

## **OCTOBER 6, 2009 STAFF DEVELOPMENT SESSION**

Good afternoon, colleagues, and welcome to our celebration. I asked Cheryl Best if she would allow me five minutes to share my enthusiasm, my appreciation, and my endorsement of some very important work. I asked for some time to frame today's event under the context of administrative responsibilities. She said "yes."

Yes, we gather today to celebrate the work of our colleagues in their design and initial implementation of our instructional model. But we also gather to celebrate our journey away from a state that I call "a system of schools" and toward the state of "being a school system."

Somewhere along the way, you may have heard me say that we are a school system and not a system of schools. That in no way implies mistakes of the past or faulty practices of the present...quite the opposite. It has to do with the responsibilities of the administration as direct extensions of the Central Office...responsibilities for sustaining a strong organization by capitalizing on its talent and drawing it together into one school system.

So what are the responsibilities of a cohesive administration to its organization?

In an effort to ensure optimal productivity, satisfaction, and success:

- An effective administration joins together as it engages the masses in facilitating a culture that speaks a Common Language (concepts and understandings)
- An effective administration joins together as it engages the masses in allowing for Common Practices that augment professionals without extinguishing (instruction)
- An effective administration joins together as it engages the masses in holding Consistent Expectations for all (observation and evaluation)
- An effective administration joins together as it engages the masses in providing Centralized Support (staff development)

And we build on a strong foundation that consists of three layers. The first layer comes from the State of New Jersey in the form of content and skills, and the last layer comes from you. It holds your talent, your style, your drive, and your commitment.

The middle layer joins the two and allows us to do good work as a school system. The middle layer takes us back to our reason for begin here today...to celebrate the work of the District Instructional Steering Committee. All of what I describe here has to do with their work. And I thank them for preparing the way...

And now I'll turn the microphone over to Ms. Cheryl Best.