

## Seth Roberts's Philosophy of Education

“Be ashamed to die until you have won some victory for humanity.”

(Biography.com) Horace Mann's admonition has always held a special place in my heart as an Antioch student (he founded Antioch College in Ohio), and a beneficiary of the public education system that he started. That is the central cog in my philosophy of supervision and evaluation in education as well in that we are all engaged in this profession to improve the lives of others and not just serve our own self interests. I am also guided by the idea that to teach one person is to save the world. These two ideas when combined illustrate my beliefs that educators are working to save the world one human at a time, and that our jobs as supervisors and evaluators is to enable the teachers to have the greatest effect possible on their students for their growth. Further I believe that due to Maslow's hierarchy of needs that students physiological and safety needs must be met before they can learn so that every school must provide that safety both of person and personality for every student in the school and that as a supervisor, I am responsible for maintaining an environment in which all teachers meet those needs first. I have also learned that the most essential skill in leadership is being the lead collaborator to create and encourage a culture of collaboration between the staff, students, parents, and other community stakeholders on many levels across many projects simultaneously.

I believe that every student can learn, and that every effort should be made to make education available to each student in the classroom. I believe that learning should be engaging and fun as well as informative. Professional education is about meeting each student where he/she is regarding any subject and helping them to take a step or more forward in their understanding of that subject. Enthusiasm for the material is a crucial tool in any teaching arsenal. I love history, economics, and the other social studies. My joy in studying everything from migration patterns to Machiavellian forces is evident to all who encounter me and drives my classes and my staff to partake in that joy. Advanced questioning strategies that move up and down Bloom's taxonomy levels are important facets of building inquiring learners. The integration of technology is crucial to creating learners who are literate in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and that good teaching includes utilizing multiple types of technology to make learning authentic and meaningful for our students. I also believe in rigor, and that if instructors raise the bar of expectations high but supply all the aid necessary to reach that bar, then students benefit the most. I believe that educating children should be multifaceted and should encourage growth of the whole child in all aspects to create stronger learners, more compassionate, engaged citizens, and understand how to pursue happiness and justice in their lives. I believe that education is vital to the success of the workforce of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and that the mission of preparing people of all ages for different stages in their lives and careers is crucial to the success of every academic institution.

I know the difference between a leader and a boss. Obedience can be given, but respect must be earned, and I believe that in order to lead one must earn the respect of those with whom one works. Respect is grudgingly earned and easily lost, so in order to pursue this strategy with students, parents, and fellow educators, I endeavor to live my beliefs as much as I can. My first management position was at age 19 when I managed an office of over 250 people for CALPIRG, and I learned quickly that in order to help each individual worker to contribute to their greatest potential to the organization, that they have to be treated as individual human beings and be helped to find and assess their own potential. I know that a big part of leadership is showing up, so I am sure to be at school early and leave late, often setting the standard for my colleagues, but encouraging a

healthy work/life balance as well. I will also model collaboration in leadership decisions so that my colleagues see how important it is to collaborate with all stakeholders in respectful, and meaningful ways. When the entire community builds a collaborative approach, schools embark on a journey of perpetual growth.

I believe in leaders who don't say "I don't do windows," and who can do whatever needs to be done to help the organization move past whatever bulwark exists. I believe in integrity as a leadership style. Without integrity, nothing else that comes from a person, an office, or an organization has any validity. When integrity is lost, the organization has a lot of trouble prospering, and will often disintegrate. Most importantly, I believe that leaders remember that we have two ears and one mouth for a reason, and they need to show it by listening to those around them carefully and by showing that they listen, even if they disagree. Leadership in an educational institution requires people to care about students, parents, teachers, and other staff members each as individual people and to see them that way, rather than just as their roles. When people feel like they are being listened to, cared for, and respected, they tend to follow those who make them feel that way, especially if those leaders show their intelligence in addition to the other qualities mentioned.