Leadership Interview and Reflection Paper

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When a person desires to successfully lead a group of people, as owner of a business, head of a ministry, or in any other capacity, it is imperative to have and/or develop good leadership skills. This report is of an interview conducted on October 1, 2014, with Shanna Honan, owner and Head of Chesapeake Montessori School (CMS). The report will critique her leadership style, including strengths and weaknesses in light of the Kouzes and Posner (2004) principles of "model the way," "inspire a shared vision," "challenge the process," "enable others to act," and "encourage the heart" (p. 2). Finally, this report will summarize the results of the interview and recommend how Shanna can improve as a leader.

Shanna Honan is a wife, mother, educator, and business owner. In 2001, when we first met, she taught a science class where I was taking my Montessori teacher training. Shortly after I finished my training she hired me as her assistant, since she had just acquired a one-room Montessori school. I worked closely with Shanna on and off for 12 years during which the school has grown from two employees to 32, from 24 students to approximately 180, and from a single classroom to two campuses (one in the Great Bridge area and one in the Grassfield area of Chesapeake, Virginia). Between the two locations the school operates an infant program (3 months to 18 month), a toddler program (18 month to 3 years), three children houses (3 through 6 years), two lower elementary classes (1st through 3rd grade), and one upper elementary class (4th through 6th grade). In addition to the core curriculum the school offers Physical Education, Spanish, Art, Music, Garden Club, before and after care programs, and summer camps.

Shanna is an educator and a whole-hearted believer in the Montessori method of education. For over 20 years she has taught in both public and private Montessori schools and holds certifications to teach children ages three through 12 years. Shanna leads with a vision to "plant the seeds for life," which is the CMS school motto, and during the first year of its inception plans were already contrived for the expansion of the school. Her leadership "…begins with a clear and compelling vision that excites the passion and the commitment of those who follow" (Kouzes & Posner, 2004, p. 106). Shanna is enthusiastic, energetic, has a vast knowledge of the workings of education, and a love for children. She is friendly and approachable. Her ability to enlist others in her vision of excellence in education has inspired teachers and parents alike (Kouzes & Posner, 2004, p. 17).

In her dedication to the program, work ethic, and commitment to excellence Shanna "models the way" (Kouzes & Posner, 2004, p. 38). She leads by example and has high expectations of herself and of her faculty. As Head of school she shows support for her teachers, which serves to build trust and a strong and good work environment. This is evidenced by the low turnover rate the school has experienced over the past 12 years. Shanna has worked carefully and painstakingly to cultivate the work culture she has created over the years (Crouch, 2008, p. 257; Honan, 2014, p. 16). She believes in empowering her employees and, within the guidelines of the school, allows her teachers to make independent decisions on how to run their classrooms. She sits in on many parent conferences and acts as the instructional and curriculum advisor to Children's House and Elementary. Shanna sets school policy and is a liaison between the Parent Association and CMS. She provides ample opportunities for her staff's educational development, as

well as opportunities for personal growth. She freely shares her expertise with teachers, parents, and others interested in the Montessori method, including the local and national Montessori community. She is a welcome presenter at the yearly American Montessori Society conference and always encourages her staff to step out and participate, thus becoming leaders themselves.

Shanna has strong moral ethics and "...determination to do the right thing for others" (Wright, 2010, p. 21). Her direct involvement in the classroom is keeping her well connected to children and parents. She is easy to talk to and shows genuine interest in people, parents, children, and faculty alike. When issues come up in regards to students she always tries to base her decisions on what is in the best interest of the child. She goes out of her way to work with families. The academic expectations at the school are high and she encourages each child and faculty to work up to their potential. In the past she has extended herself and accommodated numerous families in regards to tuition, spent countless hours conferring with parents to device new strategies, and has implemented a weekly school-wide fundraiser to collect canned foods for the food bank of a local Catholic church.

In spite of her many strengths Shanna has no problem admitting that she does not have all the answers. She is quick to admit to a mistake and does not mind apologizing. She is willing to self-reflect, seeks dialogue, and enlists suggestions to try to find solutions. She does not expect perfection from her faculty and staff and is open to communication to seek solutions. In cases of interpersonal conflict she encourages the parties to get together and try to find a solution. If they fail to come to terms she steps in in an effort to mediate. When that has failed, she has bought in professional mediators to

try to solve the issues. A warm and friendly work environment is very important to Shanna. Such is the culture that she has created, her "life's work," (Honan, 2014, p. 21) where her philosophy is cooperation rather than competition.

In 2006, Shanna took another extraordinary step in founding the Virginia Montessori Teacher Education Center (VMTEC), an institution fully accredited by the American Montessori Society (AMS). Kouzes and Posner (2004) write, "[Leaders] seize the initiative to make things happen" (p. 68). VMTEC is a 14 months program that runs during the summer and has five weekend sessions during the academic year. Upon successful completion it leads to an AMS teacher certification. Several VMTEC graduates are presently employed at the school.

As a leader, Shanna has worked very hard to get to this point. She is running a successful Montessori school, which enjoys an excellent reputation in the community and where, at this time, classes at both campuses are almost fully enrolled. Plans for an expansion of the Grassfield campus have already been drawn up and it is only a matter of time before this facility is enlarged and will accommodate all students and faculty. Shanna credits her nurturing family environment for the person she is today. John C. Maxwell writes, "If you were privileged to grow up in an environment of encouragement, count your blessings" (as cited in Kouzes & Posner, 2004, p. 41). Here she learned a value system of morals, perseverance and a good work ethic, and many of the tools that have molded her into the leader she has become.

Shanna has cast a vision of exemplary education for children and is leading as an example, both as a teacher in the classroom, as well as Head of school. She believes that focus on individualized learning, a method practiced in the Montessori classroom, is the

best way to educate a child, a belief that was investigated and substantiated by a recent CNBC report called the "Classroom of the Future," which can be viewed on CMS's website (http://www.chesapeakemontessorischool.com/classrooms-future/). David McAllister-Wilson's statement, "Vision isn't everything, but it's the beginning of everything" (as cited in Kouzes & Posner, 2004, p. 5) echoes Shanna's belief, "...I do have a vision as a leader but it is not the end of the journey, it's the journey" (Honan, 2014, p. 13).

By being Shanna's first employee, I have enjoyed the friendly atmosphere and the nurturing environment, which were established from the very opening of the school. However, I regret to say that with the growth of the school there came changes in the general atmosphere. Such changes often follow rapid growth of an institution, when the original intentions of the founder become diluted by multitudes of newcomers, who might not yet share the same vision. One of my observations of CMS's journey is that the "cozy family feel" that the school used to enjoy has gone. New employees who did not experience that era do not have the same loyalties toward Shanna and some see their work as a job rather than a calling. Shanna offers a yearly retreat for the purpose of teambuilding and teacher development, but the ideal of "one happy family", could not be sustained, even though Shanna calls the school "her home" (Honan, 2014, p. 22). However, in order to continue to promote a warm working environment, I recommend that she take steps to make a more concentrated effort to communicate with and listen more closely to the staff at the Great Bridge campus, a place where she does not come very often in person. Communication with the staff at this campus usually happens via email, which is impersonal and does not create the same feeling of belonging. Such

disconnect with her teachers has caused Shanna not to hear some of their concerns, or so it seems, which has led to decreased morale at "the forgotten campus." One way I believe Shanna could seek to improve is by actively seeking opportunities to praise her teachers individually. This would encourage the individual and strengthen the working environment. Additionally, during staff meetings and the yearly retreats, where she always expresses gratitude but in a general way, she could take time to publicly praise extraordinary services provided by her employees.

In my opinion Shanna is a natural leader who knows how to encourage people and bring out the best in them. Shanna challenges and empowers her teachers, offers development sessions and opportunities to step out and up into leadership positions. She gives opportunities to her staff to present at VMTEC, during in-house workshops, and encourages those interested to apply to the yearly AMS conference as presenters. Shanna enables others to act, she believes in collaboration and strengthening individuals. She is a networker who actively works on building trust within the school as well as the Montessori community. She knows that "Leadership is a team effort" (Kouzes & Posner, 2004, p. 87). My recommendation is that she continues to strengthen the relationships she has established and remains open to the suggestions and dreams of those who cross her path. Shanna has incredible energy but I recommend that she preserves and concentrates "...[on] clear[ing] a little space in which to think and act for [her]self" (Badaracco, 2006, p. 138). Observing Shanna over the years, it is my opinion that she spreads herself too thin in her desire to satisfy all the requests that press upon her. It is vitally important that she finds the fine balance between her responsibilities as business leader and the never

ending outside requests and pressures. In order to remain mentally, emotionally, and physically strong she will have to decide more carefully where to invest herself.

Reflective Essay

The world is full of many kinds of leaders. A business or organization is fortunate when a good leader is at its helm. It is blessed if that leader has chosen to be a servant leader. The Kouzes and Posner (2004) model on leadership has given me tools to evaluate the effectiveness of those in authority over me and is an invaluable guide as I examine my posture toward those I am privileged to lead. These principles have been used as a guideline during the recent leadership interview with Shanna Honan, owner of Chesapeake Montessori School (CMS), located in Chesapeake, Virginia, which took place on October 1, 2014.

I have known Shanna for 13 years and have been able to observe her closely. The interview reflects the person Shanna is, namely one of those people who are "...making something of the world" (Crouch, 2008, p. 40). She has decided to impact the educational world through the establishment of CMS, a Montessori school, serving children from infants through 6th grade. As a leader she has tremendous qualities. She is an engaging and clear communicator who has an incredible ability to cast vision that "...excites the passion and the commitment of those who follow" (Kouzes & Posner, 2004, p. 106). She models the way by initiating educational programs and, in spite of the enormous vision she has for the school, leads with humility. She has no trouble delegating responsibilities along with the power to complete the task, and is able to unite a varied population of students, staff, and parents. This is due to her commitment to excellence, confidence in her position, and a tremendous work ethic. I have seen her struggle with "...the line

between caring a great deal and caring too much..." (Badaracco, 2006, p. 94) in juggling her responsibilities toward her family and the demands that come from being an educator and owner of a school, especially at the beginning of her business endeavor, when her own children were still very young.

Shanna has shown me the importance of continued education and the power of knowledge. She challenges herself to stay on the cutting edge of Montessori education and encourages her faculty to do the same by attending Montessori conferences, providing workshops, and hosting meetings for local Montessorians to come together to share, exchange knowledge, and network. I have observed how her stated mission – to educate children using the Montessori method – has come to fruition in the completion of the first phase of a new campus, the establishing of a training center, and now in steps taken toward CMS's accreditation with the American Montessori Society, which will make CMS the only accredited school in Eastern Virginia.

Observing Shanna has shown me how important it is to "...pay attention to people..." (Kouzes & Posner, 2004, p. 111) and how easily murmuring and complaining can affect the work place. Having been on the receiving end of "praising without specifics..." (Kouzes & Posner, 2004, p. 113) I know how meaningless this form of encouragement is. I believe that this is an area where Shanna can improve as a leader. Most likely she is not aware of this because she is an authentic person and displays a genuine interest in her employees. However, I have seen her attention divided in conversation, probably due to the many demands upon her person.

Working with and for Shanna Honan has been a rewarding journey. She has been very supportive of me and has given me many opportunities to develop as a teacher. Her courage and determination to make a difference in people's lives are commendable and have inspired me to extend myself. I have marveled at her ability to ease parents' fears by making them aware of available programs because of her intimate knowledge of the public educational system.

Dealing with the public and within the workplace, confrontations are unavoidable and I have gained valuable tools of communication by watching Shanna's diplomatic and non-defensive ways of confronting and trying to resolve different issues. This is an invaluable skill for a leader and important lesson for me to learn because, as the results of the Christian Character Index showed, handling difficult situations is not my greatest strength. Working with Shanna, my understanding of the term "servant leader" has been enlarged, especially as I look at myself as a leader more seriously. The Kouzes and Posner leadership model was a useful tool in analyzing the interview with Shanna Honan, and understanding these principles of leadership will serve me well in the future.

References

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Crouch, Andy. (2008). Culture making. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

- Kouzes, James. M. & Posner, Barry Z. (2004). *Christian reflections on the leadership challenge*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
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Appendix

Date of Interview: October 1, 2014

Time: 1:30 P.M. – 2:10 P.M.

Location: Chesapeake Montessori School, 519 Albemarle Drive, Chesapeake, VA 23323 Interviewer: Jutta Gay (JG)

Interviewee: Shanna Honan (SH), owner and head of Chesapeake Montessori School

JG: Thank you Shanna for granting me this interview.

SH: You're welcome; it's my pleasure.

Question 1: Let me begin by asking what leadership means to you?

SH: Leadership means to me that I have gotten to a place in my life where I have accomplished some goals and have found myself in a position where I can share information with other people and that I have the opportunity to help other people reach their goals and help people understand about the vision of what we do here – educate children. It's very important to me to be in this position, I feel that I've worked hard for it and I also enjoy it very much, it means a great deal to me.

Question 2: What strengths do you believe you have as a leader?

SH: Probably my greatest strength as a leader is patience. I think that in dealing with adults we don't come from the same background, we don't have the same experiences, we don't have the same work ethic, we don't have necessarily the same ideas of right or wrong or tolerances for certain things, and I think as a leader I need to be patient and guide people to understanding how things should be done or what is the right answer in

different circumstances. So, probably patience and my willingness to stick in there with people who I might not want to have patience with but I choose to anyway.

JG: I thought that your greatest strength is vision.

SH: Yes, I do have a vision as a leader but it is not the end of the journey, it's the journey. So without that team coming together and me taking time with every person and figuring out their strengths and weaknesses, you know I do that, I spend a lot of time trying to build each person, help them come to an understanding, or being able to function the way we all need to function in this business, which meets the vision which is the ultimate goal. But I find myself more in the process and not the product.

What are your weaknesses?

Probably the same thing is my weakness because sometimes I am more patient with people when sometimes I feel ... maybe patience is not my weakness, maybe I feel like I sometimes need to be a little more heavy handed than I am. When people start taking advantage of things.

JG: Are you speaking in regards to your employees?

SH: Yes

JG: Do you feel you have to set clearer boundaries?

SH: Yes, I do want people to discover things for themselves but sometimes I need to stop it before it goes on too far. Sometimes we waste resources, time, money, and energy on things because I really want to see things through to the end. I do the same with the children, everybody has a potential to learn and to understand, but in an adult work environment it doesn't always work like that. You have to stop it at some point before it becomes detrimental.

Question 3: Who has influenced you the most as a leader?

SH: One thing I think was growing up in the household that I did. I grew up in a household where if we had problems we discussed them. We came together as a community and figured out how to resolve the problem without getting angry, without blaming, without getting frustrated. I think that's the first thing that set the tone for who I am as a person. And then the other things would be the great people that I have looked up to, mentors I've looked up to in my life. Some of these people are mentors in the Montessori community, and other people might just be other bosses that I have had who have shown kindness and patience and understanding when I was the one in that position and I needed that from people.

JG: You have been very fortunate.

SH: Yes I have.

Question 4: Do you believe that leaders should make other people feel strong and confident? If so, what do you do to help others feel that way?

SH: I don't think that I should make them feel strong and confident, I think I should provide situations and surroundings and a work environment where they can learn to feel that for themselves. I think by giving them opportunities, I think by trusting in them, I think by first of all hiring good and confident people and then giving them opportunities to make their own decisions, whether they are good or bad decisions. Part of this is the learning process. I try to provide an environment that is a wonderful work environment where people feel supported but not trampled on, where people feel that they can make decisions regardless of what they make, I'll back them up as best I can and then we figure out what we did wrong and proceed from there so that that confidence and feeling strong can grow within them. I am the facilitator of that; I am not the giver of it.

Question 5: Do you think it is important to delegate? If so, why?

SH: Yes, I think it is important to delegate for several reasons. One is that as a leader you cannot do everything. If you try to do everything you will surely fail at some things because there are too many things to do in an organization for you to do everything. The other thing, I think delegation to other people is a management style in which you can trust other people to make good choices. When you hold unto everything yourself, I see that as a control problem. You have to control everything so you have to make all the decisions, you have to do everything because it has to come out the way you want it. By being able to delegate it means that you are comfortable enough with yourself and comfortable enough with other people to trust that they have a shared vision and that they will make good decisions. It doesn't mean that those decisions are always the same way or that the thing that I delegate is always going to be done exactly the way that I would have done it, but that's ok.

JG: That means you are secure in your position.

SH: Absolutely.

Question 6: What are three or four actions you believe are essential to enable others to be successful?

SH: A positive work environment, where employees feel supported, that's definitely one thing. I also have to give them opportunities to make decisions and make choices, power within their own realm, the classroom, or whatever they do. I need to set the example that

I want followed. I need to be a positive role model and I need to give them the tools with which to do their job.

Question 7: What advice do you have for building relationships and trust in a group or organization?

SH: This is something that I have worked diligently at doing. Number one, it takes time. Trust does not happen over night, it does not even happen in a year. Sometimes it takes many years to build up trust and good communication and good relationships because, again, not everybody is coming from the same space. If you have somebody who lacks self-confidence, who is always defensive, then it will take it a lot longer to build up a good relationship and communication with that person as opposed to somebody else who is open, who is willing to learn, who is willing to do self-reflection and is able to accept responsibility for his or her own learning. It takes a lot of time. One thing you want to do is make sure of, first of all that you have good policies in place because when there is any discrepancy in, "Well, am I allowed to do this, or not do this" or "You are not allowed to do this or that here" all of that creates problems. It creates a lot of talk, it creates tension, it brings animosity oftentimes between people. So not understanding what the expectations are. The other thing is again to be a role model and provide opportunities for constant communication with people. Your people need to know that they can trust you and come to you and you will give them advice and help them when needed. You need to really create a culture within your business of trust and communication and relationships and that takes a lot of work and many years to build that culture within your place of business. You need to create a culture of a community that knows we are here for each other, we help each other, and we support each other, not a competitive type of

community because that immediately brings up walls, shuts people down and that certainly isn't going to foster relationships or trust among people.

Question 8: How would you describe your leadership style? Do you consider yourself a servant leader?

SH: I do try to lead as a servant by trying to provide the tools that you need, the work environment you need and support. I try to serve you in that respect. We do have a fairly democratic kind of working environment where I don't just hand down rules that everybody has to follow. Certainly there are some of those but if issues come up or changes need to be made, we generally talk about them and we figure out if we want to make these changes or these additions or deletions and we come to a consensus for the most part about what we want to do. I am definitely not a leader who will just slam my gavel down and say, "This is how it is." On the other hand, I also feel that I am serving you as the adult community, as the adult employees here but even more so, we are serving the children and the families. I am working for them through you to give them a solid foundation and understanding of right and wrong, in looking at education from a holistic perspective. In trying to help everybody, in Montessori we call it that cosmic task or the cosmic education, which means that we look at education from a holistic perspective and we try and help nurture each of those parts of the child so that they become whoever they are supposed to become. As adults by meeting the needs of all the different parts: mental, physical, social, spiritual, emotional, all of those parts of the child. So, I would say I have more of a democratic leadership style.

Question 9: What are your core values and how are they reflected in what you do as a leader?

SH: My core values in this position wrap around what's right and what's wrong on many levels. On the moral issues; you know there have been many times where I have, and you know this, where I have chosen to do something that may have cost me money but it was the right thing for the child, or it was the right thing to do. This is not a money-driven situation at all. It's all about how to provide this education for these children. And that comes back to how I generally operate on everything: what is right or wrong, and what is developmentally appropriate for the children. Those are the values that I make decisions based from. They are reflected in day-to-day decisions that I make. Whether it's offering somebody a scholarship or whether it's, actually all kinds of scholarship things, where somebody can't pay the tuition because Dad lost their job this month and my decision is, one, "Well you have to take your child out of school" or "Why don't you just come for this month and don't worry about this month and we will see where you are next month." You know, those are moral decisions those are not business decisions. I am an educator I am not a businessperson. So when I make decisions about this school it is from an educational and moral perspective, it is not from a business perspective. That's why I have somebody who manages my business. You know that Abby (former business manager) used to do it. She would say, "Well, this is the right thing to do but we must do this and this in order to make ends meet." I have always come from that educational perspective not an economic perspective. And you know, honestly, it cannot be all wrong because we are a successful school. I'll never be rich but I hope to pay things off one day. I'll never be rich from it but then again that was never my intention. I never thought that that's what it will be in the end. If that ever is the case, we pay everything off and I make

money, so be it. But I have to live in the now and provide the education that needs to be provided based on what is right, not what is cheap.

Question 10: How do you facilitate improvement, manage change, and deal with mistakes in your group? How do you deal with your own mistakes?

SH: We do a lot of things to facilitate improvement. One is providing educational opportunities, supporting people within their own education like helping people pay for training or providing professional development seminars or retreats. So I am always looking at how I can help people. I personally work with people one-on-one. I go into classrooms and help them make changes. We manage change generally by giving a lot of notice. This is what's going to happen down the pipeline and we're going to talk about it at this time and then we're going to implement these standards. Nothing is sprung on you guys. For the major things that are happening they usually come from me, it goes out in an email about, this is a faculty meeting, this is what's going to go on at that point. We manage the change together as a group. Again, it's not me smashing the gavel down and this is what it is. How do I deal with mistakes in my organization? Mistakes happen all the time and I tell you, the best way I deal with them and the best way I deal with my own mistakes is to not pretend that we're perfect. When we pretend that we're perfect, when we pretend that we know all the answers then we set ourselves up for hurt. When we put ourselves on such a pedestal that we can't make mistakes or that everybody thinks we have all the answers that's when we get into trouble. If a mistake happens, a mistake happens and we deal with it. Generally what that is, it's about talking with the adult oneon-one and trying to figure out what happened, what was the thought process and what happened with that and talking about what else we could have done. Often times

mistakes, well not often times, we don't have a lot of complaints, but I have to sometimes talk to parents about things that they are unhappy about that a teacher did or something like it. Often times I listen to them get their input on it and try to make them feel better about whatever the decision is and if it's correctible, of course, correct it. We try and make it right without sacrificing our vision for our program but even beyond that, even way before that we try and help people understand what the expectations are so it's kind of where we do a lot of preemptive work so that parents, faculty or staff, who ever, children, understand what the expectations are so that there isn't a lot of miscommunication in the process. I deal with my own mistakes the same way. I don't pretend that I have all the answers and I will admit when I am wrong, I will figure out what I can do to correct the situation and move forward from there.

Question 11: How do you manage conflict?

SH: Well, the first way that I manage conflict is again, I set up ... everybody should know what the expectations are, all the faculty and staff. We have policies, we have procedures and everybody knows and everybody follows the same rules. The rules apply to everyone equally. If there is conflict within the group then usually I would encourage those people to meet together to see if they can work out the conflicts. If that doesn't work then I come in and see if I can help manage those conflicts and we come up with a plan of how we can resolve the issue. Some things are resolved very easily. Others, when we have personality conflicts, they are a little bit harder. We have even brought in mediators in the past, certified mediators to deal with conflict between two people and ultimately, in this case, those two people couldn't get along with anybody and they eventually just left. It wasn't just the two of them, it was neither of them could get along

with anybody else. And so, often times those people just work their way out. One of them quit and one of them was fired. But I will say that I don't like conflict. We should be working in harmony and if there is constant conflict then I need to figure out what's going on because it is not conducive to a healthy work environment.

Question 12: What do you like best about being a leader? Do you like being a leader? SH: I do. I like being a leader. What do I like best about being a leader? You know, I love teaching and I love sharing information with people. I love the feeling of helping people. I love being able to offer somebody something that they need that I have and that I can feely give to them, which, most of the time is knowledge. This is my passion, this is my life's work and I feel if I have that to give and people can use that to make life better for themselves or for their children, than that's my duty to give that to them. That's what I should be doing, as long as I can manage that and manage everything else well. I think I do like being a leader. What I don't like, I don't always like having to make all the decisions. I don't like the business end of things and I very much dislike the money aspect. I would love it if money wasn't always an issue. Can we pay our bills this month? Well, I shouldn't sound like it isn't but there is no money left over. What we bring in we put back out. Having those financial pressures on me, because they are on me, it is my house that's on the line, I'm the owner, I take out the loans. Having those pressures as a leader is not fun and feeling that all the time if we're not fully enrolled. Those financial pressures I can't stand. But being a leader on a day-to-day basis I enjoy but I also enjoy it because of how our school is set up. If I were back at Parkview (public school in Portsmouth, VA) I couldn't do it anymore because I just don't have it anymore to deal with the constant toxic work environment and everything you have to deal with. You

know I have created this environment; this is home for me. To walk into another environment that is toxic to the adult, I don't think I could do it, I wouldn't want to do it anymore. I would rather go back to teaching than being a principal in a public school. JG: I think you answered my questions. Is there anything you would like to say? Would you like to add anything else?

SH: Maybe, one of the things, and I don't know if I talked about it a little earlier, one of the things I would like to do. I think I touched on it a little bit, is give people opportunities. I like to encourage people to step out of their comfort zone, to go to that next level with things. Whether it is encouraging them to present at a conference or even when I said the training center is going to hold a couple of sessions this winter, would anyone be interested in assisting Donna (teacher who will lead a sensorial extension workshop), would anybody be interested in presenting something on their own? Not only saying you can do this but you can do more than that. This is one of the things I have been known in being active on a national level instead of just a local level. I am more active nationally than I am locally because around here there is not a whole lot of people who share our passion and interest at the level that our school does. We go to conferences, do a lot of professional development, and bring in people. I want to help people understand that it is not just you come to your classroom and do your job for the day but there is more opportunity for you locally and nationally and that we are a part of a bigger movement than just coming into the classroom and teaching kids. We're part of a much bigger movement and actually, it's on our website, it's the classroom of the future. CNBC ran a whole segment on the classroom of the future and guess where it was it was at a Montessori school. They said this is where we're going in education, which is

actually where we came from. It's all going full circle right here. Montessori is on the rise; we are definitely part of a movement that is on the rise. Montessori is liked by anybody regardless if you are a tree hugger or so do the very conservative people because of the academics. Where other people don't seem to agree on its either no teaching of religion in the class or we want this, one way or another there seems to be nothing that meets across the board, Montessori has crossed that line for all people.

JG: Shanna, again, thank you so much for your time.

SH: You're so are welcome.