**61691-80   Change Management in Education**

**Module 2 Assignment: *Building a Guiding Coalition***  
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This past week, as I was learning about “guiding coalitions”, I received an e-mail from my principal. The e-mail was an invitation to serve on a building committee that she is calling a “Schedule and Needs Committee” that would meet over the next two months. As I was considering new learnings about guiding coalitions, I was wondering if accepting the invitation would work well with the upcoming modules of this course.  
  
***The Hanawalt School Schedule and Needs Committee: Divisional and Effective*** The principal’s invitation asked me and seven other colleagues in my building to serve on the “Schedule and Needs Committee”. I will readily admit to working in a school district that has a very functional central office staff and school board. I believe that is a necessity for that staff and the school board leaders provide a centralized purpose, vision, and direction for the largest school district in Iowa, serving over 33,000 students with nearly 5,000 staff members working in over 60 schools. However, just as we live in a country whose “central offices” of government in Washington, D.C. can be defined – using terms from this week’s module – as “functional”, our state and local branches of government can be defined as a “divisional hybrid”, where decisions made within an overarching functional structure of a larger entity, can be made to best benefit the stakeholders within that smaller “division” of the larger group.  
 Serving on the Hanawalt School Schedule and Needs Committee (SSNC) will be an effective way to provide guidance and direction for the upcoming 2021-’22 school year, in that colleagues at my school will be provided with a schedule months in advance to allow opportunities for long-range planning. My district can effectively, at the functional level, provide a curricular pacing guide that provides staff in my building with a sense of timing on a *school year calendar*. The SSNC will, at the divisional – or building - level, allow for when that district planning can be best applied during the *instructional day* at Hanawalt School. Also, the SSNC will be charged in assessing the needs each grade level or special area team has to best implement curriculum.   
 Both focuses of the committee are best carried out within a divisional structure at a local level. Micromanagement is what would take place if the central office staff or the school board was to do the proposed work of the SSN.  
  
***Who shall do the work? How will the SSNC be held accountable?***

When looking at my e-mail invite to join the SSNC, I noticed that I, and six other colleagues from my building, received invites from the principal. In creating an effective coalition, the creator needs to consider the following factors: (1) leadership characteristics, (2) credibility, (3) expertise, and (4) the position/title of some participants, and the power or connections that position might bring in helping to define and complete the committee’s work. Two of the colleagues were instructional coaches, two are “younger” teachers who have taught five years or less, one is an “extended core” (i.e., art, music, P.E.) teacher, one is a special education resource teacher, and I am the most veteran teacher in the building, and work on a functional committee for the Des Moines Public Schools responsible for providing budgets and policy for professional development. I am impressed with the people she asked, who – with the exception of the two coaches and myself – are not serving in any building leadership capacity outside of their classroom. If most accept this offer, there would be a healthy mix of experienced veterans and fresh faces.  
  
***Urgency and Accountability*** There is an inherent sense of urgency with the completion of the proposed work of the committee. As stated earlier, the hope is for the SSNC to have a draft of a building schedule completed by the end of the year, and to compile a list of needs for each grade-level and special-area team to help them in implementing curriculum.

Each member of the SSNC must seek input and feedback from colleagues, and be prepared for the possibility of the results of that input and feedback could lead the committee’s work in new directions.  
 The work of the committee needs to be recorded in minutes, which need to be shared with the building leadership team and at reported at staff meetings. Providing feedback to the committee’s work should also be encouraged before the anticipated completion of the work by the end of the year.

From what I have gathered this past week about “building a guiding coalition” from this course’s lecture notes, I have decided to accept my principal’s invitation. Serving on this “guiding coalition” for my building will provide excellent opportunities for me to apply what I learn from this, and future modules and course work in change management.