

**MRSH's leadership model:  
Not more work, not too hard, and will make teachers' enjoy more about school life**

*Transcript of interview with former teacher in Broward County  
Summer, 2009*

- **Explain your position and role in the MRSH leadership model?**
  - Marci K --a Broward County, Florida school teacher member of leadership team and co-chair of curriculum action team
  
- **What do you think the impact of the leadership model was at your school?**
  - I think the model impacted just about the entire school from student achievement, school culture, to parent involvement. It made us more conscious of everything and makes us think through the impact our decisions would have.
  
- **How did it affect achievement?**
  - It affected achievement in many ways. The action team that I was on, created a school wide scope and sequence. This was the first time that teachers planned and worked together. For the first time, two teachers could collaborate and corroborate knowledge creating a cohesive approach to curriculum planning.
  - It also forces us to look at the sunshine state standards to determine gaps and redundancy in our current practice. This was a big deal because we discovered we didn't have to work harder just smarter. It helped us to refine our approach by eliminating redundancy and making sure that we addressed and assesses area that had been lacking in the past.
  - We started seeing some changes immediately, due to the work of the data team who able to identify the students who needed immediate intervention. This information allowed teachers like me to quickly provide assistance to these students. As a result of the efforts of the data team we were able to identify students that needed tutoring allowing us to initiate tutoring immediately making a significant difference in the achievement of those students.
  - Because we began planning together, teachers were more willing to share their ideas and methods for differentiating instruction which provided valued resources for meeting the needs of various students.
  
- **Did it increase collaboration across grades?**
  - Absolutely, it increased collaboration across the grades. In fact this model increased communication both vertically and horizontally. We were now able to share information and ideas within our grades across subjects, and across grade levels. This is the first time that you really knew what the next grade was expecting of you. Because you had this public school wide scope and sequence teacher were able to actually physically see how what they were teaching fit into the big picture of public education.

- True story: An example of the impact the Leadership and Action teams had on our school's collaboration occurred to me during the time I was covering a unit on rain forests. One day I came into work and checked my mailbox to find that another teacher, who taught a different grade and subject from the opposite end of the building had left me a book on rain forests, with a note saying: "found this book at a garage sale, you owe me a quarter." This experience made me aware of the global impact of collaboration and sharing of practice could have across staff. We used to be a school where everybody shut their door and did their own thing. The Leadership model brought an openness that we never had before.
- One of the things that frightened me, I was a successful teacher and ...I wasn't convinced that I wanted to carry other teachers by sharing my ideas and planning lesson plans together; however I never expected that the experience of working with other teachers as a team would change my views forever. Now after working in the collaborative environment created by the Leadership model I would never go back to being an "island" again.
- **Did you witness an empowerment of staff regarding their voice in decision making?**
  - Definitely. There is a huge difference in school culture when a staff feels that what they say actually matters. An idea they have could actually come to fruition. The school stops being a place where things happen to you and starts being a place where you can make things happen.
- **Did you feel there was greater transparency concerning shared information?**
  - Absolutely, again things aren't sprung on you anymore. You get minutes from every action team, including the leadership team via email, and you get more insight as to how and why decisions are being made.
  - The difference that this model inspired in our school decision making structure is that now what the leadership team is discussing and recommending solutions to school issues that the action teams identify. Thus creating a bottom up approach to decision making and empowering those on the front lines with a voice to make a difference.
  - In closing, I would like to just say that this model made my school a happier place to be.