

Washington Principal

ASSOCIATION OF WASHINGTON SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

FALL 2018 / WINTER 2019

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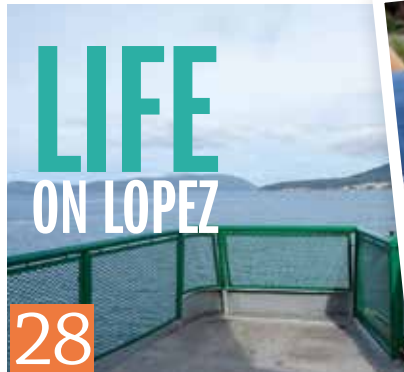
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WashingtonPrincipal

Association of Washington
School Principals
FALL 2018 / WINTER 2019



COVER STORY



FEATURED CONTENT

- 11** **AWSP Membership: The More You Know**
Annalee Braley and Cris Sippel
- 13** **Remarkable Leadership — 2018 Washington State Principals of the Year**
- 19** **Equality or Equity?** | Charlie Pierce
- 22** **You Make the Call** | Travis Drake
- 24** **Peer Mentors: Changing the Culture of Schools** | Melissa Charette
- 27** **Radical Candor** | Nathan Plummer
- 32** **Fun with Finley: How One School Manages Stress with a Furry Friend** | Vicki Puckett
- 35** **Six Strategies for Surviving Construction at Your School** | Shannon Ritter



Cover photo: Students of all ages and grades participate in the Lopez Island Farm Education (LIFE) program.

Photo by David Morrill

IN EVERY ISSUE

- 7** **News Briefs**
- 8** **Appy Hour: Basecamp 3**
- 9** **Ask a Principal**
- 10** **Did You Know?**
- 12** **Staff Spotlight**
- 37** **School Leader Paradigm** | Gina Yonts
- 40** **Diversity: Leading with an Equity Lens**
Julie Perron
- 43** **Student Leadership**
Susan Fortin and Stephanie Leitz
- 46** **Learning Centers** | Martin E. Fortin, Jr.
- 48** **Advocating for You and Your Students**
Roz Thompson
- 50** **Honor Roll** | Sen. Lisa Wellman
- 52** **Recommended Reading**
- 54** **Humor Me!**

COLUMNS

- 4** **From the Editor's Desk** | David Morrill
- 5** **From the AWSP President** | Ken Schutz
- 53** **From the AWSP Executive Director**
Scott Seaman

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National Affiliates

National Association of Elementary School Principals
 National Association of Secondary School Principals

Change is the New Normal

David Morrill

Communications Director, AWSP

Sometimes, things break.

I feel like I've written over and over in my column about all the changes we're going through in our office. Change is healthy, stagnation is not. I don't remember who said it, but someone once said, "We're always getting a little better or a little worse... nothing is truly constant."

While change pushes us forward, hopefully to a path of progress, it doesn't come without problems. I guess that's why they say, "No pain, no gain." A lot of times, we think we're on the brink of something great, only to be denied at the last minute – the Seahawks' Super Bowl loss to the Patriots come to mind (still too soon?). We're so close to getting something right, but not all the way there.



My wife and I had this experience with Amazon's Alexa voice assistant a few months back. We installed a "skill" for the 20 questions game. My wife wrote down "meerkat" and Alexa asked us questions. We responded yes or no, and about 14 questions in, Alexa asked, "Is it a meerkat?" Minds. Blown. I tried a celebrity. Are you thinking of John Legend? Son of a... She's two for two. Up next, shrimp.

About nine questions in, Alexa asked, "Can you put it on a salad?," to which we replied, "yes." We were worried loss number three was imminent. "Is it a human heart?" she asked. Wow... that got dark real quick. Alexa didn't get shrimp, and despite being taken aback, we didn't get discouraged, and we didn't stop using Alexa.

Whether it's trying a new tool or technology, implementing a new program, or tackling race and equity, two steps forward are often accompanied by a step back. Looking back through history, we see change almost always brings progress. It sometimes leaves destruction in its path, but usually things end up better than they were. Keep that in mind as we start transitioning to a new data system. We hope we don't have any steps back and your member experience is seamless, but one thing is for sure: We promise not to put your heart on a salad. ■



David Morrill is the AWSP Communications Director. He serves as Managing Editor for Washington Principal.

Leadership Lessons from Gonzaga Basketball and Coach Mark Few

Ken Schutz

Principal, Joel E Ferris High,
Spokane PS

Those of you that

know me are very aware that I am a passionate supporter of Gonzaga basketball and head coach Mark Few. I read everything that is Gonzaga Basketball. Coach Few has built a national program of unimaginable success at Gonzaga. Twenty straight trips and counting to the NCAA Tournament would attest to this success. This seems unimaginable for a small school located in Spokane. I'd like to share what I feel are the leadership lessons all of us can learn from Coach Few and the Gonzaga program as we work tirelessly to provide outstanding leadership in all the schools we have the honor to lead.

1) MAKE THE BIG TIME WHEREVER YOU ARE!

Mark Few has had many opportunities to leave Gonzaga for more money to a "bigger school" in a "better conference." More than a dozen times, Few has been romanced by programs that have hung national-championship banners. Time and time again he declined these offers and chose to stay loyal to his to university, his players and staff.

We at AWSP are very aware of the principal churn throughout our state. The average stay for a principal in a school in Washington state is three years. Research shows that it takes anywhere from five to seven years for sustained and systematic positive change to take place in any organization.



“ Does everyone, including your students and families, understand the goals you are working to accomplish?”

Personally, I am beginning my 26th year as a principal and this is my third principalship. I challenge you to think about your staff, students and community when you feel the need to move to the next school or district. Positive, sustained change can only take place when the leadership in the building stays consistent.

2) SET A CLEAR VISION.

Mark Few and other leaders at Gonzaga University had a clear vision on how to make Gonzaga basketball "big time." The first step in the mid 90's was to influence the McCarthy family to invest millions

in the building of McCarthy Athletic Center (Gonzaga's home court), which forever changed the landscape of Gonzaga basketball. If not for that one influential conversation, Gonzaga may still be playing in a small, high school-like gymnasium. With the continued success of basketball and the revenue it produces, the vision has been to continue to upgrade both academic and athletic facilities for all faculty and students.

Your vision, as the leader of a school, needs to be just as clear to all stakeholders. Does everyone, including your students and families, understand the goals you are working to accomplish? Are all stakeholders included in the creation and the work necessary for attainment of these goals? Is everyone pulling the rope in the same direction? To produce positive results, everyone needs to be on the same page and working together to achieve success. And, you

Continued on page 6

need to be passionate and unwavering in your leadership around continuous improvement.

3) RECRUIT (HIRE) GREAT PEOPLE.

It doesn't take a rocket scientist to understand that success at the collegiate level in athletics is extremely dependent on recruiting talented players and coaches. Coach Few has been quoted as saying this to an assistant coach: "Of course, you can only make guys so much better. Player development is crucial, but so is recruiting. You're a sharp basketball guy. You're doing a great job with player development. But if one wants to make a mark in this business... find a way to get great players." And, Gonzaga has recruited many great assistant coaches and players to become a part of the program. Just as important, Gonzaga has recruited assistant coaches, staff and players that fit their system.

In my opinion, hiring is the most important task we do as leaders of our schools. It is imperative that you hire the very best for your students and community. I remember, as a principal in a small rural district, I went to Montana in search of great teachers.

Additionally, you want to do everything to ensure that your school is one that the best teachers are attracted to. Remember that it isn't programs that teach kids — it's teachers. Take the time necessary when hiring. Make sure your hires

“ We need to be passionate about using the influence we have to inspire other leaders, adult learners, and teachers to do incredible work. The great thing is you do not have to do this alone.”

fit the culture of your school. Hiring often takes place when you are the most tired: late in the year or in the summer. You may be great at teacher development, but many would argue that the very best teachers are somewhat inherently great. Hire the best!

4) CREATE A FAMILY OF TRUST AND CELEBRATE SUCCESS.

Many players will talk about the family chemistry that Gonzaga and Coach Few have instilled the program. Many ex-players stay in Spokane to raise a family. An assistant that has been at many programs prior to Gonzaga said this: "Most places talk about family, and that's all BS. This place is truly family, and they live it. You can feel it just being on campus. The professors, the administration... it just seems everyone is here for the same reason. I never felt that before on a college setting."

I firmly believe the culture of your building is the most important leadership factor in increasing student achievement. And, I believe you can feel this when you visit a school. I want staff and students knocking the door down to work or go to school at Ferris High School. We often talk with each other about our

"Ferris Family." Create opportunities for staff to have fun together. Take time to celebrate your successes and achievements with staff, students, and the community. Lead in an environment that develops trust and where people truly care for one another. Don't let the need for efficiency override the need to build rapport with your staff and school community. Instill in your staff the love of coming to work each day. Steven Covey says, "Without trust, we don't truly collaborate; we merely coordinate or, at best, cooperate. It is the trust that transforms a group of people into a team."

We can learn so many leadership lessons from other leaders, like Mark Few. The examples above are just a glimpse of how Gonzaga Basketball and Mark Few have influenced my leadership development. We need to be passionate about using the influence we have to inspire other leaders, adult learners, and teachers to do incredible work. The great thing is you do not have to do this alone. ■



Ken Schutz is principal of Joel E Ferris High in Spokane Public Schools and is serving as AWSP president for the 2018-19 school year.

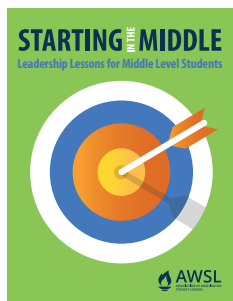


Principal Partners for Legislators

We are all advocates for the principal profession: Our daily interactions with students and adults are opportunities for us to communicate about the importance of education and having strong leaders. Want to help do more? Become a Principal Partner for Legislators to connect more regularly with a legislator you already have a relationship with or with whom you are interested in developing a better relationship. It's easy! Email Roz Thompson at roz@awsp.org to let her know you are interested. Once you are connected to a legislator, reach out to them and their legislative assistant to share contact information. Create a reminder on your calendar to share updates with your legislative partner each month or so. You can also invite them to visit your school. The goal is for the legislator to know a principal in their district who he or she can call to get an understanding of how potential policy may impact student learning and the management of a school building.

AWSL Launches Revised Edition of Middle Level Publication: "Starting in the Middle"

The second edition of the Association of Washington Student Leaders' "Starting in the Middle" publication has been rewritten and redesigned as a resource book for teaching leadership concepts to middle level students. In addition to 84 brand-new and revamped lessons, the manual includes "20 for 20," a collection of 20-minute lessons designed for school-wide use in advisory or homeroom sessions. Also included



are resources for structuring a middle level student leadership program, aligning leadership instruction to standards, workshop/large group icebreakers, and organizational tools.

AWSL also has elementary and high school publications, as well resources for CheerLeadership programs, assemblies, and fundraising.

Check out all the AWSL publications at <https://awsleaders.org/publications>.

ASB Workshops Focus on Best Practices for Supervising ASB Funds

AWSP and AWSL are partnering with the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA) to bring you an ASB workshop called, Best Practices: Supervising ASB Funds. The

workshop provides helpful hints on how a school or district can handle ASB funds and stay in compliance with the requirement for accounting practices and public money. Attendees will:

- Learn ASB rules, regulations, policies and procedures.
- Explore budget writing.
- Hear real-life examples of students in the ASB process.
- Look at the connection between activities, athletics, clubs and classes.
- Test your knowledge at the end of the day in a mock audit.

The workshop is designed for principals, activity advisors, bookkeepers, booster club members, PTO officers and students. There are still a few opportunities to register this year. Learn more at www.awsp.org/professional-learning/training-conferences/asb.



AWSP's 2018 Torch of Leadership Award Goes to Sen. Lisa Wellman

State Sen. Lisa Wellman is the winner of AWSP's 2018 Torch of Leadership Award. Wellman is a Democrat representing the 41st legislative district which serves Mercer Island, Bellevue, Newcastle and parts of Issaquah.



Sen. Lisa Wellman

Each year, AWSP's Advocacy Committee has the opportunity to select a state-level public servant who has demonstrated support of principals and the principalship in the education of all students. Wellman's commitment to education is reflected in her connection to her local school districts as well as to the attention she pays to issues across our state.

Wellman serves as the chair of the Early Learning and K-12 Education Committee, as well as on the Economic Development & Trade Committee; Energy, Environment & Technology Committee; and the Transportation Committee. She gets high marks from her community for being supportive of her schools and programs since she regularly attends district events and legislative linkage sessions with the school board. Wellman stays in touch with her constituents and uses social media to provide others with an inside view of what's going on in Olympia. This spring and summer, she has been on a listening tour around the state on the topic of school safety.

AWSP honored Wellman in October at the Advocacy Committee meeting. AWSP founded the Torch of Leadership Award in 2009.

Check out Sen. Wellman's Q&A in the Honor Roll article of this magazine!

Continued on page 8

AWSP Recognized for Strike Support by ESD 113

AWSP, along with WASA, WSSDA and PERC, was recognized in October by ESD 113 with the Spirit of Leadership Award for “exemplary support to districts navigating 2018 collective bargaining.” We feel honored by the call-out and want to pass along the kudos to all principals who worked tirelessly during work stoppages and negotiations earlier this school year.

Keven Wynkoop Named WA Library Association’s 2018 Principal of the Year

The Washington Library Association (WLA) is pleased to announce Keven Wynkoop, principal of Ballard High School, Seattle Public Schools, has been awarded their 2018 Principal of the Year Award.



Keven Wynkoop with Ballard High School Librarian TuesD Chambers

The WLA awards the honor annually to a school principal who has demonstrated a notable commitment to school libraries. Wynkoop was nominated for the award by Ballard High School Teacher Librarian TuesD Chambers because of “unwavering commitment to literacy and the library.” In the nomination, Chambers also noted Wynkoop’s recognition of the “changing landscape of learning” through his co-leading of an Instructional Innovation Cohort with the library to address the ways digital literacy can accelerate learning with strong pedagogy and reflective practice.

Congratulations, Keven!



The Power of the Principal: A 90-second Explainer Video from AWSP

Everyone knows that principals are important, but do they know just HOW important? According to the Wallace Foundation, “School leadership is second only to teaching among school-related factors in its impact on student learning, according to research. Moreover, principals strongly shape the conditions for high-quality teaching and are the prime factor in determining whether teachers stay in high-needs schools.” That’s why AWSP created a 90-second video explaining the importance of the principal in a school building, and AWSP’s efforts to reduce principal turnover across the state. Our goal is to share the video far and wide! Find it on our YouTube channel or website, along with other shareable facts and figures about the influence of principals on student achievement.



Basecamp 3

Basecamp (which we highlighted in a previous issue of Washington Principal) launched version 3 of their project organization app, and we can’t get enough of the new features!

How does Basecamp work? Instead of having stuff scattered all over the place — strewn across separate products, lost in inboxes, or scrawled on Post-Its or notepads — Basecamp allows you to keep your communication and documents in one location, accessible by anyone and everyone in your organization. It’s messaging, real-time chat, to-do lists, scheduling, file storage, documents and project management all in one. Best of all, it’s FREE for teachers and students, and discounted for non-profits!

AWSP uses the app to create shared calendars, to post organization-wide announcements, to create and assign to-dos, and as a way to keep the content and discussion around big projects organized (such as the creation of the very magazine you are reading!) In fact, we’ve pretty much done away with inner-office emails thanks to Basecamp.

Version 3 offers the following upgrades:

- Unlimited projects for everyone.
- A “Hey!” menu which serves as a single inbox for every Basecamp notification. @mentions, new messages, to-do assignments and completions all show up nice, neat, organized, and threaded.
- “Pings,” which are like instant messages or direct messages. Want to get someone’s take on something before sharing it with everyone else? Just ping them!
- To-dos can be assigned to multiple people.
- Automatic check-ins that allow you to ask part or all of your team whatever you’d like (e.g. “What did you work on today?”) on a schedule of your choosing. Basecamp will regularly gather responses and present them in an organized report.
- Scheduling, emailing forwarding, and much, much more!

Learn more about this amazing product and the version 3 updates at www.basecamp.com.

ASK A PRINCIPAL

During Principals Month in October, we asked our members,

“What’s one tool you use to make your job easier?”

Here are some of the great responses we received:

“ Student feedback is a tool I am just starting to use effectively with staff to figure out the impact of our adjustments to instruction...students tell it like it is and sometimes that is exactly what we need to hear.”

Casey Crawford
Principal, Woodland Elementary,
North Thurston PS

“ I would be lost without my mobile desk! It holds everything I need to do my work on-the-go. I can be in the halls, the lunchroom, and always have a space to work during observations. And it’s a kid magnet -- they stop just to check out my “office”!”

Brenda Goehring
Assistant Principal,
Prairie View
Elementary,
Mead SD



“ Google Tasks has been a life saver of a to-do list. It integrates with Gmail (so many districts have converted from Outlook) as a task bar on the side. The phone app allows me to jot down tasks on the fly, assign dates, add notes, and create a work flow that keeps the work flowing despite the most hectic days!”



Troy Wright
Principal, Mount Baker Junior High,
Mount Baker SD

“ Giving up my principal office completely! We turned it into a family reading library where families come in, read together and take home as many books as they’d like. How does this make my job easier? Not having an office allows me to be visible in classrooms, the lunch room and playground; communicating and providing feedback to staff, students and families. This is my greatest accomplishment this year!

Kelli Leppert-Demonte
Principal, Jefferson-Lincoln Elementary,
Centralia SD



“ My Woot-Woot Wagon! I use it to deliver treats to my staff on occasion. I am working on building a strong positive culture, and want to recognize staff for all their hard work and dedication to students and the school.

Jamie Blood-Dunn
Principal, Robert Gray Elementary, Aberdeen SD



“ We are in the middle of a remodel and just got an electronic reader board. Love keeping families up to date.”

Patty Kilmer
Principal, East Olympia Elementary, Tumwater SD

Continued on page 10

Continued from page 9



“ This may sound old school, but my tool is the old fashioned phone. I make a weekly call home and leave a message and email to my students’ families, school board, and staff concerning my building’s upcoming events for the week/month. I have never had one complaint.

Clay Henry
Principal, Kiona-Benton City High,
Kiona-Benton City SD

“ The people I work with everyday are the resources I depend on the most, but a tool I would say that is effective for me is my shoes - being visible and walking the halls, in classrooms, and always moving. Be a part of what happens in your school!

Brent Osborn
Principal, Lakeside High,
Nine Mile Falls SD

“ Although my secretary isn’t a tool, her ability to prioritize and create practical systems sure makes my job easier!

Mark Clements
Principal, River HomeLink,
Battle Ground PS

“ Marshall Memos: For a small fee principals can received weekly summaries of educational articles from a variety of topics relevant to our leadership roles.

Shawn Anderson
Principal, Jenkins Jr/Sr High,
Chewelah SD

“ One tool that makes my job easier is OneNote. I have all staff, committee, and content meeting groups in a separate folder. I can take notes, keep a running agenda, and refer to previous meetings all in one spot. Great tool.



Shari Walsh
Assistant Principal, Fairhaven Middle,
Bellingham PS

“ Neural Education, the science behind what our kiddos need to create new neuron connections in their brain to help overcome the ACES that so many bring to the table. #raftingup

Karey Richardson
Assistant Principal, Stahl Junior High,
Puyallup SD



“ That video that Scott does... He is like the news guy and then there are bloopers. But seriously it’s pretty fun to watch and I feel like it keeps me in the loop with what is going on all across the state.

Matt Kesler
Principal, Laurin Middle,
Battle Ground PS



Did You Know?

AWSP’s Washington School Principals Legislative Effectiveness Association’s Political Action Committee (AWSP-WSPLEA PAC) is one vital way that principals throughout Washington state can take an active role in the political process. Contributing to our PAC strengthens AWSP’s ability to support candidates and issues that are important to the principalship and to K-12 education. Our PAC is entirely funded by member contribution. No AWSP dues are used to support our political outreach efforts.

Currently, only 7% of AWSP’s 3,485 active members contribute to our PAC. Your contribution is essential in helping us support educators’ interests in the Legislature. If you are a current PAC member, we thank you for your continued support. If you changed districts over the summer, and contributed through payroll deduction, you will need to submit a PAC contribution form to your new district. If you are not a current PAC member, we need you! Help us advocate.

For more information visit www.awsp.org/PAC or contact Cris Sippel, cris@awsp.org, at the AWSP office.



AWSP Membership: **THE MORE YOU KNOW**



By Your AWSP Membership Support Team:
Annalee Braley and Cris Sippel

Serving as a school administrator is one of the most important, and sometimes thankless, roles in education. AWSP is proud to serve you as your professional association. Our mission is to support principals and the principalship in the education of all students.

“Membership in AWSP gives you instant access and fellowship with more than 3,800 school leaders across the state.”

Membership in AWSP gives you instant access and fellowship with more than 3,800 school leaders across the state. Our programs and resources are specifically designed to help you manage your administrative duties and address the concerns facing today's building leaders. Members receive the latest information on trends, policy issues and events, both regionally and nationally.

AWSP Active membership is for principals, assistant principals and

others employed in professional work related to the elementary, middle level or high school principalship. Over 96% of Washington state's public school principals and assistant principals professional membership dues are billed to their school district as a benefit of their collective bargaining agreements. AWSP Active membership *automatically* includes membership in one of the state component (grade-level) groups (ESPAW, AWMLP, WASSP), and “full” membership in one of our national association affiliates (NAESP Active or NASSP Individual).

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

Through your affiliated “Active Membership” status with the National Association of Elementary School Principals or National Association of Secondary School Principals, you have \$2 million worth of professional liability insurance coverage, and a legal benefit fund that is built up at a rate of \$1,000/year based on **continuous membership**, up to a maximum of \$10,000. Each national also offer more benefits such as additional insurance coverage, various discounts, publications, and resources in addition to national advocacy on behalf of principals in the education of all students nationwide.

CHANGE OF STATUS FOR 2018-19?

Have you recently changed jobs?

A change to your position, school district and/or email address may mean a lapse of your AWSP membership status, and a monetary benefit loss through your national affiliate (NAESP/ NASSP) “continuous membership” legal fund.

Automatic renewal of your AWSP membership is dependent on your current position and may not happen through the school district office. AWSP recommends that you inquire and inform district staff of your choice for professional memberships.

If you move from an elementary school to/from a secondary school, you can switch your national affiliation. As an AWSP member, your professional liability insurance coverage and legal benefits are transferrable between our national affiliates.

NO LONGER A PRINCIPAL OR ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL? AN AWSP ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP MAY BE FOR YOU!

As people explore different career opportunities, we've found it helpful

Continued on page 12

to provide a variety of services to meet our members' needs. Remain active in AWSP through an *Associate membership*.

Many former principals now working in the educational field other than the principalship choose to retain AWSP membership through our Associate membership category for our robust array of member benefits. First-class professional learning opportunities, conferences to enhance leadership skills, award-winning publications and a wealth of resources to help you stay on top of policy, trends and best practices.

All AWSP member types are eligible for free professional advice from AWSP executive staff on employment-related issues. Our seasoned staff can help you navigate a thorny issue or offer a helpful second opinion. Our services are always confidential and respectful of all parties involved. Early counsel can not only save time and money; it might also save your career.

Associate members may choose to also retain their national affiliate membership. **Renew as either a NAESP Active or NASSP Individual member to retain your \$2 million liability policy and legal fees in the case of an employment-related civil suit which can only be activated if you retain your memberships.**

STAY CONNECTED IN RETIREMENT

If you are no longer employed full-time in education, but you would like to stay involved in work you have a passion for, join AWSP as an Emeritus Member. Emeritus members are eligible for service on committees and short-term projects or programs, receive all publications, access to AWSP's website resources, as well as free registration to the annual conference.

Combine your AWSP Emeritus membership with renewal in



AWSP Active membership is for principals, assistant principals and others employed in professional work related to the elementary, middle level or high school principalship.”

your national affiliate as NAESP Emeritus or NASSP Retired to retain your professional liability and legal coverage.

Although most members never utilize this benefit, members in need appreciate that these resources are available. You pay to protect your home, your car, your health care, and your family in the event of your death. Protect your livelihood in the

event of an unexpected job-related action that may arise after you retire or leave the principalship.

Questions about your options or eligibility? Please don't hesitate to contact AWSP – your AAA provider for professional services! ■

STAFF SPOTLIGHT: Annalee Braley

Membership Coordinator

Meet Annalee Braley, AWSP's membership coordinator extraordinaire. Annalee is the AWSP Olympia office's resident historian, having been with us since 1989! Annalee first started with AWSP as the production room coordinator. Since then, she has been involved with Student Leadership programs, conference planning, AWMLP, and professional services support.

When Annalee isn't busy working through the numerous annual membership updates, processing membership billing or managing our database, she's helping members navigate their benefits and prepping AWSP ambassadors with tools to greet principals who are new to the profession. Needless to say, we truly couldn't do what we do without her! You can email Annalee at annalee@awsp.org.



STAFF SPOTLIGHT: Cris Sippel

Elementary Programs, Diversity & Equity, and Legal Support

Cris Sippel joined AWSP in December 2006. She holds a bachelor's degree in social sciences from Washington State University and a master's degree in public administration from The Evergreen State College. Cris's work influences many facets of AWSP — she is the elementary programs coordinator, diversity and equity committee support, and coordinator of the Washington School Principals Legislative Effectiveness Association (PAC).

When not in the office, Cris is busy engaging in shenanigans with her son, Ashton, and her wonder dog, Snort.

You can email Cris at cris@awsp.org.



Remarkable Leadership



ELEMENTARY
GINA NACCARATO-KEELE
Linwood Elementary, Spokane PS



MIDDLE LEVEL
MARC GALLAWAY
Selah Middle School, Selah SD

HIGH SCHOOL
JOHN GUMMEL
Kelso High School, Kelso SD



ASSISTANT
TAMI SKILLINGSTAD
Westwood Middle School, Cheney PS



Washington state has some pretty remarkable school leaders. And each year, AWSP is excited to honor four of those administrators with the designation of "Principal and Assistant Principal of the Year."

These awards start with your suggestions – nominations from AWSP members (www.awsp.org/poy) about exemplary elementary, middle, and high school principals

and assistant principals. These names are then reviewed by our component boards, who have the tough task of narrowing the list of outstanding administrators down to the lucky winners.

In addition to our surprise celebrations at their schools, we are excited to profile each of them in Washington Principal and give you a glimpse into their schools and communities. We think you'll agree that each of them is deserving of the honor. ■

Continued on page 14

2018 WASHINGTON STATE ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR

GINA NACCARATO-KEELE

Linwood Elementary, Spokane PS

PRINCIPAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

Creating a Culture, Planning with Data, Managing Resources, Engaging Communities, Closing the Gap



“We hit the jackpot.”

Staff and students at Linwood Elementary in Spokane always knew their principal was pretty special. But now they’ve got the title – and the honorary plaque – to prove it. Principal Gina Naccarato-Keele, the state’s 2018 Elementary Principal of the Year, appreciates the honor and chalks it all up to the relationships she has worked to develop in her 11 years at the school.

With more than 70 percent of her students receiving free- or reduced-price meals, Naccarato-Keele reached out to a local food bank and Gonzaga University’s business school to provide weekend food bags.

“Linwood students are outperforming schools with similar demographics 72 percent of the time in language arts and 67 percent of the time in mathematics.”

Over time, Naccarato-Keele has also implemented a handful of systems to help struggling students, including Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and Restorative Practices. These two programs have been effective at helping her and her staff provide differentiated support. The school also focuses on a character-building program to improve social and emotional skills.

All of these efforts are paying off: Linwood students are outperforming schools with similar demographics 72 percent of the time in language arts and 67 percent of the time in mathematics.

A Spokane Valley native and the daughter of teachers, Naccarato-Keele taught in the Spokane area after graduating with her Masters of Education from Eastern Washington

University. She previously served as assistant principal at Regal Elementary before taking the helm at Linwood. She says it was other principals who encouraged her to pursue her principalship credentials in the first place.

“They told me to step up, that what I was doing in a class, I could do for 500 kids,” she told the Spokesman-Review.

Rickey, a Linwood fourth-grader, told Spokane’s KXLY TV he wasn’t surprised his principal won the award.

“My friends have said their principals are so nice and do all these things for them,” he said, “and I’m like, ‘Mrs. Naccarato does that times a million.’” ■

2018 WASHINGTON STATE MIDDLE LEVEL PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR

MARC GALLAWAY

Selah Middle School, Selah SD

PRINCIPAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

Creating a Culture, Planning with Data, Managing Resources, Engaging Communities, Closing the Gap



For Marc Gallaway, creating a successful school culture means focusing on students, their families and interests, not test scores.

At Selah Middle, Gallaway has worked to deepen relationships – with staff, students and families. This has built trust and allowed them to have deeper conversations that lead to increased student success. What’s more, Gallaway has actively worked to lead by example at his school and not micromanage his team.

His workload has increased, but so has staff engagement — and student achievement.

Gallaway has served the Selah School District for 21 years, 15 as an administrator. He has served as principal of Selah Middle School/ Selah Junior High for 13 of those years. He is a graduate of Central Washington University.



“I’ve had the privilege of working with [Gallaway] for almost 17 years and have seen the difference he makes in the lives of kids. The positive culture at Selah Middle School is a reflection of the leadership Marc provides,” said Selah Superintendent Shane Backlund. “We are thrilled for Marc and he is very deserving of this honor.” ■

“ The positive culture at Selah Middle School is a reflection of the leadership Marc provides.”

2018 WASHINGTON STATE HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR

JOHN GUMMEL

Kelso High School, Kelso SD

PRINCIPAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

Creating a Culture, Planning with Data, Managing Resources, Engaging Communities, Closing the Gap



Good leaders — like John Gummel — are hot commodities in the K-12 world.

Perhaps that's why, a month after being named the Washington State High School Principal of the Year, Gummel announced he was stepping down from the principalship at Kelso High to assume new duties, this time as superintendent of the Pioneer School District in Shelton.

The move brings him closer to his family, and presented an opportunity for him to build a new high school in his new district.

As with other Principal of the Year (POY) winners, Gummel received high praise from his peers, his staff and others for creating a climate for success and allowing his team to do good work. In remarks during the award ceremony, Kelso Superintendent Glenn Gelbrich praised Gummel's leadership.

"The one thing that I think you exemplified that other principals around the state could learn from your model is that you create space for leadership for others," said Gelbrich. "You have teachers who lead, you have an administrative team who leads and you have kids who lead. In our community our kids are known as leaders and as givers and that comes from a culture that's been developed here."

Gummel became Kelso High's vice principal in 2007 and in 2012, became the school's principal. Prior to that, he was an assistant principal and math teacher at Rainier Sr./Jr. High. He also taught in Arizona for 11 years. Gummel is a Navy veteran and a graduate of both Arizona State and Northern Arizona University.

“ In our community our kids are known as leaders and as givers and that comes from a culture that's been developed here.”

His new community in the Pioneer School District is eager for him to apply his same leadership skills in ways that will make their district stronger.

"The board saw his strength in building relationships with staff and community and increasing student achievement," wrote the Pioneer School Board in a release announcing his hiring. "We fully expect Mr. Gummel to bring that same dedication to Pioneer School District." ■



TAMI SKILLINGSTAD

Westwood Middle School, Cheney PS

2018
WASHINGTON STATE
ASSISTANT
PRINCIPAL
OF THE YEAR

PRINCIPAL EVALUATION CRITERIA
Creating a Culture, Planning with Data, Managing Resources, Engaging Communities, Closing the Gap

Highly intelligent. Caring. Loving. Dedicated. Passionate. These are the clear hallmarks of a leader, and just some of the reasons Westwood Middle’s Tami Skillingstad was selected as Assistant Principal of the Year.

“Students are truly her first priority,” said Erica Burden, principal of Westwood Middle. “She loves building student leaders – building leadership in everyone. She’s also very innovative. Tami comes up with approaches and solutions that most people wouldn’t think of. She is also a true friend.”

Tami has been at Westwood Middle for five years as assistant principal and athletic director. But her path to school leadership was not a traditional one. As she noted in an

interview for Washington Principal magazine, it was a quick decision.

“[Cheney] planned to downsize the district office staff and use this money for staffing in buildings. I was the math and science coordinator at the district office and then assigned, after approval from the building principal, to be an assistant middle school principal and athletic director,” she said. “I was so excited and fortunate to work with a principal that I have the highest respect for and in a building with teachers that are professional, have high expectations and love kids.”

Skillingstad says schools today must provide numerous wrap-around services outside of reading, writing and math to all students. At Westwood, they offer nutrition, clothing, social and emotional support, health services, mental health services, counseling, restorative practices, discipline, extracurricular opportunities, and academics with intentional student-centered interventions and enrichments. Today’s principals, she



“ Tami comes up with approaches and solutions that most people wouldn’t think of.”

says, are managing and running a highly complex system.


But that doesn’t change her love for what she does.

“I love being with the students and having fun in my job every day.” ■

2018-19 AWSP

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Whether you're an intern, an AP, new, or beyond year two, we've got a workshop for you!




A cluster of colorful gears of various sizes and colors (green, orange, blue, grey). Each gear contains an icon and is labeled with a concept: 'SYSTEMS' (calendar), 'SKILLS' (lightbulb), 'GOAL-SETTING' (target), 'DEVELOPMENT' (gears), 'CULTURE' (heart), 'LEARNING' (book), 'OPPORTUNITY' (gears), and 'MINDSET' (gears).

ASPIRING SCHOOL LEADERS NETWORK

Gearing Up for the Principalship

Stage 3: Feb. 6, Seatac | Feb. 4, Spokane



A blue toolbox with a handle, containing a screwdriver, a wrench, and a hammer.

BUILDING EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP NETWORK

For Administrators in Year 2 and Beyond

Stage 3: March 7-8, Seattle

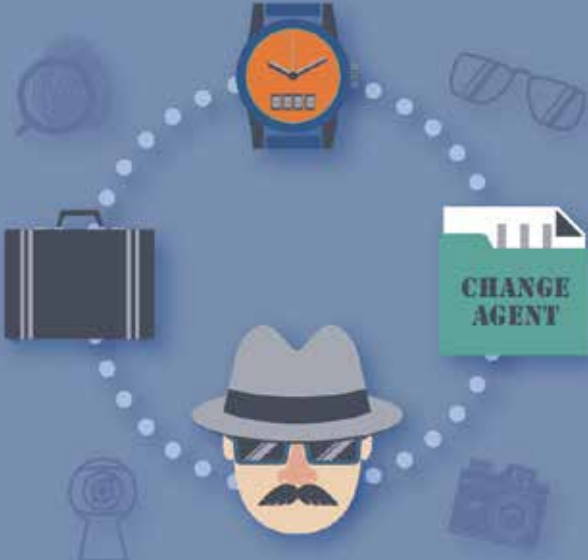


A stylized orange and white rocket ship launching upwards. The rocket has a sign that says 'LAUNCHING PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP'. The background is dark blue with white clouds and several glowing lightbulbs on thin vertical lines.

LAUNCHING PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP NETWORK

For New or Newly Assigned Principals and Assistant Principals

Stage 3: March 5-6, Seattle



A central illustration of a man's face wearing a grey fedora and sunglasses. Surrounding him are various icons: a blue wristwatch, a black briefcase, a pair of glasses, a camera, a magnifying glass, and a document labeled 'CHANGE AGENT'.

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP NETWORK

Feb. 11-12, SeaTac

Learn more and register at www.awsp.org



EQUALITY OR EQUITY?

What's Your Lens for Restorative Justice?



Charlie Pierce

Vice Principal, Lake Roosevelt Middle/High School, Grand Coulee Dam SD

PRINCIPAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

Creating a Culture, Ensuring School Safety, Engaging the Community, Closing the Gap

The idea behind restorative justice is to create new lenses of viewing crime and justice. The old lens of justice takes a punitive

discipline approach; restorative justice focuses on creating a positive outcome. Diving into restorative justice caused me to focus on two concepts: equality and equity.

Equality is based on one-size fits all where everyone gets the same thing. It calls for a well-used student handbook applied the same way for all students, regardless of the situation or circumstance. **Equity** is based on the

Continued on page 20

recognition that one size doesn't fit all, and instead of making things equal, it tries to make things fair. Equity requires us to listen to students more closely and build meaningful relationships, taking all factors into consideration when handling discipline, and acknowledging not all situations are the same for all students.

I found many staff who agreed with an equity-based philosophy and were passionate about the fact that we were not enforcing all rules on all students. However, not all staff in my school or yours are all-in on equity just yet. Equality has been in our cultural lexicon for a long time, and it's not easy to let go of.

PUSHING THE COMFORT ZONE

In recent years, the Legislature and OSPI pushed a lot of us out of our comfort zone by focusing on eliminating and/or reducing suspensions. This is a hot and current issue all administrators are dealing with. It's also caused me to change some of my thinking to be as equitable as possible.

Sometimes I struggle when I'm taken outside my comfort zone and my moral imperative box — and this is tough. While I recognize "moral imperative" does not always mean "best practice," it still is a driving force for me. I think what's important is we make decisions to restore the student rather than punish the student. This means being committed to building good working relationships with students who are likely not very good at building relationships.

It feels like we are seeing more students who feel entitled and that school rules are "dumb," and these kids often struggle academically. As I began to introduce the concept of boundaries to them, I immediately received pushback. I quickly learned one of the best strategies was to help students practice a few simple

“ I found many staff who agreed with an equity-based philosophy and were passionate about the fact that we were not enforcing all rules on all students.”

boundaries to help them get used to the idea that everything we want is not always what is best for us, and that some of our wants can actually be very harmful. Part of my restorative justice philosophy is to introduce boundaries. Start small and keep it simple because you're likely to receive pushback. Eventually, you want them to realize that what we want is not always best for us, and some of our wants can actually be very harmful to ourselves and others.

BRIDGING GAPS

To get kids to value school the way we think they should, we came up with a few ideas. We established a community truancy board, created attendance competitions, developed attendance-earned rewards, and found other opportunities to increase attendance. About 70 percent of my first semester's discipline issues have been truancy related. We are fighting cultural traditions that take students off campus for weeks when there is a death in the family, and a system that supports parents calling in to excuse any student absence they choose.

Restorative justice establishes relationships and mentorships to create the belief that attendance matters in school. It is a system that says every period counts. This brings me to my next point: parents partnering with the school is vital to the success of students — a concept people need to be retrained on.

Restorative justice raises accountability with added support structures in place to help students succeed. One of the best support structures is a mentorship program. If your high school cannot afford additional staff, try using juniors and seniors who can lead, mentor, and coach. Restorative justice is made up of a larger team of support that goes

beyond meeting with a student once or twice or making a few phone calls. After the right supports are in place, then we can talk about suspending the suspensions.

THE WHOLE CHILD INITIATIVE

Under the Whole Child Initiative, we will take an instructional approach to behaviors instead of focusing on the negative behaviors and consequences.

“ Restorative justice raises accountability with added support structures in place to help students succeed.”

This means allowing time in class to teach targeted behaviors. We want to show non-examples, along with targeted examples, when we teach. If a student does not write the correct math answer on the board, we do not send them to the office. Rather, we teach them how to come up with the right answer. It is the same with targeted behaviors.

As a school, we offer a wrap-around approach to helping students by developing support systems through the community you might not typically expect at a school. For example, could you partner with a local medical facility to help meet student needs on campus? In my school, we offer counseling with our local Native American elders — "The Peacemakers" — to anyone who wants to meet with them. We also brought in functional family therapists to meet with kids, as well

as Care Net, a non-profit organization that reaches out to single mothers and pregnant girls. All these examples came from our Community Truancy Board we initiated two years ago.

DEFINING JUSTICE

It is important the word “justice” is well-defined so we know what we are after. Justice for one subgroup may not mean the same thing for another. And justice should not be culturally bound. It is not limited to one’s perception or comfort level. As an institution whose goal is building lifelong learners, we are in the business of preparing our students for a future in society. We must meet



the norms and values expected by our society, regardless of our personal norms and values.

The bottom line: In restorative justice, we look for the most equitable answer to help restore each student back to wholeness. My philosophy throughout my whole career has been we get better results when we build positive relationships with students before we expect them to change their behaviors. ■

“ My philosophy throughout my whole career has been we get better results when we build positive relationships with students before we expect them to change their behaviors.”

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WE'RE ALL ABOUT THE FINISH

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Building a Distributed Leadership Structure to Improve School Culture



Travis Drake

*Prairie High School,
Battleground PS*

PRINCIPAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

*Creating a Culture, Planning with Data,
Improving Instruction, Managing Resources*

We, as administrators, are not necessarily the smartest people in the building.

Keeping that in mind, we at Prairie High School structured our building leadership teams to make sure our administrators don't operate under the false narrative that because we have our jobs, we must then have the intelligence. Simply not true.

When I started as an assistant principal at Prairie High in 2010, there was a tremendous amount of distrust amongst some of the staff. This isn't a knock on the principal at the time, simply an observation. I remember having a staff member come to me and ask if our admin team was reading their emails. I thought she was kidding, but when I realized she wasn't, it became apparent we had a lot of work to do.

Fast forward to 2018, and our yearly survey shows 100 percent of our staff members "like working at Prairie." We haven't had a building union rep meeting all year and any small problem that comes to the forefront stays small, big problems are resolved quickly, and we move forward. Overall, there is a general feeling we are all in this together.

“What happened is we walked our talk when we say the admin team isn't the smartest group of people in the building and our role is to support the mission of the building, not lock ourselves in an office and dictate everything that happens.”

MAKING A SHIFT

How did the shift happen?

Not surprisingly, a few of our teachers approached me a couple of years ago with the idea of flattening our building leadership structure. We were operating under the traditional School Improvement Team (SIT), led by a group of teachers passionate about the success of Prairie. Unfortunately, SIT had the reputation of simply being a few power-hungry teachers in the back pocket of the principal. When I sat down with the two teachers to talk about shifting our structure, we came up with the following:

The idea is simple: We have staff members on our Student Support Team (SST), Faculty Support Team (FST), and then of course, the traditional Department Chairs. Between these three teams, we have over 50 percent of our certificated staff in decision-making roles. Our next challenge is to increase our number of classified staff (they can join either the SST or FST, but we haven't figured out

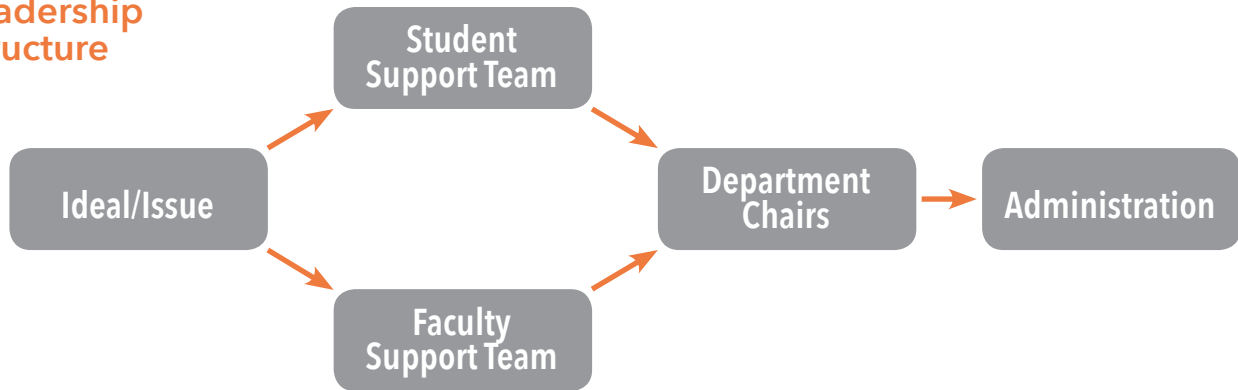
a schedule to allow more classified staff members to participate). Here's how it breaks out:

TEAM LEADS:

We have a SST Lead and a FST Lead, both paid a stipend out of our general budget. These leads create the agenda and lead the meetings. Because both teams are decision-making groups, it is imperative each Team Lead understand the importance of their role. We have processes in place to identify the leads each year to ensure we don't allow any one person take the role and never relinquish it.

Another imperative role in our leadership structure is the Communications Lead. This person works with the Team Leads to create and communicate the agenda for the monthly meetings. They also take notes and email out the minutes for each team, making sure people will always be informed, even if they choose not to participate.

Distributive Leadership Structure



WORK GROUPS:

Another main component is the formation of work groups. A work group meets for a specific purpose and usually has an end date (once the task is completed, they no longer meet). This allows many people to get involved without the commitment of meeting throughout the year. Each work group operates under either the SST or the FST and any decision must be approved by those teams (work groups are not decision making groups).

COMMITTEES:

We still have standing groups who meet year after year. For example, we have a Recognition Committee that meets throughout the year to talk about student recognition, as well as graduation. Any existing committee we had prior to the formation of the SST and FST we put under the ‘umbrella’ of those teams.

OVERALL PROCESS:

Team Leads and admin meet the last Friday of each month to develop the agenda for the following month. We have our SST and FST meetings the first week of each month (Tuesday for SST and Thursday for FST). Afterwards, we report out on the team meetings to the Department Chairs. The work groups and committees meet

throughout the month. We also share all this info through our weekly staff newsletter.

OUTCOMES

The administrative team hasn’t met as a group to decide on something for the building in a long, long time. At first, there was some hesitation (what is our role if we don’t get to make

any decisions?), but none of these concerns became our reality.

What happened is we walked our talk when we say the admin team isn’t the smartest group of people in the building and our role is to support the mission of the building, not lock ourselves in an office and dictate everything that happens. ■

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PEER MENTORS CHANGING THE CULTURE OF SCHOOLS

How We Increase Inclusion and Acceptance

Melissa Charette

Special Education Teacher, 2018 ESD
113 Regional Teacher of the Year,
Washington Middle, Olympia SD

PRINCIPAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

*Creating a Culture, Ensuring School Safety,
Improving Instruction, Managing Resources,
Closing the Gap*



All I wanted in my middle school years was to be heard and accepted for just being me. I needed to build the confidence to live in my own skin, and to learn to step forward instead of following others. Middle school is such an unsure time for all kids, it's a time of self discovery, for figuring out who they are, and figuring out what they believe in. It's our job as educators to support this growth and to inspire them to continue to find themselves.

“Our peer mentors are general education students who have one period of Peer Mentoring in place of an elective.”

I am lucky enough to work at a Washington state middle school that fosters a culture of acceptance and inclusion. At Washington Middle School in Olympia, we choose to focus on the acceptance of all students. With the support of my amazing administration and wonderful staff who were willing to try things “outside the box,” we implemented a peer mentor program that is changing the lives of students — all students.

My classroom is a special education self-contained middle school classroom. In real people terms, this means the students attend one or two general education classes, and the rest of their day is spent with me focusing on IEP goals. We work on time telling, counting money, and learning their personal information, all life skills and functional academics. One of the most important aspects of my job is to connect my students to the school. To help create a support network around them. This ensures that as they travel from one grade to the next — and one school to the next

“This program is successful because my students are truly a part of the WMS community. They come to school dances, they are high-fived in the hallways, they run track, and they love school.”

— they continue to have friendships and people who know and care about them. All students deserve a fair opportunity to have friends and be integrated with their peers.

Our peer mentors are general education students who have one period of Peer Mentoring in place of an elective. Students pull into my classroom, a practice called Backwards Mainstreaming. They work with special education students all six periods of the day. Peer mentors receive instruction from the special education teacher to run curriculum, take data, and support sensory needs. Many of my students with special needs would not otherwise have access to general education peers throughout the school day due to the severity of overarching social, adaptive and academic deficits. Backwards Mainstreaming knocks down the barriers and opens doors of opportunity for my students.

There are countless benefits. Kids form bonds far beyond those of typical middle school friendships. The peer mentors aren't just teaching academics, but also the social skills all middle school students need to survive and fit in. All special education students feel included in the school community and are known throughout the hallways and even into the extended community.

Since we started this program, my students' academic scores have all increased, some by double. Their behaviors have decreased, and they are learning social skills by observing and interacting with general education peers. These peers help provide the models of what middle school behavior should look like. My students' parents are even reporting greater interactions within

the community with fellow WMS students.

I wasn't expecting is the positives for the peer mentors, but it's been a wonderful side effect. As a school, we see increased leadership skills, confidence, and more of a connection to school from the mentors. I accept and train all students who ask to be a peer mentor; there is no interview or selection process. This includes students with attendance issues, students with behavior struggles, and students with mental illnesses. This class gives them a connection to school and a safe place to just be themselves.



Melissa Charette's Peer Mentoring program at Washington MS pairs general education students with special education students, teaching what she calls “functional academics” — things that make students as independent as possible later in life.

The peer mentors begin to build friendships that are genuine and real. The entire culture at WMS has changed. Because of the number of students working within this classroom daily, staff and students have really come to know and understand my students.

Continued on page 26

My students' behaviors that look "different" around school are now commonplace and accepted. Communication methods such as sign language, use of technology, or pictures that are sometimes a struggle outside of the classroom have been learned and implemented school wide.

Recently, I had the parent of one of my students come to me at school with tears in her eyes and a huge stack of birthday invitations. As she handed them to me I asked her why she was crying. She said her student had never been able to have a birthday party because there had never been anyone to invite. And now she said these 50 cards may not be enough. As a parent, I can't imagine the feeling your son or daughter has no friends and is alone in the school. All students deserve to have friends.

This program is successful because my students are truly a part of the WMS community. They come to school dances, they are high-fived in the hallways, they run track, and they love school. The peer mentor class is

“ The peer mentor class is now the 'cool' class to take. The first year I had three peer mentors, last year I had forty six peer mentors, and this year I have over one hundred peer mentors signed up to work in my classroom.”

now the "cool" class to take. The first year I had three peer mentors, last year I had forty six peer mentors, and this year I have over one hundred peer mentors signed up to work in my classroom. In addition to fostering academic growth in our students, we need to grow good human beings. Students who are compassionate and care about those around them are that much more equipped with 21st century job skills.

Through all my awkwardness in middle school, I would have greatly benefited from this program. It would have not only increased the confidence I was lacking, it would have also introduced me much earlier to the profession that is my passion. Having the hands-on experience with special needs students would have

opened that door and given me more of a pathway and focus through high school and into college.

This program doesn't cost anything but time – the time to set up the schedule and time to train the peer mentors. It shifted the culture of our school and the hearts of our students. Wouldn't it be wonderful if every student across the state was able to put themselves in another person's shoes?

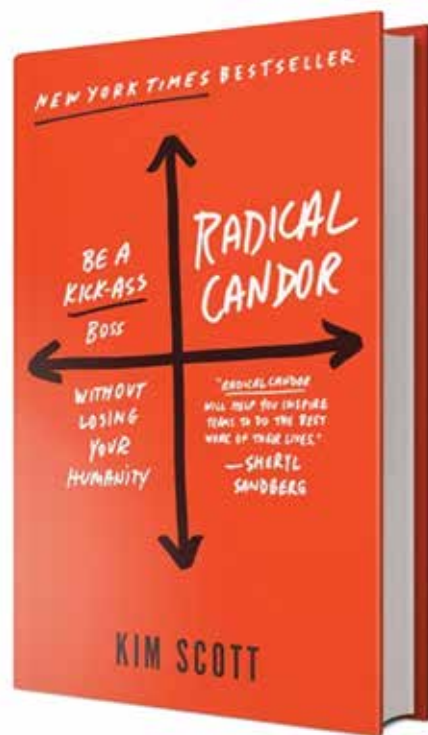
It doesn't matter if kids are special education students or general education students. All students deserve friends. All students deserve a space they feel safe in. All students deserve acceptance. A peer mentor program in your school can make this a reality for all of your students. ■

Watch Washington Middle School's Peer Mentor Program video at <http://bit.ly/wms-peer-mentor>. While you're at it, subscribe to our YouTube channel so you never miss a video.



RADICAL CANDOR

by Kim Scott



Reviewed by

Nathan Plummer

Principal, Sultan Middle,
Sultan SD

WHAT A SUMMER! Bargaining, looming strikes, actual strikes and more, oh my! And for those of you (like myself) that were at the bargaining table, it made for an interesting start. The most challenging part of entering a school year in this fashion, is trying to work with people within buildings in a collaborative way that fosters strong growth for every individual (staff and student) in the organization. In Kim Scott's book, "Radical Candor: Be a Kick-Ass Boss without Losing Your Humanity," she provides leaders with intriguing perspectives to build strong organizations that build on the human capital that all organizations need to be collaborative and successful.

This book is not specific to education, but is about building a culture that is built on relationships with staff. Scott is very clear that this doesn't mean that leaders are their staff's best friend, but it does mean that they should bring their whole self to work every day. This authenticity helps the people that work for leaders to see them as real people, with real feelings, and real lives. According to Scott, in order for leaders to show up as their "authentic self" they need to "care personally" and "challenge directly." By following these steps, people see transparent and authentic leadership and are more apt to be actively involved in the work.

Now more than ever principals need partnerships to exist in our schools that are collaboratively working for ALL students and their success. In

“ This book is not specific to education, but is about building a culture that is built on relationships with staff. ”

order to create these collaborative environments we need to empower people, guide teams, and create results through real and direct conversations. I fully recommend this book, if not for the summary given above, then at least because deep down inside we all want to be a Kick-Ass Boss without Losing our Humanity. ■

LIFE ON LOPEZ

How one small school embraced their community to create learning you can taste

Dave Sather

Principal, Lopez Island Middle/High,
Lopez Island SD

PRINCIPAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

*Creating a Culture, Ensuring School Safety,
Planning With Data, Aligning Curriculum,
Improving Instruction, Managing Resources,
Engaging Communities, Closing the Gap*

Set in the San Juan Islands and tucked in between sheep fields and small family farms lies the Lopez Island School District. Home to 220 students, two coffee shops, and no street lights, it's a "Cheers" community: everyone knows your name and waves to one another on the road.

It is also home to the Lopez Island Farm Education (LIFE) program, where for all of September, all of the ingredients in school meals were sourced within 50 miles of the school. What's more astounding: a majority of the meals are grown entirely in the school's gardens for meals all year round.

WHERE LEARNING IS EDIBLE

In six years, I've learned it takes not a village, but an island to sustain a program where learning is edible. The island is only accessible by ferry, so the school is presented with a unique set of challenges. In fact, it's not unusual for our sports teams to be gone all day, depending on the ferry schedule, and with many of our students on the fire and EMS teams, classes may go empty if there

is a call. The island has strength of perseverance and coming together as a community to prevail over those challenges. This Lopez energy also extends to the school's abundant extracurricular offerings and international travel program, with regular trips to France, Greece, Peru and Japan.

The LIFE program may be one of the first in Washington state, arguably in the country. Elementary students have a Garden Enrichment class and there are two electives for secondary students in Culinary and Sustainable Agricultural Practices. These classes blend life science, biology, mathematical understanding, and engineering practices together to hands-on instruction. These classes and concepts are taught under the ethos of environmental sustainability and represent the island's "let's make it work" attitude.

A program like this relies on the input and hard work of not only the staff, but the community — and in



TOP: LIFE students enjoy the food they harvest in the school meal programs.

RIGHT: Principal Dave Sather.

Continued on page 30



Continued from page 29

many ways the program is a reflection of our island community. We are a community of family farms, passed from generation to generation, and a student body as at home on Google classroom as it is with compost on their fingers.

SOCIAL EQUITY

In mid-September, AWSP came to visit and produced a video on our LIFE program. During the shoot, one student was asked about the “Farm” class he took last year and what he learned from it, and the student rattled the importance of the carbon and nitrogen cycles before talking about the week of canning and fermenting their own food.



Fresh air, hard work and learning go hand in hand in the LIFE program.

So much of our program is hands-on and deeply practical. Our Sustainable Agricultural Practices teacher, Amy Studzienko, developed her curriculum and it was recently approved as a Career and Technical Education course. Students in her course will do seed saving, taxonomy, animal husbandry, and soil health. The class is also seen out and about on the island with its weekly field trips participating with farms on the island. Two years ago, as a class project, we borrowed a goat to teach animal husbandry and to have our field grazed.

The Garden Enrichment for grades K-5, taught by Ali Nicol, is taught alongside art, PE, music, and a



Science you can taste – an apple tree grafting project.

“ We are a community of family farms, passed from generation to generation, and a student body as at home on Google classroom as it is with compost on their fingers.”

tinkerlab to widen young students’ curiosity and familiarity to the life cycle. Nicol expressed her satisfaction to watching kindergartners plant, care for, and eventually eat their own peas. “They have a sense of ownership of their own diet and knowledge of how that process works,” she said.

There is also a level of social equity, as everything from the classes to the meals themselves are available to every student, no matter the socio-economic background. For many, the meals at the school may be the only full meals they receive, so it is crucial to have it be nutritious and equitable for all students. Parent Keri Sausman went further, saying, “I feel very grateful that my children have the option to eat healthy, local food for their school lunch. Lopez Island school understands the importance of educating well involves nourishment and a connection to our community.” Alaya Battalia with the Lopez Island Family Resource Center added, “Lopez school lunches guarantee that every student has access to at least one balanced and nutritious meal a day, loaded with vegetables and a bit of curiosity.”

LOPEZ LOCAVORES

Upwards of 40 percent of our elementary student body is eligible

for free and reduced priced lunch. The concept of organic, healthy meals shouldn’t just be isolated to elite schools, it can be done anywhere — so for me, it’s an issue of social justice. Students monitor their BMI and cardiovascular records in Physical Education. Teacher Larry Berg is pleased to show the vast majority of students are “fit” for their age.

Shannon O’Donnell, the school’s head cook, is versatile and puts the pressure on herself to not only locally source the meals, but to make them from scratch. “You find it’s not only better for the students but provides a healthier meal,” she said. A salad bar is always available and even the bulk of the meats are from the island.

Touring the school’s greenhouses with its ripening tomatoes and basil, school gardener Suzanne Berry highlighted the work she does with fellow gardener Valerie Yukluk over the summer, as well as the volunteers from the community. Berry has been with the program and has seen graduating students more aware of where their food comes from. Many are eager to go into culinary or farming careers.

The school’s harvest is used not only in the kitchen and culinary class, but thanks to OSPI’s Healthy Kids

Grant, we bought walk-in freezers to store the summer and fall harvest through the school year. All of this allows students to have meals that are at least 60 percent from the island throughout the year.

Superintendent Brian Auckland said, “The school also is host to the Lopez Locavores, who host ‘an evening meal’ open to the community showcasing the farms and farmers of our island and a gleaning club that collects harvest that otherwise would go to rot for community members in need. This is a partnership involving not only our local farmers, but one reflecting the values of our small, rural and agriculturally friendly community.”

FARM TO SCHOOL

So how did we end up serving meals made up of entirely a 50-mile range from Lopez Island? “The conversation started last spring, when one meal was noticeably ‘all Lopez.’ We went through the menu and realized we had several days where that was the case and decided to aim to make a month like it,” said O’Donnell “I knew of the Alaskan village of Igiugig who served a month of meals subsistence-style, and I knew we could do it here.”

“ The school’s harvest is used not only in the kitchen and culinary class, but thanks to OSPI’s Healthy Kids Grant, we bought walk-in freezers to store the summer and fall harvest through the school year.”

It was remarkable to watch the pieces come together. Ronni Tartlet & Levi Rodriguez donated apple vinegar, and there was flour that we milled, beans that were grown on Horsedrawn Farm, and, not to mention, the countless volunteers who assisted Suzanne Berry and Valerie Yukluk in a successful harvest.

While other schools are starting their own “Farm to School” programs, many look to us to see what we’ve created and continue to sustain. Several other school districts, most recently the Bellingham School District, visited with a team to see about duplicating our LIFE program.

Lopez is often mentioned as a leader in Farm to School education.

While our circumstances are unique and not every school or district has the same access to farms as we do, it’s not impossible. The LIFE program is unique to us, but the principles behind it — of getting kids outside, providing hands-on learning, and meals that are nutritious — can be found in any district or school. The challenge is bringing the talents of that team together to create something that’s their own. With the will and desire, some creativity, and maybe some grants, I believe any district can create a similar program. ■

Watch our video about the Lopez Island Farm Education program at

<http://bit.ly/awsp-lopez>.

While you’re at it, subscribe to our YouTube channel so you never miss a video.





FUN WITH FINLEY

How One School Manages Stress with a Furry Friend

Vicki Puckett

Principal, Mercer Island High School.
Mercer Island SD

PRINCIPAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

Creating a Culture, Ensuring School Safety,
Engaging Communities

One afternoon last summer a staff member, Andrea Confalone, a 32-year veteran special education teacher at Mercer Island High School, came to see me about the possibility of having a therapy dog at school to help students combat academic and social stress. She noticed a trend of frequent absences with students who struggled with emotional anxiety on a consistent basis. One student missed three months because of anxiety; he would only attend if accompanied by his Labrador retriever. She wondered if having an animal in the classroom could increase the attendance of any students suffering from various types of anxiety?

“Stress, as it relates to the students’ well-being, is the number one concern of many principals and their staff.”

Like many high school students in the country, Mercer Island High students feel the pressures of performing well in school in order to be considered for the colleges of their choice. Students are over-scheduled and many haven’t yet developed the grit and skills to know how to handle and balance their school academics, social lives, and

family lives. Stress, as it relates to the students’ well-being, is the number one concern of many principals and their staff.

Our school had a policy for service animals, but not one for therapy animals. Andrea and our special education administrative intern researched and wrote a policy for therapy dogs. Andrea adopted Finley, a 10-week-old golden retriever. Finley has been in obedience training for a year and has been preparing for this important role. He has already earned his Canine Good Citizen Certificate and Level 3 Obedience. During the summer months, he visited hospitals alongside a certified therapy animal.

Finley lives in Room 311. Every day, Finley not only comforts the students attending their classes, but also students and staff who wish for a little comfort during their day. The size of Ms. Confalone’s room makes it conducive for visitors because they can enter and exit with minimal interruptions to classroom instruction or group work. An iPad with a Google form records student and staff visits and sits on top of Finley’s crate.

During his first year, Finley had over 500 recorded visits from students who were not in Ms. Confalone’s class. Many just sit quietly by his crate and talk to him or give him a treat or two, all under the careful supervision of Ms. Confalone and her staff. All students and staff report feeling much better

and less anxious about their day after spending a little time with Finley. There are some students who visit Finley almost daily. Ms. Confalone notices more smiles after a visit with the puppy.

We received overwhelmingly positive feedback from our students and parents about Finley’s presence at school and how he helps our students. One young woman who suffers from extreme anxiety wrote an email to me about Finley’s importance in her life. She is able to cope a bit better after she makes a quick visit to room 311. A parent commented on her two

Continued on page 34



sons coming home to tell her about the therapy dog program and how it helps them deal with their daily stress of school. These are just two of many compliments received since starting this program at Mercer Island High School.

Since many people have allergies to dogs, we're always asked how we manage that. Finley does not roam the school. When a classroom requests a visit before presentations or a test, the roster is closely monitored for student allergies; if one or more is present, he does not visit that classroom. In addition, when students visit from other classrooms they are encouraged to wash their hands and use lint rollers after their visits. Ms. Confalone has also purchased a vacuum cleaner to vacuum up pet dander daily. It takes a bit of planning, but the observed results are worth it.

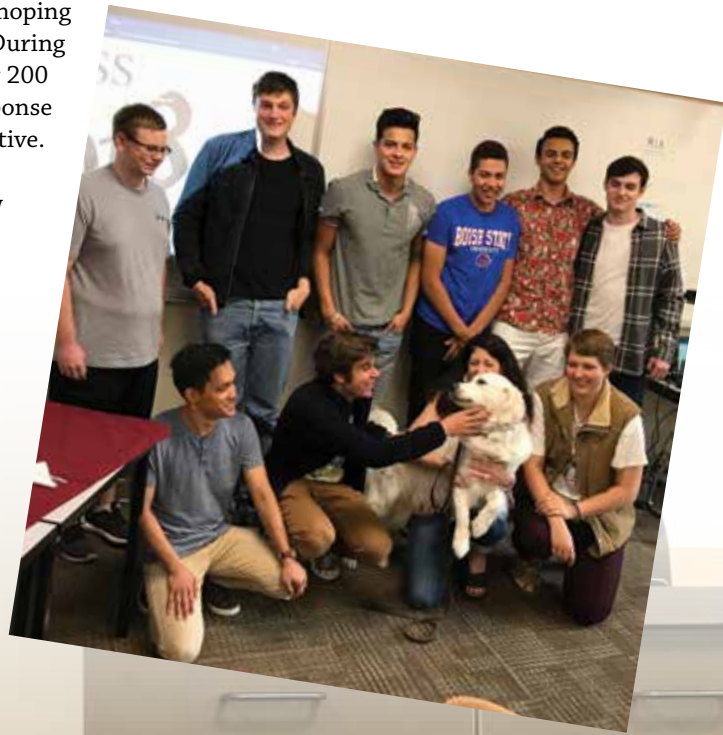
When researching whether we should start this program at Mercer Island High School, I read some recent articles of how colleges are helping their students manage and regulate their stress. After reviewing this data, I asked Ms. Confalone to arrange for a small group of therapy dogs to come to Mercer Island High School. We contacted College Dogs

“ Every single one of the students who visited the therapy dogs reported they felt relief from stress about finals exams/projects.”

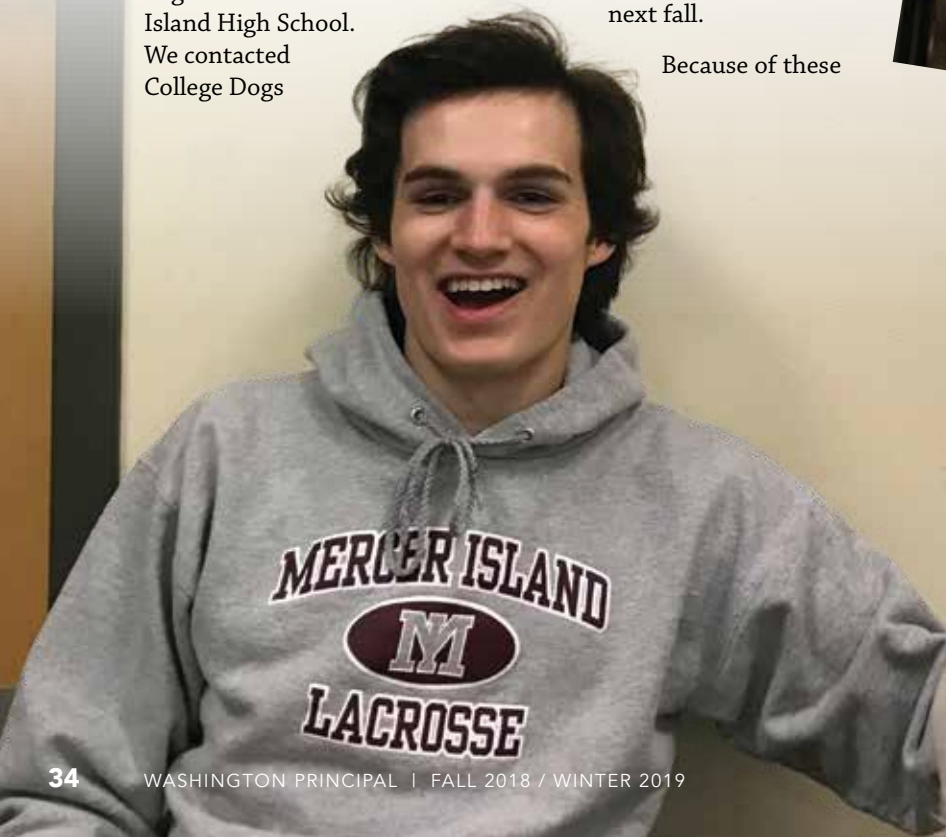
(<http://www.collegedogs.org>) to invite certified therapy dogs during our finals week. We were lucky enough to have 10 therapy dogs. Each came with individual handlers and spent 1.5 hours in our Common's Conference Center.

When our superintendent came to our school to watch, she could not even get in the door because of the long line of students hoping to see the therapy dogs. During that hour and a half, over 200 students visited. The response was overwhelmingly positive. While we don't have any quantitative data to show — grade comparisons for example—the qualitative data we collected was amazing. Every single one of the students who visited the therapy dogs reported they felt relief from stress about finals exams/projects. Students requested the dogs return during midterms next fall.

findings, we plan to increase the visibility and use of the therapy dogs to help students regulate stress in the year to come. The staff, the students, and Finley are looking forward to another positive year! You can find Finley on Instagram @finleythetherapydog. He has close to 2,500 followers now. ■



Because of these



Six Strategies for SURVIVING CONSTRUCTION



at Your School

Shannon Ritter

Principal, Centennial Elementary,
Olympia SD

Editor's Note: Shannon had so much to say in her Fast Five video, we wanted to give our audience all her great tips, which by the way, are great tips for any principal, not just one managing a construction project.

CULTURE CULTURE CULTURE

Don't underestimate the power of a good theme. It's fun for both the students and the staff to have a theme for the school year. This year our theme is—surprise!—all about construction: Laying the Foundation for Learning. We incorporate the yearly theme into PBIS, assemblies, classrooms decorations, student and staff recognition.

PRINCIPAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

Ensuring School Safety, Planning with Data, Improving Instruction, Engaging Communities

Provide “Welcome back” staff gifts. I found great little construction bags and added bubble wrap for low stress, a yellow hard hat stress ball, and a 100 Grand candy bar since they are worth 100 grand.

Remember to partner with your parent group to provide treats throughout the year.

Leave positive notes in staff mailboxes, or better yet, call home to the staff member's spouse or parent and sing their praises—with them in the room!

ADVOCATE FOR YOURSELF

We do so much to support our staff—it's okay to advocate for admin support during a year of construction. Work



Provide “Welcome back” staff gifts. I found great little construction bags and added bubble wrap for low stress, a yellow hard hat stress ball, and a 100 Grand candy bar since they are worth 100 grand.”

with the business office to come up with creative solutions. We used capital funds and class size reduction dollars to release our principal intern from the classroom in order to support intervention/extension time and the administration.

You can't do it all and that's okay. Prioritize, let go of guilt, set boundaries and stick to them. (I am still working on this.) I keep telling myself it is a marathon, not a sprint. The goal is to be upright in June! Schedule some downtime in your life and give yourself permission to fully enjoy it. Put that out of the office reply on your email!



Continued on page 34



Continued from page 35

FLEXIBLE PLANNING

If Plan A doesn't work, that's okay—there are 25 other letters in the alphabet. I say that jokingly but our after-school procedures are on Plan D or E now. I usually start every conversation or email with, "The plan right now is... but that could change next week." I seem to add this phrase to a lot of emails.

Don't underestimate your need for additional para hours to help with supervision during the day. Extra adult supervision is important while we get those kiddos (and parents) trained up.

Check in with your classified staff frequently—they are often the best eyes and ears of what is going on in all parts of the school and have a good pulse on what is happening.

FREQUENT COMMUNICATION

Weekly (and often more) construction meetings with both the contractor and project manager are key. Creating an ongoing Google doc that is updated weekly and shared with staff is quick and painless. Creating a construction document that staff can add to is an easy way to keep track of the concerns or problems without having to track the principal down. This can also be shared with your supervisor so she is aware of all the moving parts.

Partner with your booster club or PTA to get the word out through print and social media. Building a strong relationship with your parent group will make the year run more smoothly. They can be your eyes and ears away from school when parents talk at the football game.

There is no such thing as over-communication.

HUMOR

Find the silver lining. On the second day of class for our kinders, the fire alarm went off just as we were dismissing for the day. Thanks construction crew—ire drill # 1... check!

“ There is plenty to stress about so laugh about what you can! If you don't laugh, you will cry!”

Construction = closed off hallways and whole sections of the school = mileage. Just think of all the extra exercise you will get as you navigate the school. We have all decided we will be the most fit school when this remodel is done!

Perks of the job: you get to wear a hard helmet and walk through the construction site whenever you want!

There is plenty to stress about so laugh about what you can! If you don't laugh, you will cry!

KEEP IT ABOUT THE KIDS

Living in a construction zone is stressful for sure.

If the kids are safe, enjoying school and learning, that is a WIN any day. So cut yourself a little break, take a deep breath, and take it day by day. You go this! ■

Check out Shannon Ritter's Fast Five video on surviving construction at your school at <https://bit.ly/2Ei8W0j>



SCHOOL LEADER PARADIGM

Setting Goals for Your Success

Gina Yonts

Associate Director,
Eastern Washington, AWSP

PRINCIPAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

Creating a Culture, Ensuring School Safety, Planning with Data, Aligning Curriculum, Improving Instruction, Managing Resources, Engaging Communities, Closing the Gap



AWSP executive staff spent time this past summer working in partnership with our friends at the Illinois Principal Association.

We focused on the complexities of school leadership and how to use the School Leader Paradigm as a tool to help principals organize their thinking. Given that all principals lead goal setting for their staff and set their own goals as well, why not get comfortable with the paradigm and use this tool to plan for your own evaluation and guide the goal setting process?

THE SCHOOL LEADER PARADIGM

Effective leaders pay attention to their professional goal setting through the use of the School Leader Paradigm. We must keep growing our personal leadership skills and attributes, while paying close attention to the work we need to accomplish. Setting goals to support the principal's personal development (**becoming**) while taking a healthy look at what is currently in place, and the leadership actions supporting staff and students (**doing**) in the upcoming school year, is critical. It is also important to take time to pause, reflect and be open to feedback you've received from staff climate surveys, parent feedback, and your direct supervisor. Digging a little deeper into the intelligences and corresponding attributes in the paradigm can act as a resource to provide examples and definitions. It will support you in gaining ideas for potential actions.

The "doing" side of the School Leader Paradigm is a visual comprised of three overlapping circles that school leaders may want to consider using in their goal setting process. Effective leaders are measured by what they **do** in the areas of culture, systems, and learning. Thinking through how your actions and work align within these three areas can help a school

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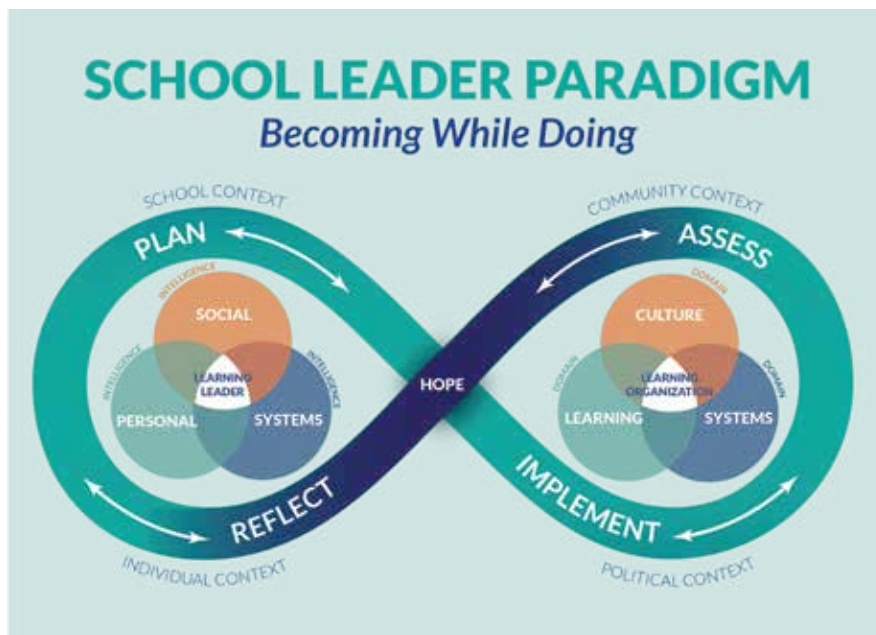
leader be goal oriented, focused, and intentional. As the goal setting season begins, many leaders are excited for the restart and how they might want to reinvent their focus based on culture and data results. However, it's critical the principal takes stock of what leadership practices and systems are currently in place and build on these foundations. The School Leader Paradigm can help a team pay attention to the personal leadership areas to develop and focus energy around the leadership actions and practices needed to support the whole system.

CULTURE

The effective principal is a vigilant protector of the school's culture and is responsive to influences on culture. Creating a school culture that promotes the ongoing improvement of teaching and learning for students and staff is a priority – a priority that is never completed. As you move into your personal goal setting this year, reflect on the big ideas/initiatives your school will be implementing. As a leader, are you being intentional with what you say and do to build a culture where these initiatives can be embraced and supported? Are you being clear and transparent in your communication to all stakeholders about where you're headed, what it is your school is working to implement, and the results you expect to attain? How do you celebrate and encourage staff and students?

Being clear about your vision as the leader is helpful in making sure your school culture stays healthy through the implementation of a new system or new instructional practice. The personal and social intelligence attributes listed on the "becoming" side of the paradigm can also serve

“Being clear about your vision as the leader is helpful in making sure your school culture stays healthy through the implementation of a new system or new instructional practice.”



as a resource for the principal as they think through the goals they will set to continue “becoming” the most effective leader possible.

SYSTEMS

Schools are full of systems with many interconnected parts that form their complex world. Any school leader who tried to change the parent-teacher conference format or implement a reading intervention period in a secondary master schedule understands the devil is in the details. The effective leader puts time and energy into collaborating with key stakeholders to ensure effective systems are in place and takes the time to evaluate regularly.

Reflecting on the upcoming year, what systems are currently in place? Have you collected feedback on their effectiveness? What tweaks are necessary to make incremental improvements? Evaluating your systems, creating mechanisms for reflection, collecting feedback, and problem solving around the

systems pieces that crop up is critical. As programs, initiatives, and instructional practices are implemented, the principal pays close attention to improving systems for efficiency, clarity, cultural responsiveness, and ultimately student success. Spending time upfront evaluating the health of your school's systems can enhance your ability as the principal to meet the needs of students, staff, and families. Refining systems to be most effective and monitoring for student growth results can be powerful. Don't forget to look for more detailed descriptions within the “becoming” side of the leadership paradigm for ideas and support.

LEARNING

Learning is not just for students and it doesn't have to be “new” or “hot off the press.” As an effective leader, it's important to look at the adult learning necessary for success. In order to build on the success of your existing culture and systems, take stock of areas where you need to communicate and clarify. Has focus shifted because of a new curriculum adoption? Have you had a large turnover in staff and do folks need to be anchored to the work?

“ Realizing you are ‘becoming’ an amazing leader as you are intentionally ‘doing’ leadership is important to remember.”

Adult learning consists of going back and refreshing the “why” behind an initiative or being explicit by sharing tools and resources for stronger implementation of a program. Effective leaders take the time to connect the dots for their staff and to ensure they have the skills and training to deliver the instruction. They take the time to evaluate their systems and programs and coach their staff by helping to develop their own skills and aptitudes to best implement programs and instructional initiatives.

PRINCIPAL COLLABORATION & NETWORKING

School leaders cannot do complex work in isolation. Principaling is tough work! An awesome opportunity awaits the principals willing to work alongside other principals, helping each other talk through their work and generate great ideas. Effective leaders also build capacity within their buildings for other adults to engage at high levels.

Have you reached out to other busy principals to discuss and collaborate around your professional goal setting? In your building, are you growing the capacity of other adults to lead? How do you use the teacher-leaders your staff respects and listens to in ways that move your school forward? The effective principal does all of these things: models collaboration

with peers, encourages staff to lead amongst their peers, involves staff in collecting and interpreting feedback, and offers next-step solutions. Building capacity should be an important part of yearly leadership goal-setting. It’s a meaningful way to involve more leaders in school improvement efforts!

Everything a school leader does on a daily basis is linked back to the School Leader Paradigm through explicit and intentional leadership around a school’s culture, it’s systems, and the adult or student learning taking place. Realizing you are “becoming” an amazing leader as you are intentionally “doing” leadership is important to remember. Connecting your principal goal-setting to these three anchors helps you build on what is already in place and focuses your time and energy on refining and going deeper in these areas. ■

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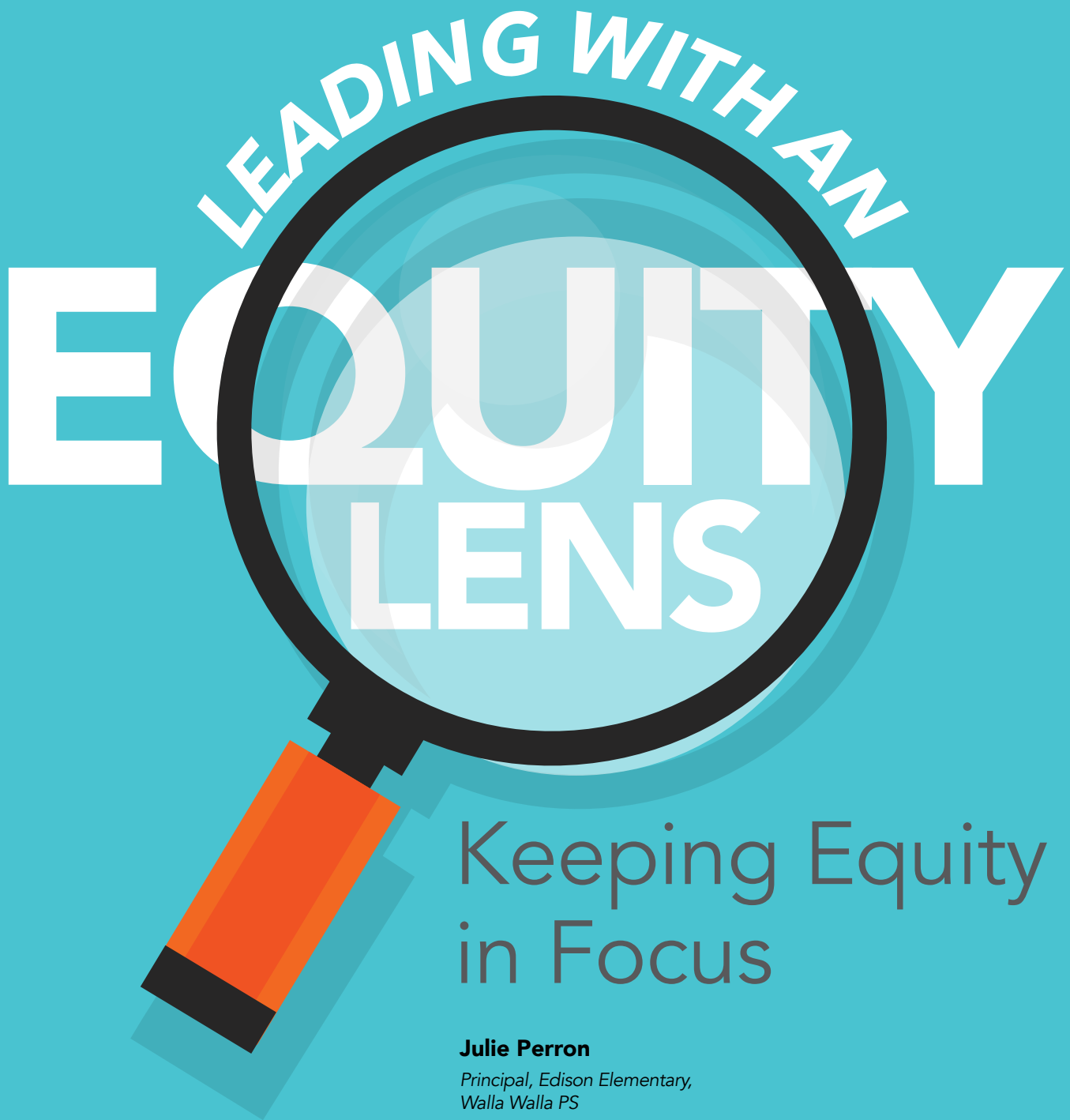
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Keeping Equity in Focus

Julie Perron

*Principal, Edison Elementary,
Walla Walla PS*

PRINCIPAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

*Creating a Culture, Planning with Data. Improving Instruction, Engaging Communities,
Closing the Gap*

As a young, energetic high school teacher in the Spokane Valley, I focused on the students in my classroom.

I led conversations and promoted diversity and equity activities within my learning community. If students were not visiting elementary schools to promote cultural awareness, model sensitivity, and create connections, they were attending conferences about eliminating racism and promoting social justice. My passion for students and their experience of the world was well-placed, and at the end of each day, I was fulfilled and motivated with my work.

When I became a principal, I wondered if the change in career would limit my impact. As a teacher, conversations with students about acceptance, equality, and mutual respect offered me a sense of purpose. The principal position presented new opportunities, but the working conditions were different. As the leader, conversations are not just with students. Parents, staff, the community, and children are the daily stakeholders. Principals rarely have the structured opportunities teachers do for deep discussions about equity.

WHAT IS AN EQUITY LENS?

As a principal, bringing an equity lens to my daily work is key. Simply put, an equity lens allows us to seek and understand the disparities and disadvantages of segments of our population by diving deep into the data that matters. It is best described as the lens that emphasizes underserved students, Like out-of-school youth, English Language Learners, and students in some communities of color and some rural locations, with a particular focus on racial equity.¹ State Superintendent Reykdal echoes this importance, even saying in a 2017 press release that “every decision made at OSPI must have an equity lens to it.”

“Simply put, an equity lens allows us to seek and understand the disparities and disadvantages of segments of our population by diving deep into the data that matters.”

An equity and empowerment lens leads us to think about issues in a new way; it can bring an idea into focus, or alternately, expand it outward and upward.² In this case, this lens does both. It allows us to focus on how equity and racial justice relate to a given issue and teaches us issues don't live in isolation. In fact, issues exist and are related to a much larger system of factors.

Clearly, this equity lens is one that is always in place. The commitment to racial equity is not something to check off a to-do list. Rather, it is a point of view that must be integrated with a mindful commitment to serve your school community.³

HOW DO YOU KEEP THE EQUITY LENS IN FOCUS? Transformational Leadership and Four Agreements for Courageous Conversations.

Our daily work as principals needs to be viewed continually through the equity lens. However, this cannot be a lens we pick and choose to wear, like a favorite pair of shades. Rather, the equity lens is the frame we hold up to the light every day to check ourselves and the effectiveness of our commitment to the students we serve.

As I think about applying this lens in my work, it is key to remember that for the equity lens to be sharp—and for me to demonstrate fidelity to its purpose—I must intentionally exercise the equity lens in all settings. Research on transformational leadership and courageous conversations give leaders two approaches to implement.

According to Riggio (2006), *Transformational Leadership* includes four significant tenets: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation.⁴ I cannot think of a better way to model an equity lens in my daily work as a principal when it comes to conversations about race and equity. With this approach, leaders strengthen their perception of situations by applying these four areas. To use the four tenets of transformational leadership effectively with my equity lens, I must truly know my staff.

“The commitment to racial equity is not something to check off a to-do list. Rather, it is a point of view that must be integrated with a mindful commitment to serve your school community.”

In addition to transformational leadership, Singleton and Linton (2006) offer the strongest protocol and approach in their *The Four Agreements for Courageous Conversations*. This is key because it offers a self-regulating protocol in place for the challenging interactions with staff. The agreements also have four tenets: stay engaged, experience discomfort, speak your truth and expect and accept non-closure.

Continued on page 42

SHARPEN YOUR LENS: KNOW YOUR RESOURCES

You can never have enough effective resources when keeping the lens sharp. It's not enough to watch an occasional webinar on race relations, attend a session on equity at a national conference, or even participate in a book study. Instead, you must be prepared to access and use resources at any given moment, and continually add to your toolbox.

“As a teacher, conversations that mattered were at the heart of my daily instruction. As a principal, these conversations are part of my soul's work.”

Remember, your first resource is your ability to self-reflect and ask tough questions about your own biases, fears, and assumptions of others, as well as questions about how to impact change. My personal questions include (and this is only a handful):

- How are my assumptions about a particular group keeping me from understanding this person's experience?
- Which conversations do I personally find uncomfortable, and how to I own that or do I avoid the conversation altogether?
- How can I help others (all stakeholders) apply an equity lens to our daily interactions and experiences as a learning community?
- How do I take conversations that matter beyond the monthly staff meeting, school assembly, or quick chat in the staff lounge?

- How might I promote diversity in an integrated fashion rather than recognizing it only during its token month (like Black History Month)?

And perhaps my most perplexing question and reflection:

“How do I continue to rally for the causes that matter—in both formal and informal settings—while maintaining influence in a learning community with many stakeholders and a social, cultural and political complexity that can be very different than the classroom?”

In addition to asking questions, it is critical to find resources to support your understanding of equity and offer suggestions for ways to create change. Taking time to seek support is critical. Resources are often a simple click away. Here are a few strong publications:

- teachingtolerance.org (also comes with a publication)
- www.edchange.org/multicultural/sites/journals.html
- <http://www.nea.org/tools/30402.htm>

Be sure to check out AWSP's own diversity and equity resources at www.awsp.org/diversityresources.

KEEPING AN EQUITY LENS IN CHECK: BE PART OF THE SOLUTION

Regardless of your familiarity with an equity lens approach, our students, staff and all stakeholders deserve for their leaders to embrace this lens. We must keep this lens in continual check. Put your equity lens on and see the world with hope. Remember, using an equity lens is not wearing rose-colored glasses. Rather, it means looking at the underbelly of some of our daily exchanges and the disparity and marginal nature of our students' experiences, and owning our role and responsibility in changing these experiences for them.

Brene Brown, author of several best sellers, including *Daring Greatly*, tweets it best when she shares,

“The fight for justice requires honest conversations about race & class privilege. Start owning it. Start healing it.”

As a teacher, conversations that mattered were at the heart of my daily instruction. As a principal, these conversations are part of my soul's work. The equity lens must be a permanent fixture in our routines, and wearing this lens a continual part of our professional and personal identity. ■

¹ Equity lens. Oregon-gov. Referenced in https://www.oregon.gov/HigherEd/Documents/HECC/Reports-and-Presentations/Presidents_Letter_Equity_Lens.pdf.

² Balajee, Sonali S., et al., (2012). Equity and Empowerment Lens (Racial Justice Focus). Portland, OR: Multnomah County.

³ Race Matters. Referenced in <http://www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/morerace.pdf>

⁴ Bernard M. Bass & Ronald E. Riggio (2006). Transformational Leadership (2nd ed.). Erlbaum.





Link Leaders touring their students around the school as Team PAC-MAN!

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Student Leadership Director, AWSP

Stephanie Leitz

Principal, Wahkiakum High School, Wahkiakum SD

PRINCIPAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

Creating a Culture, Ensuring School Safety, Engaging Communities, Closing the Gap

Wahkiakum High School Students Plan to “Brighten the Light”

with the help of AWSL programming. All students will graduate from Wahkiakum High School with the tools and skills necessary to persevere in their pursuit of a successful life.

A note from the AWSL Director:

This program highlights the perfect marriage between AWSP’s student division - the Association of Washington Students Leaders (AWSL) - and AWSP’s Residential Learning Centers! The enthusiasm of Principal Stephanie Leitz during the retreat showed her belief that this experience would be a game-changer. When I saw her in October at the AWSL Conference she reaffirmed their success. Her high school leaders presented a student-led workshop based on the relationship-building and mentoring that Stephanie outlines in this article. It’s a winning formula: Principal vision for school culture + AWSL programs and AWSP facilities to support that vision = Student Success! — Susan Fortin

As a high school principal who started her career as a kindergarten teacher, creating a positive, student-centered culture that supports the academic growth of all students has been my focus and my passion.

Continued on page 44

Continued from page 43

Students want to be supported, loved and accepted whether they are six or sixteen. As the only administrator at Wahkiakum High School which is in the small, rural community of Cathlamet, I choose to spend my time working directly with the students to ensure this happens with both the adults and peers on our campus. AWSP has identified Culture, Systems and Learning as the three main circles that must continually be juggled in the journey of building a school that ensures that all students succeed. For me, culture is where it all begins — gaining buy-in from staff and students, by rallying around one common theme or purpose and striving to make sure that every single person that walks through our school door feels the energy, pride and love they deserve. Each year when a new group of students arrives on campus I wonder: How will this group impact our school culture? Which students will rise to the top and take on new leadership roles? Will students who have previously been unsuccessful find their way?

At Wahkiakum High School, our students select a theme that is used to support and inspire students. “Knowledge is Power” was our theme the year we added honors and AP to our schedule. When students wanted to honor under-recognized groups, like our Gay Straight Alliance club — the theme was “Being Different, Belonging Together.” The following

year students were asked to “Stand Up, Stand Out and Take a Risk.” This year the theme is, “Brighten the Light.” The words were carefully selected and defined by students:

“At Wah-ki-hi, you brighten your own light by being your best self. You can brighten the light of others by being kind and inclusive and you can brighten the light of our whole school, community and world by coming together to accomplish great things.”

Our theme this year took on a much deeper meaning than those of the past due to the time our leadership students were able to spend with incoming freshman at the Cispus Learning Center in Randle, Washington.

AWSP’s Cispus Learning Center is magical. If you haven’t had the opportunity to leave behind the internet, cell phones and today’s pressures to experience the tranquil, refreshing 68-acre Cispus campus, you are missing out. Last spring, with generous support from Youth Marijuana Prevention and Education Program (YMPEP) funds and Matt Shellhart from CHOICE Regional Health Network, we were able to take high school students and incoming freshmen to Cispus for a three-day retreat. The opportunity to build strong relationships and support our eighth graders as they dreamt about their future — both as high



Pictured above is Daron, the student who wouldn't stop talking about how much fun he was having!

school students and as successful adults - was powerful, inspirational and created a positive vision of Wahkiakum’s future. Working with AWSP facilitators Joe Fenbert and James Layman, the class of 2022 came up with several things they wanted to stand for as they planned for a successful high school experience:

Be Your Best Self!

Turn your cant's into cans and your dreams into plans!

No matter how comfortable you are in life, we can always push each other further.

Have hope, show love and be peaceful.

As our eighth graders worked to develop a vision, the high school leaders reflected on what they stood for and how they hoped others perceived them. They committed to the following:



The lives of these Wahkiakum students have been forever changed. They will start high school with lots of people on their side – ready to accept the challenge and “be their best selves!”

“We will inspire others to be their best self, stand for all and respect everyone’s voice. It is our job to be role models and ‘Brighten the Light’ of every individual that comes to WHS.”

While at Cispus, in addition to spending time reflecting, students were able to attend several sessions on the challenge course which stresses the idea of “challenge by choice.” Students worked as a team to accomplish tasks that required problem solving, teamwork and perseverance — all skills needed in both high school and life. Outdoor education gives students confidence and builds strong relationships and trust among peers that then transforms what occurs in the classroom.

“ When a student-led culture is in place, changing and enhancing structures and ensuring learning comes easy.”

Each night we gathered around the campfire with a culminating activity that summed up the day. Led by both high school students and the amazing AWSL staff, students performed skits, sang songs and walked the blind trail. The bonding and relationship building that took place will last a lifetime! In addition, there were sessions on career exploration, leadership styles, peer pressure and finding your passion in life. To end our amazing retreat, all our students were presented with the ultimate “challenge by choice”... zip lining! As Daron, a student with Cerebral Palsy, was pushed off the cliff by his best friend and high school mentor, he said, “This was the best day of my life... thank you, thank you, thank you.”

The WHS class of 2022 has some amazing things to accomplish as illustrated by the goals they set. They

have proven they were ready for the challenge of high school. The power in building strong relationships with same-age and older peers — and the importance of helping students build a clear vision for their future - is obvious and occurs easily and naturally at Cispus. The staff and students in the picture below have committed to continuing to mentor their assigned students throughout their 9th grade year. For us at Wahkiakum, team building is this key to creating an inclusive, caring culture that fosters learning in all students. Our high school leaders met again in August for two days of Link Leader Training (The Boomerang Project) and then led all new students through orientation. In addition, the high school leaders have committed to meeting with our 9th graders once a week to support them as they learn to navigate the high school world. With the implementation of Cispus and weekly mentoring, our ninth-grade failure rate is down to less than 5% for the first quarter for the first time in several years.

Being a part of a rural school in a county without a stop light or a fast food restaurant is a beautifully unique experience — although some may say opportunities are limited, I choose to believe that we can provide each individual student exactly what they need. Our statistics aren’t just numbers - they are actual students with names, strengths, weaknesses, hopes and dreams. At Wahkiakum, we strive to help each and every one of our students find their passion and build a program that meets their needs in addition to giving them similar opportunities to those

The Challenge Course was an opportunity for students to realize the fun that can be had outdoors and when you chose to be a part of a group and/or bond with new people.



shared by their urban peers. When a student-led culture is in place, changing and enhancing structures and ensuring learning comes easy.

Building a positive school culture is done in a variety of ways and the needs are different for every school, but striving to ensure students have what they need to be successful starts with building strong relationships and the confidence of each individual student by helping them identify strengths, set goals, overcome fears and strive for a positive future. An AWSL program at Cispus is the perfect place to begin this journey. ■



The cabins were decorated in an ocean theme with lots of reminders about the importance of all!

AWSP is the only principals association in the country to provide facilities for student and staff development. The Cispus Learning Center in Randle is approximately two hours from Puget Sound, Vancouver or Yakima. The newest facility, the Chewelah Peak Learning Center, is located one hour north of Spokane. Both sites are available for your own retreat and challenge course experience. AWSL program staff Joe Fenbert and James Layman are available to help plan an experience to meet your goals.



Leadership students from Cascade Middle School leadership work together to move the ball.

WHERE ARE THE ROPES?

Martin E. Fortin, Jr.

Director of Learning Centers, AWSP

PRINCIPAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

Creating a Culture, Engaging Communities, Improving Instruction, Closing the Gap

By December 2018, Cispus and Chewelah Peak Learning Centers will have welcomed over 16,000 visitors. The sounds of students and their teachers engaging in lessons and outdoor experiences is often enthusiastic and joyful. I regularly hear from former “campers” that their time with us was one of the most memorable experiences of their school career. I truly believe an overnight outdoor experience away from school and home has many elements that enhance the participant’s social and emotional growth.

Last year The Aspen Institute¹ published a paper on supporting

students’ social, emotional, and academic learning. Several of their major points grabbed my attention:

- Major domains of human development — social, emotional, cognitive, linguistic, academic — are deeply intertwined in the brain and in behavior, and all are central to learning.
- Social and emotional development is multifaceted and integral to academics — to how school happens, and to how learning takes place.
- Social, emotional, and cognitive competencies can be taught and developed throughout childhood, adolescence, and beyond.

I started to think about the opportunities we have at the Principals’ Learning Centers to support and enhance those skills. One way is to use our ropes courses. Although there are very few ropes



Trusting your teammates is a highlight of the “ropes” experience.



Training challenge course facilitators involves "hands on" experiences. Here they are crossing the deadly swamp on "safe" boards.

“ We take great pride in our efforts to build teams, one individual at a time.”

found, it is a term that comes from popular use over the last 50 years. We prefer the term Challenge Course. So, what happens when we take groups into the woods?

In a day-long experience, we address those competencies described by The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (casel.org). We task the participants with solving physical challenges that involve developing relationship skills, self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and responsible decision making. It turns out that the perceived physical threat is minimal: it is the challenge to learn about oneself and work together that is key.

How does this happen? There are six steps that progress throughout the experience.

Step #1: Ice Breakers and Get Acquainted Activities. These tone setting games are designed to warm up the group. A major goal is to laugh and have fun.

Step #2: De-inhibiting Activities. These activities are designed to loosen up the group. We look for the time that members of the group become willing and able to get physically close to each other to solve problems.

Step #3: Trust and Spotting. The facilitators give instruction and lead activities that ensure the safety of group members. Once the group shows they can work closely together, we teach them how to physically support each other.

Step #4: Briefing. The rules of the challenge are given including constraints and artificial handicaps

for an activity. Here the facilitator pauses and assesses the group's status. We watch for communication dynamics and insist on a good plan before beginning.

Step #5: The Challenge. This is the actual initiative and its plan. We define an initiative as a challenge which has many possible solutions, as opposed to a trick that only has one answer. You may hear the facilitator say, "It is important to be able to say at the end of our activities today that you challenged yourself in at least one way. Your challenge may be physical, emotional, social, or intellectual."

Clearly, the Challenge Course experience is designed for social and emotional growth. Past participants often have told us of the benefits they received during their time at our camps. AWSP's Learning Centers at Cispus and Chewelah Peak have a way to assist in your plans to develop social and emotional competencies in your students. We take great pride in our efforts to build teams, one individual at a time. ■

¹Jones, Stephanie M. and Kahn, Jennifer. "The Evidence Base for How We Learn" The Aspen Institute, National Commission on Social, Emotional, and Academic Development (September 13, 2017)



Keeping the ball aloft for 50 sequential hits is far more challenging than it seems.

Step #6: Debriefing. This is the key step as we learn best not from the experience, but by reflecting on the experience. It is vital that we lead a debriefing conversation after each major initiative. We stress that participants must discuss the process as well as the product of their efforts. We often ask team members if during the problem-solving process they listened more or talked more.

Dear Woods,
 Thank you for being such a creative and innovative person by organizing the challenge courses. It is such a cool opportunity to be able to not only challenge yourself physically, but also mentally. I personally love a challenge, and I greatly appreciate the chance to push myself past my comfort zones therefore expanding it. I thank you once again for creating these opportunities for us. Stay awesome.
 Sincerely,
 [Signature]

An appreciative note to a facilitator after the day's experience.

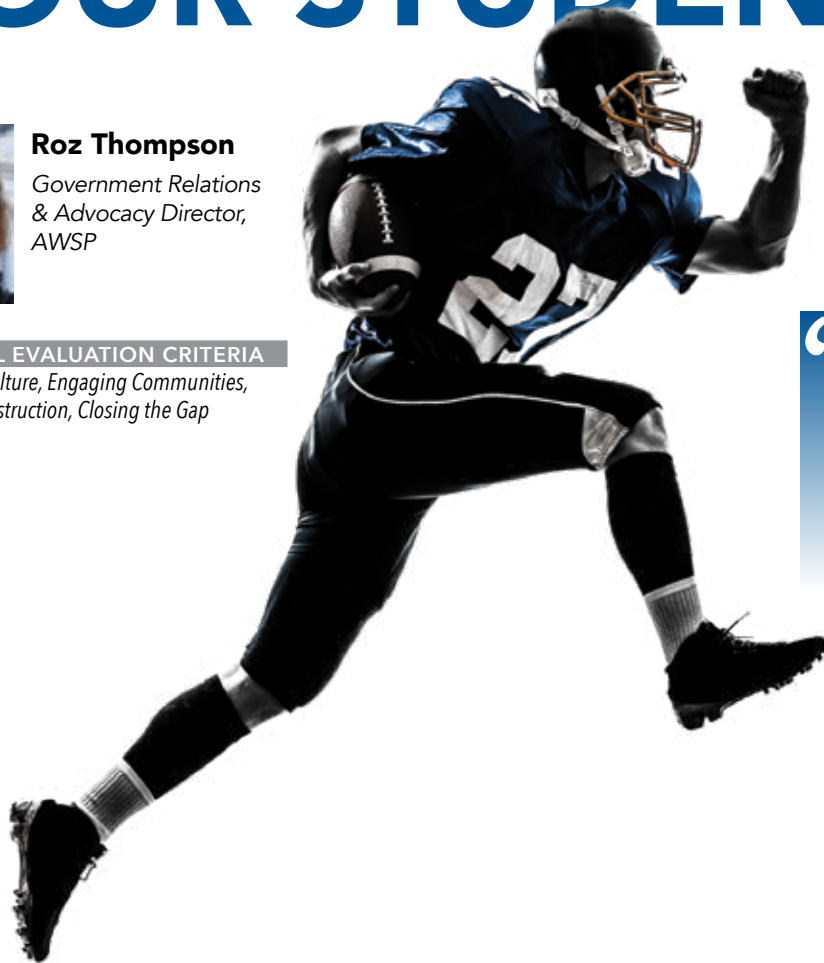
ADVOCATING FOR YOU AND YOUR STUDENTS



Roz Thompson
Government Relations & Advocacy Director, AWSP

PRINCIPAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

Creating a Culture, Engaging Communities, Improving Instruction, Closing the Gap



“Your work has been so good, that it’s almost been silent. You have to carry your image forward — no one will do this for you.”

As Scott Seaman, our executive director, says in his column at the end of this issue, principal leadership matters. You demonstrate this daily to your students, teachers, and community members, but it is time to explain this to a much wider audience. We need to push further and advocate more clearly on behalf of our profession to explain what principal leadership is

and why it matters. As Gene Sharratt recently said to our AWSP Executive Board, “Your work has been so good, that it’s almost been silent. You have to carry your image forward — no one will do this for you.”

Our 2019 legislative platform will speak more specifically to the needs of school principals. It is time for us to be more proactive with policy in order to support our members and encourage future leaders.



Our platform for 2019 consists of the same three intersecting circles we had in 2018. These include ample funding, quality workforce, and student support. We believe support in all three of these areas will equate to success for all students.

AMPLE FUNDING

Despite a healthy increase in education funding from the Legislature for the “McCleary Fix,” inequities in education remain. Special education funding increased but is still not enough to cover costs incurred by districts. Regionalization benefitted many districts but did not help others. Fixed levy rates in the future will drastically limit the amount districts can collect from their communities which will negatively impact budgets.

So, what will be on the list of potential budget fixes for 2019? Increased special education funding makes the list and so does levy flexibility (especially for increased health care costs related to the new School Employees Benefit Board). OSPI’s budget request includes targeted requests for counselors, mental health, and school safety. Other groups will request funds for school construction and career-connected learning.

All of these are important to principals because these different fixes support the system of funding each district receives. And of great significance within this funding discussion is the need for all employees in a district to be paid a wage or salary that attracts and retains quality people. Our recent survey shows the gap between principal pay and teacher pay has narrowed. Data from over 500 K-12 principals (principals, associate, assistant principals, etc.) shows that 28 percent of principals have teachers in their buildings making more per year than they do and that 60 percent of principals have teachers in their buildings making more per diem.



Our whole education systems needs you. Competent teachers and students need competent leaders. It’s up to all of us to carry this message forward—we are all advocates!”

At AWSP, we will support budget fixes suggested by many groups. We will also create materials explaining the importance of supporting principals and principal leadership. We will share all of this with you, with our education partners, and with policy makers.

Besides waiting until next year when the cap on administrator salaries ends, what else can you do?

- Work with superintendents now to plan beyond this year.
- Work with local media to cover a “day in the life of the principal.”
- Share stories with people in your community (including your legislators) to showcase the work you do each day in order to increase understanding about the incredible responsibilities you have as well have the powerful impact you make on the students in your buildings.

Every role in the school is important and people need to understand what you do as the “Chief Education Officer” in your school.

QUALITY WORKFORCE

At AWSP, we are working to make sure we have strong programs for aspiring leaders, new leaders, and master leaders. Thanks to a great partnership with OSPI, we were able to include a budget request for additional money in 2019 to support our internship grant and our mentoring program. We also have support from The Gates Foundation and the Washington Roundtable to support our master leaders. You will start seeing professional learning resources coming your way thanks to Title II funds.

We also have a “wishlist” of ideas around how to increase support for principal leadership in other ways. One idea is to request funding for positions at OSPI and the nine ESDs to support principals. If you have any out of the box ideas, send them our way!

STUDENT SUPPORT

Support for all students is at the heart of our work. There will be many issues in 2019 that directly impact students and student learning, including school safety, mental health, and graduation waivers. We also hope the Governor’s budget includes funding for a new dormitory at Cispus (Burley Mountain Dorm) and increased funding for outdoor education for students. If you have student-centered issues you believe warrant more attention, let us know.

LOOKING AHEAD

Think about all of the ways you can create additional awareness and understanding about the realities and joys of being a principal. Our whole education systems needs you. Competent teachers and students need competent leaders. It’s up to all of us to carry this message forward—we are all advocates!

Finally, enjoy the Honor Roll in this issue, featuring our 2018 Torch of Leadership recipient, Sen. Lisa Wellman (D-Mercer Island). She is truly an advocate for students and the whole education system! ■

Our quarterly profile of educational leadership in Washington state.

Sen. Lisa Wellman

State Senator 41st Legislative District

Senator Lisa Wellman is the recipient of AWSP's 2018 Torch of Leadership Award. She represents the 41st Legislative District (Mercer Island, Bellevue, Newcastle and parts of Issaquah, Sammamish, and Renton) in the Washington State Senate. She was elected in 2016 after a 25-year career in technology and marketing including executive level positions in Fortune 100 companies.



How did education become an area of focus for you in the Legislature?

My campaign for the state senate in 2016 was all about education. McCleary of course was top of mind and my opponent was chair of the Senate Education Committee. Although I have a background in education, I knew I needed to learn more about a number of specific needs. That year I took a deep dive into our state's education challenges – that was nearly three years ago and I'm still learning something new every day. Nothing is more important to our state than providing a high-

“ Nothing is more important to our state than providing a high-quality education for our kids – it's why we spend more than half of our state budget on education.”

quality education for our kids – it's why we spend more than half of our state budget on education. That's why I was so pleased that my caucus entrusted me with the chairmanship of the committee.

What is the biggest challenge the Legislature faces in addressing student needs at the state level in the 2019 session?

McCleary funding and how school districts have been impacted will continue to need careful examination. I'm also focused on school safety – and helping empower educators to install and maintain a school culture that is sensitive to the mental health needs of students. Obviously, mental health support is top of mind for all legislators and will require sufficient funding to address our children's growing needs in this area.

Have you seen any changes in the way the Legislature functions since you were elected? If so, what's changed?

Really? It has been a sea change. The first year, Democrats were in the minority in the Senate and the number of seats on the education committee was reduced so I couldn't even sit on the committee. Now, I am chair! With Democrats in the majority, the vast majority of bills passed this year were bipartisan legislation that put people first, not special interests. I make sure all committee members, regardless of



party, get bills heard. We're focused on putting people first and I feel honored to be in a position to make positive change.

What has had the most influence on your thinking about education reform?

First, I believe public education is the bedrock of democracy. I know, having grown up around schools like Bronx Science and the High School of Music and Art in New York, public schools can be as varied as the community wants or needs. And they must prepare children for work in a 21st Century. This is going to require public education to be flexible and responsive to our rapidly changing country.

With all that you do, what do you do to relax and maintain balance in your life?

I love to be with family and friends, enjoy travel, love reading and exercise my creative muscle with photography.

What book is on your nightstand?

Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind by Yuval Noah Harari.

What is one lesson that you have learned that you would like to share with principals?

A school's culture is one of the most important factors in student success. Creating an inclusive environment where staff and students feel supported and encouraged to be their best is critical. Leadership matters, and as a former executive, I know some days it is really hard. It starts at the top and principals, as leaders of the enterprise, drive school success. Hats off to them and the critical role they play. ■

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RECOMMENDED READING

AWSP is partnering with Scholastic to bring you book recommendations related to school leadership and education. Here are this season's recommendations:



Find these books at scholastic.com/teachers

FOR EDUCATORS

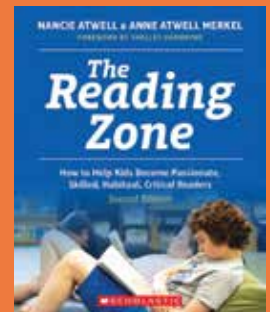
The Reading Zone: How to Help Kids Become Skilled, Passionate, Habitual, Critical Readers, Second Edition

By Nancie Atwell & Anne Atwell Merkel

2015 Global Teacher Prize winner Nancie Atwell and educator Anne McLeod Merkel share strategies for helping students become skilled, passionate, habitual, and critical readers. This new updated edition includes Atwell's latest thinking

about the real meaning of close reading, collaborative, literary discussions, teacher-student reading conferences, the content-rich nature of fiction, and features links to expert-tip videos. New chapters included:

- Writing About Reading
- Literary Discussion
- In Defense of Fiction



FOR STUDENTS

Pig the Pug

By Aaron Blabey - Grades PreK-K

Pig is a greedy and selfish Pug. He has all the bouncy balls, bones, and chew toys a dog could ever want yet he refuses to share with his poor friend, Trevor. Little does he know, however, that being greedy has its

consequences. Join Pig as he learns to share - the hard way! Young readers will love the irresistibly quirky and funny illustrations that are paired with a relatable lesson of learning to share with others.

For dog and pet lovers everywhere.



FOR STUDENTS

Sparrow

By Sarah Moon - Grades 7+

The story of a sensitive, gifted African American girl who tells us with mordant humor what it feels like to spend every day wishing so hard that you could fly away from it all.

Sparrow has always had a difficult time making friends. She would always rather stay home on the weekends with her mother, an affluent IT executive at a Brooklyn bank, reading, or watching the birds, than play with other kids. And that's

made school a lonely experience for her. It's made *life* a lonely experience.

But when the one teacher who really understood her — Mrs. Wexler, the school librarian, a woman who let her eat her lunch in the library office rather than hide in a bathroom stall, a woman who shared her passion for novels and knew just the ones she'd love — is killed in a freak car accident, Sparrow's world unravels and she's found on the roof of her school in

an apparent suicide attempt. With the help of an insightful therapist, Sparrow finally reveals the truth of her inner life. And it's here that she discovers an outlet in rock & roll music...



PSST! Want a chance to win one of these books, compliments of Scholastic? Send an email to webmaster@awsp.org with the word "reading" to be entered to win!

PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP MATTERS

Scott Seaman

Executive Director, AWSP

If there has ever

been a more important time in education to talk about the importance of principal leadership, the time is now. Did you hear me? Principal leadership matters. There is no other way to say it.

Thanks to research by the Wallace Foundation and our own data collection at AWSP's *Principal Education Research Center*, the evidence is clear. According to the Wallace Foundation, Leadership is "second only to classroom instruction among all school-related factors that contribute to what students learn at school. And, leadership effects are usually largest where and when they are needed most." What does that mean? It means that you matter. Your leadership matters. Your growth as a professional matters. And, most importantly, your impact on kids matters. There is no other way to say it. Principals matter. And, principalizing in schools where students face the greatest challenges is even more important. Got the point?

Through decades of education reform, the role of the principal —, whether principal or assistant principal —, has grown exponentially. More and more has been added to your plate as the world of education becomes more



It takes an effective principal to step in and create a long term vision for the school where culture, systems and learning are data-driven and student-centered. Principals lead hope in our schools. And yes, I said hope."

complex and demanding. You are a self-sacrificing servant to all. You are a leader, counselor, advocate, mentor, coach, father, mother, security guard, custodian, food server, social worker, emergency first responder, therapist, and friend to everyone in the system. You can go from observing a classroom, to mopping the floor, to wiping away tears within the swing of fifteen minutes. The best word to describe your work is unpredictable and very similar to running an inner city emergency room.

Serving as a principal today is no small task. It is often described as both the hardest job in the world, yet the most rewarding. Even though our research indicates that 70% of our members report working 60+ hours per week over the course of 5-7 days, you also say that you love your work and the impact you have on kids. It's not very often that a principal isn't moved to tears describing the impact of their work. However, sustaining the pace, demand, and increasing

responsibility is bearing a toll on how long you stay in your buildings.

Principals matter. Principals set the tone in schools by creating a safe and positive school culture. Principals tackle systems that either support or erode that culture. And principals lead the learning for everyone in the system, including themselves. Without principals; culture, systems, and learning can remain untouched and unphased for years. It takes an effective principal to step in and create a long term vision for the school where culture, systems and learning are data-driven and student-centered. Principals lead hope in our schools. And yes, I said hope.

As your Executive Director, I'll never shy away from a conversation with anyone about the important role principals play in our schools. Our goal is to elevate this point to any and all stakeholders in education. Everyone in the system talks about

Continued on page 54

Continued from page 53

the stress, anxiety and unrealistic workload for principals, but now we need to change that conversation to how we can all better support the number two influence on student learning: principals. We need effective principals to commit long-term to their schools and break the national average of 1 in 4 remaining in the same building after five years.

Principal churn is bad for kids and bad for schools. Without effective building leadership, inequitable systems will persist and students will suffer. One of our main goals at AWSP is to partner with key stakeholder groups to reduce principal churn in our state. This can't be an effort by AWSP alone, but rather a statewide and collective response. Our kids deserve consistent leadership because principal leadership matters. If we truly want to close gaps in our state and increase student access, opportunities, and achievement, then we'd better start talking about the importance of consistent and effective principal leadership.

Although recent events might have planted ideas into your heads of moving back into the classroom, we would argue that the kids need you to stay. Your teachers, your school, and your communities need you to stay. It's your leadership that will create the culture, systems, and learning that closes gaps, changes lives, and makes a forever impact on kids. Let's work together to change the equation in our state for principals and build systems to better support you and the best job in the world.

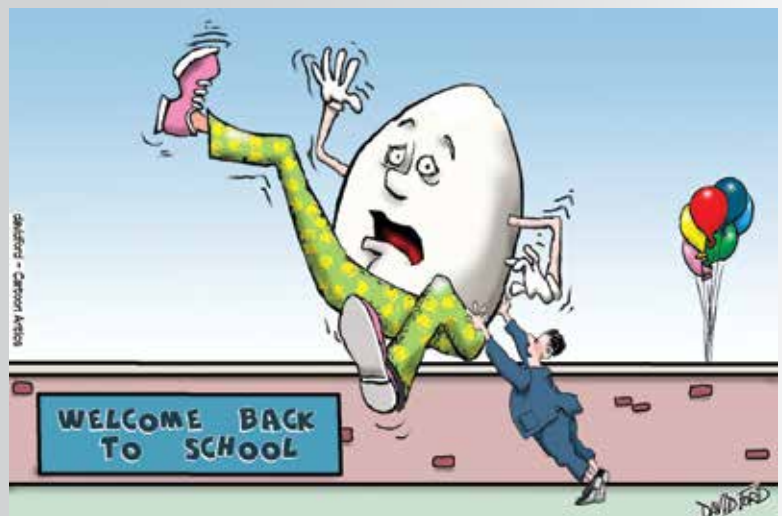
Keep up the great work for kids because you matter. ■



Scott Seaman Scott joined AWSP in the fall of 2013 after serving as the principal at Tumwater High School. In July 2018, he assumed duties as Executive Director.

Humor me!

Created by **David Ford**, Retired Washington State Principal





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