

BELIEFS VS. ACTIONS

Effective leaders protect the shared values and beliefs of the institution and point out actions that are in conflict. Listed below are some actions that various schools and individuals have contemplated or have taken. One way to protect beliefs is to practice the application of them in the context of examples. Engage your staff in examining each of the following situations and see if they can first, identify the school belief that is in conflict with the proposed action, and second, respond to them in a way that gets the action back into alignment with beliefs of the school.

1. A group of teachers believe that some of the objectives of the state curriculum are developmentally inappropriate for students in first grade and want to remove them.
2. A group of faculty decides that students would be better served in the core curriculum by providing three levels (basic, intermediate, advanced) of each subject and assigning students to each based upon perceived ability levels.
3. A team of grade level teachers have concluded that the six-week grading periods are too short of a time span to accumulate enough assignments to determine a grade for each student and thus want to change to a nine-week grading period.
4. A middle school staff is frustrated with student tardiness and wants the school to suspend students when they have been late to school more than five times in a semester.
5. An elementary principal wants teachers to use one of their lunches each week to implement professional learning communities.
6. A school superintendent has gone to a conference on differentiated instruction and wants the principals to design professional development to implement it.
7. A middle school wants to reorganize the time schedule in order to provide flexible time to students who are struggling in core subjects. The elective teachers are offended that some children will be missing their classes on days when they need more learning time in core subjects.
8. A student is assigned a C for a course in which she has earned A's on every assignment for the marking period, but failed to complete one. The teacher uses a point system and with a zero on one assignment, the student's grade fell under 80 percent.
9. A parent calls a teacher to inquire about his son's final grade for the year that he believes does not reflect a significant improvement in the last two marking periods. The teacher replies "I don't actually calculate the final grade, the computer does that."
10. A teacher begins her course by announcing to her class that "My job is to teach and your job is to learn."