PROTECTION OF INSTRUCTIONAL TIME: A SIGNIFICANT COMPONENT OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

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Every endeavor requires skillful time management – and education is certainly no exception.

- Tracy Ocasio
  Staff Developer

The demands of the 21st century calls for school heads with a deep understanding of how pupils learn and at what levels they need to learn. Principals should be able to provide teachers with strong leadership and support. This is in order to help pupils gain the skills and knowledge they need to face in this ever-changing world.

In the vast concept of school leadership, there are a number of components to carefully look at when it comes to managing a school. To name a few, a school principal should have a thorough understanding about goal-setting, communicating the school goals, implementing the curriculum, supervising and evaluating the instruction, monitoring pupils’ progress, being visible, giving awards and recognition, and protecting instructional time.

Having a closer view on instructional time which is the total time for teaching instruction and student learning, it is a must for every school head and teacher to protect or even maximize the time spent for quality instruction. They have to make sure that the great bulk of time is devoted to instructional activities and non-instructional time is kept to a minimum. They must also see to it that majority of instructional time is dedicated to core academic subjects. Teachers should accentuate the use of instructional strategies that maximize student engagement at high levels of success.

In my recent study entitled “Instructional Leadership of School Principals vis-à-vis School Culture among Public Elementary Schools in Western Part of Region III”, it was found out that teachers viewed their principals as strong instructional leaders in protecting instructional time. The item “The school principal protects instructional time by limiting interruptions during class hours”
got a weighted mean of 4.21 from the school principals and 4.20 from the teachers. It gained an average weighted mean of 4.21 with a description of “strongly agree.” As revealed by some school principals during the interview, classroom instruction is their priority and teachers should not be interrupted as they facilitate learning unless there are rush and call-up reports, academic and non-academic contests and the like.

Ocasio (2013) suggests the following to maximize instructional time:

* Reduce the number of disruptive announcements throughout the day
* Schedule core subjects for early-morning hours, when students are fresh and ready to learn
* Schedule key classes at times when students can access extra support
* Match struggling students with teachers who have the expertise to help them succeed
* Prevent students from leaving the classroom for other activities
* Offer additional assistance at times that don’t interfere with students’ core subject class periods

Certainly, effective time management is one of the skills necessary for success in schools as well as in everyday life. Teachers who are able to manage time effectively can give their learners the best opportunities to learn and develop habits leading to wise use of time. As school heads, it is our duty not just only to pay attention to this matter but more importantly, to make sure that instructional time is maximized daily. This is due to the fact that protection of instructional time is a significant component of instructional leadership wherein the school principals strongly shape the conditions for high-quality teaching and learning.

Reference:

Bautista, Jake (2016) Instructional Leadership of School Principals vis-à-vis School Culture among Public Elementary Schools in Western Part of Region III, Bataan Peninsula State University, Dinalupihan Campus

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http://www.marzanocenter.com/blog/article/school-leaders-assuring-teachers-have-instructional-time-to-deliver/