



Stephen F. Austin State University
College of Sciences and Mathematics

*Visionary Leadership
In Higher Education*

Dr. Kimberly M. Childs

Visionary leaders
inspire, challenge, empower,
encourage, and serve.



Visionary leadership in higher education requires

- attention to strategic planning and execution
- active institutional advancement
- productive collaborations and partnerships
- purposeful engagement of the alumni base
- sound financial direction

What inspires you to become an academic leader?

- Vision of excellence
- Ability to make a difference
- Platform for change
- Institutional mission

Who are our students and what do we know about them?





Programs and Partnerships

- Enrollment in existing programs
(*majors, concentrations, etc.*)
- Curricular cleansing and re-design
(*formula funding, market demand, etc.*)
- Interdisciplinary program development
- K-12 institutions and community colleges
- P3s

Strategic Initiatives

- 60x30TX – Call to Action
- Recruitment and retention of Underrepresented/Underserved Populations
 - Increasing Hispanic and Underrepresented Groups in STEM (iHUGS)
 - Women in STEM (WiSTEM)





Management

- Financial Stability
- Enrollment
- Personnel
- Curriculum and Assessment



Communication

- Be a fierce advocate
- Host an open forum such as '*Coffee with the Dean*'
- Entertain open, honest conversation
- Be clear in responses (emails, texts, etc.)
- Mobilize the base (faculty, alumni, donors, etc.)





Fundraising

- Build relationships anchored on
 - Honesty
 - Trust
 - Genuine concern
- Identify opportunities and challenges
- Expand your comfort zone



Advice from current unit heads

- Surround yourself with talented and motivated individuals and then let them do their job. Also, encourage collaboration, this fosters excitement and creativity.
- Be supportive of faculty and new ideas, pick and choose your battles, build a trusting relationship with faculty.
- Possess the ability to multi-task. Keep channels of effective communication open across all levels, within and beyond your department. Consider multiple perspectives before making a decision that impacts the department.
- Understand the budget process and your departmental budget.
- “Don’t sweat the small stuff”

My advice to you...

*“Lead out of conviction
not out of fear.”*



Our Future...



We are currently preparing students for the jobs that don't yet exist...using technologies that haven't yet been invented...in order to solve problems we don't even know are problems yet.
(Richard Riley, former Secretary of Education)

[www.nsf.gov/news/special_reports/
big_ideas/harnessing.jsp](http://www.nsf.gov/news/special_reports/big_ideas/harnessing.jsp)

- Flexibility
- Data-informed decision making
- Mission-driven action
- Symbiotic coexistence

Questions?

