

## My Two Cents

*What book do you believe should be on every principal's bookshelf and why?*

***The 21 Indispensable Qualities of a Leader: Becoming the Person Others Will Want to Follow*** by John C. Maxwell. Maxwell's book identifies 21 vital characteristics that motivate others to want to follow a leader. The script is interesting and applicable to daily leadership issues. The book should be absorbed one chapter at a time. Maxwell recommends that it be used "to reflect, review, and renew." I have found it to be an ideal tool by which to gauge my communication skills and interpersonal associations.

*Melissa D. Patschke*  
Principal  
Upper Providence Elementary School  
Royersford, Pennsylvania

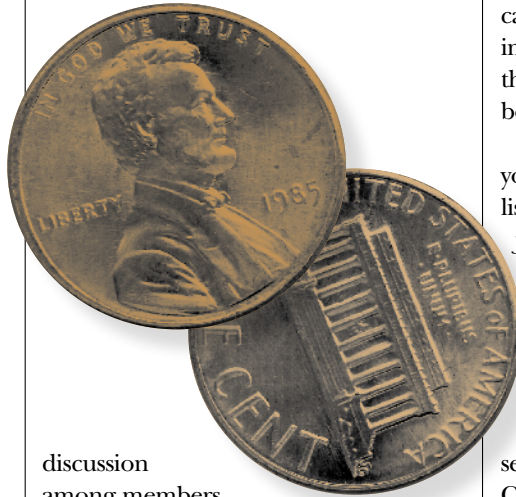
***Bringing Out the Best in Teachers: What Effective Principals Do*** by Joseph Blasé and Peggy C. Kirby. Blasé and Kirby have written a detailed book that really teaches the principal how to bring out the very best in teachers through motivational, inspirational, and empowering techniques. Most of the techniques are very quick to implement, but will have long-lasting effects on teachers. In addition, the book offers profound strategies that can be used to create a positive school culture through building positive and sincere relationships with teachers.

*LaQuanda Brown*  
Principal  
King-Danforth Elementary School  
Macon, Georgia

***Who Moved My Cheese?*** by Spencer Johnson. It is a quick read that makes you think. I found it amazing that so many individuals fit the characteristics of the four main characters. I read this book once a year and use it to prompt

**New to *Principal*.** This new section gives our readers an opportunity to voice their thoughts and experiences with us and fellow NAESP members.

This page will feature your letters to the editor (e-mail your letter to [publications@naesp.org](mailto:publications@naesp.org)); a Legislative Dispatch, which will offer first-hand accounts from Federal Relations Coordinators about their interactions with their local legislators; and responses to My Two Cents, in which principals offer their thoughts on a particular question.



discussion  
among members  
of various committees.

*Jon S. Stern*  
Principal  
Wabasha-Kellogg Schools  
Wabasha, Minnesota

Read more responses and submit your own by visiting NAESP's blog, the Principals' Office, at <http://naesp.typepad.com>.

## Legislative Dispatch

**N**AESP's 2008 Federal Relations Conference was a powerful experience. Principals were briefed on the issues and prepared for our meetings with congressional leaders. For example, meetings could be held in a hallway, cafeteria, or office. It was important to realize that congressional

aides appeared very young but were knowledgeable and would inform the legislators about our concerns.

A good example was my visit to the office of Congressman Brad Ellsworth, D-Indiana. Ellsworth admitted that he came from law enforcement and knew little about education issues. He relied on us educators and his education assistant to keep him informed on issues important to educators in Indiana. He has been an advocate and has visited our schools and participated in educational roundtables back home. It is important to establish relationships with those folks who come from our neighborhoods and represent us in Congress.

Are you an NAESP Key Contact? Do you know at least one legislator? Establishing a relationship with a legislator is just like having great parents in your school. They become advocates for educators because of your relationship and the information you share with them. E-mail your representative to invite him or her to your school for a special event. Let them see their hometown school in action. Congressional leaders learn from your leadership.

At the end of the day I felt exhausted but energized by the feeling that I had made a difference. I was amazed at how many interest groups visit Capitol Hill throughout the day—some with views that conflict with ours. Returning to NAESP headquarters, I thought about the 50 principals who, like me, may have felt intimidated and inadequate when walking the halls of Congress. I thought that, individually, I might have been insignificant. During our visits, I represented the hundreds of principals from across Indiana. That was powerful. Together, in one collective voice, we can make a difference. ☐

*Diane Cargile*  
Principal  
Rio Grande Elementary School  
Terre Haute, Indiana

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