THE TEACHER’S ROLE IN CULTIVATING LEADERSHIP AMONG STUDENTS

by:
Ria A. Cortez
Teacher III, Limay National High School

"Leadership is the wise use of power. Power is the capacity to translate intention into reality and sustain it." -Warren Bennis

Teachers automatically play their roles as leaders as they become a powerful classroom manager in a classroom setting. But how do teachers become trainers of their students to be responsible leaders?

Cultivating student leadership is a critical part a classroom practice for teachers. Teachers tend to create positive changes in their student lives because of the leadership skills they had learned in organizing. In a blog by Ferlazzo (2012), he mentioned that it is better if the leadership skills are learned and developed while students are still younger.

There are some strategies that are suggested for teachers to employ in order to nurture student leadership. These were presented in the website www.edweek.org, where leadership among students is also given importance. Some of these are the following:

1. Develop power. Help the students develop power by simply letting them have a feeling of strong sense of belief that they can accomplish their goals. Let the students know how they can do things greatly by themselves. Give them responsibilities where they could act as leaders, and make them decide on things that will benefit the group they lead.
2. **Enhance Intrinsic Motivation.** Intrinsic motivation is an important factor in developing student leaders. The actions taken by teachers could greatly improve this value for students. In this way, teachers can build relationships with students as we can learn their self-interests, hopes, and dreams, and relate the lessons we teach to their own lives. We can always praise their efforts to let them know that we appreciate what they are doing. We could give incentives or rewards for the accomplishments they have achieved, as little as it could be.

3. **Inspire them with leadership stories.** Researchers have found that telling or reading the students some leadership stories could develop their behavior towards leadership. Teachers could read examples of stories that demonstrate leadership and we use them “as opportunities for literacy instruction for exploration of leadership characteristics that connect to students’ own lives” (Ferlazzo, 2012). Some leadership stories are those talking about Martin Luther King's emphasis on developing relationships, Cesar Chavez's willingness to take risks, and Nelson Mandela's sense of vision (www.edweek.org).

4. **Let students teach others.** Good leaders are also the ones who could teach others. It does not only require students to learn on the topics before but it could also enhance their self-confidence and serve as good models for their classmates. Teachers actually make “little teachers” on this part who in the future would be effective leaders because of the trainings they experienced in the school.
5. **Let them do actions for the community.** Community involvement is vital to teachers many responsibilities inclined to his profession. But we could also impart this to our students. We can also develop student leadership by creating opportunities for students to take cooperative action to help improve their community. This could be done by letting the students address the community issues that matter to them.

Teachers are really good leaders. But if we could train our students to become leaders like us, it would be better. Imagine the benefits of the school and the community if the future leaders are trained enough by effective leaders of the society – the teachers.

*References:*

www.edweek.org