

THOUGHT LEADER

Conversation in the Digital Age

While advances in digital technology have ushered in exciting, new ways to communicate and share information, ramifications for human relationships and conversation have surfaced. This is according to renowned social psychologist Sherry Turkle, who is the author of *Reclaiming Conversation: The Power of Talk in a Digital Age* (Penguin Press, 2015). Turkle is a thought leader for the 2017 National Principals Conference in July. Here's a preview of her message.

What's your educational philosophy?
Read. Talk. Listen.
Imagine. Create.



Should cellphones be banned in schools?

Cellphones should be banned in all classrooms and dining areas. Those are places for talking. Students should be able to consult phones

in halls, lounge spaces, and other designated areas.

How can principals help reclaim the power of conversation in an age of technology?

By creating no-device "sacred spaces" in school environments that are set aside as conversation-only places. When we are interrupted by our devices, we attend less to each other. We become less empathetic.

MYTWOCENTS



Lynn Colón (@TheColon_s): Collaboration, inspiration, and energy from passionate leaders

Ready to be inspired at the National Principals Conference? What are you looking forward to or hoping to achieve?

Julie Bloss (@BlossJulie): I'm looking forward to collaborating with my incredible PLN—many I've never met in person!
#principalsinaction #kidsdeserveit #ecechat

We turn the conversation to more trivial matters and we feel less connection to each other.

In what specific ways can principals use new technology to enhance communication?

For the moment, I think our challenge is to learn to put aside technology to enhance communication. We need to learn to look at each other in the eye, to attend to body language. We need to relearn the art of the significant apology. And perhaps most of all, to attend to each other, we have to learn to attend to ourselves, to be content with our own thoughts. If we can't gather ourselves to ourselves, we can't hear what someone else has to say. We project onto them what we need them to be saying to buttress our fragile sense of self.

What's the most important benefit and biggest drawback to technology in schools?

Technology brings us in contact with people and experiences all over the world, with people we would never meet. That is wonderful. We need to take advantage of this without living a life of constant distraction.

**Excerpted from Principal Leadership, March 2017*

A Tribute to NAESP Executive Director Gail Connelly

“Gail is someone you can always count on to ... greet you with a smile ... be prepared, thoughtful, attentive, and honest ... think, lead, and ask tough questions ... challenge your thinking and enlarge it ... see things from many perspectives ... think of amazing new ideas ... approach every situation with the needs of principals, students, and families uppermost in mind ...



make thoughtful decisions ... do the right thing ... work closely with others ... make everyone feel welcome and important ... provide sound advice ... have your back ... be a loyal and supportive friend ... fill you with positive energy ... give you hope that the principals, families, and kids of this country will be better off ... and always be there for NAESP.”

—From colleagues at NAESP and around the country. See a full retrospective of Connelly's decade-long tenure as executive director on page 57.

New Hashtag Alert

Vouchers and school choice, rights for special education students, and funding for professional development for teachers and principals. These are among the issues the nation faces in the 115th Session of Congress, as new initiatives are being advanced by the Trump Administration, and as states and local districts implement the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

Enter #PrincipalsAdvocate, which attendees of NAESP's National Leaders Conference recently used to document their advocacy on Capitol Hill about these issues.

Follow #PrincipalsAdvocate to keep up with NAESP's advocacy agenda for a stronger investment in public schools and policy developments that impact school leadership.

<https://twitter.com/kasnelson/status/847099292485664768>



Kelly Musselman Luscre: I'm looking forward to meeting new people and creating a Professional Learning Network that I can learn from, ask for help when the "tough" times ensue, and who can help celebrate the good times!!

Amy L. Suffoletto: I am excited to be part of this amazing conference again. I am looking forward to connecting with so many great leaders! #NAESP2017

Want to grow your PLN before the conference? Connect on Twitter via #NPC17