

EMPOWERING TEACHERS AS LEADERS

by:

Alicia F. Tabugan

Teacher III, Bagumbayan Elementary School

Teacher empowerment is a captivating phrase. It is one of the various terms that everyone thinks they understand, but few really do. If you will ask a dozen of different teachers, you will get a dozen of different answers to the question, “What is teacher empowerment?”

As Terry (1999) defined, teacher empowerment is not just a set of techniques, but rather a way constructing an inner understanding of the relationship between a person’s self and the people he/she works with. The importance of teacher empowerment in key education areas cannot be underestimated. A belief by teachers that their knowledge of teaching and learning (and the very students they teach) matters and is considered a valuable factor in decision-making can connect them to their school and districts in powerful ways. This connection can help improve the retention of those teachers in their classrooms and ultimately, the success of the students they teach.

According to Santos (2000), the willingness to take risks is a characteristic of empowered teachers. Teachers who take risks, gain insights about themselves, stretch their limits, solve problems and meet challenges. As a result, they grow in self-assurance and are better able to empower others.

The benefits provided to teachers through the teacher empowerment are inclusive in increasing teacher job performance and competence, improved morale of teachers, increased knowledge of subject matter, teacher strategies, methods, techniques and pedagogy and finally resulting higher motivation among students as well as higher achievements. As a result, teachers, ultimately their students and their schools could

potentially receive the full benefits of teacher empowerment if principals sharpen their focus on the appropriate leadership behaviors, styles and policies to effectively maximize teacher empowerment.

References:

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