

National Blue Ribbon Schools U.S. Department of Education 2015 Terrel H. Bell Awardees Video *Conversations* Transcript



Leadership

Jon Cerny, [Bancroft-Rosalie Elementary School](#), Bancroft, NE: The example that I feel is of a great leader is John Kennedy. You know, when he identified the problem of the US being behind the Russians in education and in the space program, he set the goal that by the end of the decade, the US would put a person on the moon. And you know, that is vision. Finding the problem, setting a vision for the country, motivating the country—he had everybody behind him believing in something that most people would have thought it was impossible. And then providing the resources in terms of money and personnel to make that thing happen. So as a school leader, you know, that’s what I want to try and do, is to set a vision and make sure that we have all the resources in place to be able to make that vision happen.

Heidi Smith, [Frank L. Huff Elementary School](#), Mountain View, CA: I think leadership is about service to others and truly identifying strengths in individuals, and the positives in all situations and leveraging that and using that for the benefit and good of every child every day. Leadership is about being a voice for those who may not have one and advocating for the best possible outcomes every day.

Janell Uerkwitz, [Murdock Elementary School](#), Lafayette, IN: Part of that leadership objective is to present a situation for the staff or for whatever group it might be. It might be parents, it might be other administrators. And presenting the scenario and the situation so that they analyze it in maybe a little bit different way because we’re all different, but leading them toward that same common goal and same objective.

James Heater, [Esther F. Garrison School of Visual and Performing Arts](#), Savannah, GA: I define leadership as being a model for everybody who’s in that building. and again for the—the best way I can say it is, “the buck stops here.” I’m ultimately responsible for everything that happens in that building. Leadership is creating a common vision so that we can as a faculty, as a student body, and a parent, as a community, take the school in the right direction to best serve our community. Because we’re a public school. We need to help our community so all of our students flourish.

Edna Coia, [Francis J. Varieur Elementary School](#), Pawtucket, RI: Leadership is finding the best talent among all the people who will be part in any activity. It could be the principal's talent, but also it includes all the teachers, parents, community, and most of all the students. When you find these talents and you put them together and everybody will work as a team then that is leadership for me.

Rosalba De Hoyos, [Achieve Early College High School](#), McAllen, TX: I believe leadership is understanding others, their personality and their communication style. Also trusting and earning others' trust, to empower, to motivate, to respect, to celebrate, those that you work with and those that you work for. And so when we come together in a school and we work to accomplish a certain goal it's we—not I as a leader but we get together to accomplish the goals for the system.

Irma Trosclair, [South Crowley Elementary School](#), Crowley, LA : I think leadership is one of creating a vision, communicating that vision, and not dictating to others how to reach that vision but instead inspiring them to want to work with you. It is more about "we" than "me." Leadership is also one of service. I feel that I am a service provider to my teachers, who have to do the real work in the classrooms. So I try to support them through providing anything that they need.