

## **Ingham Impact Episode 16: Core Values Transcript**

Core values are important to the success of any organization, and we've worked hard here at Ingham to establish core values aligned with our strategic plan. We administered two surveys through the process with the following core values being identified by staff. Those being: collaboration, compassion, innovation, integrity, and a student focus. The podcast will feature members of our culture workgroup going over each one of these core values and providing a specific example of what these look like in action.

Collaboration:

We will seek, share, and respect diverse perspectives. We will function as a team with our colleagues and stakeholders to define and achieve common goals.

I'm a special educator and we don't do anything in a vacuum. We work on teams entirely throughout our day. I serve a couple of local school districts and I know that those school districts receive the support of ISD staff in East Lansing we've got OT, PT, we have adaptive physical education providers and we all collaborate with the special education

students and with general education students to help meet needs and goals. But we also I know the ISD also provides general education support, we provide training and supports for things like curriculum and curriculum development. Ongoing support as they're collecting data, we do data teams and data meetings to help train staff. There's collaboration on all levels across the board, I know our Human Resources provides support in terms of payroll and benefits to other local school districts. We collaborate in running programs that serve all kids in special ed. Heartwood is a great example. We have a Learning Center where students high school-age students have the opportunity to receive support coming from all different directions we provide that kind of collaboration. We are always working together to meet the combined need of of our local districts.

Compassion:

We will be kind, empathetic, and strive to understand the circumstances and viewpoints of all. I think one of the things that we need to remember about compassion as we approach it is to really focus on that part that

we will strive to understand the circumstances and viewpoints of all that the the idea in the situation is the thing that we're supposed to be working at instead of building up or tearing down individuals so together we stand as a compassionate group to be able to reach our goal.

compassion is a strong word that means staying side by side, turning an emotion into a focused action it's a kind of encouragement to be brave passionate and proud together and it helps us be content with who we are.

Some people may view compassion as big things, but I think the everyday things show the compassion more as a regular routine. The individuals who make sure that we have the tools to do our job, the individuals who make sure that the areas that we work in are appropriately stocked and serviced and you know there's a desk where you need to sit a bus that brings a person to that place and that the technology that we so depend on now is present and functioning, and at least if it doesn't function we have a way to make it function or a way to make it work until something can function. The way that our administrators work to hold

us accountable, but also understand that there are limitations for them as well as us shows compassion. Some of those conversations are hard, there's no guarantee that compassion is easy compassion is a strong action and when we show that strong actions there's going to be a bit of conflict, a bit of things to move through, and I think that that's the part that makes us better individuals and that are able to do our job.

**Innovation:**

we will explore new ideas and opportunities to challenge conventional views and develop forward-thinking solutions.

I think in order to stay current and to always keep our eye focused on increasing student outcomes, we have to be innovative in the way in which we work, so that we can work smarter together. So some examples of that are developing community partnerships; not only does it involve Ingham ISD with the community but it also provides us opportunities that we wouldn't have for our students. For instance, at the Career Center or ways that we partner to bring services into traditional pre k12 settings. On the programming side we look at things such

as service delivery models, curriculum implementation, professional development best practices to make sure that we are providing the service in the best way possible to get the best outcomes for kids. If we're innovative and we're seeing results from our innovation, people are going to come to us and want to use our services. We have to be innovative to ensure that we're staying current and that we're not getting stuck in kind of the mundane rut of what education could be, so if we're really focused here at Ingham using innovative practices and we're going to be able to get kind of more bang for our buck in the long run and hopefully get student outcomes faster than if we weren't being innovative.

Integrity:

We will be honest, trustworthy, respectful and ethical.

We will honor our commitments and be accountable for actions.

Integrity means we will do what we say we're going to do, and we will back it up with our actions and data-driven results; we continue to maintain a high academic standards for students, we also continue to develop ourselves through PD; continuing

education to deliver the highest quality service to our partners in the community and students here at the ISD. We will work to make sure that we do what we say in terms of the way we interact with our staff, our constituents, and all parties across the ISD. If you don't have integrity, your results will show and it's how you perform, how you do what you say going to do, and how you really meet the needs of your students and in fact all learners across the ISD.

Student-focus:

We will place students and their successes as the driving force behind our decisions.

When I first came here I noticed that everyone from custodians to support staff to IT folks, they all seemed to have the best interests of students in mind.

They might not necessarily have a background in education; not everyone that works at the ISD is a teacher but I just was impressed with how interested they are in teaching and learning. They really do care about kids and want to help them succeed. We also have folks who identify a need, for example, one of our support people realized that a lot of

students probably didn't even get a nice Thanksgiving dinner at home, some of our students don't, so she organized the staff and culinary arts helped out and we provide a Thanksgiving dinner for every one of our students; we've been doing that for the last several years and I know it means a lot and that shows our student focus. I think there was a need for some students to have career clothes for interviews so we have a career closet, someone started that. So, people are very, very student focused and I was really pleased to know that one of our Career Center students was asked to be on the committee that worked on the strategic plan. In this day and age, things are changing, and we all went to school, and sometimes I think we remember that as how it should be, and and we really need to get to know these students and their, you know, their world is so different from ours and we need to remember that they're facing challenges that we had never even heard of and we have to figure out how to help them through that. It keeps us from getting distracted by some of the things that really aren't as helpful as students, so if we have a

student focus we're less likely to get distracted.

These core values are intended to be the guiding principles in which we do our work every day here at Ingham ISD.

Each one of us is responsible for living the core values. I look forward to working with you in the years ahead as we provide outstanding services to our children and families that are aligned with our strategic plan.

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