

An Innovative Approach to Personalized Learning

Tested strategies can help you provide each student with a personalized experience

By L. Earl Franks, Ed.D., CAE



Coming off a successful NAESP annual conference this summer in Spokane, Washington, I was struck by the enthusiasm for “The Exchange” sessions led by Andy Jacks and Hamish Brewer. Jacks and Brewer, fellows of NAESP’s new Center for Innovative Leadership, used a live interview format to showcase principals

who are sharing the strategies they use to move their schools beyond the status quo. The experience captivated principals because it quenched their thirst for innovative ideas that will help personalize learning to move students toward academic success.

The biggest hurdle in executing new strategies, however, is not in the approach itself but rather in sustaining the innovation over time and scaling it to broader impact. According to *Driving K–12 Innovation*, a new series from the Consortium for School Networking (CoSN), an initiative for which NAESP is on the advisory board, that hurdle can also be the hardest to overcome because “institutionalizing innovation requires a

systematic, iterative approach, including ways to identify effective practices to scale and sustain.”

Implementing and assessing innovative instructional programs, initiatives, and technologies requires principals to master key leadership practices such as building culture, empowering people, and optimizing systems. These practices are outlined in NAESP’s newly released *Leading Learning Communities: Pillars, Practices, and Priorities for Effective Principals*. The guidebook provides a concise and practice-oriented philosophy of the principalship that is organized around:

- Pillars: main areas of focus that define the “what” of the principalship;
- Practices: corresponding strategies for “how” effective principals operate; and
- Priorities: a shared set of core beliefs that describe the “why” behind what effective principals do every day.

As you continue to lead your learning communities dynamically, NAESP stands committed in supporting you with research-based, practitioner-tested strategies that will help you provide each student with the personalized experience they deserve. 📖

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TIME TO CELEBRATE—AND ADVOCATE

In addition to wishing you all a successful start to the school year, I also want to wish you a happy National Principals Month. NAESP—along with the National Association of Secondary School Principals and the American Federation of School Administrators—has once again declared the month of October National Principals Month. In addition to celebrating your leadership, this year we are asking you to advocate for real change in the principalship to get the support you need. Find more information, sample language, and templates at www.principalsmonth.org.



The executive summary of *Leading Learning Communities: Pillars, Practices, and Priorities for Effective Principals* is available at www.naesp.org. The full guide is available for purchase on Amazon and at www.naesp.org.

