Succession Plan

Instructional Leadership Team

Great leaders are evidenced by the legacies left when the leader has moved on. *Tertulia's* leadership agrees with this premise and is working diligently to ensure that the future leadership is prepared to continue with the established mission.

Preparing leaders requires a succession plan that addresses several components. These are retention procedures, ongoing professional development, and a clear career course. These components will help the school to retain employees that are a benefit to the school and to its mission. The employees that are targeted for retention are those with the following characteristics:

- Integrity
- Love of children
- Belief that all children can learn
- Willingness to work hard and with a team
- Record of success demonstrated through student achievement

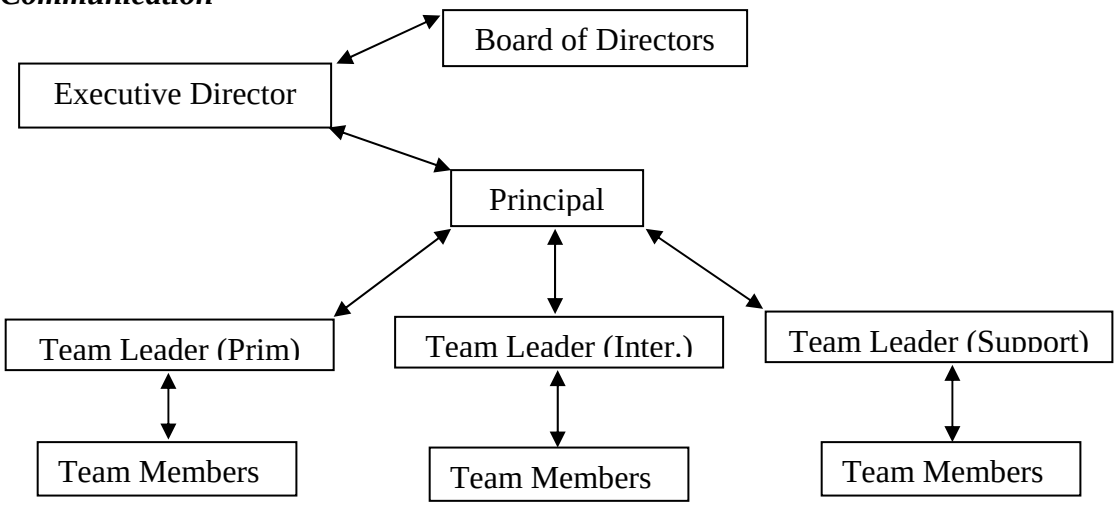
Retaining Quality Employees

Retention of quality employees rests on three key factors; communication, professional development, and addressing outside factors. *Tertulia* addresses each of these with the intent of showing its employees that they are valued and respected.

Communication

Staff members who feel valued and appreciated will stay with the organization that helps them to feel this way. *Tertulia's* method of ensuring that the staff is heard and included in school wide decisions is to first communicate with them on a regular basis, then act on the information received from them. Communication of information follows the communication flow chart depicted below.

Flow of Communication
Chart 1



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Personal feedback from each staff member directly to the executive director is a unique structure that impacts retention. Once each quarter every staff member is required to meet with the executive director. These meetings will have an expressed purpose of providing feedback on a decision, soliciting input on upcoming decisions, addressing any personnel issues, and answering questions that the employee might have. These meetings have been very helpful in gauging the pulse of the school, gathering data, taking polls, and establishing relationships with the staff members. Information gathered from these meetings has influenced all aspects of the school from the food service program to the academic program and staffing.

Professional Development

Information from surveys and questionnaires gathered from the staff is summarized in the statement that teachers want to learn how to be better teachers and want to be appreciated for the work that they do. *Tertulia's* professional development plan aims at developing skills and developing leaders.

Through the professional development plan, teachers are trained in strategies that will help them to be better teachers. In order to do this the school must first recognize the needs then provide the training to address those needs. At *Tertulia*, teachers are receiving ongoing professional development in academic vocabulary, reading strategies, and math processing and problem solving. Each training session is followed with specific observations that look for implementation of those strategies. Feedback from the instructional staff has been positive. They have shared that the follow up has helped them to be more accountable and has helped to ingrain these strategies into the operating repertoire of strategies used in the classroom. These teachers then become the experts and continue to share with their colleagues what they have learned.

Outside Factors

Another method implemented at *Tertulia* for retaining quality personnel is to recognize the needs of the staff members outside of the work arena and provide support. Many of the teachers who are positively impacting the school and who would be an asset to retain, are young teachers with young families facing the difficult child-care issues. *Tertulia* offers daycare for the staff members at reduced rates in order to support the families. Feedback from this program is overwhelmingly positive. This support allows the staff members to work more comfortably because the children are very close at hand. In addition, the staff members using the service have shared that they are also able to work longer at *Tertulia* because there is no travel time required to meet pick up deadlines. Positive impact for *Tertulia* is twofold; happier employees and more work time.

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The three factors that offer the most impact for retaining staff members who are positively impacting the school are communication, professional development, and addressing outside factors. As with any organization, at times there is a need to replace personnel. This process is outlined below.

1. Early notification- Staff members are notified early in the third quarter whether they will be invited back the following year.
2. Advertise on the Arizona Department of Education employment website
3. Paper screening of submitted resumes and cover letters
4. Schedule interviews and sample teaching opportunities
5. Complete the application and reference check process for selected candidates
6. Provide detailed orientation early in the summer with expectations for the start of the year.

These two procedures combined help *Tertulia* to retain the staff members who are positively impacting the students and the school as well as replace those who are not meeting the expectations.

Ongoing Professional Development

Professional Development (PD) is one aspect of the succession plan that permeates all other aspects of this renewal application and is critical to our operation. Goals and strategies are included in the performance plan, funds are allocated through the business plan, and discussion is provided in the narratives. In reference to the succession plan, PD is critical.

In order to develop future leaders who are able to be successful, they must possess the skills and knowledge that is required for the leadership positions that they might fill. To become great school leaders individuals must be great teachers who understand how schools operate and who are willing to become reflective learners. The PD plan addresses all three areas by providing training in excellent teaching strategies and assessments. School operations are addressed in the PD plan by including opportunities for staff members to be involved in discussions as well as the planning, and implementation of different programs. Finally, *Tertulia* encourages, through communication systems and personal interactions, interested staff members to continue learning and developing professionally. This component of the professional development plan prepares staff members for future leadership positions.

School wide support

As a support for the staff, *Tertulia* has developed an incentive plan for rewarding outstanding performance. *Tertulia's* Community Excellence Plan begins with the

understanding that all employees at *Tertulia* work daily to ensure that all students enroll in a four-year college or university.

Within the scope of this mission, we all work together to maximize student achievement and ensure that all members of our community are working together towards our mission.

To ensure consistent and fair accountability for all, *Tertulia's* Board of Directors implements a Community Excellence Plan consisting of an evaluation of specific elements in four realms key to our success. Within these realms, all *Tertulia* staff will participate in working towards school-wide goals and benchmarks, as well as individual goals and benchmarks to maximize student achievement and greater progress towards our mission. As some or all of these indicators are met, *Tertulia's* Board of Directors may provide increased "excellence" pay to some or all employees.

Tertulia Community Excellence Plan will include goal setting in the following four realms:

Program Satisfaction
Student Readiness
Student Achievement
Constant Learning

At determined intervals (three times per year), the *Tertulia* Board of Directors will review school-wide data to determine if adopted benchmarks have been met. The executive director and school principal will evaluate each employee's performance at determined intervals to review progress for each individual staff member. The Board may then, at its sole discretion, disburse "excellence pay" to each eligible employee. Total "excellence pay" may be up to 3% of each individual's projected annual compensation.

This excellence plan supports the goals set forth in this renewal packed addressing the goals of the performance plan and the succession plan.

Career Course

Once the staff members are established in the school and are growing professionally, then the career course set out by the school can more easily guide individuals into leadership positions. Through learning, implementation, and willingness to impact the surrounding educational community, great leaders are developed.

A structured plan for targeting leaders for specific principal or director positions involves details and discussions leading to the development of a career course for the individual. Discussion would answer the following questions:

- What are the individual's leadership goals?

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- What strengths and skills does the individual already posses?
- What specific certification does the potential leader hold?
- What are the professional development needs of this individual?

Following discussion and determining that an individual is committed to advancement into leadership roles, *Tertulia* then establishes a career course tailored to the individual based in the discussions. All potential leaders must complete the activities listed below.

Career Course
Table 1

Activity	**Timeline (Begins after discussion)**
Complete and present an Action Research Project	Within first year
Develop and deliver one component of the PD plan	Within in the first year
Demonstrate success in (2) leadership roles (i.e. PLC leader, committee chair, board representative)	Within two years
Intern with the immediate supervisor (principal, executive director) for one year	In year before expected promotion
Participate in the leader Mentor Program	Throughout the first year

Conclusion

The Succession Plan for the school's instructional leader team is a comprehensive plan that includes quality staff retention, professional development, and a clearly outlined career course. Individuals who have proven success in each of these areas will be best prepared to carry *Tertulia* forward. These individuals will become the next leadership team to continue with *Tertulia's* long-standing mission.