

Be Greater than the Average

*Tammy Mangus, Superintendent of Schools*



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Dear Member of the Monticello Community,

Israelmore Ayivor said, "A true leader is a person whose influence inspires people to do what is expected of them to do. You cease to be a leader when you manipulate with your egos instead of convincing by your inspirations." Indeed, true leaders are those who embody the following traits:

1. These folks are our eternal optimists. They see the glass as half full and every challenge as an opportunity to improve. They embrace their baseline and use it as a point of measurement to allow for forward growth instead of being defensive about why they are in the steps they are currently taking or making excuses for why things are what they are. They believe in themselves and others and, because of that faith, they hold themselves and others accountable for extraordinary outcomes. As a result of this eternal optimism, and the belief that we all can grow, they inspire great action.
2. Great leaders commit themselves to the service of others. Self-service is selfish service. Great leaders seek to improve the world around them. Every intentional step serves the greater good. This commitment to building a better tomorrow acts as a magnet. Folks are drawn to this drive to be better tomorrow than we are today, and as a result, are inspired to take action.
3. True leaders sift through complaints and seek solutions. A savvy leader wouldn't dream of complaining without attempting to talk through solutions at the same time. Frustrations happen, but leaders wade through their frustrations and the frustrations of others to seek the root cause of the issue in order to resolve situations. This allows for positive outcomes. Think about it, when you discuss frustrations without a solutions-oriented mindset, all you've accomplished is frustrating yourself further. However, when you seek solutions in those venting sessions, you leave feeling accomplished. A great leader does this repeatedly. It allows people an ear to vent concerns, establishes a basis for improving the situation, and therefore, inspires action.
4. Distinguished leaders are courageous leaders. Robert Frost, in his poem *The Road Not Taken*, explains that the popular route is not the best, most fulfilling route. Inspiring leaders make unpopular, but powerful, decisions that seek to lead in the right direction. They take the road not taken, seeking growth and solutions, for the enrichment of the greater good, and that inspires others.

**We are all called upon to be leaders.**

**Indeed, despite titles and roles, we all know who our natural born leaders are. Oftentimes, they operate outside of management titles, inspiring others daily in order build a better, brighter world. These actions typically make their life more difficult, and their days longer, but it is the benefit to the greater good that is fulfilling.**

**Today, no matter who you are, seek to take action to benefit the greater good and model consistent improvement in order to inspire action in our youth. It is the most significant factor in improving our organization and our community. Negativity and negative talk will get us nowhere. A belief that we can grow each and every day, coupled with a commitment to improving our community and solutions-based discussions, will. Let's all be leaders by focusing on this month's essential habit and essential question:**

**ESSENTIAL QUESTION: Am I focusing my efforts in the right direction?**

**ESSENTIAL HABIT TO BUILD THIS MONTH: Intentional communication and solution-oriented discussions, rather than merely explaining frustrations, will bring our entire organization forward.**

**Be intentional. Be solutions-oriented. Be inspiring.**

**Mr. Ayivor's quote has roots in our habit. We must shape our culture by focusing our efforts in the right direction, making sure that our communications are not time-wasting, frustrations-based utterances; but rather, intentional, solutions-oriented, inspiring conversations that seek to improve our organization.**

**Be well,**

**Tammy Mangus  
Superintendent of Schools**