

Chelsea Brown
EDU 5419 – Metaphors Assignment
Dr. Frank Smith
May 29, 2009

- 1) What metaphor would you use to help your visitor understand how the school is organized and governed?
- 2) Explain in writing, what aspects of the school your metaphor helps one to see and also what aspects it helps one not to see.
- 3) Explain in writing, how that metaphor functions as a “constructive falsehood.”
- 4) How does this notion of Morgan’s relate to Deborah Stone’s ideas about leadership in schools? What does it mean to you as a leader?

Metaphors enable us to see all aspects of an organization. At the same time, they mask certain aspects. School districts are one form or formal organizations and can be described using various metaphors. For the purpose of this assignment, I have chosen to use the metaphor of a clock/time to depict a particular school district. The primary focus of this metaphor is based on a clock’s mechanisms and gears to represent the school district’s synchronicity. Each facet of the clock plays an integral role in the telling of time just as each component of the district. The underlying pattern that all of the components within the district work together to provide effective learning opportunities for all and promote lifelong learning. In order to better understand this metaphor, let us take a look at the parts of the district with relation to the parts of the clock:

- Board of Education – the dowels/pinions holding/controlling the gears
- Administration – One of the gears, moving in a synchronized fashion with the Staff and students

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- Instructional and Support Staff - One of the gears, moving in a synchronized fashion with the Administration and students
- Community- One of the gears, moving in a synchronized fashion with the Staff and Administration
- Students – the hour and minute hands telling the time/products of the learning community...reaching out and evolving, growing (time)
- The Budget – the battery or electrical power source...effected sometimes by the community voice that winds the clock
- The Community (Parents) – the springs...applying pressure to the various gears...creating friction, impeding the process at times, causing the gears to get stuck, jammed

When we think of clocks and the concept of time, several themes, thoughts, and ideas come to mind that connect to the district in support of this metaphor...

- Always wanting more time in a day...not enough time...within this district always wanting more, never enough to satisfy always looking toward improvement...test scores, programs, enhancing curriculum.
- The malleability/flexibility of time. It can go fast or slow.
- Time as a straight line, always moving forward always progressing, difficult to travel back in time.
- Time not standing still – education and the growth of this district does not allow for it to stand still.
- Time is always of importance – education within this district of excellence is always of importance. People are drawn to this area for its reputation.

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- The ability to use time as a predictor – what will happen next? What will happen if? The district is constantly reflecting and evaluating progress, achievements, strengths and weaknesses.
- Time can be looked at as rigid and limited (negative connotations to the district – limited financial resources, Union Contracts, Educational Law)
- The clock is an instrument used to keep time. As the gears move the time changes. Just as the components of the district move and change (new Superintendent, new board members, new administrators, teachers, contracts, students, and the economy) so do the outcomes.
- Clocks have alarms/bells and whistles that remind of important events, “Time’s Up”, changes in a schedule. The alarm represents the standards in education, the bells in the building, the ...however with an effective leader, the bells should be internal, they should be silent and transitions and change should be moving toward a more seamless approach as not to uproot or upset the flow and growth of the district.

Thoughts to infuse within the paper

Wheels within wheels...Images of Organization “Whole in all of the parts”

Metaphor of the clock morphs into that of a kaleidoscope, whereas you turn the end of the cylinder, the colors merge and blend to create a beautiful picture. This is where an effective leader comes into the picture. Taking the elements of the clock/watch and transforming them from the rhythmic ticking of the clock to a more fluid motion of change, sometimes subtle, sometimes drastic.

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“Synchronous events reveal an underlying pattern, a conceptual framework which encompasses, but is larger than, any of the systems which display the synchronicity. The suggestion of a larger framework is essential in order to satisfy the definition of synchronicity as originally developed by Swiss psychologist Carl Gustav Jung.