Strength in Numbers

For our annual convention issue, we chose to focus on the extensive influence principals have at the local, state, and national levels. What better time than now—when we anticipate thousands of pre-K-8 principals to hone their skills at the premiere professional development event designed just for them—to shine the spotlight on the power of the principal?

One principal alone pulls a lot of weight in his or her school and community, helping to effect change on behalf of the hundreds of students under that principal’s care and responsibility. Take, for example, what principal Mark Terry explains in “Leadership Matters,” which begins on page 36: “Think about it: You are in daily contact with 500 children, 70 staff members, 1,000 parents, and the community in which you live, which adds up to at least 1,070 direct or indirect voters.” That’s a significant web of influence for one school leader.

Now multiply that by the tens of thousands of principals around the country and it’s easy to see the potential strength in principals’ collective efforts. As Andy Hargreaves and his co-authors write in their article: “Collaborative advantage is simply about mutual interest. Collaborative edge is about the collaborating parties also engaging in mutual support and in furthering a higher, common purpose that transcends them all.”

With that in mind, as you engage with your colleagues at NAESP’s convention, on the Association’s various social media outlets (e.g., the Principals’ Office, Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn), on Capitol Hill, during webinars, and all other opportunities available to NAESP members, remember that you have more than 25,000 colleagues to learn from, offer advice to, and pull strength from. Your common purpose is to positively impact the lives of children, which is no small task, nor is it one that goes unnoticed.

In addition to reading about how others in the education field describe the power of the principal, and NAESP’s initiative tied to this concept, included in this issue is a preview of our 89th Annual Convention and Exposition, which takes place April 8-11 in Houston. This event will offer a national discussion on transforming schools, a volunteer opportunity, and a silent auction to benefit the NAESP Foundation, as well as helpful sessions, workshops, and networking opportunities. See you in Houston!
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