**“Leaders know and understand what it means and what it takes to be a leader”**

Fully understanding leadership is an ongoing process that I am learning more and more about as time passes. In my experience thus far, I’ve learned that conflict is sometimes necessary in order to reach a goal, clear communication is essential, and it takes a diverse individual to successfully lead in a district like Great Neck.

One of my favorite contingency theories about leadership is the path-goal theory. The modern development of the path-goal theory is attributed to Martin Evans and Robert House. Essentially, the theory attempts to explain the impact of leader behavior on subordinate performance by creating four categories of leader behavior. Those four categories are *directive leadership, supportive leadership, participative leadership*, and *achievement-oriented leadership*. In my experience as an intern I’ve demonstrated each of the four leader behaviors on a regular basis.

Recently I’ve found that sometimes only one leader behavior is necessary to complete simple tasks. For example, I’ve been a *directive leader* while distributing memorandums to building faculty and giving instructions in regards to policy updates we created for our emergency exit procedure drill folders.

In more complex circumstances, multiple leader behaviors are needed to complete a task. As an intern, one of the first administrative tasks I was assigned was to create and maintain a school-wide auditorium schedule. I began this process by reviewing the high school calendar, district calendar, and Performing Arts department calendar seeking out all events that would take place in the auditorium throughout the year. Once the dates were determined I used Google Calendar as a means of communication and emailed each stakeholder the link to our new calendar to make the schedule transparent. This proved to be a great way to get everyone on the same page, but when conflicts arose it was up to me to resolve them and inevitably assign one particular teacher, club, or outside vendor the auditorium. In these situations I found myself demonstrating *participative leader* behaviors by consulting all subordinates and gathering information before making a decision. I’ve also demonstrated *supportive leader* behavior by speaking to individuals in person to ensure that they are satisfied with the administrative decisions I made before and after an event had been scheduled.

As a learner, I’ve always felt that it is beneficial to study with multiple professors on a given subject. Each professor will teach you different things, however, the lessons that all professors have in common can be deemed the most important. For instance, one of the on-going leadership lessons throughout my administrative courses has been that a competent leader always gathers information before making a decision. Prior to my internship, I’ve heard this leadership lesson from four separate college professors/administrators. I’ve observed other administrators practice this technique during my internship through administrative shadowing and interviewing both formally and informally. Naturally, certain circumstances will not allow a leader the luxury of waiting before making a decision, but in my career I will strive to do this whenever possible.