



# Spartan Staff News



Vol. 1 – No. 10

## ***SUPER'S PERSPECTIVE***

**IMAGINE THE POSSIBILITIES**, what if our students could consistently achieve extraordinary results ... What would it mean for Hope-Page Cooperative Schools? What would it mean for our students? What would it mean for you and your career?

At the beginning of the day, it's all about possibilities. At the end of the day, it's all about results. But in today's ultra-competitive world, good results aren't good enough. We need to produce extraordinary results. Extraordinary results come from extraordinarily performing teams. And where there is an extraordinary team, you can bet there is a leader who is inspiring. That's why leadership – specifically, your leadership – matters. Are you that person in your classroom.

**Leadership matters** because high performing teams are the ultimate advantage for any organization whether it be a school, a business, a non-profit, an athletic team, or a family for that matter. New or unique products or abilities may get you in the game, but only your team can deliver victory and create a result that is the best you can attain.

**Leadership matters** ... right now, today ... no matter what situation you find yourself in. Whether you lead a team of one or a team of 100, or a classroom – leadership matters. Whether you lead at home, at the office, in one city or across the globe, leadership matters. It matters when you are on the front lines of an organization. It matters in an up economy or a down economy, in a start-up or a mature business, in local business or a global enterprise, or in a school. It matters on the first day and the last and every day between. Leadership is possibly the single biggest factor in achieving extraordinary results.

It might be hard to believe that one factor can have such a profound impact on performance, but our daily experiences – as well as plenty of research – prove it over and over again. A recent study of 30,000 leaders found that the top 10 percent of leaders generated twice the net income as the middle 80 percent. The study also identified one critical competency that distinguished the top 10th percentile of leaders from the rest: the ability to inspire and motivate

others to high performance. These findings demonstrate that inspiring leadership is directly linked with both employee engagement and productivity. The researchers stated, "... in addition to the responsibilities outlined in their job descriptions, leaders need to inspire and motivate people if an organization is to succeed."

*"If a woman has to choose between catching a fly ball and saving an infant's life, she will choose to save the infant's life without even considering if there is a man on base."*

*--Dave Barry*

## **CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

Some events that are on our calendar that will be happening over the next several weeks follow. Athletic events will be listed only when it is a special event such as homecoming, parents night, or a tournament.

- ✓ **Fri. April 21<sup>st</sup>** – "Dance the Night Away" Page Café fundraiser spaghetti dinner and concert @ Page School (6 p)
- ✓ **Sat. April 22<sup>nd</sup>** – Prom @ Finley
- ✓ **Mon. April 24<sup>th</sup>** – Bb (V – DH) v MPCG in Hope (4 p)
- ✓ **Tues. April 25<sup>th</sup>** – Pembina County Outdoor @ Cavalier (1 p); Bb (JH – DH) v Northern Cass in Hope (4 p)
- ✓ **Wed. April 26<sup>th</sup>** – Athletic Awards Banquet in Hope (6 p)
- ✓ **Thurs. April 27<sup>th</sup>** – Bb (V/JH) @ Larimore; Elementary Spring Concert (7 p)
- ✓ **Sat. April 29<sup>th</sup>** – State Speech @ Mandan; MPCG Invitational (10 a)
- ✓ **Mon. May 1<sup>st</sup>** – Bb (V/JH) @ Thompson (4:30 p)
- ✓ **Tues. May 2<sup>nd</sup>** – Larimore Invitational (2:30 p)
- ✓ **Thurs. May 4<sup>th</sup>** – Title Workshop in Fargo; Spring HS Concert in Hope (7 p)
- ✓ **Fri. May 5<sup>th</sup>** – Bb (v/JH) v H-CV in Hope (4:30 p)
- ✓ **Sat. May 6<sup>th</sup>** – State Music Contest
- ✓ **Mon. May 8<sup>th</sup>** – Bb (V/JH) v Hatton-Northwood in Hatton (4:30 p)
- ✓ **Tues. May 9<sup>th</sup>** – RRVC Outdoor @ Mayville (2 p)
- ✓ **Thurs. May 11<sup>th</sup>** – Bb (V/JH) v Dakota Prairie in Tolna (4:30 p)
- ✓ **Fri. May 12<sup>th</sup>** – Elementary Talent Show in Page (2 p)
- ✓ **Sat. May 13<sup>th</sup>** – Larimore Invitational (10:30 a)
- ✓ **Mon. May 15<sup>th</sup>** – Last Chance Track Meet (TBA); Bb (V/JH) v Larimore in Hope (4:30 p)

✓ **Fri. May 19<sup>th</sup>** – Regional Track Meet (TBA)

**MORE LEADERSHIP**

Sticking with my theme from the first article, I want to discuss leadership further, beginning with the *secret ingredient* for extraordinary leadership – and yes, as a teacher you are a LEADER.

So as the LEADER of your classroom, what type of leadership do you use? Do you utilize what is sometimes referred to as the “vending machine approach”? This approach occurs when someone (a student) asks the boss (you) a question. This is like inserting the coins in the vending machine and out pops the item like a candy bar, a soda, or bag of chips (the correct answer).

Or do use the “Fitting the Mold” approach to leadership with your workers (the students).

This is the “all-knowing” approach. The expectation is that you, as the leader, are rewarded for looking smart by quickly providing answers.

What gets rewarded gets done, you adjust your actions to fit the approach. In all reality, no one is always the same type of leader. We tend to take the approach that best fits our situation at the time. Not sure about your style – take a moment and reflect on how you work with the students:

- ✓ Do you make statements rather than ask questions to save time and keep things on track?
- ✓ Do you reward consistency and conformity because they are the expected norms of behavior?
- ✓ Do you label those who ask too many questions as disruptive and difficult?
- ✓ Do you look for facts that only support your position and ignore those that challenge it?
- ✓ Do you want answers given quickly, clearly, and unequivocally?
- ✓ Do you tell the boss what he / she wants to hear?
- ✓ Do you feel uncomfortable when there is



ambiguity?

When we take these approaches, the curiosity and joy of exploration (the incessant inquiry about why this or why that) that filled your childhood gets squeezed out by the expectations and standardized processes of academia and expediency. It becomes all about the business of learning. The teaching comes first. It becomes all about the results (how many were proficient or advanced on the test) and learning goes by the wayside, taking a back seat. These approaches are about the teacher and not the student.

We need to get back to the curiosity – most times it is about the trip and not just about the destination. It seems that we want to claim that

we value curiosity, but our actions discourage the expression of curiosity in our rush to cover the information. We need to promote innovation while learning from the failures rather than punishing it. We need to move to more open structures and systems, away from authority over inquiry and

routine and toward resourcefulness. In our world, the answers are more valued than inquisitive thought, draining the curiosity out of us. We need to find ways to rekindle the curiosity – the desire to learn.

When there is an **Absence Of Curiosity At Work or in school, the life seems to be drained out of all involved.** A survey regarding the state of curiosity was conducted by the Harris Poll in 2015. The results show how curiosity is absent from most of the leadership landscape:

- 39% of workers report that their employers are either extremely encouraging or very encouraging of curiosity;
- 22% describe themselves as curious at work;
- 66% report facing barriers to asking more questions;
- 60% say their workplace throws up barriers to integrating curiosity into their work; and
- 10% strongly agree that their leader preferred new and unfamiliar ideas.

So, how does being curious benefits you? First, curiosity — desiring knowledge beyond what you know, is a state of mind. It is a necessary leadership ability. A lack of curiosity and a surplus of conformity makes it challenging to lead in today’s complicated world.

Curiosity delivers multiple personal and professional benefits including improved

*“Challenges are what make life interesting and overcoming them is what makes life meaningful”.*  
 -- Joshua J. Marine

performance, mental retention, and happiness. curiosity also improves **social interactions** and interpersonal relationships by allowing for “comfort with uncertainty, unconventional

***“Curiosity is what separates us from the cabbages. It’s accelerative. The more we know, the more we want to know.”***

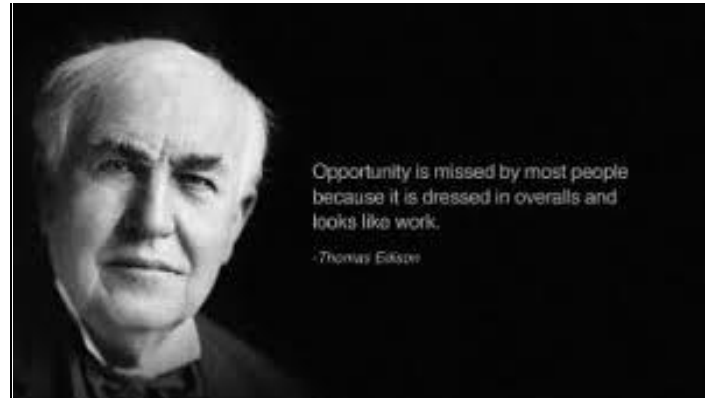
***~ David McCullough***

thinking, and a tendency to avoid judging, criticizing, or blaming other people.”

If you want to become a more curious leader you can do the following, provided you have self-awareness. Curiosity — filling the gap between what you know and want to learn, is a skill that can be developed. To be a curious leader, you need to:

- 1) Stop making statements that shut down creativity; start asking more questions that begin with “why” and “how.”
- 2) Probe for hidden or missed insights in the conflict, incongruity, contradictions, and uncertainty the bubble up at work.
- 3) Reframe your definition of failure to allow room to experiment, explore, and learn.
- 4) Be mindful of being too quick to judge or criticize.
- 5) Stop insisting on certainty and accept a measure of uncertainty and ambiguity.
- 6) Give yourself permission to play, have fun, and break the rules.
- 7) Listen more closely; ask clarifying questions. See what’s churning beneath the surface.
- 8) Watch the labels you use to categorize people and situations; they can be barriers to learning.
- 9) Probe for unfamiliarity within the familiar.
- 10) Don’t get too comfortable with what you know; seek out facts that challenge what you believe to be true.

***What will you do tomorrow to be a more curious leader and to inspire those around you to do the same?***



***“A man should look for what is, and not for what he thinks should be.” ~ Albert Einstein***