INTEGRATING 21ST CENTURY SKILLS IN SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

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Some of us possibly experienced being a leader in some ways. Way back from being a leader in school or in any organization, the leadership styles may differ depending on the members you are supervising and depending on the nature of the work where you were involved. Nowadays, the term ‘leadership’ must be specific because this may connote different meanings, variation in nature and the styles leaders possess. The leadership styles a person once had may not be applicable anymore in the present time because we are already in the 21st century generation.

Maxine Driscoll (2018) said that there is always something to be gained from the past, but preparing students for the future requires forward-thinking, 21st century leaders. Strategic school building is important as she added because education in the 21st century is a new frontier, and 21st century learners are a new breed. 21st century school leaders enthusiastically face the challenging task of preparing young minds for the future, and they think strategically about the goals and systems that will support this task.

Since the generation is changing along with the people belong in it, leadership styles and characteristics must also get along with those changes. A leader of 21st century generation, particularly in school leadership, must be flexible and persistent so that whatever changes may come, he or she is always prepared to deal with those adjustments needed in order to improve the school and its different resources. It is also important to be resilient because challenges brought by 21st century generation can be tougher since the educational system is also upgrading.
Driscoll (2018) also added that the way a leader thinks can change his/her life and the school as well. A positive mindset encourages a leader to take risks without fear as he/she confident to get out from his/her comfort zone to try new something new for the betterment of the educational community. 21st century leadership also involved self-awareness and social awareness in order to under one’s self and other people as well. Through this awareness, it will be easier to figure out their own needs and the needs of the people around them. This also fosters collaboration and communication with other stakeholders, human resources and other people involved in educational community.

In addition, being 21st century leaders also requires to develop other leaders within the school community where they belong so that they can work as a team to settle the shortcomings that the school has, to improve the service they are providing, to think of other alternatives to give quality education for students, to empower the teaching and non-teaching staff of school and many other ways to collaborate with each other to achieve their common goals. This means that being a leader also obliges you to bring out the leadership in your co-workers in order to effectively deliver the plans that are needed to be done to establish a school with excellent performance.

As what was mentioned above, collaborative leadership is important and Ken Kay (2018) said that if there is one factor that distinguishes successful 21st century schools and districts, it is strong leadership. While individual teacher can adopt the practices of 21st century classroom, the real impact on students is if an entire school and district embraces and works toward the same vision. Everyone must commit to building critical thinking, communication, collaboration and creativity to their educational system.

Therefore, 21st century leadership should not be a one-man show but rather a collaboration as a team so that it will be more possible to create desirable learning environment in schools. Everyone involved in educational community must embrace the role of being a leader so that it will be a successful battle to prepare students in their
future endeavors and to assure that the institution is providing exceptional service. If everyone is exerting efforts to contribute to the development of the school and to the learners, the desirable outcomes of all the exertions will surely manifest.

References:

https://thinkstrategicforschools.com/leadership-in-schools/