Lessons From Peers

Turning around a school is no easy task. It takes planning, examining, re-evaluating, and—most important—time and patience. But time is what many principals are competing with when state and federal lawmakers, state departments of education, and even parents demand swift, significant gains in student achievement. And since there’s no easy or established formula that works consistently for all schools across the board, improving achievement becomes even more challenging.

What can be helpful is learning from your colleagues who have overcome these challenges and succeeded in improving in not only reading and math scores, but also instruction, curriculum, professional development offerings, parent-school connections, behavior, and school culture. That’s what this issue of Principal is here for.

Three of the theme articles are written by principals who offer case studies of what they did to improve their schools. As you’ll learn from Phoenix principal Daniel Salaz, Las Vegas principal Lucille Keaton, and South Carolina principal Rachel Ray, their success did not come overnight, but rather steadily and surely given the commitment they made to their students. Author Robert Manwaring addresses this point—the importance of strong leadership and the role of principals in effecting change—in his article. And the final theme article is a Q&A with Diane Ravitch, who expresses her concerns with current reform efforts. Ravitch’s responses are not to be taken lightly as she weighs in on No Child Left Behind, measuring student achievement, and what is lost by continually reorganizing management in schools.

Also featured in this issue is a preview of NAESP’s 2011 Convention and Exposition, which takes place April 7-10 in Tampa, Florida. Convention speaker Robert Marzano is featured in the article “What Works,” where he explains what his research has revealed about effective teacher evaluation, assessment methods, and school leadership. He also provides insight on what he’ll discuss with convention attendees during his Extended Learning Session. Our convention coverage also includes details about NAESP’s third annual Community Service Day.

Attending convention is another way NAESP offers you the opportunity to learn from your colleagues, furthering your impact on school success. We hope to see you in Tampa!

Prepare to Vote!

This spring, eligible NAESP members will elect a new president-elect, and directors for Zones 1, 2, and 8. The electronic ballots will be available through our website—but you will need to log in to access the ballot, which is members-only content. If you have never logged in to www.naesp.org, take a moment to do it now—and ensure being able to vote for candidates as soon as you receive your notification the second week of April.

To log in for the first time:
1. Go to www.naesp.org/user/login.
2. Type your “Username”—the e-mail address NAESP has on file with your membership.
3. Type your “Password”—your last name is your password the first time you log in. (Once logged in, you will be prompted to change your password to something more secure.)

If you have trouble, send an e-mail to elilley@naesp.org.

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