

Joseph Wright
EDUC 6540
Professor Montgomery Lee
Sept. 19th, 2018
Week 4 Chapter 4 Reflection

Provide a copy (or link) of your school district's organizational chart. What elements of your district's organization seem to be working at an optimal and effective level? What elements of your district's organization seem not to be working at an optimal or effective level? If you were the superintendent, what changes would you make in your districts organization? Please explain why?

This is my third year working at Merit Academy, a charter school located in Springville, UT. I've seen a lot of changes occur here at the school, from an organizational point of view, although I wasn't looking at it back then with the knowledge I have now. Still, I've seen our school make a lot of improvements in the last few years, and I'll try to share what I've noticed and what seems to be working well and what might need some help, or changes that I might make if I were in charge.

We are a smaller charter school (which basically functions as an independent school district) with just over 400 students, so our organization is at more of a micro than macro level, as compared with some of the larger school districts here in the area (here's looking at you, Alpine and Nebo school districts). However, that doesn't mean that we don't have our strengths or challenges.

I'm going to get down and dirty first. When I started, we had one administrator, Dr. Jesse Meeks, who had just been hired about a week before I was hired. It was a hectic year, since the other administrators either quit or had left, and as Dr. Meeks worked on getting a handle on the school, I noticed that some things could have run more smoothly. For instance, he didn't have his Assistant Director yet, Ms. Kuhnz (she was hired a year later), and I know for a fact that having another administrator was something that he wanted and has been a tremendous asset to the school since she got here. For instance, she is now over the facilities (which is run by Brent Bunnell, a fantastic facility supervisor), yet neither of them were there that first year (yes, the previous one left soon after the school year began, because they didn't agree with the administrator changes). I actually helped Dr. Meeks replace a few outside bulbs that had broken, and had to paint my own room over the summer, until we got a reliable, permanent person to fill the position.

We've come a long way since that first year. Whereas the first year was very scatterbrained and Dr. Meeks seemed to be running from one disaster to the next, the hiring of Ms. Kuhnz (along with Mr. Bunnell) helped to delegate much of that responsibility, and took it off our director's shoulders. We also hired Kati Evans as our Marketing person as well as New Student Liaison, and she has done a tremendous job with that. And just this year, we finally got a new Athletic Director hired as well (the past one left after Dr. Meeks' first year). Ms. Kuhnz is also a bit more hardnosed with students and discipline, and that was a great help, because our discipline policy that first year without her was not functioning as it ought to. Dr. Meeks has a big, kind heart, and he seemed to believe that a friendly chitchat with troublesome students would fix all of those problems, and it didn't. She helped be the "bad cop" to his "good cop" routine, and it has worked much better.

If I were in charge, I would make a few changes, not to denigrate the work that we've accomplished in these past three years. One position that I think would be helpful is to have perhaps a Junior High director / dean of students, who is directly over the 7-9 graders. We have 7-12 grades at our school, yet I think it would be helpful to create more of a distinction with the students in the 7-9th grades, as well as some more sporting programs, etc., as most of that sort of thing is at the high school level, and our Junior High aged

kids seem to be forgotten at times (we have hardly any sports that involve them). This person could help transition the students into the school, and also help create a unique identity for them within our structure, promoting and organizing junior high level clubs, sports, pep rallies, etc. They could also serve as a figure that the students can go to for help if they are struggling with school, yet not seem as intimidating as the “Grand Marshall Head Chief Director Meeks” might seem to be.

Otherwise, I’ll admit that things have been for the most part improving each year that Dr. Meeks has been in charge. He seems to be getting his “sea legs”, to employ a nautical term. With additional hires and delegation, he and the administration have been better able to marshal the school, students, parents and faculty into an effective and organized force.

Merit College Preparatory Academy — Organizational and Duty Chart 2018 — 2019

