"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." -Nelson Mandela

NEW PRINCIPAL CONNECTION

FEBRUARY 2021

THIS ISSUE

Empower People

FEEDBACK
TOPICS PRINCIPALS NEED ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

"This year is really survive and advance each day." -NPNP Panelist

- Highlight a need to hire specialists, such as reading or math coaches, to fill gaps and meet student learning needs.

- Assemble data teams to determine which measure and data sources to focus on an prioritize – beyond what is mandated.

- Offer action-oriented, participatory learning opportunities.

- Provide regular, actionable feedback

WEAVE A WEB OF EXPERTISE
NAESP *COMMUNICATOR*

Educators are increasingly relying on teams as they discover that traditional methods of problem-solving, decision-making, communication, and implementation are not fast or flexible enough to respond to the challenges of the times. The issue? When things go wrong, many find it easier to "do it themselves," defeating any value that derives from working in groups. And even when things go right, a sharp eye can often discover room for improvement.

Everyone in the school—teachers and school leaders alike—should be watchdogs over effective collaborative practice. Monitor the team's effectiveness: How can the group make better use of its resources—time, money, processes, and people? Look for what's missing, what's getting in the way, and what needs to happen. Keep an eye on colleagues: Who needs encouragement, who's out of line, who's confused, who is using practices that discourage knowledge-sharing and information exchange, and who engages in practices that add to the group's collective brain?

Read more

TRIALS OF A FIRST YEAR PRINCIPAL: MIDYEAR REVIEW

BY CHRISTOPHER BAILEY, ED.D.
NAESP *COMMUNICATOR*

Midway through the school year is a great place to stop and reflect. As I have conducted formal and informal discussions with staff members this month, I have taken the opportunity to think about how we have grown as a learning community. It is easy to get mired in the minutia of the year and forget to celebrate the progress along the way and realize the areas needed for growth. As I personally reflected and had conversations with colleagues, several thoughts trended to the top of the list.

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- Provide leadership opportunities for others in the community knowing that doing so has the potential to improve student learning and strengthen instruction.

- Provide consistent, sustained opportunities for teacher leadership.

- Identify a narrow student learning problem and a contributing teaching problem of practice that the school needs to solve.

- Gather ongoing data and continually assess the team's effectiveness in meeting its goals and solving the identified problem of teaching a learning.

- Integrate supports for social and emotional development and physical and mental health as essential components of the school's overall approach into high-quality teaching.

- Know how to lead instruction and monitor instructional progress to support teaching and learning for students with disabilities.

- Assess self-knowledge to recognize your own strengths and weaknesses, personal and professional identities, self-interests, assumptions, and biases.

To view NAESP's upcoming webinars, please visit:
[**https://www.naesp.org/career/webinars**](https://www.naesp.org/career/webinars)

What is your biggest challenge in leading personalized and collaborative teaching and learning? View resource.

- COVID, also an understaffed building which requires me to support with behavior issues more than being in the classrooms to support teaching.
- Coaching for myself. Removing the barriers so I can consistently get into the classrooms for feedback and observations.
- Changing school and safety structures that make consistent, productive learning environments difficult for students and teachers.
- Standardized curriculum.
- Scheduling PLC is difficult during the instructional day.
- Meeting the needs of veteran versus new teachers.
- We have found a challenge with finding time within the virtual schedule to engage in bi-weekly data conversations.
- Expectations on state testing.
- The biggest challenge is the size of my school, with one teacher needing to teach multiple grade levels, the secondary challenge is the pandemic - its difficult to spend time in classrooms and provide feedback while following guidelines.
- Creating a year long plan that aligns without a leader that leads that process.

What is your biggest challenge in distributing leadership across a community? View resource.

- We have just begun training instructional team leaders and started PLCs. Some ITL are not confident and are facing much resistance.
- Cultivating a staff culture of mutual contribution.
- Partnerships; distance learning especially had made this challenging.
- Finding time and resources to sustain these groups.
- Staff interest and time to participate.
- Our contract - I don't currently have a means to pay teachers for their leadership efforts.
- Burdening the same leaders with too much.
- Need to build trust.

What is your greatest challenge in supporting the academic, social and emotional, and physical needs of children and adults at your school? View resource.

- Need to spend more time to educate and enhance understanding of the needs of students with disabilities for all of our staff- not just our special education department. We are also beginning to work on learning how to assess yourself and your own strengths/weaknesses biases etc. through equity training and equity courses.
- Supporting remote learners and adults navigating a stressful environment.
- Legal understandings.
- Connections via virtual space.
- Identifying student needs appropriately especially concerning SEL.
- Managing EL students and communicating with families.
- Balancing needs for school with needs not met at home.
- Currently we don't have a strong MTSS system. Our support systems are disjointed and lack solid communication.
- This year a lot of students have high needs for emotional support and we do not have the correct staffing to help facilitate this.
- Providing faculty and staff with the appropriate training.
- Supporting and working with trauma.

Resources:

- *Dare to Lead*
- Class Catalyst
- AIM
- *The Infinite Game*
- Leader in Me
- *Culturize: Every Student, Everyday, Whatever It Takes*
- *The End of Average*
- *Achieving Equity: Understanding Each Child's Cognitive Strengths and Weaknesses*
- *What Should School Accountability Look Like In A Time of COVID-19?*
- *The Instructional Leader's Guide to Strategic Conversations With Teachers*

- *Syllabus: 21-Day Racial Equity Habit-Building Challenge*
- *Supporting Behavior for School Success: A Step-by-Step Guide to Key Strategies*
- *Daily Leadership Development:365 Steps to Becoming a Better Leader*

NAESP Webinars:

- Transforming Your Leadership and Those You Lead
- How to Write Your Resume and Gain Skills for Interviewing That Ensure Success
- The Stickiness Factor: Embedding Restorative Practice In The School Community