Forum 4

East Middle School is currently undergoing a considerable change as far as our school culture goes and how the administrators are demonstrating they are valuing these changes. At our recent leadership meeting, our principal unveiled the rough draft of how the master schedule will be put together for next school year. Our districts mission and vision have been modified to fit our second year superintendents priorities and now our strategic plan is emphasizing five main areas.

1. All reading proficiently by 3rd grade.

2. Teaching and Leading.

3. 21st Century Learning.

4. Community Partnerships.

5. College, Career and Life Readiness.

Our new schedule will allow for teacher flexibility to co-teach content area classes and to implement more blended learning opportunities as well as project-based learning. The new schedule will allow for a STEAM class that will have teachers identify what they are interested in teaching and students identify what they are interested in learning about and matching those interests. Our administration team has been proactive in the changes that are wanting to be made knowing that the district is wanting innovation and that change is necessary to be successful in our strategic plan.

The following quote would help identify East Middle School as a healthy organization, "Common to all healthy organizations is a positive and growth-producing process for responding to opportunities for change" (Hackmann, Tracy, & Schmitt-Oliver, digital pg. 1448).

Currently our administration is listening to all of the I likes and I wonders from the staff and school personal to allow for feedback on the changes that are happening. This quote would support the decision to listen to the stakeholders involved, "Creating structures that support the involvement of teachers, staff, parents and students in the decision-making process of the school further empowers this workforce and the students" (Hackmann, Tracy, & Schmitt-Oliver, digital pg. 1543).

What I am learning is that as an administrator, Abraham Lincoln's quote of "The best way to predict the future, is to create it" is very true. We could for sure wait around and see what the "district" would tell us to do but instead our school knows that change is happening and we are actively having a say in what that change looks like. I personally experienced the feeling our administration is going through with consistently hearing that they have leaderships support and that their innovation will be met with the districts resources because this is our myself and my co-teacher were treated when we wanting to change our teaching pedagogy to all project-based learning and the many other changes that come with that.

Being in the Rapid City Area Schools system as a teacher and an administrator is very exciting and interesting because of all the changes and this will only lead to a better, very different school culture that is much needed for our students and the skills they need to be developing for their future!

Hackmann, D.G., Tracy, J.C., & Schmitt-Oliver, D.M. (2002) The standards-based administrative internship: putting the ISLLC standards into practice. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press.