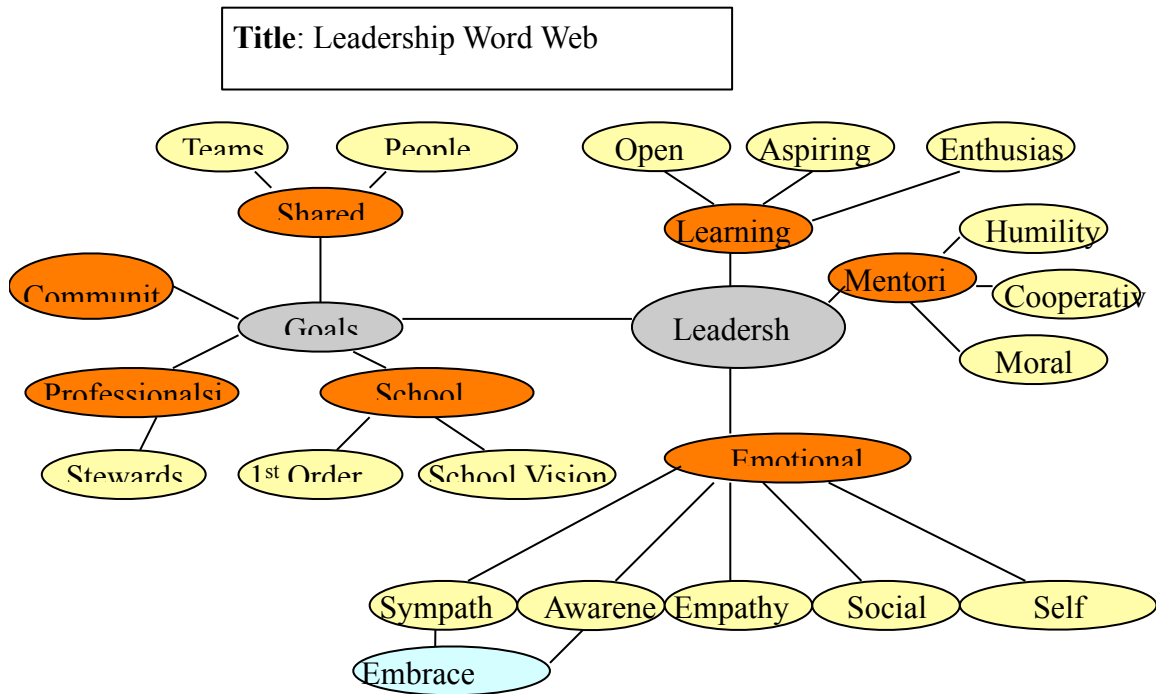Developing ground rules is a prudent decision by any organization. They establish norms, rules, and standards of personal conduct. The ground rules should contain every member of the organization so that every person has a voice and in turn has an increased feeling of buy-in. This is a critical step in the early developmental stage. Questions can be developed to facilitate meaning discussion about what group norms or behaviors look like to different people. Furthermore, once the ground rules have been established it is critical to have discussion on how the ground rules relate to words, actions, and behaviors in the organization.

In my own classroom I establish ground rules by working with the students to create a social contract. The social contract is discussion of how each person in the class wants to be treated, should treat each other during times of conflict, and how the facilitator wants to be treated and expects of the students. I break the students into groups and have them answer the questions. The groups will report their results and a list of words will be complied onto a large sheet of paper. The list will be kept and each student will sign their name by the agreement. As soon the list is created I will role play challenging situations (student conflict, a frustrated teacher, etc) in which they will have to refer to the contract and act within the parameters they created. The creation of these ground rules does take a considerable amount of time and effort up front by it pays off in the long run when students know how to handle themselves and be accountable to each other.

Being part of a school district that believes and develops learning leaders is a critical part of the schools success. A learning leader is encouraged to examine their

strengths and deficiencies through feedback, make decisions that benefit all the

shareholders, and look to develop their knowledge through professional development

opportunities. However, the paramount idea behind an individuals success within the

organization is their emotional intelligence.   Daniel Goleman wrote, "But my research,

along with other recent studies, clearly shows that emotional intelligence is the sine qua

non of leadership. Without it, a person can have the best training in the world, an incisive,

analytical mind, and an endless supply of smart ideas, but he still won't make a great

leader."[1] Whether the leadership's skills are inherent or developed, emotional

intelligences such as empathy, self-regulation, and motivation determine the success of a

leader. The school districts benefits from these leader either in a formal setting (building

principal, curriculum developer, dean of students) or through the informal leadership

roles like that of teacher or support staff. I do not plan to pursue a formal leadership role

within the school district I teach; however, I believe that I act as a strong informal leader

within my school. I serve as a building representative, liaison to the principal for the east

wing, and I coach swimming in a challenging high school outside of the district. In each

of these capacities, it is critical to seek professional development and infuse this learning

with emotional intelligence. The following concept map is a reflection of my leadership

values.

_____

[1] Goleman, Daniel. (1998). What Makes a Leader. *Harvard Business Review.* Vol. 76 Issue 6, p93,

Title: Leadership Word Web

Teams People
Shared
Open Aspiring Enthusias
Learning
Humility
Mentori
Cooperativ
Communit Goals Leadersh
Moral
Professionalsi School
Stewards 1st Order School Vision Emotional
Sympath Awarene Empathy Social Self
Embrace

Generating and reflecting self-assessment and peer-assessments is a key component to leadership. When we discuss feedback in my leadership class I often times tell my students that, "Can not grow it, if don't know it." Teaching students to give and ask for constructive feedback is a vital skill that allows them to become aware of their strengths and weaknesses. While I have facilitated student feedback and often times ask for it me, I feel that this class helped expand the ways I conduct self and peer assessment. One form of feedback I plan to utilize is a mid-trimester feedback from the students. The feedback will occur through an online survey that has a space for comments as well as fill in the bubble prompts. This invaluable feedback provides a snapshot of the students' comments so that pedagogical changes can be made to better accommodate student needs. Peer reflections, like the 21st Century School Administrator Skills Self-Assessment and Observer Assessment, were also an invaluable ways to look at my

perceived strengths and deficiencies versus the feedback from my fellow peers. I plan to conduct this peer analysis every three years to look for changes.

The strongest aspect of the McRel guide to leadership is "magnitude of change" theory. Like never before, schools are embracing change in schools. The nature of the changes undoubtedly comes from laws like No Child Left Behind or Race to the Top. Therefore, McRel's emphasis on "magnitude of change" is extremely relevant. The first or second order change can have a profound impact on all shareholders. With education moving in different directions such as the growth of online classes and online credit recovery programs, many teachers may not be comfortable agree with the changes. As McRel standards pointed out, the shareholders can feel, "less competent and less confident about their work." (p. 8) Therefore it is critical to make the changes slowly and give the teachers the proper training to ensure their confidence with the changes. Indeed the school I district work for is engaged in second order change. The number of credit recovery, online classes, or computer based classrooms is growing at frenzied pace. The administration has communicated to the various shareholders that they expect the change not to be instantaneous but gradually over a period of time.

Leadership requires a certain set of characteristics, values, and behaviors. I prefer to work for a leader who shows integrity, ethics, fairness, and a high degree of emotional intelligence. Integrity is most important leadership skill because fairness and equal treatment of all the shareholders flows from this concept. Integrity is a steadfast commitment to set of ambitious guidelines that give personal direction. A leader who acts with integrity strengthens their relationship with teachers. While decisions are not

always well received, if the leaders has established a reputation of making lasting and meaningful changes that is in the best interest of students and teachers year in and year out, the staff will trust the vision of the building leader and help facilitate change. A leader can have a high degree of integrity but they also need a high level of emotional intelligence. Daniel Goleman wrote on the importance of emotional intelligence in regard to leadership. Goleman wrote, "The components of emotional intelligence- self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skill-can sound unbusiness like. But exhibiting emotional intelligence at the workplace does not mean simply controlling your anger or getting along with people. Rather, it means understanding your own and other people's emotional makeup well enough to move people in the direction of accomplishing your company's goals." Understanding the emotional makeup of the staff is critical to total success of the school. Integrity guides the direction of the building and the relationships that are built between the building leader and the staff through emotional intelligences is what facilitates the success of the students.

My own informal leadership has a set of skills values and subsequent behaviors. As a teacher and a coach I like to have a set of values that can be transparent in both capacities. I want to foster and develop a cooperative environment among the formal and informal leaders within my school. I want to make everyone feel welcome by listening more than talking.

I will use my social skills to effectively communicate with all of the staff, students, and athletes. I strive to be fair and equal with my students, peers, and athletes in times of

conflict and disagreement. Perhaps the most important belief is that values and principles

be reflected through my actions.

The last area of leadership addressed in this course was the utilization of the

ISLLC standards. At first the standards seems extremely vague but through examination

the A Teacher & Student Team hip guidelines for the utiliza Aaron Blain

environm Help Build nost important standards deals with sch Concept Map 8/1/2010 2039

A Teacher & Student Team

Help Build

Empowering

Focused

Trajectory Based

Instructional

Communication based

Time is . . .

Staff Development

Decentralizing

Help Build

A Macro-Team

Problem solving

Mentoring is

Analytical

Supportive

Transference

Help Build

Micro-Teams