

ISLLC Standard #6:

A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal and cultural context.

Title:**Schedule or Skedaddle****Key Questions:**

- When is non-renewal the best option for dealing with insubordination?
- What effects does the response time of an administrator have on other's perception of his/her interest and involvement?

Discussion:

At Cardinal High School in a suburb of the city of Atlanta, the school counselor is notorious for demanding that Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) be amended in order to fit the "master schedule" that she creates. On various occasions, special educators in the school have attempted to explain that IEPs are not written to fit the conveniences of a school, but to provide for the needs of the student eligible for special education services. Cardinal High School has faced a number of administrator changes over the past several years and as a result, the gains made by one administrator with regards to the behavior of the counselor were lost with each new principal. During scheduling, the administrator would begin documentation and investigation of the complaints lodged by the special educators but would fail to brief the new administrator coming in and the cycle would repeat itself the following school year.

During the 2006-2007 school year, Dr. Jekyll became principal at Cardinal High School and immediately noticed that there was tension between the special educators and counseling department. After a little investigation, Dr. Jekyll learned of the on-going difference of opinion between the faculty members and decided to speak with the teachers and counselor individually. In his meeting with the teachers he learned that they felt pressured to write IEPs according to the "master schedule" at the school instead of focusing on the needs of the students. When he met with the counselor, he began to understand the concerns of the special educators; she was very clear that she had no intention of manipulating the schedule to accommodate a bunch of "sped" kids.

Dr. Jekyll responded by providing a school-wide training on the laws regarding students with disabilities in hopes of catching the attention of the counselor without singling her

out. Several months later, the counselor was written up for refusing to make schedule changes to allow several students the assistance of a collaborative teacher as indicated in their IEPs. Mr. Jekyll reported the instance to the county coordinator for guidance and counseling and developed a professional development plan to address the problem. At the end of the school year, after she was over-heard telling another teacher that she'd retire before she allowed "speds" to interfere with her schedule; the counselor's contract was not renewed.

Answers:

- School administrators have an obligation to understand and respond to situations with potential legality as indicated in ISLLC Standard 6. The situation in this case study was not only of legal concern but it was interfering with the proper education of several students.
- Largely because of the amount of time it took for an administrator to respond to the actions of this counselor, the special educators in this school had given up on changing the way students receive services and were writing IEPs to accommodate an ease in scheduling. Had the school had a more stable administration or had a previous administrator responded in a timelier manner, I suspect the morale of these special educators would have been preserved.

Case Study/Administrator Evaluation:

This administrator in this situation demonstrated proficiency with regards to ISLLC standard #6. His actions were timely and demonstrated both awareness of the law and regard for the importance and necessity of proper education for the students within his school.