

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP PARADOX SUGGESTIONS

ADVICE #1	ADVICE #2	SUGGESTIONS
Keep your focus on academic outcomes.	Focus on the whole child (social-emotional, extracurricular, wellbeing).	Prioritize both academic outcomes and whole child development. Move away from a mindset that it is either or, and guide teachers in embracing the power of both in the learning environment.
Be visible in classrooms every day.	Don't micromanage teachers — trust them to do their work.	Be present when building culture or coaching new teachers. Step back when staff is experienced and autonomy boosts morale.
Be transparent with staff and parents about everything.	Control the message — avoid overwhelming or alarming people.	Share openly when context builds trust. Filter when details could cause confusion, panic, or rumors.
Make tough calls quickly and show strong leadership.	Build consensus — hear every voice before acting.	Decide quickly in crises or safety matters. Take time when buy-in is critical for long-term success.
Hold teachers and students accountable to high standards.	Be flexible and compassionate with unique circumstances.	Enforce standards in performance, testing, and safety. Flex when students or staff face hardships or inequities.

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP PARADOX SUGGESTIONS

ADVICE #1	ADVICE #2	SUGGESTIONS
Be bold — innovate with new programs and technology.	Don't rock the boat — stick with proven methods.	Innovate when needs shift (remote learning, new pedagogy). Honor tradition when consistency provides stability.
Put students first in every decision.	Support teachers first — they drive student success.	Focus on students in mission/vision. Focus on teachers in day-to-day support so they can serve students better.
Work tirelessly — be the hardest worker in the building.	Model balance and self-care so teachers don't burn out.	Push hard when necessary in times of crisis or change, within reason. Actively model and discuss balance and burn out prevention.
Maintain strict rules and consistent consequences.	Use restorative practices and individualized responses.	Apply consistency for fairness and safety. Use restorative practices to repair harm and build relationships.
Be yourself and lead with your personality.	Adapt to the board, district, and community expectations.	Authenticity builds trust with staff and students. Adaptation builds credibility with external stakeholders.