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PRINCIPAL PRACTICES

**Exploring key tenets to make
your leadership soar**

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Great Expectations

Effective principals drive academic success for transformative change

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Share the Spotlight

Leading more effectively by empowering teacher leaders

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A periodical supplement to *Principal* magazine



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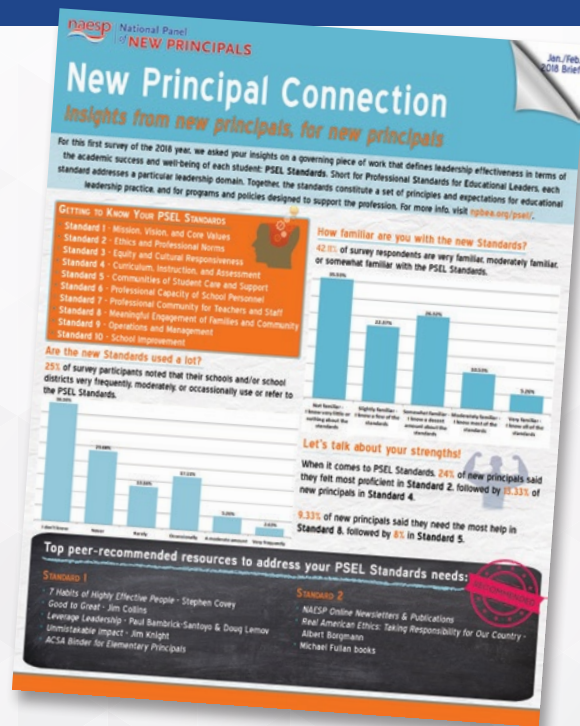
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PRINCIPAL PRACTICES

May/June 2018

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The National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), founded in 1921, is a professional organization serving elementary and middle school principals and other education leaders throughout the United States, Canada, and overseas. NAESP advocates for the support principals need to be successful 21st century leaders—to achieve the highest results for children, families, and communities.

The National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) believes that principals have the vision, courage, wisdom, and professional knowledge to lead learning communities that create opportunities for all children to thrive. To achieve these goals, however, they need continuous, job-embedded professional learning opportunities to adapt to the context of today's schools, including shifting demographics and new standards and competencies. For example, principals are increasingly concerned with addressing student-related issues such as student behavior, student mental health issues, absenteeism, lack of effective adult supervision at home, and student poverty. This is according to NAESP's recently released report, *The Pre-K–8 School Leader in 2018: A 10-Year Study*.

NAESP stands committed to developing and providing quality, research-based professional resources for principals and other school leaders to drive school and student achievement. This special supplement to *Principal* magazine, developed in partnership with The Wallace Foundation, shines a light on school leaders deeply engaged in key practices of principal leadership.

While we see this resource as a useful tool for all principals and other school leaders, this supplement is especially valuable to early career principals and those entering the principal pipeline. We hope that you will use this tool to deepen your knowledge about research-based strategies that lead schools to success. Share it with your teachers and leadership team, and use it to reflect on your own practice.

L. Earl Franks, Ed.D., CAE
NAESP Executive Director



This special supplement is brought to you in partnership with The Wallace Foundation. For more school leadership resources, visit www.wallacefoundation.org.

A LAUNCHPAD FOR SUCCESS

Every successful space mission requires an influential captain. The same is true for successful schools. “Leadership is a key element in successful schools,” states the Learning First Alliance’s recently released *The Elements of Success: 10 Million Speak on Schools That Work*, which identifies elements of successful schools.

Of the six elements, one—distributed leadership—speaks specifically to the principal’s vital role, while the other five refer to elements that principals have significant influence on, such as teaching, climate, and family engagement.

This concept goes hand in hand with NPBEA’s *Professional Standards for Educational Leaders*, NAESP’s *Leading Learning Communities: Standards for What Principals Should Know and Be Able to Do*, and The Wallace Foundation’s *The School*

Principal as Leader: Guiding Schools to Better Teaching and Learning, which affirms that principal leadership is second only to classroom instruction in impacting student achievement. “[Principals] can no longer function simply as building managers tasked with adhering to district rules, carrying out regulations, and avoiding mistakes,” the Wallace research suggests. “They have to be (or become) leaders of learning who can develop a team delivering effective instruction.”

That brings us to Wallace’s five key practices of effective principals. Each one needs to interact with the other four in order to make a real difference for students.

1. Shaping a vision of academic success for all students, one based on high standards.

2. Creating a climate hospitable to education in order that safety, a cooperative spirit, and other foundations of fruitful interaction prevail.
3. Cultivating leadership in others so that teachers and other adults assume their part in realizing the school vision.
4. Improving instruction to enable teachers to teach at their best and students to learn at their utmost.
5. Managing people, data, and processes to foster school improvement.

We are consistently hearing about what needs to be done, but it is up to the schools and districts to decide the *how*. This special resource guide addresses the *how*, using lessons learned from Wallace’s pipeline schools. •

An ESSA Moment: Investing in Principal Pipelines

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) presents states and districts with a unique opportunity to invest in principal pipelines. The law requires states to set aside 7 percent of Title I, Part A, funds to improve low-performing schools, which could include investments in school leadership activities. It also enables states to allocate up to 5 percent of their Title II, Part A, funding to investments in teacher and leader programs, with the option to reserve an additional 3 percent of funds for school leadership activities.

Recognizing that principals are critical to transforming schools, 24 states indicated in their state ESSA plans that they do intend to use the optional 3 percent to invest in

leadership. The use of these funds varies depending on state context, but most states are using the set-aside funds to focus on strengthening principal preparation, development, and support.

Examples of school leadership activities include the establishment of principal residencies, boosting job-embedded and cohort-based professional learning, and expanding mentorship opportunities for aspiring principals. State leaders are taking advantage of this “ESSA moment” and are targeting funding to boost principal pipelines, thereby strengthening principals’ capacity as instructional leaders who improve student outcomes.

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

Effective principals set a vision
of academic success to drive
transformative change





BY JENNIFER GILL

Many children look forward to school outings to the local zoo or science museum, but at Commodore John Rodgers Elementary/Middle School in Baltimore, children prize a field trip to a college campus.

Every month, 20 students—two from each grade, from pre-K to eighth—tour the campus of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. They eat lunch in the cafeteria, take part in a science class, and learn about college life from current students. They earn the trip by being named Commodore Collegiates, a monthly program started in 2011 that recognizes students who show outstanding dedication to the school's values. Principal Marc Martin wanted the name of this student-of-the-month program to convey a potent message to kids: You are college material.

Reaching for the Stars

It wasn't a message that Commodore students were used to hearing. When Martin took over as principal in 2010, he found kids watching movies and sleeping in classrooms. Four principals had come and gone in the five prior years. "It was a culture of failure," he recalls. "The mentality was, 'I won't mess with you if you don't mess with me,' and it went both ways."

Since then, Martin has transformed that mindset by shaping, articulating, and living a vision of academic success for all students. It comes to life in the Collegiates program, the daily

handshakes Martin gives students at arrival and dismissal, and the college pennants hanging in the halls. It's the foundation of the school's catchy slogan, which adorns uniform shirts, faculty lanyards, and even stair risers: "Commodore to College—100% for 100%."

"It's our North Star," Martin says. "If every single student, teacher, staff, and family member follows through 100 percent, then 100 percent of us will achieve."

Like Martin, many principals agree that setting a high bar for students is critical to raising achievement. Through their words and actions, effective principals work tirelessly to get everyone to believe that all students can and will succeed. If they sound like a broken record, so be it.

"You have to get staff, students, and parents in the boat with you," says Pam Williams, principal of Bethesda

Elementary School in Lawrenceville, Georgia. "They won't get in if they don't know where they're going and that they'll be safe along the way."

Rerouting Your Course

Teachers at Bethesda thought their school was headed in the right direction when Williams became principal in 2013. Indeed, she found a hard-working staff and students who were eager to learn. The staff believed students were doing well, based on their classroom assessment results. However, the problem was that students weren't working on material aligned to grade-level standards.

Shortly after arriving, Williams convened a faculty meeting and shared the startling news: The school wasn't performing up to districtwide expectations. To drive home the point, she compared Bethesda's scores on districtwide tests with those of similar schools that were higher-achieving. The teachers sat up in their chairs. "It built a sense of urgency," she recalls. "It was like, 'Hey, our students are the same as theirs. If they can do it, we can, too.'"

That eye-opener sparked the beginning of Bethesda's transformation. Weekly staff meetings, which used to focus on building logistics and administrative paperwork, pivoted to discussions about best instructional practices. Teachers, who once operated in silos, started meeting twice a week to analyze grade-level standards and began using common lesson plans. A team of 30 staff members developed a research-based guide for teachers that dissected the standards used to evaluate them and described effective classroom practices for each one.

Bethesda's collaborative efforts transformed student achievement: For the past two years, it has been among the top 10 percent of Georgia's Title I schools, making the most progress in improving the performance of all students on statewide tests.

Resetting the Culture

Teachers at Fairview Elementary School in Denver had a more lukewarm reaction to new principal Antoinette Hudson's high expectations for student learning. The struggling school serves 220 students, all of whom qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. Before Hudson arrived in 2013, teachers managed classes on their own with little oversight or collaboration. Some children spent more time in the office than in the classroom due to disciplinary issues. Student achievement and growth were so poor that the district designated Fairview a "red" school, the lowest ranking possible. If the school didn't turn around, it would be at risk of closing.

Hudson's first step was to reset the school's culture to create a positive learning environment for students. Teachers, she believed, should be role models for children and be seen as professionals. As such, they should look the part. So, she instituted a faculty dress code: no more jeans and sneakers. Some teachers chafed under the new rule and complained about other changes, such as splitting their instructional duties so some could focus on reading while others concentrated on math. At the end of Hudson's second year on the job, six of the seven teachers in second to fifth grades quit.

Becoming "College Material"

At Commodore John Rodgers Elementary/Middle School, the goal is to make 100 percent of students eligible for college. It's a big deal to be recognized as a Commodore Collegiate for consistently displaying the school's core values, or Five Promises:

1. Commitment to Quality
2. Honor and Integrity
3. Perseverance
4. Gratitude
5. Contribution

“

You have to get staff, students, and parents in the boat with you. They won't get in if they don't know where they're going and that they'll be safe along the way.”

—Pam Williams, principal,
Bethesda Elementary School,
Lawrenceville, GA

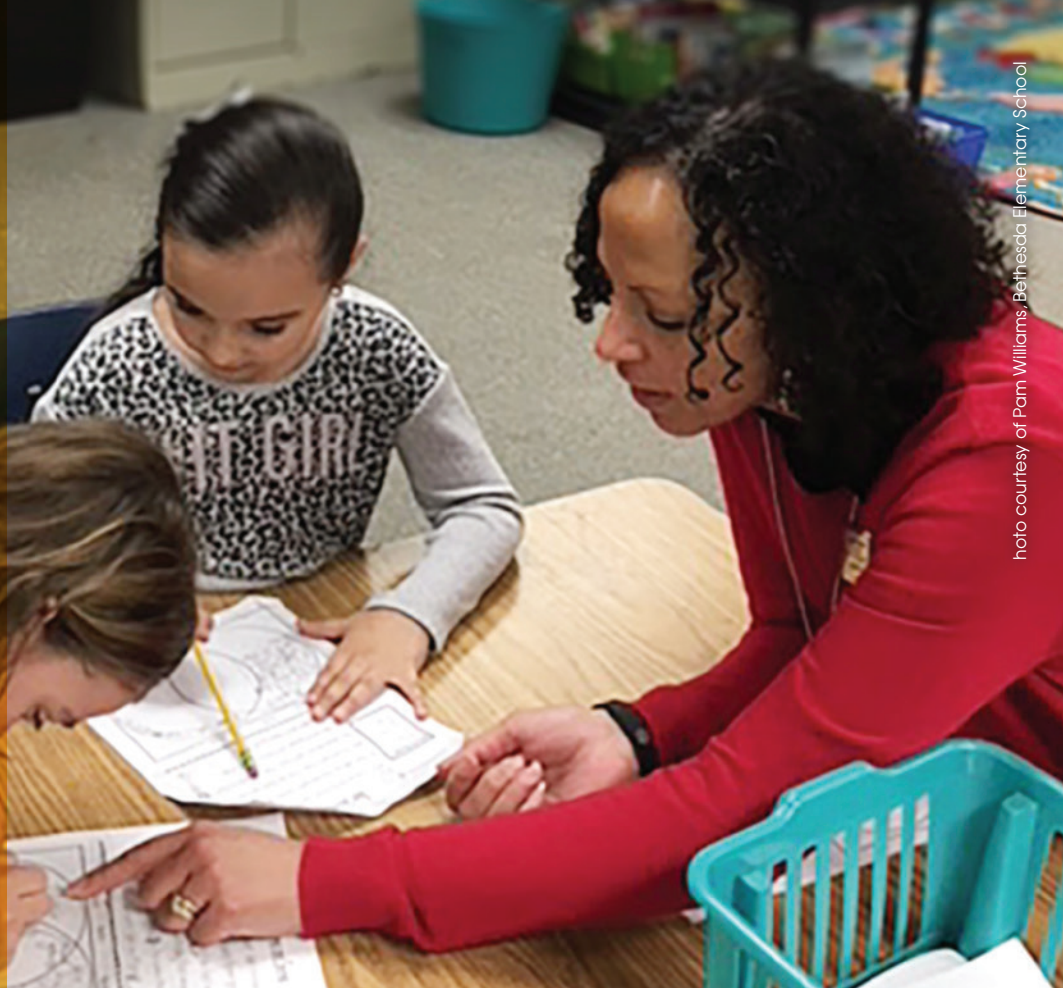


photo courtesy of Pam Williams, Bethesda Elementary School

Hudson acknowledges that she “took some hits,” but she stayed committed to her vision for Fairview. To combat the school’s chronic disciplinary problems, she and her staff launched a program to reward students for good behavior and academic progress. Recipients are recognized at schoolwide assemblies. Morning announcements now start with a student reminding classmates to uphold the school motto, SOAR: show respect, be outstanding citizens, accept responsibility, and rise to the occasion. And students are more likely to visit Hudson’s office because they’ve earned a prize for good conduct than

for misbehaving. “When you support kids and build relationships with them, then you have kids engaged in learning,” Hudson says. “That’s what changes outcomes.”

In 2016, Fairview shed its “red” label with some of the strongest gains on state tests in the district. For two years running, it’s been recognized as one of 33 high-poverty schools making the most academic progress in Colorado. Now that Fairview is a “green” school and meeting expectations for achievement and growth, Hudson and her staff already have their sights set on becoming a “blue,” or distinguished, school.

“It’s really motivated our teachers to do even better,” she says. “We can be the school that others want to be.”

Fairview has also become a place where educators want to work: Teacher retention has steadily rebounded, with no resignations the past two years.

Tapping Into Family

Additionally, principals stress the role families play in shaping and realizing a vision of academic success for all students. When Martin became principal at Commodore, one of his first moves was tearing down a tall counter in the front office that stood like a barrier to



Marc Martin
Commodore John Rodgers
Elementary/Middle School
Baltimore, MD

Pam Williams
Bethesda Elementary School
Lawrenceville, GA



Antoinette Hudson
Fairview Elementary School
Denver, CO

Tips for New Principals

What's the first step a new principal should take to shape a vision of academic success? Principals Marc Martin, Pam Williams, and Antoinette Hudson suggested more than one. Here are a few tips they have for fellow school leaders:

GET TO KNOW THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY. Ask teachers what they're most proud of at the school and what they would love to change. Use this feedback to make small immediate changes that are welcomed by staff. These early wins are key to building buy-in and creating a shared vision of student success. "They won't care about what you know until they know you care," Williams says.

CUSTOMIZE THE VISION TO YOUR SCHOOL. "It should represent a substantial change from the way the school has been operating," Martin advises. "At a turnaround school, the change must be physical as well as philosophical, since the school has been failing in so many ways."

DIG INTO THE DATA. Examine your school's data at the disaggregated levels, Hudson recommends. Then, use this information to collaboratively develop a vision of success with your teachers.

MAKE IT STICKY. Brand the vision with a catchy slogan or acronym that captures its essence. Use it everywhere, as a constant reminder to students, staff, and families of where the school is headed.

visiting parents. “It signaled that we were different [from] them and that we weren’t in this work together,” he says.

Martin regularly reminds families that their involvement is critical. In a video to parents last fall, he shared positive school news before turning his attention to tardiness. When kids arrive late, Martin explained, it eats into learning time. An hour missed daily adds up to four weeks of lost instruction a year. “Be aware of the time they’re missing and how that impacts every child, especially as we continue to push them to be eligible for college and be successful in life,” he adds.

Enrollment at Commodore has quadrupled to more than 800 children under Martin’s leadership. Chronic absenteeism and suspensions have dropped significantly, while proficiency scores in math and reading have surged.

None of these gains would have happened if students weren’t deeply invested in their education. That commitment, principals say, comes only when students know what is expected of them and take ownership of the vision themselves. No one likes to tell a seventh-grader that she’s reading at a third-grade level, but without that knowledge, she won’t be engaged to try harder with the right instructional support. “When kids know where they are, they’ll buy into learning,” Williams says.

Tracking Progress

At Bethesda Elementary, students track their progress visually. Third-graders, for instance, color in two bar graphs to show their current reading level and the level expected for their grade. The exercise helps them set goals, which are revisited throughout the school year as their



Photo courtesy of Marc Martin, CujR School

“When you support kids and build relationships with them, then you have kids engaged in learning. That’s what changes outcomes.”

—Antoinette Hudson, principal, Fairview Elementary School, Denver, CO

reading skills improve. Some won’t master the standard in a year’s time, Williams notes, but that’s OK. What matters is progress and celebrating that growth.

It’s also a morale boost when other schools want a copy of your playbook. This year, Baltimore City Public Schools asked Commodore to give hands-on guidance to three failing elementary schools in the district. Essentially, the schools are where Commodore was in 2010: poor test scores, declining enrollment, and persistent misbehavior. During the four-year initiative, one of the last in Maryland to be funded through an expiring federal grant program, teachers at Commodore and the three schools will share lessons, observe

each other’s classrooms, and collaborate in other ways.

Meanwhile, Martin will coach the principals on effective leadership practices. They’re calling it the 100% Project because the goal is for all four schools to work together to make 100 percent of their students eligible for college. The schools have even embraced Commodore’s 100% pennant, adding the emblem to their own uniforms. “Seeing other schools adopt our vision really validates where we’re headed,” Martin says. •

Jennifer Gill is an education and business journalist based in the New York City area.



AGENTS OF CHANGE

Successfully building relationships and managing change creates a positive learning space

BY RICHARD LEE COLVIN

When Ryan Daniel became principal of Chillum Elementary School in 2017, she knew the school was located in a subsidized housing complex and that English was a second language for most of its students. She was also aware that the person she was replacing at the 360-student school in Hyattsville, Maryland, had been in the role for 19 years.

“I knew that change would be difficult for some and welcomed by others, and that there was work that had been started, but that the school yearned for new energy, new life, and fresh ideas,” says Daniel.

Rather than issuing directives, however, Daniel put her energies into ending the isolation some teachers felt and emphasizing teamwork.

“Building relationships is one of my biggest strengths, and I knew that in order for us to do this work, we needed to collaborate,” she says. “Change is hard and messy in the beginning, but if we stay close to the goals that we create as a team, we can help everyone along the way.”

Cameron Millspaugh, who in 2015 was a first-time principal at Cool Spring Elementary School, located a few miles north of Chillum in Adelphi, Maryland, faced similar challenges. As a result of teachers who chose to leave rather than adjust to a new principal, he also had a number of staff vacancies to fill. Like Daniel, Millspaugh made building relationships with and among his staff a top priority.

“I told the staff that we had to focus on the people, not the work, and not the

stress of the work,” Millspaugh says. “We had to work together, whether or not we taught children, and build camaraderie around the idea that everything we do is intended to benefit the children we serve and the community around us.”

Districtwide Effort

It wasn't by happenstance that both of these new principals recognized that a supportive, professional, and collaborative school culture is key to academic success. Both Chillum and Cool Spring are part of Prince George's County Public Schools, a district that, with grants from The Wallace Foundation, has put in place a multidimensional training, mentoring, and hiring system to ensure its principals are steeped in evidence-based leadership practices. One of those practices, researchers have found, is that effective



principals intentionally create a school culture that allows teachers and students to concentrate on learning and doing their best work.

A principal of a school serving mostly disadvantaged students has one of the most difficult jobs in education. But, too often, the only preparation aspiring principals get is university classes that cover mainly the administrative and legal aspects of the job, not the critical work they do to improve academic achievement and create an instructionally supportive culture.

Typically, assistant principals are put in charge of discipline rather than working with teachers on their practice. That's not the case in Prince George's County schools. There, assistant principals participate in an academy that helps them learn to be instructional

leaders, coach teachers, and make good use of data. Once they are on the job, specially trained supervisors coach and mentor them, helping them set and reach academic goals and establish a positive culture.

"We want all our principals to have a love of learning, and we want them to develop a school culture that is inclusive and—for students, their families, and staff—feels like they are all part of a family," says Monique Davis, deputy superintendent of Prince George's County schools.

Always in Motion

For Daniel, whose school is too small to justify having an assistant principal, that means being constantly on the move. Wearing comfortable flats, she is posted at the school's entrance, bantering with

Communication Tip

Principal Ryan Daniel records weekly updates on YouTube and sends teachers the link. It's faster than writing and adds a personal touch.

students and teachers as they arrive. Smiling students form brief scrums around her for hugs. She asks an arriving teacher who had been out sick the day before how she is feeling.

Daniel's day consists of a flurry of meetings and classroom observations. She doesn't stop for lunch; instead, she stocks her purse with pretzels, chocolate, an energy bar, and a bagel and cream cheese, and she nibbles on them throughout the day.

Opportunities to Collaborate

All Prince George's County schools use the Data Wise process, developed at the Harvard Graduate School of Education as a way to make discussions about data and the implications for instruction more productive. The year before Daniel became principal of Chillum, the school's leaders decided that improving math instruction would be the school's top priority. Teachers were expected to comply, yet they had not been a part of that process, despite wanting to be involved.

In response, Daniel hired a data coach to help teachers learn how to

analyze their students' progress and how to adjust their instruction appropriately. Daniel also set up professional development and planning sessions. Teachers asked for more time to work directly with one another, so Daniel converted every other session into an opportunity for teachers to collaborate on instructional issues.

Meetings allow Daniel to talk with teachers about two of her biggest concerns—building up students' inventory of academic language and increasing the level of rigor. The relationships she has developed with teachers and the

Whiteboard Wisdom

A peek at Principal Ryan Daniel's whiteboard reveals the following questions to ask yourself:

1. How can I be helpful?
2. How can I be a hindrance?
3. How can I make things go well?

trust they place in her enable Daniel to raise those issues and work with teachers on techniques for addressing them. Evidence of that trust is that teachers asked Daniel to observe them informally, and give them feedback to help them



“
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we stay close to
the goals that we
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we can help
everyone along
the way.”

—Ryan Daniel, principal,
Chillum Elementary School,
Hyattsville, MD

Photos by Lloyd Wolf

“

We want to prepare our students to be college- and career-ready. Proficiency on the state assessment is not our ceiling; it is our floor.”

—Cameron Millspaugh, principal, Cool Spring Elementary School, Adelphi, MD



improve. Those instructional conversations are two-way. “I teach my teachers to push back and to be facilitators of their own learning,” she says. “That helps me release control.”

Lorraine Joseph, a lead teacher at Chillum, has worked at the school for 16 years, and she sees a big difference. “It’s like we’re all in this together; it’s not like she’s ahead and yelling out orders,” Joseph says.

Daniel is also clear about what she wants to see instructionally. “She poses questions to us and encourages us to delve deeper and provide evidence for what we’re saying,” Joseph adds.

Associate Superintendent Helen Coley says the difference Daniel is making at

Chillum is instantly noticeable. “Everyone seems to be on fire with excitement,” she says. “It’s every day, and it’s such a good feeling. The focus on school culture, on instruction, on data, is there all the time.”

Changing the Game for Students

Teachers’ enthusiasm and commitment to improvement are also evident at Cool Spring, which serves nearly 900 students, about two-thirds of whom are English-language learners. At the beginning of Millspaugh’s second year there, teachers voted to add “completing the circuit” to the previous year’s theme, enlarging the concept of teamwork to include

Relationship-Building Tip

Principal Cameron Millspaugh saw something occur at a Back to School Night that bothered him, so he let the teacher involved know. A day later, he visited the teacher in her classroom. “He asked me how I was feeling,” the teacher relates. “He explained to me what had occurred and why it bothered him. I appreciated that.”

community partnerships that would bring students more services and opportunities.

In Millspaugh’s third year as principal, teachers agreed to be

“game-changers” for their students. As a result, the new programs proposed or embraced by teachers include a kindergarten dual-language immersion program, a newcomer program for students who don’t yet speak English, and an arts integration program.

“The way you build capacity is to go out on a limb and take risks,” he says. “Failure is OK, but don’t stop with failure.”

Two of Millspaugh’s biggest academic concerns are similar to those at Chillum: the level of rigor and English-language learners’ need for more academic language. “We want to prepare our students to be college- and career-ready,” he says. “Proficiency on the state assessment is not our ceiling; it is our floor.”

A district-level analysis of academic trends revealed that, for students such as those at Cool Spring, second grade is a particularly important step on the ladder to long-range academic success. Millspaugh and his team looked at their own data and realized that the first-grade teachers needed more support to get their students ready for second grade, and that second-grade teachers needed to know more about third-grade expectations.

Giving Teachers What They Need

For Cool Spring, the solution was to encourage teachers in those three grades to share challenges and strategies with one another, and to provide them with whatever resources and professional development they needed.

Laura Corley-McKan, who has taught for 20 years (including four at Cool Spring), appreciates the support. She says teachers have had opportunities

“We want all our principals to have a love of learning, and we want them to develop a school culture that is inclusive and—for students, their families, and staff—feels like they are all part of a family.”

—Monique Davis, deputy superintendent, Prince George’s County Public Schools, Upper Marlboro, MD

to learn how to do guided reading with greater fidelity, and that they have plenty of books and other resources. She was on jury duty for five weeks, so Millspaugh arranged for a qualified long-term substitute to fill in, and the other second-grade teachers also helped out. When she returned, Corley-McKan was pleased to see that her students had continued to make progress.

Millspaugh has helped teachers gain confidence and be optimistic. “We may or may not be there yet, but you have to have the attitude that you can do it, even though it’s hard,” Corley-McKan says.

Staci Sendgikoski, another second-grade teacher at Cool Spring, is only in her second year in the classroom. Even before she started, other teachers came to ask her how they could help. Within a few weeks, Millspaugh “popped in to ask me how I was, and what he could do for me.”

Early on, Sendgikoski realized she needed to know more about her students, most of whom are immigrants. She mentioned that to Millspaugh, and the first week of school he offered her a useful learning opportunity that helped her understand immigration, adjust her instruction, and communicate with parents.

One of Millspaugh’s goals at Cool Spring is to create what he calls “a coaching mindset in the building.” He and other members of the instructional team work one-on-one for a whole week with teachers who ask for help or who, in the team’s judgment, need the extra assistance. He also provides teachers with chances to lead, encouraging them to conduct professional development sessions and share their knowledge.

Millspaugh taught high school-level mathematics at a middle school for 13 years before becoming an assistant principal, so he welcomes the opportunity to help Cool Spring’s elementary-age students develop their math skills. However, Millspaugh also recognizes that he knows relatively little about literacy instruction. So, in the collaborative spirit he has cultivated, he turns to his teachers for help.

“I’m willing to admit when I don’t know something,” he says. “I’ll go into a classroom with teachers and have them point out what I need to know.” •

Richard Lee Colvin is an education journalist and policy analyst based in the Washington, D.C., area.

Mr. Bond,
Thank you for ensuring we all have a safe and welcoming environment each day. Thank you for checking in and supporting me constantly.
Mrs. Daniel

Mr. Hill,
Thank you for supporting our youngest learners.
Thank you for supporting Ms. Newsome through her first year at Chillum.
Mrs. Daniel

Mr. Biongeog,
Thank you for teaching our students how to love and appreciate reading. Thank you for your flexibility and support for school events.
Mrs. Daniel

Showing Appreciation

A teacher came to Ryan Daniel to say she feels as if, in the past, she heard only criticism, never praise. That gave Daniel pause. So, on her next observation, she wrote a message on a Post-it note providing specific praise and expressing her gratitude. Several weeks later, when Daniel dropped by, the teacher still had the note on her wall. That prompted her to begin writing thank-you notes to teachers every day and posting them in the teachers lounge. "I want them to know that I appreciate them," she says.

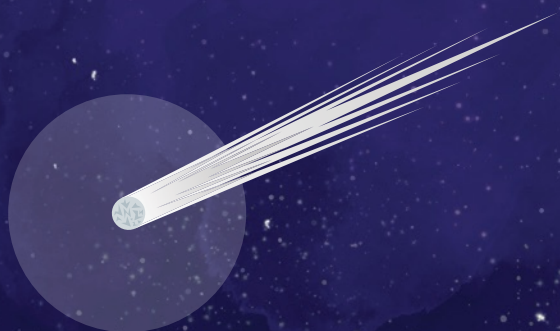
Ms. T. Moore,
Thank you for being such a team player. Thank you for using various resources and strategies to help our students.
Mrs. Daniel

Ms. Smith,
Thank you for building relationships with students that make them feel supported and encouraged.
Mrs. Daniel

Ms. Nepomucena,
Thank you for your willingness to do what is needed to support your students. Thank you for supporting Dr. LeeHart.
Mrs. Daniel

SHARE THE SPOTLIGHT

Principals lead more effectively
by empowering teacher leaders





BY SUSAN McLESTER

"Start with the assumption that leadership is everywhere and in everyone," says Andrew Olson, principal of Progress Village Middle Magnet School of the Arts. "Then, think about how to structure a capacity-building program that takes advantage of it."

Olson is one of 244 principals in Tampa, Florida's Hillsborough County Public Schools, one of six large urban districts across the country that since 2011 have been involved in The Wallace Foundation's "principal pipeline" initiative—designed to grow more effective principals.

At the helm of the initiative at Hillsborough is Tricia McManus, assistant superintendent of educational leadership and professional development. She is in charge of all levels of professional development for the district, including building capacity in teachers, aspirational principals, current principals, and principal supervisors. A sampling of the program she's put in place to do

this features a Preparing New Principals Program, a Principal Induction Program, and Coaching for Success.

With a mandate to cultivate leadership in others as part of their job description and with district guidelines indicating the *what* that principals must do, Hillsborough County principals are nevertheless given the autonomy to build their own leadership growth programs, leaving the *how* up to them. "You need to give people the individual freedom to be innovative," McManus says.

Olson and two other Hillsborough principals share their approaches to developing leadership capacity in others, and how empowering staff members to rise as leaders creates a stronger learning environment for students.

Development by Design

Progress Village serves 870 students in grades 6 through 8, and it offers a range of unique electives, such as keyboarding, dance theater, costume design, and culinary arts. School admission is

lottery-based, with a consistently high demand for limited slots.

Working from the belief that there are opportunities for everyone to lead, Olson, during his five years as principal, has created a range of formal and informal options to promote and encourage the development of leadership skills in his staff. Playing a central role are Olson's two teacher leadership teams: Talent Developers and Team Leaders.

The Talent Developers consist of two subject-area coaches: a math/science coach and an English language arts/social studies coach. They help develop

other teachers by meeting weekly with subject-area teachers to facilitate their professional learning community (PLC) planning and also overall schoolwide professional development. In addition, Talent Developers organize quarterly peer observation walk-throughs, which focus on specific subjects, such as data management and lesson design.

The Team Leaders take on a few of the duties traditionally assigned to administrators. They consist of six teachers, two for each grade level—one educates teachers on data, attendance, and behavior, while the other oversees interventions and coordinates student

success programs, such as the Student of the Month program.

Olson has also instituted a monthly Tea Party, a presentation that allows each teacher to share knowledge with colleagues. Rotating among teachers, the presentations can focus on any topic of interest to the presenter, whether it be an article, a TED Talk, a study, or something else.

"Knowing your people and creating the right opportunities is key," Olson says.

Layers of Leadership

At the K-5, 400-student Lanier Elementary School, building leadership is



Photo courtesy of Lifetouch Photography

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Less is more. It's about having the right people. And because trust is key, their roles are not evaluative.”

—Rachael O’Dea, principal, Lanier Elementary School, Tampa, FL

at the core of teacher development, but also of the school as a whole. Structured around the Leader in Me program, an education offshoot of Stephen Covey's *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, the school's instructional approach includes goal-setting and action steps for both teachers and students.

"The Covey-infused curriculum teaches students skills such as how to be proactive rather than reactive, how to participate in crafting your own pathway, and what it means to be a leader," says principal Rachael O'Dea, who began incorporating the Leader in Me program three years ago.

Lanier's leadership development is layered, with teachers supporting student leadership development, the leadership team supporting teacher development, and the principal supporting the leadership team.

O'Dea prefers a small leadership team, with hers consisting of a reading coach, a math coach, a guidance counselor, an ESC specialist for exceptional students, and the assistant principal. "Less is more. It's about having the right people," she says. "And because trust is key, their roles are not evaluative."

As developers of adult learning, team members lead and participate in a variety of activities designed to build capacity in others. These include learning walks, peer coaching, lesson and assessment strategies, feedback, and assistance in the development of action steps.

During weekly, hourlong planning time, coaches meet with PLCs to support teachers in ensuring lessons are aligned with standards. Team members also conduct mentoring sessions in which teachers demonstrate lesson strategies

for peers, followed by a discussion on ensuring the lesson teaches what it's supposed to teach and that the assessment matches the lesson.

Quarterly learning walks pair coaches with general education teachers to observe classroom lessons with detailed follow-up debriefings. Walks are based on a three-G structure—goal, grow, and glory—in which observers provide feedback to the teacher on how well the lesson matches the teacher's goals and how much growth the teacher is showing, and they offer praise for the teacher's accomplishments.

"We focus on research, and it's job-embedded," O'Dea says. "We don't do research after school. The school itself is the perfect research lab, and we take advantage of it."

Getting Teacher Buy-in

In contrast to O'Dea's "less is more" leadership team is Principal Larissa McCoy-Mitti's 18-teacher capacity-building team.

Arriving at A.P. Leto High School in January 2017 as assistant principal of curriculum and instructional leadership, McCoy-Mitti had her work cut out for her. As a turnaround school, Leto has a student population of 2,287, with 84 percent economically disadvantaged students, 30 percent English-language learners, and a long history of ranking near last place in state test scores.

"When I first got there, only the 10 department heads had any kind of say or voice in how the school was run," McCoy-Mitti says. "It was like going back in time to [the movie] *Stand and Deliver*."

McCoy-Mitti knew getting teachers' quick buy-in was vital. She assembled

A Tale of Two Teacher Leadership Teams

At Progress Village Middle Magnet School of the Arts, two types of teacher leadership teams provide extended leadership opportunities for the staff.

TALENT DEVELOPERS

- Consist of two subject-area coaches: one in math/science, one in English language arts/social studies.
- Develop other teachers via weekly meetings focused on professional development.
- Organize quarterly peer observation walk-throughs, script notes, facilitate follow-up debriefings.
- Receive \$3,000 stipends.

TEAM LEADERS

- Consist of six teachers, two for each grade level—one educates on data, attendance, and behavior; one oversees interventions and coordinates student success programs.
- Assume some duties typically assigned to administrators.
- Receive \$1,000 stipends.



You have to approach the job with a positive attitude, model behavior, and see each person's potential."

—Andrew Olson, principal, Progress Village Middle Magnet School of the Arts, Tampa, FL

the leadership team from teachers who had the capacity to lead and from instructional coaches. None were department heads, which ensured that as many people as possible would have a voice.

Identifying instructional leadership as a high-need area, McCoy-Mitti began a twice-monthly, one-hour lesson-tuning showcase in which teachers meet with the leadership teams to look critically at lessons to ensure that activities align with goals and include critical thinking and multiple assessments.

The leadership team also creates 100 percent of the school's professional

development and helps promote the vision and mission of the school by "rallying the troops" and creating a sense of urgency, says McCoy-Mitti.

In fall 2017, McCoy-Mitti assumed the principalship of Leto and continued building on her leadership development program with quarterly highly structured learning walks. The program includes four walks a day, with each team visiting two to three classrooms, followed by a group debriefing. Six to eight teachers participate in each walk, including an instructional team member. Before the walks, the group sets norms to decide

what they are looking for, and debriefings include sharing takeaways and discussing how to implement best practices.

"Our priorities are what we teach, how we teach, and authentic literacy," McCoy-Mitti says. "We make it work by all pulling together and working collaboratively to overcome barriers."

Overcoming Challenges

The three principals talk about the challenges they have faced in their efforts to grow leadership in others.

For McCoy-Mitti, it was a "baked-in" sense of apathy on the part of both

students and teachers, and a resistance to disruption from staff members who wanted to do their best for students, but had not been trained. “It’s natural to be fearful of change,” she says.

O’Dea shares that an early challenge was about risk—taking risks and hoping for the right outcome. “Being empowered to take risks is a little bit frightening, and you hope you’re doing the best thing for your staff,” she says.

As far as working with her leadership team, training them while they are training others can be an ongoing challenge. “Sometimes you need to use direct, explicit instruction and say, ‘Here’s what you need to spend your time doing, and even though you may be friends with another teacher, you still need to push them,’” O’Dea adds.

For Olson, learning how to meet people where they are—even if it’s frustrating—is a challenge he once faced and is now seeing his leadership teams face. “You have to approach the job with a positive attitude, model

behavior, and see each person’s potential,” he says.

However, all three principals agree that once people start seeing the impact of the work they’re doing, behaviors and attitudes of both students and teachers change.

Measuring Impact

At Leto, the quality of lesson plans has increased exponentially, and the school is no longer at the very bottom when it comes to test scores. “Although it may not seem like a huge improvement, we’re now third from the bottom in Algebra I,” McCoy-Mitti says. “And in the district formative assessment that mirrors state tests, we scored 11th out of 23 schools that administered the Algebra I-A assessment.”

O’Dea also reports “steady growth” in test scores from 2015 to 2017, with students going from 42 to 49 percent on the state English/language arts test, and from 43 to 53 percent in math.

Olson says his school grade increased

40 points on the state tests over the last five years, and that teachers seem more willing to take chances, seek help, and volunteer their time. For example, on a recent Saturday, members of the Beautification Committee spent the whole day painting murals and planting an aromatherapy garden.

Across the board, the principals report increasingly positive responses from teachers on School Climate Surveys, and a greater willingness to trust each other and the administration.

Principals who are most effective at growing leadership in others share common traits, McManus says. “It’s not just about performing tasks, but about interacting with others and building credibility,” she explains. “They are people who want to create a culture in which others thrive. And most of all, they want to make sure everyone has a voice.” •

Susan McLester is a freelance education writer in Berkeley, California.

Photo courtesy of Larissa McCoy-Mitti, A.P. Leto High School



“Our priorities are what we teach, how we teach, and authentic literacy. We make it work by all pulling together and working collaboratively to overcome barriers.”

—Larissa McCoy-Mitti, principal, A.P. Leto High School, Tampa, FL (pictured at right)

BEHIND PRINCIPAL EYES

Three principals share insights about their roles in improving classroom instruction



Taffeta Connery

Taffeta Connery is in her second school year as principal of Sugar Hill Elementary School in Sugar Hill, Georgia. Prior to that, she was assistant principal of Corley Elementary School, also in Gwinnett County, for three years, and of Oakcliff Traditional Theme School in Dekalb County Public Schools for five years.



Angie Wright

Angie Wright has been principal of Craig Elementary School in Lawrenceville, Georgia, since 2008. She was previously an assistant principal at Louise Radloff Middle School and has worked for Gwinnett County Public Schools since 2003.



Bron Gayna Schmit

Bron Gayna Schmit has served as a principal in Gwinnett County Public Schools for the past 18 years. She has led Simpson Elementary School in Peachtree Corners, Georgia, since 2004, and took the helm at Walnut Grove Elementary School in Suwanee, Georgia, in 1999. Prior to that, she was assistant principal of Peachtree Elementary and Walnut Grove Elementary schools.

Today, the nation's high school graduation rate is at a record high—more than 84 percent, according to the U.S. Department of Education—dropout rates are hitting historic lows, and more students than ever are attending college.

At the heart of these trends are effective principals and their push to advance achievement. From improving the quality of classroom instruction to offering continued professional learning opportunities, principals empower teachers to excel at instructing and students to excel at learning.

Principal magazine recently held a roundtable with three principals from Gwinnett County Public Schools—Georgia's largest school district—to get their take on the principal's role in shaping classroom instruction.



Quality instruction begins with teachers and their level of mastery. How can principals encourage growth for their entire staffs, despite teachers having different approaches to instruction and varying levels of experience?

Connery: I strongly believe that it's my job to create opportunities for continuous improvement in the classrooms. We create opportunities for full-day planings, and we schedule substitutes so all teachers in grades K–5 can participate. During this time, our grade-level teachers collaborate, and we analyze and look at schoolwide data to determine our impact in order to make instructional adjustments if necessary. This reflection time is critical in ensuring that every staff member is able to make informed decisions based upon student performance on common, district, and state assessments.

Whether it be STEM opportunities or guiding reading or math, we want to make sure that pedagogy is strong and we're here to work as a team. We only succeed when everybody from kindergarten through fifth grade is successful.

Schmit: In a very complex world, and in the very complex world of education, I think it's important for the instructional leader to keep it simple and focused. The way we do that is to concentrate on what's most important—teaching and learning—because it's easy to get caught up in what's urgent, what's critical, or what needs to be done today, versus what can wait until tomorrow.

I think teachers all have different beliefs about pedagogy, and they have

heard different opinions about quality instruction. So, I think it's important for the principal and the administrative team to say, "In our county and school, we follow these research-based, quality teaching strategies."

For teachers who are new to our school system or to our school, it's important to provide a mentor program. New staff members are bringing good ideas, but as a principal, if we don't keep those instructional arrows pointing in the same direction, we're going to be all over the place, and our student achievement is going to be all over the place. If we concentrate and eliminate and direct ourselves—with all our arrows going in the same direction—we're going to improve student achievement.

Wright: I think one of the most difficult challenges as a principal is trying to create equity in instruction among the classrooms. At Craig, our instructional expectations are grounded on our district's Quality-Plus Teaching Strategies. We focus on the workshop model in reading, writing, and mathematics. As educators, we have to sift through all the information that is coming out in education and really ground ourselves on what the research indicates are the best approaches to teaching our students.

We begin every nine weeks with unpacking our standards. Whether you are a veteran or a brand new teacher, we all have our interpretation of the standards. Once we have an understanding of the standards, we then discuss how we will formatively and summatively assess the standards.

At times, our veteran teachers will model different strategies to our new teachers to ensure everyone has a clear

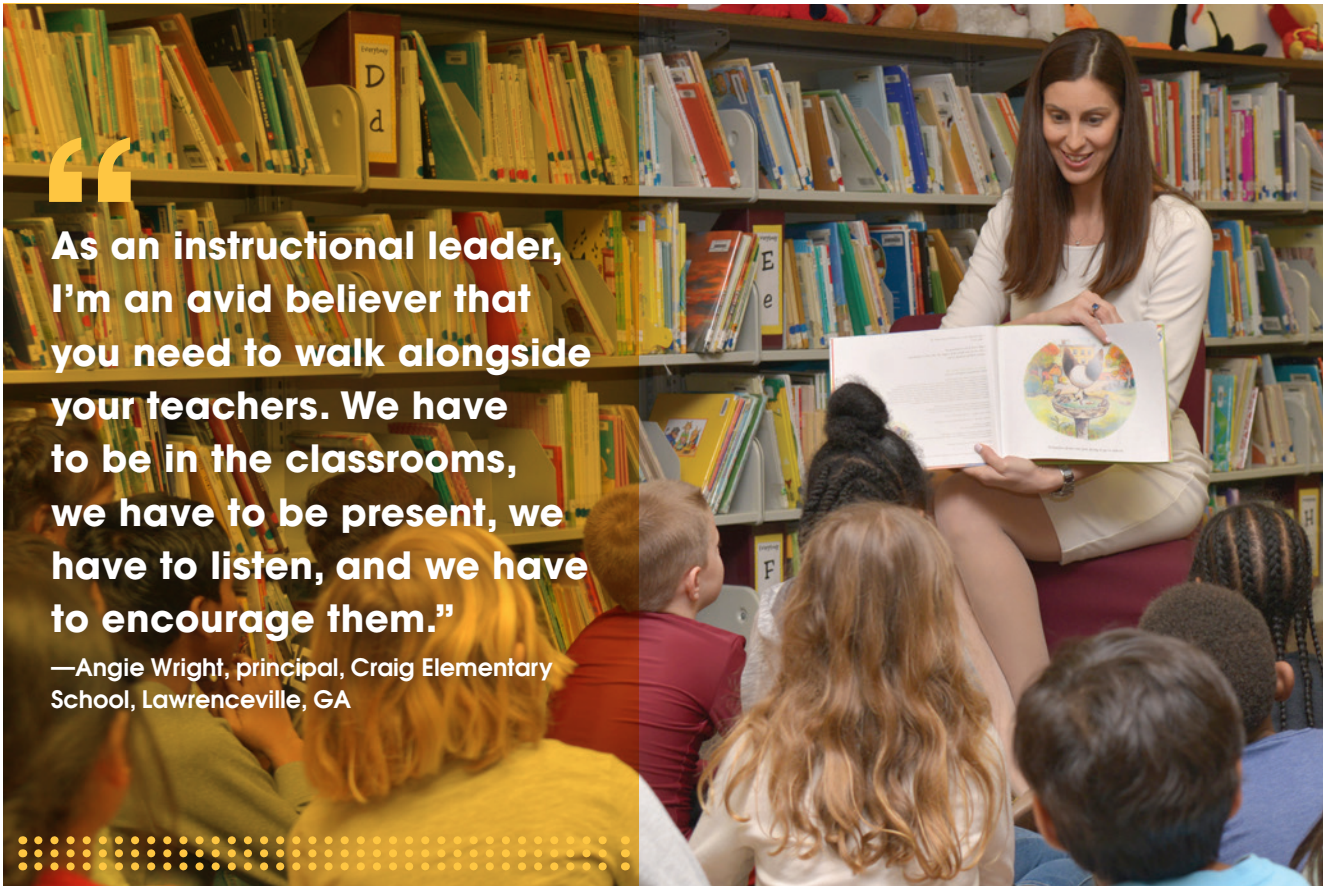
understanding of the standards. These conversations enable us to create a common vocabulary and a common approach to instruction that we utilize with our students from kindergarten through fifth grade—we are building upon their knowledge every year.

What methods of professional development have worked well in your district?

Connery: As a new principal—this is my second year in this role—Gwinnett County has outstanding support measures in place. As a member of our district's Aspiring Principal Program, I was exposed to research-based case studies on high-performing schools.

We also have "leader-mentors" who provide individualized coaching sessions. We sit down one-on-one and talk about the teaching and learning practices occurring in the building. We also conduct paired observations in classrooms. All leader-mentors are former principals, so they are highly skilled to navigate situations that happen in a school on a day-by-day basis.

I believe in developing teacher leaders. We have in place what we call "live lessons," where teacher grade-level teams plan to address areas of growth identified in our district assessments. The actual lesson is modeled by our coach and by one of the grade-level teachers, who brings their classroom into our live lesson room. That lesson is streamed throughout all of those grade-level classrooms. This instructional practice has shown an increase in student achievement for three consecutive years—on our district as well as our state assessments.



“As an instructional leader, I’m an avid believer that you need to walk alongside your teachers. We have to be in the classrooms, we have to be present, we have to listen, and we have to encourage them.”

—Angie Wright, principal, Craig Elementary School, Lawrenceville, GA

Schmit: This is where my age comes into play. As a principal for 18 years, it’s trial and error. Early in my career, I offered professional development to our staff, and it was a one-size-fits-all type of thing. And it was OK. But as I grew as a leader, I realized we expect teachers to differentiate their lessons for their learners. So, why should we not, as administrators, differentiate our professional development for our teachers?

For example, in the area of technology, why should some teachers sit through the basics of spreadsheets when they can move on to the intricacies

of e-class pages? We began differentiating instruction. Now, we offer four levels of technology staff development.

Our next step involves teachers observing in other teachers’ classrooms, and taking the time to debrief after those visits. It’s been hugely effective.

Wright: One of the areas that I had to grow in as a leader was increasing my level of engagement when presenting new learning to the teachers. I wanted to create an environment where teachers were doing the heavy lifting in their learning, versus me doing it. Through the National School Reform Faculty, I

was able to develop as a facilitator in utilizing protocols. I could then create an environment where I presented content that the teacher needed to determine what was valuable and how it could be implemented into instruction.

In addition, I knew that I had to develop more leaders in the building. At times, teachers listen to other teachers more than they listen to administrators. They need a practitioner who’s doing the work that we’re asking them to do. In each grade level, we developed two facilitators in the areas of language arts and mathematics. Their roles are to help

lead instructional conversations, continue the staff development, and to help work with the instructional team to determine or adjust the professional development.

With ESSA empowering principal leadership by giving school districts and individual states more autonomy than its No Child Left Behind predecessor, how do you see that shaping classroom instruction?

Connelly: This ESSA plan, in my opinion, is challenging our leaders to rethink the current structures in place and build more opportunities for teacher collaboration and shared leadership. I believe now we have more flexibility to determine what works best for our individual schools. We are extremely lucky that our district supports us with strategies that work best in our buildings. In regard to the classroom, it gives us as leaders the ability to meet students where they are and increase that collaboration with teacher teams in

order to differentiate our own needs. I am appreciative of the flexibility that it offers individual schools as well as districts.

Schmit: I love the word “empower.” If schools are following the district direction and we are experiencing success, then why not breed that success by applauding and recognizing things that are happening that are going right at the school? Same thing about the classroom—if teachers are increasing student achievement, and they have aligned themselves with our vision, then can we



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—Bron Gayna Schmit, principal, Simpson Elementary School, Norcross, GA



not empower them to do what’s working in their classrooms?

I feel like the role of the principal—our No. 1 job—is to place a teacher in every classroom who is going to be the very best educator for that group of children. If we do, then I want to stand back and let them do what they do best. My role is monitoring that instruction, being in that classroom, giving them positive feedback, and I love the fact that we’re given that autonomy to do that.

Wright: This is an interesting question, because I have felt—working in a very

progressive district—that we have the autonomy to make so many decisions on what’s the best approach to move instruction forward at our individual schools. For instance, Gwinnett County has a contract (IE2) with the state of Georgia that enables us to make instructional decisions based on how we believe certain policies and procedures could be adjusted to meet the needs of our school. There are benchmarks that we have to meet. If we meet those benchmarks, we’re allowed to determine where we need flexibility. In addition, Gwinnett

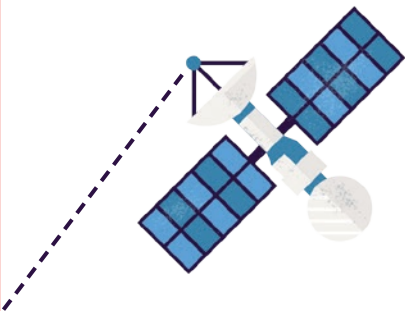
County has its own evaluation system—the Weighted School Assessment—which empowers principals to perform at high levels so that you have the flexibility and autonomy in your building.

As an instructional leader, I’m an avid believer that you need to walk alongside your teachers. We have to be in the classrooms, we have to be present, we have to listen, and we have to encourage them. If we’re focused on instruction, if we’re focused on our students—on that teaching and learning—students will succeed. •

ORCHESTRATING LEADERSHIP

Principals lead by skillfully conducting their orchestras of staff and students for overall school improvement





BY JENNIFER FINK

Transitioning a third-grade teacher from the classroom to physical education was one of the most strategic moves Emily Miles has made as a principal.

The teacher, Miles says, was great at building relationships with students, but not as effective as other teachers in helping students meet academic benchmarks. The teacher was also a certified yoga instructor with a deep personal interest in health and fitness. Miles asked her if she would consider teaching physical education.

When she was principal at Montclair Elementary School, one of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools in North Carolina, Miles lacked an effective PE teacher. (Miles is currently principal at Sterling Elementary School, another school in the district.) “So, I pitched it to her,” she says of her conversation with the third-grade teacher. “I told her she could use her experience as a classroom teacher to really bring academics into PE. She ended up taking the exam she needed to be a PE teacher, and now she’s one of

the best PE teachers I’ve ever seen.”

According to The Wallace Foundation’s 2013 report *The School Principal as Leader: Guiding Schools to Better Teaching and Learning*, effective principals consistently implement five key practices. Miles’ teacher transition is a good illustration of key practice No. 5: Principals manage people, data, and processes with the goal of school improvement. In essence, good principals orchestrate leadership.

Much as orchestra conductors select, organize, and train the best instrumentalists with consideration as to how each individual’s skills complement those of the others, principals manage and educate school staff, making sure that the right people are filling the right roles. Conductors choose music based on the interests and skills of the orchestra, with an ear toward the needs of the orchestra’s patrons—just as principals prioritize educational initiatives and processes based on the talents and needs of the school community. Conductors do what they can to ensure that the orchestra collectively has what it needs

to succeed; principals do the same for their schools.

And just as a conductor stands in front of an orchestra, directing the group in real time—a wave of the arm requesting more sound from the horns at one point or calling on the percussion to speed up or slow down—principals are constantly listening and readjusting. Like conductors, principals use their expertise to recognize areas that need improvement, and they clearly communicate their vision to all members of their team.

Here’s what that looks like in practice.

Managing People

“When I hire people, I’m not only looking for skill, because if you’re lacking skills, I can coach you through that,” says Carmen Concepción, principal of Oaklawn Language Academy in Charlotte, North Carolina. “I’m looking for the dynamic of the person. A positive outlook. Someone who is very hardworking.”

As a Spanish immersion magnet school, Oaklawn recruits teachers from around the world. Approximately

one-quarter of the school's staff members are visiting international faculty that work at the school for five years before returning to their home countries.

Concepción devotes time and energy to getting to know each of her teachers and support staff. "When we don't have relationships, we have blind spots," she says. "As principals, relationships are so important because we can't do everything. We're not omnipotent. I want people to feel comfortable enough to come to me and tell me what isn't working, or what's working really well."

Building relationships with school staff also helps principals better

understand—and meet—the needs of educators. When Miles took over the principalship of Sterling Elementary in July 2017, she realized that staff retention was one of the school's most pressing issues, as only a handful of staffers had been at the school for more than five years.

"The first thing I decided to do was meet with the teachers and get a feel for where they've been and what they see this school becoming," Miles says. "I spent a lot of time getting to know them and found out that culture and morale were big issues. A lot of people didn't like coming to work."

Because the school was failing academically, previous school leaders increased the emphasis on academics. The pressure was extreme, and teachers felt like there was no room for fun. Miles made space for fun, while maintaining high academic expectations.

"You have to have a balance between culture and academic press," Miles says. "Let's have fun and make the joy happen, but also give assessments to make sure we're on track."

Managing Data

Simply collecting data is not enough. Effective principals, like the best



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—Emily Miles, principal, Sterling Elementary School, Pineville, NC

Photos courtesy of Lifetouch Photography

conductors, use feedback to make both short- and long-term improvements.

When Mark Angerer took over as principal of Bruns Academy, a low-achieving K–8 school in Charlotte, he crunched the available data to look for possible quick wins, as well as opportunities for improvement over time.

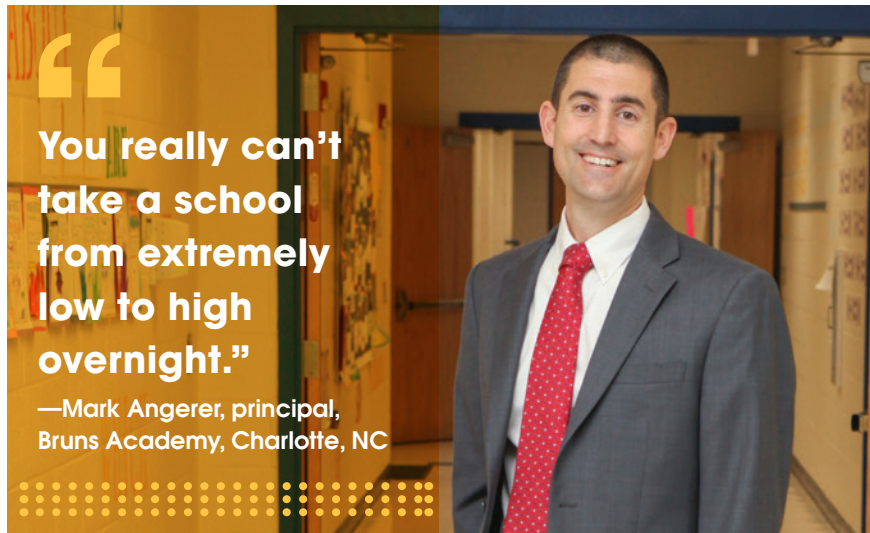
“Bruns Academy was the lowest-achieving school within the traditional school district, with just 18 percent of scholars on grade level,” Angerer says. “You really can’t take a school from extremely low to high overnight.”

Devoting some immediate time and attention to areas that could see improvement with just a little effort allows the entire team—staff and students alike—to experience success and satisfaction. Those small successes build confidence and give staff members the encouragement and stamina they need to work toward longer-term improvements.

Along those lines, Concepción has built in time to analyze data, set goals, and assess progress toward benchmarks. Schoolwide goals are set at the beginning of the school year and re-examined in January. When the school staff decided to reduce the amount of homework assigned to students, the January check-in included questions such as, “Do you feel like your students are lagging behind?” and “What kind of reaction are you getting from parents?”

“It’s very important to have check-in points,” Concepción says. “We’ll keep going if it’s working, and trash it or make adjustments as needed if it’s not.”

Concepción has also created a data protocol that she uses with staff to analyze student assessment results.



Leadership 101

Principals at Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools in North Carolina share their most common leadership practices.

RECRUIT FOR PERSONAL DYNAMICS OVER SKILL. Skills are teachable, but having a positive outlook and being a hard worker are invaluable traits to have in a staff member.

GET TO KNOW YOUR STAFF. Building relationships helps build morale, and it will make your staff feel comfortable enough to tell you what is and isn’t working.

USE FEEDBACK TO MAKE BOTH SHORT- AND LONG-TERM IMPROVEMENTS. Small successes can boost staff confidence and give the motivation to tackle longer-term improvements.

ESTABLISH CHECK-IN POINTS FOR BENCHMARKS. This allows you to maintain momentum if a strategy is working, or make adjustments if it’s not.

BUILD PROTOCOLS. Create processes for practices such as new teacher onboarding and professional development, which facilitates order and consistency across the staff.

BE PREPARED TO IMPROVISE. Principalship is not a perfect science. Part of the job means being able to successfully prioritize issues as they present themselves.



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—Carmen Concepción, principal, Oaklawn Language Academy, Charlotte, NC

"We really dig into the data to determine action items and next steps," she says. "We determine from the data what students need—these kids need to be remediated on this particular standard, these can be enriched."

Managing Processes

Because Concepción has new teachers rotating into (and out of) Oaklawn Academy on a regular basis, she devoted extra effort to establishing onboarding processes for international teachers.

"Previously, there was a negative dynamic between the English and the Spanish teachers because there weren't supports in place to support the Spanish teachers, so that fell to the English teachers," Concepción says. "Processes were lacking, and therefore people were not fitting well together."

So, now, when Concepción hires an international teacher, she sends them two books by Harry Wong; the books introduce American education and include classroom management

tips. When the teachers arrive in the United States, they engage in differentiated professional development that includes logistical information—such as how to make copies and log on to the school's attendance system—and curricular details.

"Once we put those processes in place, people were able to relax and create the relationships we need to be effective," Concepción says.

In his first year at Bruns, Angerer is also focusing on process. He says that as the school prepares to transition to a magnet school over the next few years, "we've put in some systems and are partnering up with people." Angerer has systematically scheduled time to attend school board meetings, build relationships with stakeholders, and get positive information about his school out into the community.

"I've been on the news more over the few months I've been principal at Bruns than I ever was at my previous school," Angerer says. "This year, we're really working on setting up some

wraparound services to support both students and parents."

At the same time, Angerer is taking care not to move too quickly or introduce too many changes all at once. "I didn't want to come in all gangbusters and say it's time to wipe the slate," he says. "So, we build protocols and expectations. You monitor. You coach. You conference."

Effective principals are prepared to improvise. Much as a masterful conductor has the ability to make an "off" note feel like an essential part of a performance, a great principal knows when to highlight beauty and back off from challenges.

"You've got to kind of roll with the punches as you see what comes at you," Miles says. "You learn how to be really good at prioritizing 'this has to happen right now' and 'that's going to have to wait a bit.'"

Jennifer Fink is senior editor of Principal magazine.

Research and Reports

Building Principal Pipelines: A Job That Urban Districts Can Do

www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/pages/perspective-building-principal-pipelines-update.aspx

In the quest to ensure that all schools have leaders who focus on improving instruction, this guide sheds light on how school districts can build a pipeline of effective school principals.

Elevating School Leadership in ESSA Plans: A Guide for States

www.ccsso.org/resource-library/elevating-school-leadership-essa-plans-guide-states

This guide offers ways to leverage new ESSA opportunities as a way to invest in school leadership.

How Leadership Influences Student Learning

conservancy.umn.edu/handle/11299/2035

This report suggests that, to improve schools and student success, there should be a focus not only on teachers, but also on principals and administrators.

Leading Change Handbook: Concepts and Tools

www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/pages/leading-change-handbook.aspx

This guide offers seven tools to help school leaders succeed when attempting to introduce change or innovation.

Logic Models for Selecting, Designing, and Implementing Evidence-Based School Leadership Interventions

www.rand.org/pubs/tools/TL274.html

This guide explains how ESSA-required logic models work and can be applied to school leadership interventions.

The Principal Pipeline Podcast: Practitioners Share Lessons From the Field

www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/pages/podcast-principal-pipeline.aspx

This podcast series features conversations with principals, district and state leaders, and university officials who have developed strong principal pipelines.

The School Principal as Leader: Guiding Schools to Better Teaching and Learning

www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/pages/the-school-principal-as-leader-guiding-schools-to-better-teaching-and-learning.aspx

This Wallace *Perspective* is a summary of a decade of research, identifying what effective school principals do and describing five key practices that are characteristic of those leaders.

State Efforts to Strengthen School Leadership: Insights From CCSSO Action Groups

www.policystudies.com/news/2018/2/9/insights-from-ccsso-action-groups-on-state-efforts-to-strengthen-school-leadership

In this study of states that were part of an effort to boost school leadership, improving on-the-job supports for principals was found to be the most common school leadership priority.

Organizations

Center for Applied Research & Educational Improvement

www.cehd.umn.edu/carei

CAREI is a research center at the University of Minnesota that strives to improve the quality of education for all learners, and for society as a whole.

Center for Educational Leadership

www.k-12leadership.org

The University of Washington CEL is a proponent of effective instruction—for teachers and school and district leaders—as a means to help close the achievement gap.

Council of Chief State School Officers

www.ccsso.org/topics/teachers-and-leaders

CCSSO is a nonprofit that ensures students graduate from the public education system prepared for what's next, and it believes that effective teachers and leaders are the building blocks of student achievement.

National Association of Elementary School Principals

www.naesp.org

This professional association leads in the advocacy and support of elementary and middle-level principals and other education leaders in their commitment for all children.

The RAND Corporation

www.rand.org/topics/principals.html

This nonprofit research organization develops solutions to public policy challenges, such as education, and it offers reports and research tools about principalship.

U.S. Department of Education

www.ed.gov/essa

As the go-to source for the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the U.S. Department of Education offers a section detailing various aspects of the law and related updates and resources.

The Wallace Foundation

www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/school-leadership

The Wallace Foundation seeks to improve learning and enrichment for disadvantaged children and promote the arts to all. Its Knowledge Center offers school leadership resources and reports to help guide principal leaders in their careers.

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