

MY CONTRACT WITH OUR ADMINISTRATORS

From Superintendent Bryan Dunn, Great Falls S.D., Idaho

I expect you to keep the focus on instruction. No excuses. This means that on a regular basis you do something that is visible to staff that conveys the message that instruction is the main thing.

In return, I promise to encourage and support your effort in whatever way I can, both publicly and privately. I will keep the focus on instruction at the district level. I will work with the Board and the community to provide the necessary funding. I will see that your performance as an administrator is evaluated based heavily on what you do instructionally.

I expect you to address issues that impede instruction. I expect you to take calculated risks. This means I expect a good administrator to be a risk-taker and have political skills. If you talk with me before you take action, I will support you...but let's go into to this together.

In return, I will use whatever political influence and skills I have to defend the position you (no, we) have taken. If we have to back off, and sometimes we will, we will do it together.

I expect you to monitor instruction. This means that school administrators visit some classrooms every day. Other administrators visit classrooms regularly, once a week is reasonable. This means you give staff feedback on what you see. I expect you to regularly review the achievement of your students. I expect you to use this information as you work with teachers.

I will keep the focus on instruction at the district level. I will work with H.R. to develop better ways to recruit teachers. I will work to keep our salaries competitive so that we can attract high quality staff. I will work with I.T. to see that you have the data you need.

I expect you to retain only quality staff members. When you recommend the non-renew of a staff member, I expect you to have sound, documented reasons why you are doing so.

I, in turn, will be the one who actually makes the recommendation. I will educate the Board on why non-renewal of some staff is necessary. And, we will all work to make sure the Board has absolute trust in our recommendations.

As I clarify my expectations of you, **I expect you to have clear expectations of your staff, and to communicate those expectations.** Those expectations must include expectations that directly relate to instruction.

I expect loyalty, but not blind loyalty...loyalty to the district, the Board, and central office staff. I have seen “the superintendent made me do it” game (substitute Board, principal, central office). The Blame Game can’t be a part of Great Falls Public Schools.

In return, I will avoid the game myself. Superintendents can say, “It’s the principal’s fault,” just as the principal can blame it on the superintendent.