



As a principal, I know how challenging it can be to run strong academic programs in addition to considering other enrichment programs. But I've discovered one that has produced amazing results. KidLead was introduced in the Eaton School District, RE2, at Benjamin Eaton Elementary during the 2007-2008 school year. Laurie Corso was the principal at that time. I am currently the principal, joining the staff in 2008. For the past two years I have been honored to be involved with the trainer, Nina Lewis, and the KidLead Program. This program combines student leadership, community involvement and a chance for students to gain a sense of belonging and purpose.

The program focuses on students who display leadership aptitude, at school and in the community. During their involvement they refine their skills with leader values, attitudes, relationships and decisions. Positive results could be noticed in school, as well as team sports and in the community.

This semester we selected a student who has struggled with appropriate social behavior. He is extremely intelligent and a leader, but not in a positive manner. I made it mandatory for him to begin the KidLead program. I discussed with him our belief in him and desire to provide tools for him to succeed. After completing one module, this child displayed disappointment that his KidLead session was over.

The community has been very supportive of the KidLead program. Several parents completed coach training and are now involved. The students in this last module decided to do an Angel Tree project to help children in the community who may not receive any Christmas gifts. The donations were overwhelming and the pride that the students felt was priceless. As a result of these programs, our school has been featured in news articles and the Colorado NBC TV affiliate.

In the environment of Standards Based Education and High Stakes testing, character building is often placed on the back burner. Yet we read in the newspaper the problems plaguing our teens, who struggle with difficult choices on a daily basis. KidLead meets the needs of educating the whole child, especially those who are socially influential, missing in so many district educational curricula. KidLead is a valuable program needed for educating the whole child, especially those with leadership potential. I heartily recommend it!

Diane Eussen – Principal

