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BUILDING MORALE: THE IMPORTANCE OF STAFF NOT ONLY FACULTY COMPENSATION

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Littleford & Associates has worked with almost 3000 schools in 30 years to help them design mission-based salary systems that focus on workload, salary system models and benefit systems structured to be flexible, tax smart and able to attract and retain top staff. We have also advised them about the link between salary system design and teacher evaluation and their professional growth.

However, only a few of these clients have asked us as well to help them create appropriate systems for non-teaching staff, i.e., all those on the payroll who directly engage with students. This category includes office, maintenance, food service, security and transportation personnel.

One long-term Client is a case in point. This School asked this Firm many years ago to help them design a mission-based faculty salary system. Fifteen years later, the next Head asked us to return and help them revamp the old system that needed to be updated and made more relevant to a changed faculty demographic and economic conditions.

The Head ensured that the nonteaching staff were represented in the benefits component of this overall process because they share the same health, retirement, tuition and lunch benefits, etc. with the faculty. He also recognized that they deserve to have the School's compensation and evaluation patterns and traditions examined as they affect them through a similarly thorough process. The assurance that this would occur boosted staff morale.

In interviewing a cross section of non-teaching staff from several areas it was clear to this Consultant that these employees valued the opportunity to articulate their views, to be heard, and to exchange ideas with Board members, the Head and key Administrators about what kind of salary and evaluation system the School might consider. This group is participating in an ongoing exercise of working with the key Administrators and Board members. It is just like the process used with the teaching staff a year earlier.



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More schools should be thinking about whether they evaluate their non-teaching staff at all. They should be doing it in writing annually and making that a part of a mission-based salary system that allows for a way for non-teaching staff both to have some predictability of their future earning power and clear protocols about how to influence it.

Teachers and non-teachers have different jobs and are usually hired from different markets. But both groups deserve an opportunity to participate in a review of salary, benefit and evaluation systems.