

**Minidoka County  
Joint School District #331**

**2016**

**District Priority Focus**

**Administrators Summer  
Reading**

# Leading with FOCUS:

Elevating the Essentials for School and District  
Improvement

By Mike Schmoker

Published by ASCD Quotes from pages 11, 12, 13, 14, 25, 31, 32, 33, 39, 40 and 46

MCSD – 2016 District Priority Focus

## Leading with FOCUS:

To succeed,  
leaders must carefully select,  
severely limit, and then  
persistently clarify (and clarify, and  
clarify, and clarify)  
the work to be done by those they  
lead.

## Leading with FOCUS:

Clear, manageable expectations reduce friction and misunderstandings between leaders and employees (Buckingham, 2005).

## Leading with FOCUS:

A simple formula emerges from the research:

- Carefully determine and severely reduce your focus to the fewest and most manageable priorities,
- Emphatically and repeatedly clarify those priorities throughout your organization, and
- Ensure that everyone stays focused on those priorities and fully commits to them through practice, reflection, and refinement.

## Leading with FOCUS:

Clarifying the organization's priorities is the leader's single most important job (Buckingham, 2005).

## Leading with FOCUS:

Exceptional leadership requires us to choose the right things to focus on and then devote our ongoing efforts to them with “simplicity and diligence.”

## Leading with FOCUS:

Efficiency is doing things right;  
effectiveness is doing the right things.

Peter Drucker



## Leading with FOCUS:

According to Schmoker (and the research he has compiled), the three areas of focus which will have the greatest impact are:

- Curriculum
- Literacy
- Instruction

## Leading with FOCUS:

### Curriculum:

“an adequately defined set of essential topics, concepts, texts, and writing assignments that the school will provide for their children regardless of which teacher they happen to get. This common curriculum might constitute 60 to 80 percent of the material taught by teachers of the same course.”

## Leading with FOCUS:

### Literacy:

“includes the ability to read, discuss, and write in the analytical, explanatory, and especially argumentative mode in every course, including electives and the arts.

The acquisition of literacy, thus defined, is the primary means of acquiring knowledge, thinking skills, and verbal facility.

## Leading with FOCUS:

### Instruction:

Purposeful reading, writing, and discussion are integral to quality curriculum – in fact, they constitute the primary means of becoming educated.

(Rose, 1989; Lasch, 1995)

## Leading with FOCUS:

### Instruction:

“Clear learning objectives, step-by-step teaching, focused practice, checking for understanding, and adjusting of instruction are the most important elements of effective lesson delivery.”

## District Priority FOCUS:

As the District Admin Team met and discussed these three areas of impact (Curriculum, Literacy and Instruction) we have chosen to focus on Instruction and more specifically:

# Effective Instruction

District Priority FOCUS:

# Effective Instruction

To more clearly identify what effective instruction is the District Admin Team sifted through a great many aspects of what good high quality instruction looks like.

## District Priority FOCUS:

# Effective Instruction

Here is a sampling of those characteristics:

- Active engagement of students
- Effective modeling
- Preplanning and organization
- Learning objectives posted
- Classroom management
- Clear introduction and conclusion
- Highly effective questioning
- Variety of instructional strategies



## District Priority FOCUS:

In order to better focus on fewer characteristics and monitor them closely the District Admin Team has chosen to focus on three **Key Attributes** of

# Effective Instruction:

- **Posted Learning Objectives**
- **Meaningful Student Engagement**
- **Effective Use of Formative Assessments**

## District Priority FOCUS for 2016-17

This year we will be focusing our **Instructional Sweep** classroom visits on these three **Key Attributes** of

### **Effective Instruction:**

- **Posted Learning Objectives**
- **Meaningful Student Engagement**
- **Effective Use of Formative Assessments**

District Priority FOCUS  
for 2016-17

# Effective Instruction

as indicated by

**Posted Learning Objectives,  
Meaningful Student Engagement, and  
Effective Use of Formative Assessments.**