

Introducing the “Decker Rule” to all Educators

Currently in our schools, we have a majority of very effective administrators who are school leaders, value their educators and staff, and create a school climate of collaboration to advance student achievement. We need to continue to support such leadership and invest in systems that provide resources and training. Ultimately, we need to ensure safe and collaborative environments are led by effective leader across the District.

Unfortunately, there is a small percentage of administrators who are ineffective, and in some cases highly ineffective. Their leadership does not foster a safe and collaborative work environment, but one where a top down dictatorial leadership style creates fear and intimidation. This leads to high staff turnover and poor student achievement. Many times the stories of such administrators are covered up. Short of the staff who are victims to such an environment, CCSD Trustees and the public know little of these administrators.

However during the 2018-2019 school year, due to investigative journalism of the RJ reporter Amelia Pak-Harvey, one of these stories came to light. It was at Decker Elementary School where the climate was horrific, staff left in droves, and parents were angry over the administrator. It turned out this was not the first time this administrator had created a hostile work environment. Their previous school, Vegas Verde ES, had the same pattern. But at the time, CCSD continued its’ practice of simply moving this principal to another school (i.e. Decker). This so-called ‘dance of the lemons’ is enabled by the Administrator’s union when it protects ineffective administrators.

For the past four years not one administrator has received an ineffective rating in their evaluation. NOT ONE- even after what happened at Decker ES!

In 2015, Nevada Legislator passed a law, SB 241, required the termination of an effective administrator if they had two successive years of staff turnover of over 50% and their school dropped a star rating. To date, no administrator has been terminated under this law. The principal at Decker, having had a second school in a row which produced high staff turnover, a hostile environment, and low student achievement, was not released from her position-but moved to another job. The dance of the lemons continues.

CCEA is no longer going to continue to sit back and let this occur. Educators cannot be the victims of this practice. Accordingly, starting this school year, CCEA will take a more aggressive and very public approach to ensuring that all of our schools have great leaders in their administrators. It is time that ineffective administrators are either retrained or removed from leadership and in some cases employment. We are calling this the ‘Decker Rule’.

The Decker Rule means the following:

1. If there is a complaint lodged with CCEA about an ineffective administrator in a school that creates a hostile environment, high staff turnover, and low student achievement, we will investigate the matter. If there is merit to the complaint, we will attempt to resolve the issue directly with the administrator.

2. If there is no resolution with the administrator, then we will notify CCSD Superintendent and attempt to resolve the issue with the Associated Superintendent or Regional Director that oversees that administrator
3. If there is no resolution, then we will take the matter before the CCSD Trustee who has jurisdiction of that school and attempt to resolve the matter.
4. If the matter isn't resolved then, we will take the matter public by informing parents and the school community of the school staff's complaint regarding the school administrator. We will demand that the administrator be removed from that school.
5. We will not end the campaign until the administrator is removed and the school has an effective administrator who creates a safe school climate, engages in collaboration increased staff retention, and advances student achievement.

At all times in our effort, to protect educators from retaliation from the administrator, staff's names and complaints shall be kept confidential.