



# LETHBRIDGE SCHOOL DISTRICT No. 51

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

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## **Barry Litun's Beliefs About Education**

1. I believe in Public Education, which is the avenue by which every child can be successful.
2. I believe in people. Provided the opportunity, in a sound environment, and regardless of the individual's age, virtually every person, almost all the time, will do the best she or he can.
3. I believe that a strong education system is a result of cooperation and collaboration between educators, students, parents and the community.
4. I believe that every child deserves the opportunity to succeed and excel.
5. I believe in openness, listening and seeking solutions to problems which do not compromise the best interests of children.
6. I believe that curriculum is the foundation upon which the 'schoolhouse' is built.
7. I believe in life long learning. Ongoing, job-embedded professional development is critical to maintaining an exceptional education system. Acknowledging and supporting individuals who seek to broaden their knowledge or experiences is vital.
8. I believe in creating and sharing a vision. Without knowing where you are going, any road will take you there.
9. I believe that students and staff appreciate and deserve honest assessment.
10. I believe in dedication to excellence and in leading by example.
11. I believe that respecting and appreciating the efforts of every single individual within a school is essential if a 'family' culture is to be reinforced.
12. I believe in personal integrity, honesty and trust.
13. I believe an educational leader is a catalyst, encouraging others to use their expertise to improve the learning environment.
14. I believe in developing a climate where stakeholders understand and share a set of beliefs, which in turn empowers all individuals.
15. I believe in supporting risk takers whose purpose is to be progressive. We cannot get to where we want to be by staying where we are. John Shedd said, "A ship in harbor is safe--but that is not what ships are for."
16. I believe an educational leader is one who is confident enough to allow others to receive praise for successes, yet strong enough to accept responsibility for plans gone awry.
17. I believe that communication is the single most important element required for successful leadership.
18. I believe that children are the *raison d'être* for educational organizations. One must never forget the responsibility one accepts as an educator, so aptly expressed by Dr. Haim Ginott.

I have come to the frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element in the classroom. It's my personal approach that creates the climate. It's my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher, I possess tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool for torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humour, hurt or heal. In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated and a child humanized or dehumanized.