in lost instructional time for teachers and students. This lost instructional time has an impact on standardized test scores, school leadership, students, teachers, and the local community.

When cultural conflicts between educators and students are non-existent, schools become the benefactor of a culture where standardized test scores increase and student disciplinary infractions decrease. However, in a school where the staff demographics are mostly white and the student demographics are minorities, the challenge for the school leader becomes how to overcome this stumbling block without the adverse effects that racism allegations can cause. Leaders who promote positive racial teacher-student relationships have leadership characteristics with an ethical foundation and include Servant, Participative Management, Social Justice, Transformational, Feminist, and Transactional leadership qualities.

Ethics is the foundational leadership component necessary to promote positive racial teacher-student

classroom relationships. The leader must believe that they have an assigned stewardship over their organization which also requires them to faithfully develop good relationships between students and teachers. This leader is committed to developing moral communities that make all teachers and students the basic center of all moral and ethical decisions.

Servant leadership qualities are necessary components for a moral community that promotes positive racial teacher-student classroom relationships. The leader must take precautionary steps in selecting the appropriate staff members who will participate in the change process. They must also remove obstacles that may thwart the process, empower teachers, and have the ability to persuade and not coerce teachers involved in the process.

Participative management is an essential leadership quality for this process. The leader must have the ability to develop a shared vision in collaboration with the participating teachers. Teachers and students must be comfortable with the relationship bond between them and the leader. The leader will have the ability to decipher information and will share this information with staff members and students. Finally, the leader must be ready themselves for the self-organization systems that will be manifest pursuant to promoting positive racial teacher-student classroom relationships.

Promoting positive racial

teacher-student classroom relationships requires Social Justice leadership qualities. The overall project completion will create greater opportunities for children by decreasing the student disciplinary infractions and therefore increasing student classroom achievement.

Transformational leadership qualities are engrained in the overall project. The leader promotes shared vision development with teachers and students, allows teachers to experiment with new strategies, use reflective practice as a process for changing the culture, and promote second-order change which impacts teacher classroom practices.

Facilitating a project of this importance creates a child-centered school that ensures staff members treat students with respect which is consistent with Feminist leadership characteristics.

The leader must have the bureaucratic authority to ensure the success and completion of the project. For example, if the leader decides to conduct students meetings, the leader will need the bureaucratic authority to ensure that staff members and students comply with their request.

Anyone who has this assortment of leadership qualities can successfully promote positive racial teacher-student relationships which will result in increased student achievement and decreased student disciplinary infractions.

DLC Consultant Group

PO Box 1668
Blackwood, NJ 08012

Phone: 856-566-3267
877-WISolve

E-mail: info@dlconsultantgroup.com
www.dlconsultantgroup.com

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