

# KAREN SMITH, M.A.T.

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## PHILOSOPHY OF ADMINISTRATION & LEADERSHIP

My philosophy is based on the premise that a successful school is one that encompasses a top-down approach. Therefore, it is crucial for the administrative team to be highly effective, results-oriented, open, and collaborative in nature. My leadership style is very adaptable and hands-on. Since all issues require different tactics and solutions, I analyze the situation and employ whichever means will suit it best. Furthermore, as a hands-on leader, I have no problem getting my hands dirty. If I won't tackle a tough situation myself, why should I expect my staff to do the same? I believe this to be an effective approach to leadership, as it shows all members of the school community that I am committed to the betterment of the institution, lead by example, and follow through on what I propose.

An educational administrator must be able to play many roles and execute numerous responsibilities: staff management, scheduling, public relations, community involvement, budget preparation, strategic planning, and so many others. My leadership style allows me to successfully juggle these positions and give equal time and effort to each one. My goal is to put the school district's philosophy at the forefront of my decisions, while championing student growth and support, interacting with the community, and ensuring stakeholders remain satisfied with school test results.

The ideal work atmosphere is based on collaboration. As such, I strive to encourage socialization, teamwork, and cooperation amongst my staff. I promote open communication, idea sharing, and positive risk taking to fuel an innovative and energetic team. I also maintain an open door policy, serve as administrative liaison to parents, and will facilitate communication between different parties as needed. As a goal-driven and team-oriented leader, I make certain that all of my staff members, including teachers, fellow administrators, and support staff, know how valuable they are to the success of our academic institution. I provide praise, positive encouragement, and constructive feedback to keep educators enthusiastic and eager to give 100% every day.

One of my greatest strengths as an educational leader is my forward thinking ability. I like to keep my school at the forefront of education and innovation. I subscribe to numerous academic journals, with a particular focus on integrating technology in the classroom. By staying on top of the changing world of technology, I am able to identify, source, and integrate effective technology to optimize the learning experience. Since software and hardware can be costly, I apply for as many grants as possible, and allocate a good portion of our fundraising initiatives to this cause. Another strength of mine as an administrator is my openness and transparency. I deliver our school's mission statement at the beginning of each year, outline my goals, detail the steps necessary to achieve these goals, and solicit suggestions from the school and local community. I also promote parental involvement and encourage family members to approach school staff with any questions or concerns they might have.

My leadership style has been honed by years of service as a teacher and administrator. With eight years of hands-on experience in the classroom, and five years in administration, I have developed a well-rounded knowledge base with regard to leading a highly successful school. I am also a great proponent of continuing education, having earned a Master of Arts in Teaching in Administrative Leadership, Bachelor of Education in Elementary Education, Elementary Educator License (K-5), and a School Principal License. Furthermore, I attend conferences, workshops, and courses on regular basis, and encourage my staff to do the same. My goal is to leave students and staff with a wonderful impression of the school, a lifelong love of learning, and the desire to reach their full potential. I truly believe that the school will be an incredible, thriving environment under my guidance and leadership.