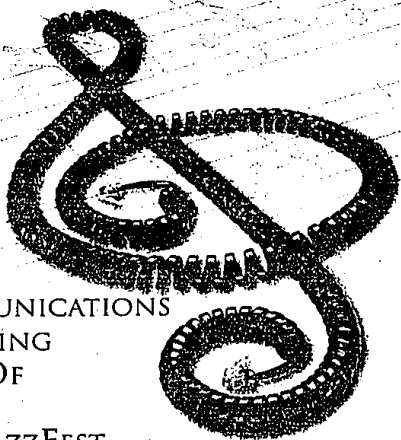


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Leadership

Almost 50 school employees
sign up for academy

By TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER
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Farmington school district employees of all vocations are stepping up to the leadership plate and, according to a May 2 presentation, are hungry for more.

The district's Leadership Academy, which includes nearly 50 employees, was highlighted during the school board's "Evidence of Excellence" segment of the meeting.

Three members of the academy talked about the experience and a video was shown, featuring participants being filmed revealing what leadership means to them.

The first-year program — which was successful enough to merit being expanded for 2000-01 — united 49 employees who took the lead in the Galileo leadership program, which is only available to a limited number of educators.

Judy White, the district's assistant superintendent for instructional services, emphasized that there is potential for the program to really take off next year and beyond. This year's program focused on collaboration, innovation and individual leadership skills assessment.

"Leadership happens every day," White said. "It happens in teachers' lounges and virtually

everywhere else within the walls of a school building.

As proof, among those taking advantage of the Leadership Academy were teachers, custodians, secretaries, counselors and support staff employees.

"Leadership means having a vision without fear," said Warner Middle School teacher Dave Tylor, one of the participants who spoke at the board meeting. Debbie McCracken, executive assistant to Farmington schools Superintendent Bob Maxfield, said the experience revealed how being a leader entails being a good listener.

Listen well

"We can all improve our listening skills," McCracken said. "... A leader doesn't listen with his ears, but listens with empathy, with heart and soul."

McCracken also said being part of the academy sent a strong message to all employees of Farmington Public Schools. "I believe the administration, by opening the academy up to all employee groups, is making a strong statement that we're all part of the Farmington team."

Another participant was David Devroy, head custodian at O.E. Dunkel Middle School.

"What the Leadership Academy (meant) to me was an opportunity to learn about different styles of leadership," Devroy

said. "And it gave me a chance to compare my style as a leader to what others thought."

The fact that Devroy is already in a leadership role, as the head of custodians, enabled him to immediately put what he learned into practice.

White told board members the testimonies from Tylor, McCracken and Devroy provided "evidence of the wonderful leadership and enthusiasm" exhibited by academy participants.

More proof was the video, featuring each member's own take on what leadership means to them. Following are several of those quotations:

■ "A teacher does not lead alone," Dale Phillips, vocal music consultant, Hillside Elementary School;

■ "If you want to truly learn, then truly listen," Motria Kraus, teacher, Warner;

■ "To lead is to ask, model and listen," Kurt David, counselor, East Middle School;

■ "Good character makes good teachers," Michele Meyers, teacher, Beechview Elementary School;

■ "I am the sum of my actions — this is how other people see me," Dave Tylor, teacher, Warner;

■ "If you are having a bad day, it doesn't mean everyone else should, too," David Devroy, head custodian, Dunkel.

Longtime Botsford employee remembered

Friends, family and employees of Botsford's Health Care Continuum will pay tribute to friend and colleague Linda S. Mylnarek with a "Friendship Garden."

Until her death in late 1998, Mylnarek, 44, Redford resident, was president of Botsford Con-

tinuing Care Corporation and administrator of Botsford Continuing Health Center. She began her career in long term care as a nurse assistant at Farmington Nursing Home (now Botsford Continuing Health Center). Her 25 years of experience

with Botsford made her a visionary and leader in her field.

The "Friendship Garden" will be planted on the campus of Botsford Commons and will be the prelude to a larger "Community Garden" which will be formally dedicated to her sometime later this year.

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