



# Page High School

Franklin, Tennessee

## A Case Study of School Leadership

### **Purpose of the Research**

To learn about factors associated with inclusive high schools whose students are achieving exemplary results, the Beacons of Excellence project at the Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota, (in collaboration with the Council for Exceptional Children) implemented a three-year, project funded by the Office of Special Education Programs. The project was designed to study how curricula, instruction, leadership, and other factors contribute to exemplary results for *all* high school students. The conceptual model used to guide the research was built on the framework established by the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award for education, which was established in 1998 to recognize performance excellence in schools (National Institute of Standards and Technology [NIST], 1998). Additional input for the model was gathered from a broad group of constituents interested in youth and educational concerns, and school completion and post-school outcomes established by the National Center for Educational Outcomes at the University of Minnesota.

### **Introduction: A Case Study of School Leadership**

When stakeholders (20 focus groups and 12 interviews) at four inclusive high schools producing exemplary results for students with and without disabilities were asked what factors they associated with the successful outcomes of their school, 75% of the groups and individuals replied with statements associated with leadership. Because of this frequency, *Leadership* became a particularly important focus for the Beacons research study.

To understand what stakeholders defined as important leadership factors associated with their schools, each interview and focus group session was transcribed. These transcriptions were then coded for statements that were directly or indirectly linked to the school-based leadership system and/or the actions of the school leaders. This process was conducted by two people who established high reliability in their consistent classification of leadership statements. Once identified, these statements were analyzed, school by school. The themes that emerged from the statements were checked and validated by Beacons staff who were familiar with the interview text and schools. Lastly, the resulting case studies for each school were given to school administrators to be shared with relevant stakeholders for further validation. A cross-school description of leadership themes can be found in the

document *The Leadership Factor: A Key to Effective Inclusive High Schools*, located on the Beacons of Excellence web site ([ici.umn.edu/beacons](http://ici.umn.edu/beacons)).

### **Leadership Themes Defined**

This case study describes the leadership themes that emerged through interviews with stakeholders at Fred J. Page High School. It should be noted that the themes presented are not exhaustive of what school administrators and school leadership systems are doing, but are based only on the statements stakeholders. Leadership was defined as the "school-based leadership system and actions of the leaders." Only stakeholder statements that could be identified as explicitly related to this leadership description were included in the themes that are reported here.

This process, we believe, stayed true to stakeholder intent, and the emergent themes represent what stakeholders highlight as important leadership actions and systems within their school - actions and systems that support exemplary outcomes for students with and without disabilities.

### **Page High School Summary**

Page High School (Page) is a comprehensive 9-12th grade high school located in Franklin, Tennessee, a suburb of Nashville. The area surrounding the school is picturesque, with rolling hills, trees and open fields. Page serves about 875 students, most of them Caucasian (85%) and black (9%). Fourteen percent of Page students have Individualized Education Plans.

Page High School first opened in the fall of 1976 as a 7-12th grade high school. In 1981, a middle school was built across the street to serve seventh and eighth grade students. Since 1976 the school has experienced four major renovation projects, including the addition of a new gym, nine science labs, four computer labs, several new athletic facilities, and a state-of-the-art media center. The current principal started at Page in 1993. The context in which the principal arrived was one of a school that was having difficulty maintaining its reputation. His foremost task was to improve the school and establish its reputation.

Currently, Page High School's overriding aim is to prepare its students for college, although it offers a *two path* curriculum that includes a career education focus. Page prides itself on its wide selection of courses and programs. Academically, they have eliminated all of their basic classes and replaced them with differential courses that challenge students at every level - from remedial and study skills courses to college level courses. Support is built into the daily schedule through a 50-minute "Directed Study" period that allows all students to study in the classroom of the teacher of their choosing. Alternate day block scheduling, allowing 90-minute instructional periods, offers instructional latitude and opportunities for teacher collaboration within departments and across departments. In addition, there is a school-wide emphasis to incorporate knowledge application, problem

solving, and critical thinking in all courses. Graduating students are required to complete a culminating project that draws on a variety of skills to present to a panel of *experts*, including topic-related professionals from the community.

Extracurricular efforts emphasize activities that are relevant to students and staff. Although there are competitive activities, such as sports and debate, the less competitive activities stem from student and staff interests, with an underlying objective to connect students with the school community.

When the current principal was assigned to Page High school, he initiated an effort to increase expectations for all students. A new resource program was developed to encourage the involvement of students with disabilities in the general core curriculum. A staff monitor was connected to each student with a disability and this person would remain in this role throughout the students' high school experience. Currently, 95% of students with disabilities spend 100% of their day in the general core curriculum, and the remaining 5% participate for at least 75% of their day. Only one class is offered exclusively for students with disabilities.

#### **A Partial List of School Programs/Initiatives**

- Site-based decision-making along the framework of the Effective Schools program.
- Joining the High Schools That Work program of the Southern Regional Education Board.
- Extensive staff development program in effective instructional strategies, including Socratic Seminars, Cooperative Learning, Application of Learning, Writing Across the Curriculum, Interdisciplinary Instruction.
- Implementation of an Extra Help Network.
- Peer Mediation and Anger Management program.
- Freshmen Transition programs.
- Integration and Expansion of Technology program.
- Upgrading all vocational classes to include college preparatory curriculum.

*For more information, visit the Beacons Web site at <http://ici.umn.edu/beacons>*

#### **Reference**

National Institute of Standards and Technology (1998). Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award: 1998 Education Criteria for Performance Excellence. Gaithersburg, MD: Author.

## The Significant Factor of Leadership

One of the primary factors associated with the success of Page High School is the quality of its leadership. When stakeholders at Page High School think of leadership, they almost always think of one person, the principal. It was the arrival of the current principal that marked the change in Page's direction and performance. The principal carried with him absolute values that fused with the values of the staff and eventually transformed the school. These values included a belief that all children can learn, that performance is only as high as expectation, and that a school needs to be one - one group of staff and students, driven by one common vision.

The principal at Page focuses on developing and maintaining a single, high quality, learning community that strives to challenge students and staff while supporting their individual needs. He does this by regularly renewing, reinforcing and aligning school objectives around a common school vision; by setting and communicating high standards; by being consistent and systematic (fair); by expanding student access to challenging classes while expanding their responsibility for their choices; by being visibly present and involved at many school levels; by giving professional autonomy to staff while promoting an energetic climate of innovation and collaboration; and, finally, by expecting that all students are part of the general education curriculum while, at the same time, expecting the school will continue to give students the individualized support they need to succeed.

Page's staff and students have positively responded to these efforts. In six years Page High school transformed itself from a school that was characterized as the "runt of the community" to a school that now produces exemplary results for all of its students. In response to the school's success outcomes, students with and without disabilities have begun traveling beyond their own district borders to attend Page.

*"If you have a strong principal, you have strong leadership, you're going to have a staff that's driven in delivering the goods and making things happen."*

*- District Administrator*

*"[The primary factor associated with this school's success is] The principal's involvement. That was six years ago now in January. We were a very sleepy community... We were the runt of the litter. The principal came in and, in his first year here, was principal of the year for the State of Tennessee, which was kind of an eye opener for me. I have taught forever. I was in resource in 1972."*

*- Special Education Administration*

## **Challenge All Students and Their Teachers to High Standards**

When the principal arrived at Page High School he began to work on unifying the staff into a community with a common focus. The "first thing we worked on was climate and philosophy and mission and with where we were going," says an administrator. Aligning visions, goals, and objectives became essential to integrating the school - staff and students. More coordinated objectives were viewed as a means to a more effective school with higher outcomes. However, coordination of objectives first required an underlying philosophy and vision upon which objectives could be coordinated.

Page's vision was developed around the following explicit beliefs or assumptions -

- 1) All students can learn.
- 2) The level of learning is proportionate to the level of challenges.
- 3) All students should have access to all the school's support.

*"United in the pursuit of excellence. We educate each student by valuing respect, responsibility, and relevancy in a dynamic and enlightening environment."*

- Mission Statement

Fundamental to the principal's objectives is an assumption that students will learn if the structure is set up to challenge them. This assumption is one that stakeholders refer to as an empowering premise, having a motivating affect on what staff believe they can do with students and, in turn, what students believe they can do with staff and themselves. This optimism is fundamental to Page's reform efforts and is the result of a variety of coordinated administrative objectives.

### ***Developing and Maintaining High Expectations***

The principal promotes high expectations for all students, regardless of background or disability. Each year, strengths and weaknesses of the school are discussed and evaluated, and the envelope of expectations is expanded where possible. For example, recently Page increased the criteria for a passing grade. The school had reached a performance level where a "D" was no longer useful as a measure of minimum student performance. Subsequently, the minimum performance level was graduated to the level of "C" while maintaining the same assessment criteria as before this change.

*"He expects kids to learn. He doesn't believe that just because you are poor or grew up in the country or are a minority, that you can't learn. [The principal's] attitude is one of 'If we expect quality, we'll get quality.' I think that he's out there expecting what he expects. He's very visible in and around the school."*  
- District Representative

*"The primary factor - I try to emphasize this with groups that I speak with when I have a chance to talk with other administrators at workshops - the thing I try to get them to see and the thing that I try to relate when we talk about the success that we've had here is that the first thing we worked on was climate and philosophy and mission and vision. That was of primary importance to us, to get everybody aligned with where we were going. I think that is one of the things that we've been able to do and it's not been easy..."*  
- Administrator

*"Since the beginning, the outlook [has been] 'all kids can learn'; we need to figure out how."*  
- Special Educator

*"I think [the principal] sets*

When expectations are clear and understood, it empowers students to make informed and responsible decisions. The principal personally takes it upon himself to reinforce and clarify expectations. Whether at an assembly, at a meeting, or in a classroom, the principal takes the opportunity to refresh the expectations and how they relate to the vision of the school. Often, the principal will meet with new students to clarify for them and their parent(s) what is expected of them and what the school will do for them.

### ***Trusting Student Potential and Expanding Student Choices and Responsibility***

Another way that the principal increases the challenges for students is by expanding their realm of responsibility. Page has pushed to increase student responsibility by giving them more academic latitude yet holding them accountable for their choices. While students may be more vulnerable to making choices that exceed their abilities, greater options can lead to greater challenges and engagement. For example, Page lowered the admission criteria for advanced placement classes to make them available to a larger number of students. Although some students overextend themselves and struggle within these classes, the performance measures remain the same, and the students are challenged and grow from the experience. A special educator describes a situation where a parent of a student who was not performing well requested an adjustment in the grading scale. "The principal's response to the parent was: 'We cannot modify to ensure passing; we can modify to ensure the ability to pass. But if he's not willing to take the responsibility, there are no modifications for passing any class.'" Although standards are firm and students are given choices but held accountable, the school views these challenges as part of its goal of providing instruction and support that each student needs to achieve success.

### ***One Learning Community***

Page is focused on sustaining one learning community for all students. This is an expectation that is placed on the school and on all students. Out of a total of 219 classes during the fall of 1999, only one class was exclusively for students with disabilities. Where there is a special educator collaborating with a general educator, all students receive access to the same level of assistance. Teachers talk about students working together and accepting each other's differences, and offering each other

*expectations with every student who enters Page High School. They have meetings with the parents to tell you what is expected of you and what is expected of your child. I was just blown away by that fact. Here we are in a country school and we're setting expectations because we have to... He communicates this. They communicate this at different levels too."*

*- Community Member*

*"I think [that AP scores constitute a measure of school success] if you were a traditional principal and think that only people who have a 3.5 grade point average and an 'A' in English and an English teacher's recommendation can get into AP classes... There is about an 88% correlation that kids should also be able to so score three or higher on an AP exam [if they score 50% on a PSAT]. So if they're saying 50 is the cutoff, [the principal] is saying, 'Let kids with 40 in and let's just push that envelope and get these kids in at 40. I'd rather have a kid with an AP for curriculum making a C+ or B in there (making a 2 on the AP exam) than having a kid sitting in a regular European history class making a B and not getting challenged."*

*- District Representative*

*"[A factor in Page's success] is the leadership's ability to relay 'a philosophy to their staff... The expectations are extremely high, [yet] they try to have students within the regular program as much as possible."*

*- State Representative*

classroom support when needed. Students talk about Page as a friendly place, an accepting community. Parents talk about Page as an inviting, respectful environment, where their children feel accepted and connected. Stakeholders in general talk about an environment where the same expectations apply to everyone - everyone is part of the same community, sharing similar struggles, goals, and successes.

### **Hire Staff Who Reinforce School Values and Vision**

Administrators at Page believe that a school can only be as good as its staff. For this reason the principal sees his most important job as "being able to attract quality faculty." Once identified, scrutinized, and hired, he then empowers staff with a lot of professional autonomy.

Through a process of inquiry and research the principal will identify teachers, throughout the region, who have strong reputations in the areas he needs to fill. He will attempt to attract their attention with whatever means he has available, while making sure that he is ready to hire quickly if the candidate meets his criteria. On a few occasions the district representative has even been asked to come to the school on a Saturday to finalize a contract.

The administration uses a rigorous screening process when selecting teachers to hire. One teacher describes the process as "brutal." Although there have been a few exceptions to this hiring process, it usually follows these steps: First, prospective teachers complete an application at the district level. If this is accepted, the teachers produce a video that is available to principals throughout the district. Next, there is the school-level interview. As one teacher explains, "We've had teachers who we thought were going to be great, and they didn't pass the interview process." The teachers may have exceptional knowledge of their disciplines, but that is only one of four criteria used.

The other criteria that Page's administration uses for selecting teachers is well defined. They are as follow:

1. **Altruistic:** Is the teacher teaching because he or she cares about children?

*"No matter what system or organizational structure you have, if you don't have good teachers and you don't have good staff and support staff, then it's not going to work. So that has been our primary [job]."*

*- Administrator t*

*"[T]hat's been my primary job - to really search out, recruit, cajole, kidnap, do whatever we can to get the very best people available that fit our philosophy and that have the same goals and agenda that we have. I think that would be the primary thing that we've been able to do is to really reach out and get good people. So it starts there."*

*- Administrator*

*"The thing that comes through that I look for the most is altruism. It's caring about kids. Why are they doing this? Is it about them? Is it about fulfilling their needs and their desires or their goals? Is it because they love English or they love math? Or is it about wanting to help kids?"*

*- Administrator*

*"Can they fit in our climate, our*

2. **Compatible:** Is the teacher compatible with the school's culture, purpose, and philosophy?

*culture, and with our philosophy of improvement?"*  
- Administrator

3. **Open-minded:** Is the teacher personally interested in learning?

*"Do they have all the answers or are they learning themselves?"*  
- Administrator

A combination of the above attributes has been a recipe for a vital, responsive, and cohesive staff that embraces the concept of community and continuous improvement.

### **The Principal Supports Staff Innovation**

School improvement does not depend only on ideas, but implementing them. Whether it is ideas or implementation, teachers are the primary resource. Once the principal has invested in hiring qualified and student-centered staff, the principal takes on the role of facilitating their professional potential. This facilitation goes in three directions:

- 1) develop a climate that enables staff to safely exchange and implement ideas.
- 2) provide staff with resources they need to carry out their objectives.
- 3) provide for training to increase and refresh the knowledge pool within the school (described in the *professional development* section).

*"We need to support them and provide an environment for them to do their thing so that they can teach and grow and we can help them with that - then they feel supported in their efforts and have the opportunity to experiment, to be innovative, to reach out and do different things that improve learning."*  
- Administrator

*"[The principal says,]you want to try something different? That's good."*  
- Special Educator

Risk-taking is basic to improvement - *nothing ventured, nothing gained*. The principal advocates for reasoned risk-taking, innovation, and a pursuit of new ideas. This effort is not rhetorical, but permeates the staff culture, and it is an outcome of administrative consistency, administratively modeled risk-taking, an administrative search and sharing of new ideas, administrative support of staff autonomy and ideas, and an administrative and staff understanding that risk is inherent in all continuous improvement.

*"We try to focus on what the school-wide goals are. That's our primary goal. Not everything should be aligned directly towards that. I don't want to indicate that we... wouldn't support something that would be outside that, but primarily our goal ought to be toward the school-wide goal, either directly or indirectly."*  
- Administrator

Although Page High School experienced more changes than the average school during the principal's first year, because the change was nurtured through the ranks it was not perceived as something the principal did, explains a district representative. The school's organizational structure is used as a conduit for

*"The one thing that I would say that [the principal] has put a strong emphasis on is changing, on flexibility, on trying. Mistakes*

generating and collecting ideas and information. It facilitates input and discussion at all levels. In addition, ideas are generated and exchanged through daily, informal interactions with staff. Included in these exchanges is often a subtle message that asks the staff to reflect on what they personally are trying to achieve at Page. Furthermore, when faculty and staff have an idea, they can take it either to their department heads or directly to the administration.

Although the principal nurtures an open climate of innovation and ideas, there is an emphasis of support for those ideas that are aligned with school-wide goals. This is not a requirement, but a basis upon which to make reasoned choices.

Additionally, the principal supports staff innovation through two avenues: Through offering time, expertise, and resources to implement initiatives. And conversely, to offer support through respecting the professional autonomy and choice of staff. Staff initiatives are supported but not micro-managed. Staff determine, individually and within their own unique contexts, how initiatives will best apply to their work. An administrator offers an example, "When we went to the block schedule, we said this is pretty much how this ought to look, now you define how it works in your classroom..."

The openness around ideas and initiatives is not one-way, from staff to administration. The administration has played a key role in promoting the value of improvement and generating ideas about how to improve the school. The refreshing of the vision, goals and objectives; the focus on program evaluation; the promotion of current research in education - these initiatives either prompt or require a questioning about how things are being done at the school level, department level, or in classrooms - turning the soil of intelligence, making it more fertile for ideas. Because of the reciprocal relationship between the administration and staff, the staff says that it listens openly and favorably to the administration. And conversely, the administration listens to the staff. As a community member points out, the principal often says, "Well, we have to be careful... so we don't overload people."

*aren't a big deal as long as what you were doing had a sound basis. Very willing to do things differently and very supportive, if you can give a reason why."*  
- Special Educator

*"What are your needs? - ... That's our job, and it's for them to say, 'This is what we need.' When they say that we need to provide the resources for them."*  
- Administrator

*"We encourage innovation and we try to find opportunities. We don't force the issue on them. We don't say everybody here has to use Socratic seminars or everybody here has to use cooperative learning... We take the approach that we make those things available... [H]ow the teacher goes about getting that done is pretty much up to them to choose, but we'll help them find ways to make it more effective... And we'll support that."*  
- Administrator

*"[The principal] is always aware of how to improve and then he shares them with us because we know each other very well, and we're very receptive. The rest of the faculty is quite receptive. We share goals. Everybody... There's constantly a push for improvement."*  
- Community member

## Promote Professional Development

Ongoing professional development is a key to success at Page High School. The principal nurtures professional development by promoting staff learning opportunities that are aligned with the school improvement plan, and supports departmental and individual desires for additional training that may or many not be aligned with the school improvement plan. In addition to targeted training objectives and programs, the principal infuses the school culture with information that reflects broad issues that strengthen staff relationships and current school trends.

When the principal first arrived at Page, he brought with him a positive momentum. This momentum was communicated to staff through thought-provoking articles, thought-provoking questions, and thought-provoking discussions. Topics were broad and pertinent, including readings by such authors as Deming and Covey. A summer reading list was initiated that included, among other authors, *Total Body/Soul* and *Teaching In The Block*.

In addition to initiating new ideas, the principal promotes opportunities that further school improvement plans. This includes identifying and supporting staff involvement in objective-related learning opportunities. But the principal doesn't stop at support: He often leads the effort in learning by initiating and participating in these events himself. A special educator offers an example where the principal loaded up a van of faculty and, with a sense of camaraderie, drove to several cities to observe programs that modeled initiatives that Page was wanting to develop. In another example, the principal identified a school in Delaware that would be useful as a model for Page. He then accompanied department heads and other faculty on a three day site visit to observe the Delaware school program.

The principal also supports individual staff learning objectives, primarily (but not exclusively) when the objectives are aligned with school-wide goals. These activities include conferences, workshops, as well as other learning opportunities. When staff return from training, they share what they have learned with their colleagues. This climate of learning and sharing has prompted staff at Page to offer more presentations at conferences than any other school in the district.

*"[When the principal began, there were suddenly] [j]ournal readings in your mailbox - this is happening, what do you think?"*  
- Special Educator

*"About four years ago [the principal] called me and said a bunch of teachers are going, and he's driving the van to everyone's dismay, to Atlanta to go to a school-to-work conference. The next year I was driving with him somewhere to present at a school.*

*They went one year to learn about how to do it, they did it, they got grants, and then a year later it was turned around. That happens with a lot of things here."*  
- District Representative

*"I think [the principal] has been very proactive... So often I see teachers sort of beaten down. You're in a little box and expected to go it alone. It's just a real nice feeling here about who you are and what you do. I think teachers are valued and rewarded by being able to go to these conferences and bring back information."*  
- Community Member

*"We provide staff development opportunities for areas that fit what we're trying to do and that we believe work, that are strategies that work and get kids excited. Active participation. Involvement of students. Depth of understanding. Working towards being able to apply and transfer that knowledge or that skill. So those are all things that we think are important."*  
- Administrator

## Principal Supports Informed Improvement

Central to Page High School's success are its school-wide goals. These common goals guide the school's direction, decisions, and unify the school. They are also, of course, central to improvement and self-assessment, providing a reference upon which school performance can be judged and acted upon.

When the principal first started at Page, he came in as a visionary with a strong aptitude toward systematic decision making. With the assistance of a district representative, he quickly learned how to identify and link appropriate indicators with the goals within the vision. In addition, a school improvement plan was developed through a democratic process that cycled ideas through the school leadership structure over a long period of time. Data that was collected then had specific purposes that informed the school about its progress toward its short and long-range goals.

In addition to establishing school-wide goals, he advanced the school's systematic orientation by getting the school involved in the *High Schools That Work* program.

The vision, goals and objectives, and improvement plan are regularly renewed at Page. As the school improves, standards are increased and strategies changed. As specific needs of the students constantly change, improvement is treated as a never-ending process. Subsequently, the improvement plan is regularly updated, using purposeful data and the same democratic process that forged the previous plan.

*"I came in the winter of 1992. I came that second semester and right away began to evaluate. Over the next year we became involved in the High Schools That Work program and that gave us a real hook."  
- Administrator*

*"[The principal had a] very clear vision of where the school is... I think he's done a very good job of doing a deft analysis between where they are, where they want to go (as far as the data is concerned), and then targeting and determining [the distance] from where they are to where they want to be. He's focused on that."  
- District Representative*

*"I had been really vision-oriented and had ideas about what school ought to look like and how we ought to do things and how we want to treat people and manage, but I had not been very data-driven."  
- Administrator*

*"[The superintendent] helped me... in terms of being able to really zero in. The indicators of success that we have are things that he's brought to the system. We've been able to plug into it. It's really been helpful to have that direction and that training - 'This is what you ought to look for and some things you can look at to tell whether or not you're doing a good job and to see the areas where you need to improve,' etc."  
- Administrator*

## The Principal Nurtures An Inclusive Community

Page High School acts as one learning community. This singularity is a result of concerted efforts to bring the academic and social community together, philosophically and structurally. An integrated and collaborative focus on all students is perceived as a more complete and better service than a separate, compartmentalized focus on particular student populations. All students are expected to participate in the common curriculum and in school activities - where students will receive the individualized support they need to be successful. Not only have academic courses been made available to larger numbers of students, extracurricular activities have been broadened and diversified to interest more students. Students are also drawn to extracurricular activities by being given one period a week during the school-day to participate in them. According to a state representative, the principal has been so successful at communicating a philosophy of inclusion that it "permeates through all the staff - the vocational staff, the special ed. staff, the regular ed. staff..." An administrator indicates that when a philosophy reaches a critical mass within the school, as it has at Page, it begins to reinforce itself. Teachers who are not compatible with Page's inclusion and collaborative orientation, it is reported, eventually leave Page for a position elsewhere.

The principal supports inclusion by transmitting values of high standards, accountability, autonomy, and innovation to staff, while at the same time emphasizing student support services within a single learning community. Transformation of Page from a traditional segregated orientation to an inclusive orientation evolved over a period of years. The evolution required patience and a long-term vision. The outcome has been described as a "team spirit" among staff, a staff that carries inclusion in "their hearts." The value of inclusion (acceptance of difference) is central to the school's image of itself. Although it is structured through the school's policies, it is practiced as something to celebrate, something that makes many things possible. This orientation has not only integrated staff around serving all students, but it has had a transformational affect on student acceptance of the school, teachers, and of each other.

The role of leadership in developing this inclusive community included the following:

- The leadership communicates - in an articulate and genuine manner - a message that is clear and can be understood as

*"[The principal has conveyed a message of inclusion that] permeates through all the staff - the vocational staff, the special ed. staff, the regular ed. staff - so it's not just one component like regular ed. teachers, not special ed. teachers, not vocational. It's all the teachers, so they realize what the philosophy is and the concerns that they have. They try to work with the students as much as possible."  
- State Representative*

*"[It] didn't happen overnight... He is a very patient man. His faculty is also patient. It's evolved."  
- District Representative*

*"It's not just expectations; it's that this is something that we recognize and celebrate..."  
- Principal*

*"We've taken the approach that if you don't believe this way, that's okay. You may be successful doing your thing in another place, but right now, here, we need to be going in this direction. I think we are at the point where the vast majority of the faculty, the community, the students, have that idea."  
- Administrator*

*"A lot of it has to do with [the principal]. He really, really takes it upon himself to make everybody feel involved and part of the school. It's an important part that has a lot to do with [the school's success]."  
- Students*

*"[The staff] work together. There's a real team spirit here. Whenever I'm looking for volunteers for*

good for the whole learning community. This message has been consistent over the years with a long-term vision that can be understood by staff, students, and parents alike. Although the message has been well defined over the years, it is general enough to allow for staff, students, and parents to shape their own visions within it.

- The leadership provides training for inclusive programs. Opportunities for training have existed since the beginning of the principal's arrival. This includes training for special educators and general educators, as inclusion has always been defined as a joint - or united - effort. This training includes workshops as well as travel to observe carefully selected model sites.
- The leadership is physically visible and involved with staff. The principal teaches a class, interacts with students, speaks at assemblies, and attends staff activities.
- The leadership is accessible to staff, students, and parents. This accessibility includes receptivity and involvement in decision making. The principal has an open-door policy for all stakeholders and his receptivity has attracted the attention of students who can sometimes be seen lined up at his door to discuss their issues. The principal holds a monthly "Principal's Coffee" as a forum for meeting and having discussion with parents and disseminates a parent newsletter describing school-level decisions.

*workshops, opportunities, and those kinds of things, I almost always call here first because I know people will give up their time... [The principal] has great teachers who ask to [present to others] and he supports that and celebrates it with the staff and lets others know that this is great and we're proud of you."*

*- District Representative*

*"[A factor in Page's success is] The unity... I feel like [the principal] has enforced us to think of our school body as being like a family, not just like a school."*

*- Student*

*"[The principal] is always around. In the lunchroom. Picking up trash..."*

*- Student*

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