

Finding GSD's Values/Beliefs

Definition

Values/beliefs are those ethics and principles an organization holds that form the foundation of its culture.

School districts have many values/beliefs, however some of the values/beliefs are so important that even with major changes in funding, curriculum, assessment, and technology these values/beliefs should still stay constant. The values/beliefs should be a foundation for the district's vision and mission, how it interacts with the community and which strategies are selected to fulfill district goals. The values/beliefs must be the basic elements of the district's culture.

Why Identify and Establish Values

Effective organizations identify and develop a clear, concise and shared meaning of values/beliefs, priorities, and direction so that every employee understands and can contribute. Once defined, values ideally impact all aspects of an organization. The district must support and nurture value and belief statements or identifying them will have been a waste of time. Employees, students, parents, and community members will feel misled unless they see the impact of the values and belief statements in daily actions from the GSD's leadership.

Create Impact Through Value and Belief Statements:

If we want the values/beliefs we identify to have an impact within the district's schools, the following should occur:

- Staff members must demonstrate and model these values/beliefs in action in their personal work behaviors, decision-making, and interpersonal interactions.
- Values/beliefs should guide decision-making, especially on the tough calls.
- District vision, mission, and goals should be based on the identified values/beliefs.
- The District should hire and promote individuals whose outlook and actions match GSD's values/beliefs.

Examples of Format and Concepts of Value/Belief Statements from Popular Private and Governmental Sector Companies for Our Consideration:

U.S. ARMY

- Courage...Face fear, danger, and adversity
- Duty...Fulfill your obligations
- Honor...Live up to all Army values
- Integrity...Do what is right, legally and morally
- Service...Put the welfare of the nation, the Army, and your subordinates before your welfare

GOOGLE

- Great is just not good enough
- You can be serious without a suit
- You can make money without doing evil
- It is best to do one thing really, really well
- Fast is better than slow

MERCK

- Corporate social responsibility
- Unequivocal excellence in all aspects of the company
- Science-based innovation
- Honesty and integrity
- Profit from work that benefits humanity

WHOLE FOODS MARKET

- Selling the highest quality natural and organic products available
- Satisfying and delighting our customers
- Supporting team member happiness and excellence
- Caring about our communities and environment
- Promote the health of our stakeholders through healthy eating education

IN SUMMARY

Only the active participation of the majority of the employees of an organization, plus the development of systems and processes based on the organization's values and beliefs will ensure a truly organizational-wide, value-based, shared culture.