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EDL 651

Dr. Kamler

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Administrative Shadow

I had the opportunity to shadow Ms. Lily Rose, principal of William A. Shine Great Neck South High School, on and off over the period of a few days. Throughout this time I was able to sit with Ms. Rose during a variety of meetings and activities. This experience was worthwhile and led me to a better understanding of the various roles a principal has in a single day. Ms. Rose is able to balance these different responsibilities quite well, extending the typical boundaries of a principal.

Friday, September 27, 2013; 8:43 am – 9:30 am

At this time Ms. Rose, accompanied by her two Assistant Principals, held a Senior Parent Breakfast. This has become a tradition that Ms. Rose started herself about two years ago. She holds two parent breakfasts every year for each grade; one in the fall and one in the spring. Ms. Rose shared she feels this is an excellent way to communicate with parents directly. Additionally it encourages parental involvement, which is something Ms. Rose would like to see more of especially from our Korean community. There were about twenty-five parents in attendance and the setup in the cafeteria was welcoming for them. About one third of the parents present represented our Korean community. There were four long tables set up in a square so that all could be included in questions and discussion. Ms. Rose spoke about various subjects pertaining to students in their senior year at Great Neck South High. She had a set agenda of

what she wanted to cover. Topics such as senior portraits, parking, prom, and Senior Event were brought up. Ms. Rose even spoke at length about the transition process, for both students and parents, of leaving home to go to college.

It was nice to hear her speak from personal experience and the parents also enjoyed this. The parents interacted well with Ms. Rose and I could see this was a valuable experience for them. I was pleased to see Ms. Rose interact with parents in this way as it helped me understand yet another facet of her job.

Tuesday, October 1, 2013; 12:26 pm – 1:06 pm

During this period Ms. Rose met with South High's Student Government. Ms. Rose meets with Student Government once a month on a formal basis, and more times as necessary. This meeting was to inform Ms. Rose of what Student Government discussed at their last meeting. The Student Government representatives were very excited to share the minutes of their last meeting. They were particularly happy because after a three-year endeavor students will finally be given their own school email addresses. The President and Vice President couldn't contain their excitement over this, and the principal was obviously proud of this major accomplishment. It's proposed that all students will be given a school email address by this coming January. After the students shared this news, Ms. Rose confessed that the superintendent of schools had hinted to her that this "wish" would be granted. The members of Student Government then reported on their goals for the 2013-2014 school year, which, of course, contained improving school lunch and ideas for community service and fundraising.

Throughout this meeting Ms. Rose was warm and welcoming towards the students. It's evident she has a nice rapport with this group of students as she works closely with them. There was also an air of mutual respect and trust in the room and Ms. Rose listened carefully to student

ideas and requests. One quality about Ms. Rose I especially took note of during this time was her ability to listen. That may seem like a basic, or given, quality in an administrator; however, after that meeting I now believe it is something administrators must do more of. Ms. Rose listened intently to *everything* the students had to say. Never once did she interrupt them to shoot down ideas, even if they were far fetched. She truly respected their ideas and wanted to hear what they had to say. After listening to Student Government's ideas, she guided them on next step procedures, offered suggestions, and instilled a sense of hope and encouragement in the Board. From my observations this seemed like a particularly bright, mature, and extremely competent Student Government Board. I shared this with her after the students left, and she agreed wholeheartedly. She feels Student Government is becoming more and more powerful every year, and is happy to see this positive change in the school. Ms. Rose shared with me how she believes a strong Student Government Board is an essential piece of a school running smoothly. She also is a strong supporter of students voicing their opinions and learning the processes by which policies and/or changes are made.

Wednesday, October 2, 2013; 8:43 am – 9:26 am

Ms. Rose was kind enough to invite me to a meeting between her and the Math Department Chair to review her goals for this school year. Prior to the department chair, Ms. Calculus, even entering the room Ms. Rose shared with me what she thought her goals would be. Currently, the math department has adopted a new common core curriculum. This is proving to be an everyday struggle for faculty, students, and parents alike. Ms. Rose knew that Ms. Calculus' goals would revolve mainly around making this transition smooth, and sure enough she was correct. Perhaps some of the reason why Ms. Rose was able to predict this is because she is a former math teacher and always stays current on math curriculum changes. Ms. Calculus

explained that people are confused about the new curriculum and are in need of help. She also shared that she and another faculty member attended a countywide meeting in which administrators from varying districts expressed concern. After listening to Ms. Calculus' concerns she said she herself would mention them to the Superintendent and the local Board of Regents member.

Again, Ms. Rose listened to everything Ms. Calculus said and offered insights and suggestions. Ms. Rose has a way of making her staff feel welcome in her presence. She validates their feelings and creates an open and honest environment. It is clear she has a warm rapport with this staff member and they share a relationship built on mutual respect. Ms. Rose is open and shares her own life experiences with colleagues she feels comfortable with.

After Ms. Calculus left, Ms. Rose shared with me her method of organization. She carries a journal and writes down notes on every single meeting she attends. She uses the right side of the journal for notes and the left side as her "practical" side, which typically includes a to-do list. Ms. Rose shared it took her a few years when she first started as an administrator to find a system she felt comfortable with. Using the two sides of the journal allows her to know where important information is along with things she must accomplish by a certain deadline.

Sometimes, just seeing an administrator in school does not give you a full picture of what his/her job really entails. This shadowing experience enabled me to see the different roles an administrator plays: colleague, friend, parent, manager, director, coach. The list could be endless. I also spent some time with Ms. Rose at the end of our Open House. During that time I was able to see parents come up to her and thank her for her help. This assignment was valuable and helped me see Ms. Rose in a new light.