

New Mexico State University
College of Education
Department of Educational Management and Development

Think Globally, Act Locally
Policy Paper: A Proposal

Brian Adams
badams21@nmsu.edu

Paper Prepared
for
EMD 350
Introduction to Educational Leadership in a Global Society
Dr. Fred J. Rodríguez

Spring, 2010

Introduction:

In understanding leadership, we must understand that we came from a nation of Natural Law. Natural law was defined by St. Thomas Aquinas as “a unjust law is no law at all and need not to be obeyed.” (Beatty, 2005) This is how our country was founded. The history of the United States was made up of men and women who felt that a law of some kind was unjust. This was not just for people of the United States, Mahatma Gandhi and Mother Teresa are some of the leaders that people think of when fighting unjust laws. To be a leader does one have to find a unjust law to fight? This was one of the many questions I asked myself in my dream of the future. All of these people started somewhere and changed the world or even a nation. The somewhere they all started was locally. They were the ripple in the pond.

I feel to understand my dream; you have to understand the man behind the dream. I was lucky to have traveled the world the world at such a young age. This was due to the fact that my father was in the military. I think of three events that shape me into being the man that I am today. This first event was while I lived in Izmir, Turkey at the age of 10. My mother and father took me to a homeless children shelter. Many people understand the fight that Mother Teresa was doing. I feel as though I got to firsthand what she was fighting for. This shelter rented children for days and or weeks at a time. It is a sight that will stay with me forever. My second event was also in Izmir, Turkey. This event was the first gulf war. Though not in the exact warzone, I got to see what war does to a country as well as a region. I watched a country that was so generous, turn on the United States. The sudden change was due to the many innocent people that lost their lives.

The last event was in Riverside, Ca subsequently where I was born 12 years previous to this day. My father took us to McDonalds for lunch because my sibling and I were doing well in school on “report card day.” As we were leaving, a man down on his luck asked my father for money. My father turned to the man and said “are you hungry?” The gentleman with his head down nodded in disappointment and embarrassment. My father then said “Sir, I will not give you money, but I will take you inside and let you pick anything off the menu so you can eat.” This was my father’s deliverance for this young man. My father went on to do great things in the military. He achieved the highest rank a high school graduate which was Chief Master Sergeant. I had many moments to be proud of my father. This day was what shaped me, as well realized that leadership could be achieved locally.

The Problem:

When understanding a problem, we must first find the root that creates a problem. The root of our education system is that we have failed in the lack of leadership provided to our youth. As a result, we see it in our school system every day. Everyday an estimated 7000 students drop out of high school. (Orfield, 2010) This should not be acceptable. We had a whole generation of leaders that fought, and in some cases died for the right to go to school. Education should be an honor. Even more disturbing, half of all college students must take remedial courses after graduating from high school before they can take college level coursework. (Orfield, 2010) In my humble opinion, I think this is attributed to lack of funding in the public schools. School administrations are not rewarded for the hard and good work they do on a day to day basis. Our public school administration one of the most underpaid jobs in the United

States. In May 2008, the median salary range for teachers in the US was \$47,100 to \$51,180, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). The average salary earned by an individual teacher varies based upon a variety of factors like their education level. (Harrison, 2008) We can compare this to judges/magistrate judges which are another public occupation. Judges, magistrate judges, and magistrates had median annual wages of \$110,220 in May 2008. (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2009) There is something seriously wrong with our society, if the people that teach these people how to be judges and about law are paid less.

The Vision:

We need to realize that we need to relieve school district of some of this financial burden. That financial relief can then go towards teacher salaries, and other financially stressed areas of school districts. Also, financing can go towards helping administrations focus on creating new young leaders for the future. We would be recommitting to excellence. These communities would see the change and focus on the younger generations. They would see the change in their communities and know they have contributed to this pursuit of excellence.

My proposal is to create a new business model for small and big businesses similar to the model of TOMS Shoe. The model to follow is a one for one model. So for every dollar spent, a dollar would be matched for their respective community. This is using the purchasing power of individuals to achieve a greater good. Each community buys items for their personal use and then sees the money go towards books or resources for public schools.

Conclusion:

We need to empower people to help their communities. I want communities to feel the desire to serve others. People of the communities will recognize their shortcomings and help teach the younger generations. This is something that will be done at a local level, but people will then realized that they have reached a nation. Recently, a young man who played football for the University of Nebraska made headlines this week because he is giving 2.6 million dollars back to his school. But this is not your usual athletic because he has decided to give the money to the engineering department instead of the athletic department. Though he is an athlete and will make millions in his career in football, he understands the importance of education. We need to get back to the desire to learn. We need to remember that it is a honor to learn because of the leaders that paved the way.

References:

Beatty, J. F. (2005). *Legal Environment*. Mason, OH: South Western Cengage Learning.

Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2009, December 09). Retrieved April 18, 2010, from Bureau of Labor Statistics: <http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos272.htm>

Harrison, H. (2008, May). *National Average for a Teacher's Salary*. Retrieved April 18, 2010, from eHow, Inc: http://www.ehow.com/facts_6183282_national-average-teacher_s-salary.html

Orfield, C. (2010, March 09). *US Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, & Pensions*. Retrieved April 18, 2010, from US Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, & Pensions: <http://help.senate.gov/newsroom/press/release/?id=0bebd6b1-56b3-439c-9463-f7e5771cb467&groups=Ranking>