

# Leading and Growing in a Culture of Reciprocal Trust

*Kayla, a first-year early childhood special education teacher, was excited about her assignment to an inclusive preschool classroom in the Sands Primary School, which housed preschool through second grade (Pre-K-2). The weeklong start-of-school year professional learning began with the district's annual faculty kick-off. Kayla was thrilled to be introduced to her mentor Toko, who was a veteran second-grade teacher at Sands. Toko explained enthusiastically to Kayla that as her formal school-based mentor, she would be orienting Kayla to the Sands school community and providing professional and collegial supports related to teaching in general. During the first break, they set up a time for their weekly meetings and talked about the many ways in which Toko could assist Kayla including, for example, setting up her classroom, and preparing for parent-teacher conferences. In speaking with Toko that first day, Kayla learned that Ms. Kuponono, the Sands' principal, had been a preschool teacher early in her career and was considered one of the district's most competent early childhood educators. Toko shared, "Our school's personality is respectful, supportive, and fun too! Everyone belongs!" Preschool personnel in attendance at the*

*district kick-off also spoke highly of Ms. Kuponono's work to create a high-trust culture and climate at Sands. Kayla's colleagues emphasized how the preschool faculty, children, and families participated as full members of the Sands' Primary School community.*

*Following the kick-off, Kayla spent the remainder of the week in building-based professional learning. She was surprised to learn that Sands' faculty had been the primary planners of the week's work, which included both curriculum development and team-building activities. Ms. Kuponono had guided teachers by making clear her expectations and the intended outcomes for the week and the school year. In her opening remarks, Ms. Kuponono described how the year's work would center on faculty collaboratively developing curriculum grounded in evidence-based practices that have been shown to result in improved student-learning outcomes. Ms. Kuponono started the first team-building activity. Kayla watched closely as Ms. Kuponono introduced the newly revised school motto, which was emblazoned on the lobby wall in silver lettering: "With*

**Kim Moherek Sopko, EdD**

Early Childhood Advantage

**Diana J. LaRocco, EdD**

Goodwin College

DOI: 10.1177/1096250615621361

<http://yec.sagepub.com>

© 2016 Division for Early Childhood

“  
Leadership is a process  
whereby one individual  
(leader) influences another  
(follower) to achieve  
common goals.  
”

*collaboration and courage, all children succeed.” Teachers then took over and facilitated grade-level buzz groups in which faculty identified personal values that exemplified the motto. Then, each group presented a key word with related ideas that reflected shared values and beliefs. As Kayla listened to Ms. Kupono and the Sands’ faculty, her district colleagues’ comments about the high-trust culture and climate at Sands came alive. She commented to Toko, “WOW! Ms. Kupono really lets the faculty take charge. She really trusts them a lot!” By the end of the week, Kayla recognized that her outgoing personality, naturally trusting disposition, and energetic approach to life were well matched to the culture and climate at Sands.*

Ms. Kupono’s actions during the start-of-school year building-based professional learning are representative of an authentic leadership style. Authentic leaders facilitate a sense of belonging to the organization, advance followers’ identification with the organization’s mission and values, set clear accountability standards, and support the development of followers’ role and task-specific confidence (Avolio, 2011). The DEC Recommended Practices (Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children [DEC], 2014) for leaders reflect similar expectations. Specifically, DEC (2014) recommends, “leaders create a culture and a climate in which practitioners feel a sense of belonging and want to support the organization’s mission and goals” (p. 5). The culture of an organization (e.g., school) comprises a set of basic shared assumptions about how the world is, or should

be (Schein, 1984, 1996). Culture is expressed in an organization’s values, norms, expectations, ceremonies, stories, and artifacts (Bolman & Deal, 2013).

Organizational climate is a relatively enduring quality and encompasses individuals’ perceptions of their work environment, including physical, social, and cultural dimensions (Hoy, 1990). Culture is inferred from observations whereas climate, or the perceptions of those engaged in the work of the organization, can be measured. Ms. Kupono’s articulation of expectations, presentation of the mission, and clarification of shared values are observable actions that provide examples of her intentions to create a culture and climate of belonging.

In a similar way, Ms. Kupono demonstrated she understood that leadership does not happen in isolation. Rather, leadership is a process whereby one individual (leader) influences another (follower) to achieve common goals (DEC, 2015). As can be seen in how she approached the start-of-school year building-based professional learning, Ms. Kupono took on the role of follower when she had the Sands’ faculty be the primary planners of the weeklong professional learning and facilitators of activities. These actions made apparent that Ms. Kupono had built a culture and climate in which she trusted her faculty to lead and they trusted her to follow.

## Trust

Building and sustaining an organizational culture and climate where productive and positive

**Table 1**  
**Five Facets of Trust**

Facet	Description
Benevolence	Demonstrating care about and consideration for others' needs and interests
Honesty	Acting with integrity and authenticity, matching actions to words
Openness	Taking risks when disclosing knowledge or information and sharing decision-making
Reliability	Being consistent and dependable
Competence	Having the ability to perform responsibilities as expected

SOURCE: Adapted from "Trust Matters: Leadership for Successful Schools," by M. Tschannen-Moran, 2014, p. 39. Copyright 2014 by Megan Tschannen-Moran.

“  
A leader's behaviors  
form the foundation  
of a culture of  
reciprocal trust.  
”

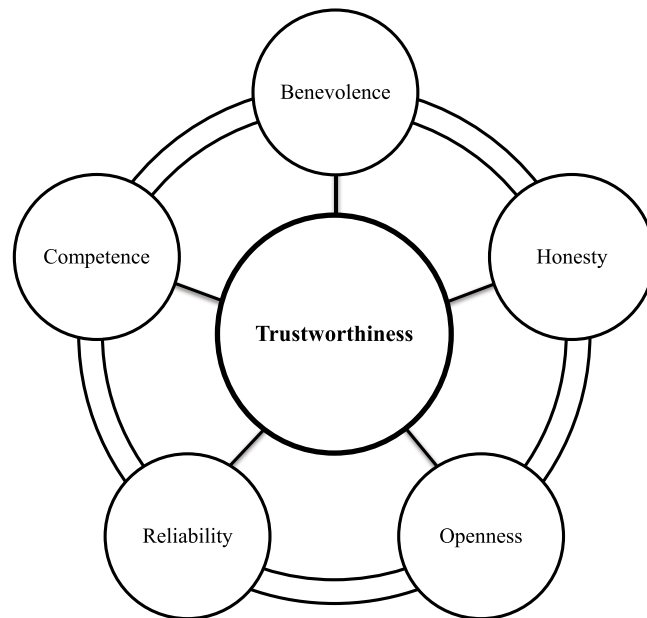
leader–follower relationships can thrive is perhaps the single most important responsibility of those who aspire to lead (Bolman & Deal, 2013; Kouzes & Posner, 2011). School cultures with high levels of reciprocal, or mutual, trust are essential for students' success (Adams & Forsyth, 2009; Hoy, 1990; Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999; Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Trust is about having confidence in and believing in another, in the absence of evidence that would lead a person to believe otherwise (Tarter & Hoy, 1988). Trust resides in the mind of the truster; it cannot be observed (Serva, Fuller, & Mayer, 2005). When an individual trusts another, the truster is willing to be vulnerable to the actions of the person and expects the person to behave in particular ways (Serva et al., 2005). Reciprocal trust results when individuals observe the actions of others and determine they are trustworthy and can be relied upon (Serva et al., 2005; Wasonga & Murphy, 2007).

To grow a high-trust culture and climate, a leader must have the capacity to trust others (Donaldson, 2001; Kouzes & Posner, 2011). Trustworthiness is reinforced in day-to-day interactions among people (Serva et al., 2005), and trust is the

fundamental link between leaders and followers (Wasonga & Murphy, 2007). Crucially, a leader's behaviors form the foundation of a culture of reciprocal trust—between leader and follower and follower and follower (Yukl, 2013). Authentic leaders, like Ms. Kuponu, focus on building leader–follower relationships that are characterized by benevolence, honesty, openness, reliability, and competence (Avolio, 2011; Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, & Walumbwa, 2005). Each of these facets of trust is described briefly in Table 1.

The attributes of benevolence, honesty, openness, reliability, and competence form a framework that individuals use in determining a person's trustworthiness (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999; Tschannen-Moran, 2014; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). For those who are in formal positions of authority and leadership and those who aspire to lead, this conceptualization of trust is offered as a starting point for thinking about leading and growing in a culture of reciprocal trust. Although the facets are presented here as distinct, they are inextricably linked and often observed with one another, as depicted in Figure 1. On one hand, the presence of these

**Figure 1**  
A framework for judging a person's trustworthiness



attributes can serve as trust enhancers. On the other hand, their absence may present barriers to building trust relations and growing a culture of trust.

### **Benevolence**

*In a measured effort to learn the culture of Sands Primary School and how she fit within it, Kayla often spent time during her induction year simply listening to and observing Ms. Kuponon, Toko, the other teachers, and the families. Kayla observed early on that Ms. Kuponon genuinely appreciated the faculty and was eager to learn about their professional successes and challenges. On the first Wednesday of every month, Ms. Kuponon hosted an informal “Coffee AND Conversations” meeting that was open to all faculty members. This meeting was dedicated exclusively to*

*teacher-driven discussions related to instruction. The Sands’ faculty and Ms. Kuponon used the meeting time to explore issues related to teaching and learning in a nonthreatening environment. Each week, a teacher would volunteer to work with faculty to identify a conversation topic and facilitate the discussion. Kayla and her mentor, Toko, nearly always participated in these very well-attended meetings. As a participant-observer, Kayla witnessed Ms. Kuponon skillfully use questioning techniques through which she invited all present to share their thinking about and experiences with the topic at hand. Ms. Kuponon’s facilitative style revealed to Kayla that Ms. Kuponon was considerate of, sensitive to, and cared about individual faculty needs and interests. It was clear to Kayla that Ms. Kuponon wanted all teachers and students to succeed. It*

“  
A leader whose goal is to  
preserve and enhance  
another's welfare will  
watch, listen, and be  
attentive to expressed  
needs versus assumed  
needs.”

*was also clear in how faculty modeled Ms. Kupono's questioning techniques that they too cared about their colleagues and the Sands' students and families. This helped Kayla feel connected to the school and forge positive relationships with her colleagues and Ms. Kupono. By late spring, Kayla felt comfortable enough to propose a discussion on diverse language learners and strategies for fostering family members' involvement in supporting emergent literacy. Before the meeting, Kayla and Toko had developed a list of topic-related questions that Kayla shared with faculty. With Toko at her side, Kayla was able to guide the conversation. Following the meeting, Kayla excitedly expressed to Toko, "Thank you! I did it! You helped me so much with the guiding questions and by just being present. And, on top of that, I have awesome ideas for updating the family flyer on reading."*

Benevolence emerges from a desire for affiliation and cohesive group functioning (Schwartz, 2012). Individuals demonstrate benevolence in their voluntarily caring for and goodwill toward others with whom they have personal contact (Schoorman, Mayer, & Davis, 2007; Schwartz, 2012). Authentic leaders like Ms. Kupono are characteristically benevolent. They endeavor to create organizational cultures in which there is a sense of belonging and where members feel they are central to the organization (Avolio, 2011). In a school culture where sense of belonging prevails, the ethic of care predominates and teachers and students want to do the right thing and be good (Noddings, 2012). Like Ms. Kupono, a leader whose goal is

to preserve and enhance another's welfare will watch, listen, and be attentive to expressed needs versus assumed needs (Noddings, 2012). In doing so, a leader can create a safe and secure school that encourages teacher involvement in professional dialogues (Ghamrawi, 2011) like the ones Ms. Kupono supported during her monthly coffee conversations. So too, faculty trust in colleagues is dependent upon a sense of being cared for, or benevolence. Colleagues demonstrate they care by supporting and cooperating with one another (Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Collegial benevolence was evident in the way Toko helped Kayla with the guiding questions for the discussion on diverse language learners and fostering family members' involvement in supporting emergent literacy.

### Honesty

*By observing Ms. Kupono in her day-to-day interactions with faculty, students, and families, Kayla was able to see how Ms. Kupono's actions were consistent with the expectations she had articulated during the first weeks of school. Ms. Kupono's behaviors matched what she said in her one-on-one interactions with Kayla, the coffee conversations, and faculty meetings. Teachers were empowered to collaboratively design curriculum that was grounded in evidence-based instructional strategies. Ms. Kupono was forthright and candid with teachers about what she could or could not do to support their work, and she followed through with her promise to set aside time and provide other resources. Moreover,*

“  
When a leader aspires to  
empower followers . . . a  
principled awareness and  
commitment between  
leaders and followers, all  
based on honesty, must  
be established

”

*Ms. Kuponon aligned her words with her actions and endorsed teacher communities of practice related to curricular projects that spanned grade levels. Teachers were encouraged to collaboratively create sustainable initiatives and programs that could lead to improved student-learning outcomes. Working alongside Toko, Kayla was highly engaged in a project to identify behavior management strategies that would work best in her classroom. During a late afternoon work sessions, Kayla remarked, “Toko, Ms. Kuponon is so real. Do you know what I mean? Like you are with me when you observe me handling students’ behaviors. Ms. Kuponon really isn’t afraid to admit she’s not sure what to do.” As they continued their work over the next few months, Kayla and Toko continued to speak about Ms. Kuponon’s authenticity and how she not only gave them freedom to carry out the needed work but also shared responsibility when their strategies did not work as planned.*

The single most important attribute of a credible leader is honesty (Kouzes & Posner, 2011). Importantly, DEC of the Council for Exceptional Children’s (2009) code of ethics calls on early childhood professionals to demonstrate honesty in all their actions to inspire the trust and confidence of others. With honesty, comes respect. Without honesty, there can be no trust. When a leader aspires to empower followers, as did Ms. Kuponon, a principled awareness and commitment between leaders and followers, all based on honesty, must be established (Ciulla, 2014). Authentic leaders like Ms. Kuponon act with integrity, match their actions to their words, follow

through on commitments, and take responsibility for their actions (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2015). The work of schooling requires a multitude of interactions among the principal, faculty, students, and families, during which the various constituents are constantly judging each other’s intentions (Bryk & Schneider, 2003). Kayla and Toko are both able to see that Ms. Kuponon acts with integrity, which supports their confidence in moving ahead with their professional tasks. Moreover, Kayla and Toko mirror Ms. Kuponon’s honesty and authenticity and they commit to being truthful with her and to each other in return.

## Openness

*At faculty meetings, Ms. Kuponon readily talked about the latest district and state mandates. She took the time to explain how new district directives connected to school-based initiatives in progress. Kayla was in awe of how Ms. Kuponon guided these sometime difficult conversations while maintaining a clear focus on students and overall expectations for faculty. Ms. Kuponon shared what she knew and was always clear about which decisions were negotiable and which decisions were not within the purview of faculty. She did so with honesty and an apparent willingness to expose herself to critique. As was typical of her leadership style, Ms. Kuponon was willing to be influenced by faculty members and looked to the Sands’ faculty for suggestions and advice. As faculty exited a meeting in which teachers had presented the state’s revised social studies framework, Kayla reflected aloud,*

*“Toko, did you see how Ms. Kupono listened so carefully to teachers’ opinions and ideas? She acknowledged what they said restating it in way to make sure it was recorded in the minutes. So interesting!” Through her openness, Ms. Kupono demonstrated her unwavering belief that teachers would competently collaborate, problem-solve, and work together to provide the best opportunities possible for all students in the school to not only learn but also be excited about the process. The reciprocal trust established between Ms. Kupono and the Sands’ faculty and among teachers supported everyone’s ability to admit mistakes, accept feedback, and collaborate.*

Authentic leaders like Ms. Kupono are characteristically transparent and open in their interactions with others (Michie & Gooty, 2005). Openness includes listening carefully, being candid, and volunteering information (Kouzes & Posner, 2011; Preskill & Brookfield, 2009). It also involves an unrelenting belief that there is room for many voices and opinions, which in turn promotes a sense of belonging and conveys that contributions are valued (Preskill & Brookfield, 2009). A person who trusts another is willing to be exposed to and influenced by the actions of the person and expects the person to behave in particular ways (Serva et al., 2005). Ms. Kupono takes risks when she frankly discloses what she knows, or does not know, about district and state mandates. Being vulnerable and taking risks go hand-in-hand with trustworthiness (Calahan, 2013; Schoorman et al., 2007). Principals who demonstrate they can be counted on to fairly represent

situations are more apt to garner teachers’ cooperation (Tschannen-Moran, 2004). Leaders like Ms. Kupono reveal their openness in their behaviors—the way they listen, show concern, share knowledge, disclose information, surrender their own ideas, and are influenced by others (Kouzes & Posner, 2012; Preskill & Brookfield, 2009).

## Reliability

*Like many new teachers, Kayla struggled with managing student behavior, balancing the frenzied pace of teaching, and applying what she had learned in her teacher preparation program. There were several times when Kayla’s broad understanding of how to create a classroom environment that supported positive student behaviors fell short of what she needed to know and be able to do to appropriately meet the needs of particular students in her classroom. At the same time, she consciously sought to exert a degree of control over how she managed such challenges. Her ability to do so was in part due to the fact that both Toko and Ms. Kupono would honor her request for assistance. Kayla heard consistency in how Ms. Kupono communicated expectations to teachers, students, and families, whether in faculty meetings or during informal dialogues. When Kayla needed help and support with a difficult student behavior or with a parent meeting, for example, Ms. Kupono followed up in a timely way and helped Kayla sort through and seek solutions to her self-identified challenges. Ms. Kupono’s reliability was especially evident in how she would stay late with Kayla and work through functional behavioral assessments results and*

*help develop positive behavioral support plans. As they left the building together early one evening, Kayla thanked Ms. Kuponon: "I'm so grateful to be working with you and the other teachers. On top of that, I can't think of a single time when someone who was supposed to help me with something didn't come through. People are just so helpful and dependable!"*

Consistency and dependability in a principal's day-to-day interactions reinforce teachers' perceptions of a principal's trustworthiness (Tschannen-Moran, 2014; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). Distrust is likely to follow when a leader's behaviors vary widely from or are inconsistent with prior actions (Kouzes & Posner, 2011). Ms. Kuponon's reliability is evident in the way she ensured expectations and goals were rooted in shared values and focused on improving the school and student achievement. Trustworthy principals exhibit predictable patterns of behavior in the way they supervise instruction, provide teachers with feedback, and discipline students, among other actions (Handford & Leithwood, 2013). Moreover, they act responsibly, are answerable for their own behavior, and exercise personal accountability. Ms. Kuponon demonstrated her trustworthiness in how she held herself to the expectations she had set for others—working collaboratively with Kayla to use evidence-based behavioral strategies.

### **Competence**

*As Kayla's induction year progressed, she came to genuinely appreciate Ms. Kuponon's broad perspective on student learning and development. Ms. Kuponon's*

*steadfast commitment to academic excellence for all students was especially evident in the monthly coffee conversations. With great purpose, Ms. Kuponon guided these open dialogues so the focus was always on students' educational experiences and outcomes and opportunities for improvement. Kayla understood the meetings as professional learning opportunities, where she could pose a question and, as a group, teachers would analyze the issue. During one of these conversations, Kayla had asked for assistance with differentiating instruction for the students in her classroom. A first-grade teacher offered to help Kayla with lesson planning and observe her implementing differentiated strategies. The teacher mentioned how she had participated in several webinars about Universal Design for Learning (UDL), a curriculum-designed approach to increase flexibility in teaching and make learning goals, content, assessments accessible to the broadest range of students possible. The teacher assured Kayla that she could master basic UDL principles and directed her to the website, which offered a free book. Ms. Kuponon noted she would have the UDL website added to the school intranet and offered to provide a substitute for at least 2 days over the next few weeks so Kayla and the first-grade teacher could observe each other's classes and meet to work on lesson planning. Kayla left the meeting with the first-grade teacher. As they walked to their cars, Kayla shared, "I'm thrilled to have your help and the opportunity to observe you." Kayla drove off with renewed energy and feeling confident that she would be able to put into practice what she had learned about*



“Trustworthy leaders provide the resources and support to ensure others attain necessary competence.”

“When shared leadership predominates, leaders and followers behave in ways that nurture rather than harm.”

*differentiation in her teacher education program. She was hopeful she would master the application of UDL with assistance from the first-grade teacher and Ms. Kupono.*

In high-trust cultures, leaders exhibit competence when they demonstrate the necessary knowledge, skills, and dispositions to carry out tasks associated with their formal responsibilities (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Maxwell, 2007). Moreover, trustworthy leaders provide the resources and support to ensure others attain necessary competence (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006). A principal's competence can be seen in how the individual solves problems, engages in the formal teacher supervision process, and facilitates teachers' workplace initiatives (Handford & Leithwood, 2013). Similarly, teacher competence is demonstrated in a person's ability to carry out tasks according to established standards and expectations with the ultimate aims of supporting students' attainment of learning outcomes and meeting school goals (Tschannen-Moran, 2014). Competent teachers are articulate and can express why they do what they do (Muñoz, Boulton, Johnson, & Unal, 2015). Throughout Kayla's induction year, Ms. Kupono routinely showed that she was a capable and effective instructional leader, school manager, and change facilitator, each of which are recognized as important areas of competence for school leaders (Fullan, 2013; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005; Wallace Foundation, 2011; Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003). Moreover, the culture of reciprocal trust that Ms. Kupono nurtured fostered productive interdependence among the teachers and the ongoing

development of professional competence. Productive interdependence was evident in the way the first-grade teacher supported Kayla by sharing information about UDL and offering time to work with her on lesson planning. Also apparent are Kayla's emerging leadership skills in the way she self-assessed her competence and accepted assistance.

Use the questions in Box 1 to guide your reflection on the five facets of trust. Considering these facets will provide you with information to build and grow trust in your own professional life.

## Leading and Growing Trust While Getting the Work Done

Trust is a dynamic, multifaceted, and reciprocal process that depends on the context of the trust relationship (Goddard, Tschannen-Moran, & Hoy, 2001; Tschannen-Moran, 2014; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). In a high-trust culture, the leader establishes a “compact of understanding” (Avolio, 2011). When shared leadership predominates, leaders and followers behave in ways that nurture rather than harm. In high-trust schools, principals attend to both relationships and tasks (Tarter & Hoy, 1988). Ms. Kupono leads, while serving and supporting the faculty, and “this release of control builds trust among everyone in the school” (Armstrong, Kinney, & Clayton, 2009, p. 15). Ms. Kupono's actions throughout Kayla's first year provide several examples of this dual orientation. With regard to building and sustaining relationships, Ms. Kupono uses a principle-centered, facilitative approach

**Box 1****Self-Reflection: Five Facets of Trust**

Reflect on what you now know about the five facets of trust.

- Which facet is most important to you in your work?
- Which of the facets do you demonstrate most often?
- Which of the facets do you want to improve upon personally?
- Which of the facets do your work colleagues or those in formal positions of authority or leadership demonstrate most often?
- How can your knowledge of the five facets of trust help you promote a culture of reciprocal trust at work?

SOURCE: Tschannen-Moran (2014).

(Armstrong et al., 2009; Bloom, 2004; Carr, Johnson, & Corkwell, 2009). Her actions demonstrated that she has the best interest of the faculty, students, and families at the center of her attention. She set out to accomplish her goals for the school through and with the Sands' teachers. Her task orientation is evident in the ways she structured teachers' time and deliberately managed and sought to develop faculty members' knowledge and skills related to evidence-based instruction with the goal of improving student-learning outcomes.

*In her end of school year summative evaluation conference with Ms. Kuponono, Kayla reflected on how she felt she belonged to the Sands Primary School community. She said, "It's so obvious that the teachers care about the children and families. They showed me in so many ways that they also cared about each other and me professionally and personally. I really feel like I belong here." Ms. Kuponono was pleased to share that she had rated Kayla as generally effective in all areas. Together, they reviewed Kayla's professional growth plan for the next school year. Although Kayla had success in supporting and*

*engaging families, this was a self-identified area of growth and professional learning. She had experienced firsthand how the trust she felt in her colleagues positively contributed to a highly productive and collaborative school climate, and she wanted to be sure families had that same experience. Ms. Kuponono and Kayla talked about strategies for building trusting and respectful partnerships with the families of the children in her classroom. They discussed how Kayla could enlist families in reviewing some of the written materials about early literacy that she had developed for families and how this might prove to be meaningful to families. Kayla left her evaluation conference feeling a sense of accomplishment and a certain amount of relief. She sent a quick text message to Toko who was still in the building: "I survived my first year of teaching! Can't wait for next year! Time for coffee?"*

Ms. Kuponono's behaviors and the Sands' context reinforced Kayla's innate sense of control and empowerment. At the same time, Kayla knew there was much she could, and did, do to positively effect the outcomes of her first year at Sands. She took full advantage of

**Box 2****Self-Reflection: Strategies for Building Trust**

Reflect on your own actions as they relate to building a culture of reciprocal trust at work.

Then, read the listed strategies for building trust. How might you apply these in your interactions in your efforts to build a culture of trust in your organization?

- Say, “I trust you” to the people with whom you work and mean it.
- Extend trust first before asking to be trusted.
- Openly share information about yourself—such as strengths, weaknesses, hopes and dreams, fears, mistakes you learned from, and what you learned.
- Spend time with and learn about the people with whom you work.
- Show concern for others’ hopes, dreams, and obstacles.
- Actively listen, and then listen more.

SOURCE: Kouzes and Posner (2012, p. 240).

“Trust grows and strengthens through a self-reinforcing pattern because leaders and followers share responsibility for establishing and maintaining an atmosphere that is open, flexible, and supportive.

the opportunities that were offered to her and engaged in specific behaviors that seemed to contribute to her sense of belonging and perceptions of trust. The productive interdependence among teachers and their leadership actions inspired Kayla to develop her professional competence and confidence not only as teacher but also as leader (Ramey, 2015). Trust grows and strengthens through a self-reinforcing pattern because leaders and followers share responsibility for establishing and maintaining an

atmosphere that is open, flexible, and supportive. School cultures with high levels of reciprocal trust are conducive to sharing experiences, generating ideas, making choices, taking risks, and accomplishing the important work of improved student-learning outcomes for *all* children.

Use the strategies in Box 2 to build a culture of reciprocal trust to benefit yourself, the professionals and families with whom you work, and ultimately, the young children you serve.

**Authors’ Note**

You may reach Kim Moherék Sopko by e-mail at ksopko@earlychildhoodadvantage.com

**References**

- Adams, C. M., & Forsyth, P. B. (2009). The nature and function of trust in schools. *Journal of School Leadership, 19*, 126-152.
- Armstrong, L. J., Kinney, K. C., & Clayton, L. H. (2009). Getting started: Leadership opportunities for beginning early childhood teachers. *Dimensions of Early Childhood, 37*(3), 11-17.
- Avolio, B. (2011). *Full range leadership development* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Bloom, P. J. (2004, November). Leadership as a way of thinking. *Zero to Three*, pp. 21-26.

- Bolman, L. E., & Deal, T. E. (2013). *Reframing organizations: Artistry, choice, and leadership* (5th ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Bryk, A. S., & Schneider, B. (2003). Trust in schools: A core resource for school reform. *Educational Leadership*, 60(6), 40-45.
- Calahan, L. S. (2013). Trust me, I'm your principal. *Principal Leadership*, 14(4), 22-26.
- Carr, V., Johnson, L. J., & Corkwell, C. (2009). Principle-centered leadership in early childhood education. *Dimensions of Early Childhood*, 37(3), 25-31.
- Ciulla, J. B. (Ed.). (2014). *Ethics, the heart of leadership* (3rd ed.). Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger.
- Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children. (2009). *Code of ethics*. Retrieved from <http://www.dec-sped.org/papers>
- Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children. (2014). *DEC recommended practices in early intervention/early childhood special education 2014*. Retrieved from <http://www.dec-sped.org/recommendedpractices>
- Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children. (2015). *Position statement on leadership in early intervention and early childhood special education*. Retrieved from <http://www.dec-sped.org/papers>
- Donaldson, G. A., Jr. (2001). *Cultivating leadership in schools: Connecting people, purpose, and practice*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Fullan, M. (2013). *The principal: Three keys to amazing impact* [iBook version]. Retrieved from <https://itun.es/us/1ptfU.l>
- Gardner, W. L., Avolio, B. J., Luthans, F., May, D. R., & Walumbwa, F. (2005). "Can you see the real me?" A self-based model of authentic leader and follower development. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 16, 343-372.
- Ghamrawi, N. (2011). Trust me: Your school can be better—A message from teachers to principals. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 39, 333-348.
- Goddard, R. D., Tschannen-Moran, M., & Hoy, W. K. (2001). A multilevel examination of the distribution and effects of teacher trust in students and parents in urban elementary schools. *The Elementary School Journal*, 102, 3-17.
- Handford, V., & Leithwood, K. (2013). Why teachers trust school leaders. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 51, 194-212.
- Hargreaves, A., & Fink, D. (2006). *Sustainable leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Hoy, W. K. (1990). Organizational climate and culture: A conceptual analysis of the school workplace. *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation*, 1, 149-168.
- Hoy, W. K., & Tschannen-Moran, M. (1999). Five faces of trust: An empirical confirmation in urban elementary schools. *Journal of School Leadership*, 9, 184-208.
- Kouzes, J., & Posner, B. (2011). *Credibility* (5th ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Kouzes, J., & Posner, B. (2012). *The leadership challenge: How to make extraordinary things happen in organizations* (5th ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Marzano, R. J., Waters, T., & McNulty, B. A. (2005). *School leadership that works: From research to results*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Maxwell, J. C. (2007). *The 21 irrefutable laws of leadership* (10th anniversary ed.) [iBook version]. Retrieved from <https://itun.es/us/Nt1OK.l>

- Michie, S., & Gooty, J. (2005). Values, emotions, and authenticity: Will the real leader please stand up? *The Leadership Quarterly*, 16, 441-457.
- Muñoz, M., Boulton, P., Johnson, T., & Unal, C. (2015). Leadership development or a changing early childhood landscape. *Young Children*, 70(2), 26-31.
- Noddings, N. (2012). The caring relation in teaching. *Oxford Review of Education*, 38, 771-781. doi:10.1080/03054985.2012.745047
- Preskill, S., & Brookfield, S. D. (2009). *Learning as a way of leading*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Ramey, M. D. (2015). Out from under the radar: Making leadership visible. *Young Children*, 70(2), 6-9.
- Schein, E. H. (1984). Coming to a new awareness of organizational culture. *Sloan Management Review*, 25(2), 3-16.
- Schein, E. H. (1996). Three cultures of management: The key to organizational learning. *Sloan Management Review*, 38(1), 9-20.
- Schoorman, F. D., Mayer, R. C., & Davis, J. H. (2007). An integrative model of organizational trust: Past, present, and future. *Academy of Management Review*, 32, 344-354.
- Schwartz, S. H. (2012). An overview of the Schwartz theory of basic values. *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture*, 2(1). doi:10.9707/2307-0919.1116
- Serva, M. A., Fuller, M. A., & Mayer, R. C. (2005). The reciprocal nature of trust: A longitudinal study of interacting teams. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 26, 625-648.
- Tarter, C. J., & Hoy, W. K. (1988). The context of trust: Teachers and the principal. *The High School Journal*, 72, 17-24.
- Tschannen-Moran, M. (2004, November). *What's trust got to do with it? The role of faculty and principal trust in fostering student achievement*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the University Council for Educational Administration, Kansas City, MO.
- Tschannen-Moran, M. (2014). *Trust matters: Leadership for successful schools* (2nd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Tschannen-Moran, M., & Gareis, C. R. (2015). Principals, trust, and cultivating vibrant schools. *Societies*, 5, 256-276. doi:10.3390/soc5020256
- Tschannen-Moran, M., & Hoy, W. K. (2000). A multidisciplinary analysis of the nature, meaning, and measurement of trust. *Review of Educational Research*, 70, 547-593.
- Wallace Foundation. (2011). *The school principal as leader: Guiding schools to better teaching and learning*. Available from <http://www.wallacefoundation.org/>
- Wasonga, T. A., & Murphy, J. F. (2007). Co-creating leadership dispositions. *International Studies in Educational Administration*, 35(2), 20-31.
- Waters, J. T., Marzano, R. J., & McNulty, B. A. (2003). *Balanced leadership: What 30 years of research tells us about the effect of leadership on student achievement*. Retrieved from <http://www.educationalleaders.govt.nz/Pedagogy-and-assessment/Leading-learning-communities/Balanced-leadership-what-30-years-of-research-tells-us-about-the-effect-of-leadership-on-student-achievement>
- Yukl, G. (2013). *Leadership in organizations* (8th ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.