

# Empower the Collective



**E** DUCATORS TYPICALLY RETURN after winter break with renewed dedication, eager to finish out the school year strong. But nothing this school year has been “typical,” and educators and students alike are returning to the same uncertainties and disruptions they experienced this fall.

School leadership during the pandemic requires flexibility to anticipate and deliver solutions for hybrid and virtual learning, plummeting motivation, and challenges to traditional forms of community and culture. “Educators are increasingly relying on teams as they discover that traditional methods of problem-solving, decision-making, communication, and implementation are not fast or flexible enough to respond to the challenges of the times,” write John Hattie and Raymond Smith in their article, “Weave a Web of Expertise.” That’s why they recommend empowering the collective and establishing a feedback loop to ensure that everyone has access to an organization’s expertise.

According to Ebony N. Bridwell-Mitchell, the ideal collective includes a variety of voices. By encouraging functional diversity with multiple perspectives, educators can solve persistent problems of practice, she writes in “On the Same Page.”

But according to Shawn Joseph and Kmt G. Shockley, many schools are experiencing a diversity disconnect. In their article, “Create a Cultural Shift,” they delve into the historical challenges of recruiting and retaining Black teachers, who are disproportionately underrepresented in the teaching force. They urge principals to teach Black culture, to make space for Black voices, and finally, to clarify the school’s mission in order to take concrete actions toward social justice.

In addition to the powerful strategies offered in this issue of *Principal*, we’re thrilled to present:

- *Leading Lessons: Social-Emotional Learning in the Time of COVID-19*, packaged with this issue; and
- *Leading Lessons: Build Capacity With Shared Leadership*, available exclusively to NAESP members at [www.naesp.org/leadinglessons](http://www.naesp.org/leadinglessons).



**Reach Kaylen  
on Twitter**

@kaylentucker  
to let her know how  
you like the issue

And as an extra bonus, we’re pleased to present you with a school safety poster provided in partnership with Lysol. Find it between pages 28 and 29. Happy New Year to you all, and as always, please let me know how you enjoy this issue of *Principal* magazine.

—Kaylen Tucker, Ph.D.

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ktucker@naesp.org

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[adinfo.nep@foxrep.com](mailto:adinfo.nep@foxrep.com)

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**Senior Editor:** Ian P. Murphy  
**Art Director:** Zon Buckley  
**Copy Editor:** Steve Kennedy