



# Leadership for the Schoolhouse

HOW IS IT  
Different?  
WHY IS IT  
Important?

THOMAS J. SERGIOVANNI

## Executive Book Summary

By: Katherine Martin

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# Leadership for the School House

## *How Is It Different? Why is it Important?*

### BOOK SUMMARY

Thomas J. Sergiovanni expresses his passion for leadership in the schoolhouse by showing that schools are special places that require their own practices and theories. Leadership for the Schoolhouse is about improving schools by using and applying leadership. He creates this leadership that focuses on community, a more democratic school, and how students learn and develop. Sergiovanni shows his knowledge about leadership in the schoolhouse by arguing that school culture can change to become inquiring communities for students and teachers. He explains his ideas, beliefs, visions, and dreams about leadership for the schoolhouse.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Thomas J. Sergiovanni is Lillian Radford Professor of Education at Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas. He teaches in the school leadership program at Trinity University. Sergiovanni has a master's degree from Teachers College at Columbia University, doctors of Education degree from the University of Rochester, and an honorary degree from the University of San Diego and State University of New York. He is also a senior at the center for Educational Leadership and founding director at the Trinity Principal's Center. Sergiovanni has two other books he has written called *Moral Leadership*, *Building Community in Schools*, and *The Principalship*.

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## *Chapters*

**One** What We Have, What We Need

**Two** A Theory for the Schoolhouse

**Three** Understanding and Building Community in Schools

**Four** Establishing a Moral Voice

**Five** The Roots of School Leadership

**Six** The Case For Smaller Schools

**Seven** Doing What's Best For Students

**Eight** Teacher Development and Schools as Centers of Inquiry

**Nine** A New Theory of Change

**Ten** The Politics of Virtue: A New Compact

# CHAPTER ONE

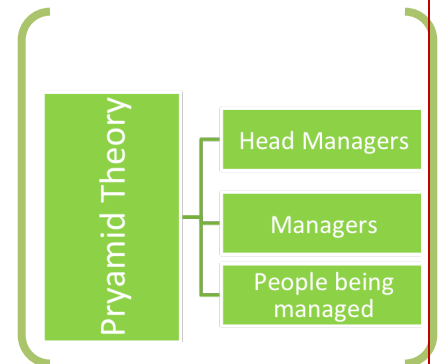
*What We Have, What We Need*

This chapter emphasizes the ability to make schools a better place of learning for students. Culture plays an important factor in improving schools. Every culture has a theory and school culture is motivated by its theory. Theories are practical that influence how we see, say, think, believe, and behave. Theories create schools to be what they are and if we want schools to change and improve, new theories need to be created. These new theories can include the context in how schools are trying to improve.

Teachers need to trust their principal and supervisors and believe that they are there to help. It has been insisted that principals be the instructional leaders in schools, managers, and motivators for teachers.

## THREE THEORIES:

**1. The Pyramid Theory** is a hierarchical system with head manager at the top while managers with delegated power is below with people being managed at the bottom. Rules and regulations are at the top. These provide protocols and guidelines for planning, controlling, organizing, and directing. When this theory is applied in schools the work of principals and teachers become simplified and standardized as well as the outcomes of the school become simplified and standardized.



**2. Railroad Theory** controls the work of people who do different jobs. This theory meets different responsibilities and instead of relying on direct supervision and hierarchical authority, time is spent anticipating questions and problems that will likely arise. This provides tracks that people must follow to get from one goal or outcome to another. Once the tracks have been laid out people are taught how to follow tracks and a monitoring system is made so everyone follows and reaches goals to be met. When this theory is applied in the schools, specific objectives are identified and aligned to a curriculum. These objectives are connected to a specific method of teaching. Teachers are supervised and evaluated and students are assessed to approve curriculum and teaching is being enforced and follow.

“What are the theories that determine how we think about and provide school leadership?”

“WHAT ARE THE THEORIES THAT DETERMINE HOW WE THINK ABOUT AND PROVIDE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP”

**3. High Performance Theory** allows workers to make their own decisions individually or in shared decision making groups. Effective leadership will connect workers together. This theory expects teachers to provide similar results. Teachers and principals are given freedom to organize their schools and teach the way they want to enable learning. This theory collects data on how well workers are doing. It allows teachers and principals to improve the quality of their own performance.



**These theories have important lessons that can teach workers and provide understanding that can help make decisions about leadership for the schoolhouse.**

**“We as educators need to make schools friendly and rich so the image of leadership, organization and behaviour fit with the learning development of the school”.**

## **Chapter Two**

**A Theory for the Schoolhouse**

### **Six Criteria’s for the Schoolhouse:**

#### **1.) Aesthetic Qualities**

The Schoolhouse should look aesthetically pleasing. The image, language, work, and purpose of the school should be appropriate for the students.

#### **2.) Moral Connections**

Teachers, parents, and students should be self- managing. There should be extrinsic rewards and teachers should be able to fit together in a way that is purposeful for the school. Moral connections come from the duties of teachers, parents, and students and the obligations they have for one another and their work.

#### **3.) Images of Rationality**

Rationality means being able to reason in a logical way and being able to come up with conclusions. Sometimes leaders in the

### **Six Criteria’s:**

- 1. Aesthetic Qualities**
- 2. Moral Connections**
- 3. Images of Rationality**
- 4. Constructivist Principle**
- 5. Center of Inquiry**
- 6. Self- Managing Goals**

schoolhouse are judges based on the look or sound, rather than looking for the effectiveness of the school. There are three aspects of Rationality: 1. People are rational, 2. People are limited in their rationality, and 3. People are rational only when acting together.

#### 4.) Constructivist Principle

Designing and constructing ideas that will change the way we think about leadership in the schools. Constructivist research shows a large number of ways children and adults learn.

#### 5.) Center of Inquiry

Theory for the schoolhouse should help provide an inquiry center school. "School must be more than a place of instruction". Teachers should be reflective practitioners and teachers should be using inquiry when designing schooling needs to enhance work for students.

#### 6.) Self- Managing Goals

Teachers, parents, principles, and students should be self- managing, responsible and independent. People who work in the schools need to be committed to doing the right thing. Workers need to be self- organizing and self- developing and they need to connect together in meaningful and authentic ways.

*"Theory for the schoolhouse should provide decisions about school organization and functioning, curriculum, and classroom life that reflect constructivist teaching and learning principles".*

### Chapter Three

#### Understanding and Building Community in Schools

*"Communities are defined by their centers of values, sentiments, and beliefs that provide the needed conditions for creating a sense of "we" from the "I" of each individual".*

**COMMUNITIES** create social structures and are organized around relationships and ideas. Communities bond people together and bring each person's values and ideas to the table.



#### THE THEORY OF COMMUNITY FOR SCHOOLS:

Community can mean many different things. For schools Sergiovanni proposes that we define community as "collections of individuals who are bonded together by natural will and who we are together bound to a set of shared ideas and ideals". Schools are constantly struggling to be a well formed community. This addresses many questions like: What can

be done to increase the sense of family, neighborliness, and collegiality among the faculty of a school? What kind of parent- school relationships need to be included into the community? How can teaching and learning settings be arranged so that they are more family- like? How can the collection of families be more like a neighborhood? Being a part of a community allows people to support one another and gives people a sense of belonging and meaning.

#### **PERSONAL EXPERIENCES WITH COMMUNITY:**

Sergiovanni asks to recall occasions in your life where you experienced being a part of a community that was meaningful to you. Then write a short story on your relationship with others, motivation, and how you felt about the experience. It is important to make lists of characteristics you have experienced in your community and share it with others. Doing this helps teachers and principals form a community that they all enjoy being a part of.

#### **RESTORING CHARACTER TO SCHOOL LEADERSHIP:**

Understanding and incorporating community into each school requires development of leadership into the schoolhouse. This leadership would include moral authority as the basis for what people do. This would come from shared agreement that brings communities together into a great fellowship.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **Establishing a Moral Voice**

#### **FORGING AGREEMENTS**

Schools need to strive to become purposeful, caring, respectful, and inquiring communities that are able to function democratically. A covenantal community is a group of people who share and have common values, beliefs, about the importance of a group rather than individual. This type of community inspires and allows people to work together for the common good.



*“COVENANT: 1. a formal, solemn and binding agreement. 2. A written agreement or promise usually between two or more parties, especially for the performance of some action. It is a declaration of intent by all parties who sign to help each other achieve mutual objectives”.*

## THE BASIC SCHOOL:

Is an emphasis on educating children from grades kindergarten to four. The purpose is that every child has a right to an education, be successful in school, and that the school is held at a high standard.

The Basic School strives to connect parents, teachers, principals, and students together to make a caring community.

There are eight building blocks that connect together making the whole greater than its parts.

## SCHOOLS WITH CHARACTER

This refers to a group of “focused” and “zoned” schools.

Students in the focused schools graduate at a higher rate than those in a zoned school. Focused schools have higher levels of school pride, a better atmosphere for learning and the schools are in better conditions. The main difference between focused schools and zoned schools is the ability of the former to speak to principals, parents, teachers, and students in a moral voice that bring everyone together for the common cause. Focus schools focus on student outcomes before all matters.

Zoned schools concentrate on delivering programs and following procedures and rules that are specific and rely on authority of the school administration. There are many differences and similarities between the focused and zoned schools but both types need moral voice. Bringing moral voice to the schools allows for balance and individual rights within the common good of the school.

## Eight Basic Building Blocks

1. A Community of Learning
2. The Centrality of Language
3. A Coherent Curriculum
4. Empowered Students
5. Teachers as Leaders
6. Parents are Partners
7. Services for Children
8. Measuring for Success



*“Why is the moral voice of community so important in today’s schools? Why is the moral voice of community so important in today’s world? Because without it, we respond to other voices—voices that acknowledge norms that might be questionable, harmful or even personally destructive”.*

## CHAPTER FIVE

### The Roots of School Leadership

**LEADERSHIP** is when someone can articulate a vision and achieve it by gathering a group of people who believe in the same vision and accomplishing it. This type of leadership is needed in the schools. We need nurturing people who can motivate the community of people in the schoolhouse. Community Theory motivates people to understand leadership differently. Community leadership allows shared fellowship and “who to follow, not what to follow”. Another type of leadership is Idea-based and it is a commitment of shared values and conceptions people must follow. In Idea-based leadership principals have an obligation and responsibility to share their visions of what their school can become. School leadership should connect



*“The roots of school leadership begin with our own personal commitments as parents, teachers, and principals to do the right thing for our children; to accept as part of our role responsibilities the necessity to practice leadership as a form of pedagogy”.*

parent, students, and teachers because schools function on extensions of families. Principals should be open to sharing their hopes, dreams, and visions for their school with the students, parents, and teachers. Some questions that may be asked before a school is changed and restored to accomplish the visions and dreams are: what changes need to be put in place to organize and operate our school? How should we live our lives together in the school? How should responsibilities be shared and what commitments must we make? Principals can ask these questions but parents also need to stand up for what kind of a school they want their children to be a part of. This is why leaders in the school need

to be sharing their visions with others so they can become a reality.

#### THE ROOTS OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

For leadership to work, leaders and followers need to be tied together in a mutual and understanding way. Leaders and followers influence one another and they both have shared purposes. At the root of principal’s responsibilities you can find the root of school leadership. Some of the roles of a principal’s leadership can include: purposing, maintaining harmony, institutionalizing values, motivating, managing, explaining, enabling, modeling, and supervising.

**LEADERSHIP AS PEDAGOGY** can be defined as any adult either a teacher, coach, or principal who provides a child with a sense of protection, direction, and orientation where

this role is shared with parents. This role is very important to the development of the child so it implies a type of leadership.



## CHAPTER SIX

### The Case for Smaller Schools



#### ARE SMALLER SCHOOLS MORE EFFECTIVE?

Schools need to become a more connected and caring community. One way of doing this is have continuity in the student's school. Children need to stay in one school building for more than three years before they can settle in. Students need to settle in and feel comfortable in their school community because they need to become responsible for their own physical surroundings to take part in their caring school. There should be a link between caring and learning and it should be a tight relationship. Students will do things for people they care and trust and in smaller school communities the relationships are stronger. In large impersonal schools students are forced to look to themselves to get their needs met. "Students do better in places small enough that the principal knows the name of each child". Sergiovanni states that there have been studies that have shown that students in smaller schools do better academically and are more eager to learn and participate in extracurricular activities than in large schools. In smaller schools there are also more opportunities for leadership because risk taking is more accepted.

#### HOW SMALL IS SMALL?

Many small school advocates agree that reduction in school size is beneficial, but not

everyone agrees on this. Some people believe high schools need to have graduating classes over 100 people to prepare the students for post- secondary schooling. The higher the number of students can sometimes have negative affects because the impersonal relationships from teacher to student can determine how well students do in school. Schools need to be a reasonable size so teachers can sit around a table to work, plan and problem solve together as a group. Small school are cost effective and it has been "concluded that it is possible to build schools as small as

*"Schools should be defined as small collections of people who are committed to each other, and who are connected to similar values and ideas".*



four hundred seats at a cost competitive with large school construction".



## Chapter Seven

### Doing What's Best for Students

#### SCHOOL PURPOSES:

There are many different lists that schools have as their goals to help educate students. Sergiovanni believes schools should help students communicate, to know, to think, to be good, and to commit to something. He states five purposes for schooling which include:

- To develop basic competency
- To pass on the culture
- To teach students to think
- To build character
- To cultivate excellence

#### CULTIVATING EXCELLENCE:

Excellence can be defined by high-level performance in “domains of knowledge” that are considered to be important. “A domain of knowledge consists of facts, principles, and skills that have evolved over time because they are useful in sustaining a particular culture’s economic or social needs”. In schools excellence is referred to high class rank, top test scores, and achieving academic awards. People have different profiles of intelligence and strengths and weaknesses in certain areas. All students have unique abilities that can contribute to excellence in a variety of ways.

“ Striving to cultivate excellence by having each student commit to something, work at it, and master it to a standard of excellence makes sense in part because, like adults, students have different

#### THE CONSTRUCTIVIST APPROACH

Constructivist teaching brings together the five purposes of schooling which are listed above. Constructivist thinking is a change in classrooms and schools into learning communities. Constructivists focus on the importance of relating new learning to recent knowledge, and the importance of teaching “authentic” learning.

*School Purposes*

*Cultivating Excellence*

*The Constructivist Approach*

*Summing the Principles*

*The Importance of Personal Meaning*

*Getting the Models Right*

### **SUMMING THE PRINCIPLES:**

Sergiovanni states that from the constructivist approach comes a variety of principles that are simple but important:

- *Not all subject-matter content is equal in teaching for understanding*
- *Less is more*
- *Combining process with substance is unbeatable*
- *Project planning and teaching is better than lesson planning and teaching*
- *Students are more producers of knowledge than they are consumers*
- *Teaching best indicator of what a student knows is the work itself*
- *An important aspect of teaching for understanding is setting up social norms that promote respect for other people's ideas*
- *The aim of teaching is to provide the conditions for learning*

### **THE IMPORTANCE OF PERSONAL MEANINGS:**

When students are given an opportunity to comprehend things not only as they are, but in ways of their own personal contexts it maximizes their learning. It's crucial that students have both personal and cultural meaning in their learning experiences but also having healthy psychological development as a part of the learning.

### **GETTING THE MODELS RIGHT:**

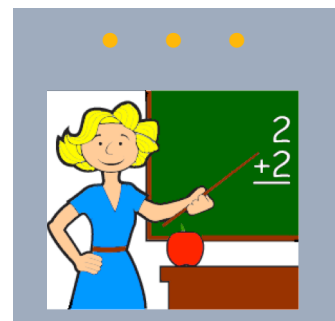
Models are useful learning devices that can provide students with many different images that can help students think more clearly about problems and to produce solutions. The leaders in our schools need to be doing what is right for the students and modeling the appropriate images to develop an enriched environment.

## **CHAPTER EIGHT**

### **Teacher Development and Schools as Centers of Inquiry**

There needs to be a certain kind of teaching and learning to create a community to enhance student academic, social, and moral development. Sergiovanni lists some strategies that can help foster a transformation for the classroom:

- Reflective Communities
- Developmental Communities
- Diverse Communities
- Conversational Communities
- Caring and Responsible Communities



If our classrooms are going to be successful as communities then we need to transform our schools similarly first. If we want teacher development to become a part of building community then the leaders in our schools need to create management, supervisory systems, organizational patterns, and teacher growth strategies that:

- *Encourage teachers to reflect on their own practice*
- *Acknowledge that teachers develop at different rates, have different talents, and interests*
- *Provide collaborative learning among teachers*
- *View teachers as supervisors of learning communities*

#### **MODELS OF TEACHER DEVELOPMENT:**

The relationship between teachers and their education on teaching is different from professional development than in their training. Professional development shows that teachers are “superordinate” to the research on teaching. Compared to technicians who are trained to research findings, professionals view research as knowledge that shows the decisions they make. “Professionals create their practice in use”.

#### **THE SCHOOL AS AN INQUIRING COMMUNITY:**

The key to community in both schools and in classroom is a commitment to inquiry, and to learning as the basis for decisions about structure, organization, sources of authority, curriculum, teaching methods, assessment, and other school issues. There are several things that can help schools and classrooms create an inquiry and learning community. These can include: building collaboration and cooperation, using knowledge to help people grow, and sharing leadership functions as a team, so people can provide skills and get experience in role taking.

#### **THE SCHOOL AS CENTER OF INQUIRY:**

##### ***Three reasons why a school should become a center of inquiry:***

- 1.) Good teachers will reflect on their practice, and create knowledge to analyze problems and make decisions. Teachers need to be researchers and make inquiries into their job.*
- 2.) Making a school a center of inquiry will help keep teachers alive intellectually.*
- 3.) Students need to be taught how to be lifelong learners, and teachers need to model it*



## CHAPTER NINE

### A New Theory of Change

1.) Schools are compared to clockworks that have turned the wrong direction. “The cogs and pins are there alright, but they spin independently of each other”. Teachers are a part of systems that require them to teach in approved ways. An example of this would be teachers learning something new to do in their classroom at a workshop on Friday and then teaching it on Monday because the teacher has to. This is not a productive way to change. A way for change is teaching what the teacher and students believe in.

#### 2.) Planning for change:

- What is it that the teacher wants to accomplish, state a measurable goal
- State clear behavioural expectations
- Train people to function in the new way
- Monitor by comparing what you expected and what you observed
- Make any corrections in the system if necessary

These ideas for planning for change is an approach a variety of school leaders came up with for a vision to arrange events and people in ways their visions can become a reality.

3.) People in the schools need to be self- managing and they need to connect their ideas and values with others. This is the idea of shared followership in the school that includes principals, teachers, parents, and students. Being self- managing is an important aspect to being a good follower. Followers share these characteristics:

- Manage on their own
- Are committed to the purpose or organization
- Build up confidence and focus on efforts
- Courageous, honest, and credible

4.) It can be assumed that extrinsic incentives and disincentives can motivate people to change. An example would be “If you want people to do something, you have to give them something they want in return”. There is also a flipside sometimes which is what does not get rewarded does not get done. Ultimately if desired incentives are given there is a good chance people will go along with the proposed changes.

### CHANGE BASED ON FOUR PRINCIPLES:

1.) Schools are managerially and culturally tight

2.) Systematic and detailed planning can backfire

3.) Means- Ways- Ends strategies work better

4.) Incentives and Disincentives can hinder

## RULES OF MOTIVATION

The Rules	Why People Behave	How They Are Involved
What gets rewarded gets done.	Extrinsic reasons.	Calculated Involvement (they stay involved as long as they like the deal).
What is rewarding gets done.	Intrinsic reasons.	Intrinsic Involvement (they stay involved without supervision).
What is thought to be good gets done.	Felt duties and obligations.	Moral Involvement (they stay involved without supervision and even when rewards are not available).

## CHAPTER TEN

### The Politics of Virtue: A New Compact

Leadership for meaning is crucial because it gives connections that enable parents, students, and teachers to know who they are better and how they fit into a larger set of meaning and significance. Leadership for problem solving is also important because it gives school members the ability to understand the issues they face and it helps them figure out what they must do to fix the problem.

#### **CIVIC VIRTUE:**

This approach of governance stands up for the departure from today's policies that allow principals, teachers, and parents in schools to choose how they will do things. The decisions the schools

make should be shared values and beliefs that everyone develops together. At the school district level school communities should be able to decide their own educational purposes, programs, scheduling, operating and be able to demonstrate to the school district and public they are responsible.

#### **THE RATIONAL CHOICE QUESTION:**

The Rational Choice Theory shows thinking in schools about how to motivate teachers to perform, show school improvement, motivate people to accept change, and how to motivate students to learn and behave. "What gets rewarded gets done".

*"It is possible to rally enough small groups of thoughtful and committed citizens throughout the continent to create the kind of schools we want if we are willing to change the way we think about leadership and if we are willing to change the way we think about politics in schools".*

Civic Virtue  
The Rational Choice  
Question  
Is Civic Virtue for  
Students, Too?  
Leadership for the  
Schoolhouse

## IS CIVIC VIRTUE FOR STUDENTS, TOO?

Sergiovanni states that children have the ability to understand what civic virtue is and have the ability to respond to it in ways that depend of their own levels of growth. Children do have different needs and function at different levels but Sergiovanni says that the evidence is enormous regarding students from kindergarten to grade 12 that they have the ability to understand civic virtue.

“The fact is that students, too, under the right conditions, not only will be responsive to the calls of civic virtue, but they need to be responsive if they are to develop into the kinds of adults we want them to be”.



## LEADERSHIP FOR THE SCHOOLHOUSE:

An important part of leadership in the schoolhouse is sharing the obligation that teachers, parents, administrators and students have and accept civic virtue. One part of the obligation to be shared is LEADERSHIP. The other component is to share the responsibility for making leadership successful. Teachers need to be responsible for leadership in the classroom, while students have a moral obligation to help make things work and be a leader themselves. Administration, teachers and parents need to share and accept responsibility together to provide successful leadership in the schoolhouse.

*“Leadership for meaning, leadership for problem solving, collegial leadership, leadership as shared responsibility, leadership that serves school purposes, leadership that is tough enough to demand a great deal from everyone, and leadership that is tender enough to encourage the heart—these are the images of leadership we need for schools as communities”.*

