**“Leaders never stop learning and honing their skills”**

I believe that one of my strongest characteristics as an educational leader is the ability to self-reflect and make improvements with each passing year. During my internship I’ve demonstrated this ability by regularly taking on tasks that were outside my comfort zone. From December 5-8th I attended this year’s NYSSMA All-State Winter Conference in Rochester NY. This professional conference offered me a wide variety of networking opportunities, but more importantly, it offered me the opportunity to attend five educational workshops and deepened my knowledge about the field. Each of the workshop, focused on a different administrative, musical, and/or educational area. Although it was convenient that I could log the hours for these workshops as an administrative intern, my thirst for knowledge extends much further than this experience. I would have attended this conference as a dedicated educator regardless.

I recently read an article in Educational Leadership entitled “Growing into Leadership”. The article stated that inspirational leaders (principals) possess the ability energize their staff, community, and students on a regular basis if they themselves are lifelong learners. In a world that is constantly changing, as is education, administrators must understand that the effective strategies in one year, may not be as potent in future years. Between the common core, tax levies, and an increased focus on statewide assessment all coming into focus as of late, administrators will need to be aware of the implications and potential effects each of these topics will have in relation to his/her district.

To me learning is the most important aspect of life. It stimulates the mind, body, and soul in a way unlike any other. I am proud to consider myself a lifelong learner.