

## The ebb and flow of structure vs human resources

Actions for 'The ebb and flow of structure vs human resources'  
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When looking at decisions made at my current school, through the lens of the structural vs human resources framework, it is easy to examples of both at work. Last year, I had the opportunity to serve as the school's K-12 Dean of Students. We were in the process of transitioning from a school with two administrators (Superintendent/K-4 Principal and 5-12 Principal) to one with three administrators (Part Time Superintendent, K-6 Principal, 7-12 Principal).

**Structural:** As the school board hashed out the details of what our new administrative structure would look like most of the emphasis on the general operations of the school was placed on "structural" outcomes: setting/communicating clear goals and objectives, articulating specialized roles such as mine as Dean of Students, establishing a more formal hierarchy of relationships within the school between admin and teachers and paraprofessional support staff. Much of the focus as we closed out the school year last year was dedicated to setting parameters and publishing policies. Most of the directives we received from the school board remained focused on the bureaucracy of managing the school.

**Human Resources:** With the dawn of the new school year, having secured the 7-12 principal position in our three person admin team, our decision-making model shifted to a much more "human resources" focus. This is due, in my opinion, in large part to the school board putting trust in the new admin team to establish the climate within the school. They have, in large part, stepped back this year and allowed us to assess the needs of the school, develop the skills necessary to address those needs as a learning community, and build relationships between the admin and faculty/staff.

The same bureaucratic *structure* is still present but the *human resources* element is encouraged to operate within the confines of that established framework. There's a definite give and take that happens as our new admin team walks that tightrope between wanting to establish clear expectations based upon state statutes and school board guidelines and wanting to establish a positive and constructive school climate. There's an art to being strong in both areas while constantly trying to move the organization forward.