

WashingtonPrincipal

Association of Washington School Principals

WINTER 2015



SETTING THE TONE

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FEATURE SECTION

SETTING THE TONE

School leaders are tone-setters, and the job is by no means easy. This issue of Washington Principal serves to highlight some good examples of positive tone-setting and provide ideas for making a difference in the lives of those you interact with on a daily basis.

- 11** Emotional Intelligence: Surfing the Emotional Landscape Resiliently
Dr. Craig Church
- 16** All Play: Everyone Plays with Everyone
Joe Fenbert
- 21** Derailing School Leadership Distress
Cathie E. West

FEATURED CONTENT

- 32** A Tap on the Shoulder: The Principal's Role in Encouraging Future Leaders
Donald Larsen, Ph.D., Joseph Hunter, James Everett, Tarra Patrick and Kristen Sheridan
- 24** Dual Enrollment: Building Bridges from High School to College and Careers
Noreen Light and Randy Spaulding

IN EVERY ISSUE

- 6** News Briefs
- 6** Did You Know?
- 7** Appy Hour
- 8** Ask a Principal: Keeping It Positive
- 36** PR for Principals | *Tanya Rowe and Jacqueline Brawley*
- 38** Learning Centers | *Martin E. Fortin, Jr.*
- 40** Student Leadership | *Susan Fortin*
- 42** Diversity | *Vicki Bates*
- 46** Honor Roll | *Dr. Anthony Craig*
- 50** Humor Me! | *David Ford*



COLUMNS

- 5** The Editor's Desk | *Caroline Brumfield*
- 10** From the AWSP President | *Rex Larson*
- 49** From the AWSP Executive Director | *Gary Kipp*

ON THE COVER

- 26** Rising from the Ashes: Setting a Tone of Gratitude in the Midst of Loss
Lois Davies and Mike Hull



Cover photo: Pateros K-12 Principal Mike Hull and Superintendent Lois Davies work to rebuild their school and community's culture after a tragic fire. Read the story on page 26.

Photo by Chris Tumbusch

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1021 8th Ave. SE
 Olympia, WA 98501-1500
 360.357.7951 • www.awsp.org

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National Affiliates

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

Repeat After Me

We all tend to pick up traits, moods and habits from those we're around most often

Caroline Brumfield

Managing Editor

As most parents know (and as I am just now discovering), having a toddler in the house can be like owning a parrot, or having an extra shadow that follows you about. My two year old, Lincoln, has learned some great things from me that I've intentionally taught him: parts of the ABC song ("A, E, C, D, P, F, G," he sings), what sorts of things should and should not be eaten (crayons = no), and the different sounds farm animals make.

But he has also learned some traits and phrases from me that I didn't mean to teach him, and that I didn't realize I was saying so often.

"No, no, no!" yells Lincoln as he walks past the running dishwasher, pointing to it in disdain. (I have clearly and on multiple occasions exerted my concern about him touching the buttons while the machine is running.)

"Dirty!" he cries, pointing to a minor oil spill in a parking lot. He then looks at me expectantly, waiting for me to whip out a roll of paper towels to clean things up.

"Gracie, to bed!" he demands of our Chihuahua, as she tries to steal a Ritz cracker out of his hand.

Toddlers aren't the only ones who learn by example and who mimic the tone around them. We all tend to pick up traits, moods and habits from those we're around most often. In leadership positions especially, someone is always looking up to you and learning from you. Leaders are the tone-setters; if you're stressed, your students and staff will pick up on that stress. If you are generally confident and positive, chances are those qualities will embed themselves into the culture of your school.

Being a tone-setter is by no means easy — but it is important. This issue of *Washington Principal* serves to highlight some good examples of positive tone-setting and provide ideas for making a difference in the lives of those you interact with on a daily basis.

What are we saying or doing each day that deserves repeating? ■



Caroline Brumfield is the Marketing and Publications Manager for AWSP. She serves as Managing Editor for Washington Principal.



Happy 25 Years to AWSP Membership Coordinator, Annalee!

November 2014 marked the 25-year AWSP anniversary of our membership coordinator, Annalee Braley. Annalee joined AWSP in 1989 as the production room coordinator. Since then, she has worked with Student Leadership programs, conference planning, professional services support, and much more. She now manages

the membership database and accounts receivable, and coordinates the Middle Level Board and programs. Annalee's anniversary represents the strength of the AWSP staff and its commitment to members. Congrats, Annalee!

Did you know...?

AWSP sponsored its first student leadership program in 1956. Since then, AWSP has continued to grow and adapt its student leadership programs to meet the changing needs of students and schools.

Today, the Association of Washington Student Leaders (AWSL) serves more than 12,000 students and advisers annually through a variety of programs. Guided by rigorous goals and objectives, AWSL is recognized as a national model of excellence.

Learn more at www.AWSLeaders.org.



AWSP's 2014 President's Award: Edie Harding

Congratulations to Edie Harding, the recipient of AWSP's 2014 President's Award! Edie is the Senior Program Officer for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. She was chosen for the award because of her commitment and support of AWSP and our AWSP fellowship.

Evening Magazine: The Best of... Principals!



In mid-November, King 5's Evening Magazine published the "Best of" Washington State Principals for 2014. Puyallup's Stahl Junior High Principal **Troy Hodge** was awarded #1 out of 192 nominees due to numerous tips from voters. ("Ask any of his students! He's truly the best.")

Here are the rest of the Top 5:

2. **Steve Leifsen**, Ferrucci Junior High, Puyallup SD
3. **Ron Banner**, Mann Middle, Clover Park SD
4. **Beth Porter**, Snohomish High, Snohomish SD
5. **Greg Schwab**, Mountlake Terrace High, Edmonds SD

See who else made the list of Evening Magazine's top principals at <http://best.king5.com/best/principal/people/western-washington>.

Legislative Update

LEGISLATIVE NEWS FROM THE ASSOCIATION OF WASHINGTON SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

Watch for AWSP's Legislative Update E-newsletter

AWSP's *Legislative Update* e-newsletter has a new look this year, and we'll continue sending it out to our members weekly during the 2015 session. Stay tuned to the newsletter and the blog as we break down what the action on the "Hill" means for you and your schools.

AWSP's User's Guide Wins Gold!

The AWSP Leadership Framework User's Guide won a Gold Ribbon from the 2014 Association TRENDS All-Media Contest. The contest is an annual competition held exclusively for associations, recognizing the most creative and effective communication vehicles developed in the industry over the prior year.

The 2014 competition included 410 entries in 22 categories of association communications.

AWSP will be honored at the 36th Annual Salute to Association Excellence, to be held February 6, 2015 at the Capital Hilton in Washington DC. The User's Guide will be on display at the event, along with the other winners.

Association TRENDS is the national newspaper for association executives and suppliers, spotlighting the latest news, information and trends in association management for the professional staff of international, national, state, regional and local voluntary organizations.

You can purchase this award-winning Guide from the Apple iBooks Store, or contact AWSP to see if you're eligible for a print copy.



WHY
Culture

HOW
Systems

WHAT
Learning

New TPEP Leadership Team Trainings for 2015

AWSP is partnering with WASA and AESD to bring building leaders and their evaluators together to learn the "how" of using the AWSP Leadership Framework and User's Guide. This three-workshop series is specifically designed for teams rather than individuals. Workshop 1 was completed in mid-January, and Workshops 2 and 3 are taking place in March, April and May in various locations. Learn more or register at www.awsp.org/TPEPtraining.

APPY Hour

AWSP's "tech experts" review a few of their favorite apps and websites of the quarter.



Replay: Make videos, faster than ever.

Replay makes it easy to create amazing videos. In one tap, Replay can analyze your videos, add beautiful motion graphics, and synchronize everything to the beat of the music. Take some footage of an assembly or cool event, run it through Replay, and post it to your website or Twitter.

Available for: iOS (free with in-app purchases)



Collegeresults.org: We

work hard to prepare *all* students to be college ready, but what happens when we get there?

Different academic and social support systems on college campuses yield different graduation rates for students in college, just like they do in high school. At the Education Trust's College Results Online website, families can easily research and compare the graduation rates of colleges, particularly to identify rates for underrepresented minority groups.

"Choose a college" to see its characteristics, and with one click, how it compares to "similar colleges" based on SAT and GPA scores of entering freshmen. Or, "Compare Colleges" to select a group of colleges and see how outcomes stack up.



Backblaze.com: You love your music, movies, and photos. You need your documents. Don't let failed hardware, theft, or disaster take them from you. The best backup systems are

automatic and require no thought. Designed to be easy to use, there is no need to pick folders and files. All your data gets backed up securely. Your computer is going to love it. Peace of mind for just \$5 a month.

Would you like to review an app, or do you have a cool app to share? Email caroline@awsp.org.

ASK A PRINCIPAL

Keeping It Positive

We asked our members, "What is one thing that you do to maintain a positive tone and culture at your school, in spite of the circumstances?" The response was overwhelming!

Here are some of the answers:



“ We get a positive lift every morning by greeting our students and holding the door open for them as they enter our building to start their day, whether it is raining, sunny, or 20 degrees. A warm greeting and a smile is returned several times over. Our students appreciate the gesture and often hold doors open for each other and adults in our building.”

James Everett, Principal

Kurt Harvill, Assistant Principal
Meridian High, Meridian SD

“ I have the luxury of having a small staff. We have 12 certified teachers, a certified counselor, and 3 para pros. My husband and I host our staff at our home several times a year. We provide a main dish, while others bring appetizers and beverages. It is a great way to blow off some steam, reconnect, and remember that we do enjoy each other. It also gives us the opportunity to band together and keeps us from being divided and conquered. Our staff really looks forward to these gatherings and we usually have 100% attendance. It only lasts a couple of hours and we do it right after contracted time is up. This keeps babysitting minimal for staff that need it and gives teachers the ability to come straight over and not get caught up in other things.”

Lara Gregorich-Bennett, Principal

Walter Strom Middle, Cle Elum/Roslyn SD

“ Every staff member at Mountain Meadow was given a journal at the beginning of the school year called a feedback journal. Staff members had the opportunity to personalize their journals with pictures and quotes. The journals give me a place to leave positive comments about what I see in their classrooms and ask reflective questions. They also give any other staff member the opportunity to leave a positive message to another staff member from the school. Teachers are then able to write back comments to me, as well. This has been another wonderful way to celebrate the amazing things our staff members do throughout the year.”

Jeff Byrnes, Principal

Mountain Meadow Elementary, White River SD





“ We continue to recognize students and staff for making a positive contribution to our school. They receive a CLAN shirt (Community, Leadership, Academic, Nobility) and a quick positive statement while in class. It is always amazing — every time we give out a shirt, the class claps in approval.”

John Gummel, Principal
Kelso High, Kelso SD

“ To keep the tone positive, I keep my own head positive. When I find it slipping due to all the commitments and juggling being a principal entails, I go out for recess. I tie shoes; I slap around the four-square ball; I get in the tetherball line. I model for my staff that we must have fun. It’s impossible work sometimes, but with a splash of fun, it’s the most rewarding job in the world.”

Courtney E. Ross, Principal
Fisher Elementary, Lynden SD

“ I learned from a previous principal that handwritten notes to staff — either saying thank you, noticing extra effort, or offering support — go a long way to setting a positive tone in the building.”

Justin T. Bradford, Jr., K-12 Principal
Harrington Schools, Harrington SD

“ I maintain a sense of humor with staff and students. In my weekly bulletin, I post a pun or joke — it is called ‘Just for Fun!’”

Mary A. Wilson, Ed.D., Principal
Fern Hill Elementary, Tacoma PS

“ Over the past few years, we have come together to define what type of school we would like to become. Student voice has become a driving factor in creating authentic opportunities for students to demonstrate their greatness. We have developed student leadership teams led by a staff or parent member. The school developed the 4Gs Network of Student Leaders: Greeters, Guides, Grounds Team, and Green (recycling) and Community Service. Students and staff take pride in our school through these team efforts.”

Karen A. Reid, Ed.D., Principal
Serene Lake Elementary, Mukilteo SD



“ I greet kids in the morning. Sunny, raining, snowy — it does not matter. I find that this connection to kids makes much of the stress I feel take a backseat to the joy these young learners bring to our school. When things are stressful, focus on our kids; they warm the coldest day.”

Donna Hudson, Principal
Greywolf Elementary, Sequim SD

“ The community supports our schools; that means we have supportive parents and students who value the opportunities our high school provides. This has attracted a dedicated teaching staff. That’s one of the secrets to my ability to be a positive leader — I work with a great staff. An old leadership adage is ‘People tend to support that which they help to create.’ Our teachers are leaders, and veteran teachers support and mentor new teachers.”

Bob Walters, Principal
W.F. West High, Chehalis SD

Setting the Tone

is a Principal's Responsibility

Rex Larson

Principal, Gause Elementary
Washougal SD

Successful schools

do not just happen by accident. Schools that are successful share one very important element: they all understand and value the work it takes to create the right culture and atmosphere for excellence to take place with all its stakeholders. Whether one is new to his or her current principal position or has some quality years under his or her belt, there are some key things a school leader must value and be able to do to set a tone of success.

Effective principals set high standards for themselves and others with professional attitudes and respect for doing the work required to meet those standards. Principals must balance high expectations for their staff with the right amount of impatience. The principal needs to send the message that every one of a student's 180 days is an opportunity for learning.

Principals should be able to support the learning and professional growth in others, while at the same time, make themselves vulnerable to their staff by showing that they don't have all the answers to the difficult questions that educators face every day. Principals need to model that they are learners too — that they, as well as their staff, are all in this together. No one will be left behind.

Setting the tone also means the principal understands productive and effective professional learning communities are key and risk-free collaboration is a must. Setting the tone means being able to be both "loose" and "tight" with the required elements of a successful school. The short- and long-term work schools must be able to do in our current age of rigorous standards and assessment is hard. That work cannot be done successfully without the collaboration and shared leadership of its staff members. Developing and supporting leadership in others will help greatly.

Along with developing leadership capacity in others, a principal must always work to encourage and reward creativity and problem solving in their staff. The school improvement plan's success depends on the staff's ability to recognize, design and implement revisions to an action plan based on what they believe will best meet the learning needs of their students in an ongoing way.

Principals should also have a healthy awareness and respect for the important role the parents play in a positive school culture. Successful schools empower their parents by encouraging their involvement and leadership in the school's mission. Understanding this and encouraging and supporting parents to take on

“Setting the tone means being able to be both “loose” and “tight” with the required elements of a successful school.

relevant leadership roles in important support programs is crucial in maintaining a positive school climate that supports instruction and learning.

And finally, a principal should be skilled in the strategic use of humor to lighten the weight of responsibility felt by staff on a daily basis as they do the work it takes to ensure the success of each one of their students. Setting the tone means having the ability to strike a balance between, “*Let's not take ourselves too seriously*” and “*These students have a limited amount of time to master these essential skills so every day must count.*” ■



Rex Larson has served as principal at Gause Elementary since 1997. A long-time AWSP member, Rex is serving as president this year.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

—Surfing the Emotional Landscape Resiliently

PRINCIPAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

Creating a Culture, Ensuring School Safety,
Improving Instruction, Managing Resources

Dr. Craig Church

Principal, Emerson Elementary
Snohomish SD

Anyone can become angry — that is easy. But to be angry with the right person, to the right degree, at the right time, for the right purpose, and in the right way — this is not easy.

— Aristotle

Continued on page 12



Principal Craig Church works with his teachers on planning for math intervention.

Let's face it — being a principal is and always has been a challenging profession. But in the current educational climate of Common Core transitions, resource implications with the McCleary decision, recent popular support for the class size initiative, and local implementation of TPEP in a variety of models, it is particularly intense. One thing we can always count on is change as a building principal. With these changes come a multitude of ways initiatives are interpreted which can lead to confusion and frustration. The pressure of understanding everything and helping those you work with to move forward is at the heart of our job today.

Setting the Tone with Emotional Intelligence

How you handle the pressures being applied by policy makers, legislators, and district supervisors is being watched closely by your staff. Your response to how staff reacts to these pressures is critical to your success in guiding your school. Setting the tone of calm, clear, and reasonable direction to help them navigate the waters ahead is prudent. It is a good time to reflect on the work of Daniel Goleman, who brought the idea that emotional intelligence is just as — if not more — important for us to be successful in our work life as our cognitive abilities. Emotional intelligence is defined as knowing and managing one's emotions, using this knowledge to motivate oneself, recognizing emotions in others, and effectively handling relationships.

Since Goleman introduced the concept in 1995, there have been some adaptations and revisions to his original framework. I'd like to share the more critical components that impact the school workplace, focusing on self-management and relationship management.

Each component is inextricably tied to the others, but allows for self-analysis in this format.

Self-Awareness

Principals with strong self-awareness have the ability to recognize and understand their moods, emotions, and drives, as well as their effect on others.

The self-aware principal has a realistic perspective — not overly critical or unrealistically hopeful. When they admit a mistake publically to their staff, this can be embarrassing. The acknowledgement of this uncomfortable feeling, recognition that making mistakes is a part of being human, and the act of taking responsibility for one's mistakes are values that illustrate the self-awareness component well. A self-aware leader can do this in a self-deprecating manner, using humor to temper the situation. Setting an innovative tone can be messy and full of mistakes for teachers and principals who strive to serve students with new ideas and programs.

Self-Regulation

School leaders with strong self-regulation skills have the ability to control or redirect disruptive impulses and moods. They can suspend judgment and think before acting.

Classroom observations can be a joy to behold or a nightmare to endure. After spending a great deal of time working with a particular teacher, supporting their professional development, and identifying points of growth together, perhaps that teacher just isn't making the gains needed. Your frustration with the lack of growth and awareness is grating and you're about ready to blow. Controlling your frustration is critical in continuing to walk that path of support in a thoughtful manner. Post observations provide an opportunity to continue to be supportive and maintain the expectation for the teacher's growth. Poor performance is an opportunity to explore the reason for failure in an environment of trust and fairness. Teachers are sharing

with one another their perceptions of our demeanor when discussing their practice. If the tone we want to set is one of integrity, being consistent in our emotional responses to staff is important. A hallmark of this component is being comfortable with the ambiguity this implies and the openness to multiple perspectives. Holding high expectations for professional practice from our teachers and understanding they are all in different places on this journey is challenging, to say the least.

“When we listen to angry parents expressing their frustrations, it is important to focus on the common ground between teacher and parent.”

Motivation

Are you called to the profession? Principals with strong motivation have a passion for the work for reasons that go beyond the paycheck. They pursue goals with energy and persistence.

There are many ways to measure how effective our leadership is in schools today. Student assessment data, parent and teacher surveys, and school climate indicators all provided information for us to continue to build upon. Our energy around the engagement in using indicators to monitor and adjust our work is a model for our staff. The focus on achievement is contagious and has an impact on the staff's commitment to the organization. People want to be associated with a school where good things are happening for students. Setting the tone of exploring new approaches for the sake of achievement is a hallmark of this component.

Empathy

Principals who are empathetic have the ability to understand the emotional makeup of other people. They adapt how they treat others bearing this in mind.

With the changes in the teacher evaluation system, anxiety and confusion can be the primary reaction for teachers as we ask them to develop goals based on student data, to be more effective as collaborators, and to make sure they are collecting evidence of their goals. This may be confusing for principals too, as we are also being evaluated differently. Recognizing these emotions as we confer with teachers goes a long way in helping them be successful. We are walking the same path in so many ways with this new system and supporting each other — making sense of it together — can create a fertile space. Empathizing with teachers sets a tone of compassion and creativity that can carry the day in difficult times like these.

Social Skill

Principals with strong social skills are proficient in managing relationships and building bridges between stakeholders. They can find common ground among groups and build rapport within teams.

We have all facilitated challenging meetings between parents and teachers. When we listen to angry parents expressing their frustrations, it is important to focus on the common ground between teacher and parent. Refocusing the conversation on the student and what it will take to make them successful is critical bridge building. Helping that teacher transition from a defensive place where they feel attacked to one of understanding with a child in mind is an important skill for principals to know how to do. Building a culture where many views collide in a healthy manner is priority one in today's schools.

Strengthening Your EI

Recent research regarding emotional intelligence in the school setting suggests it is an important factor in successful leadership and teacher efficacy. Evidence for this can be found for principals at all school levels. While some of this may seem like common sense, we know many school leaders lack the skills mentioned above. All of us are stronger in some areas than others. It is possible to strengthen areas of emotional intelligence given some intentional practice. Listed below are some resources you may find useful should you choose to develop your skills.

- *Emotional Intelligence* by Daniel Goleman
- *Educating People to Be Emotionally Intelligent* by Ruven Bar-On
- *The Emotionally Intelligent Workplace* by Cary Cherniss and Daniel Goleman
- *The Emotional Intelligence Activity Book* by Adele Lynn

Craig Church's doctoral work included studying how principal preparation programs support development of emotional intelligence in candidates. His interest in EI was piqued by the wide variety of skills he saw in his colleagues who either struggled or flourished by the emotional complexities of the position. ■



People want to be associated with a school where good things are happening for students.

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AWSL's All Play workshop games are all designed to be student led.

PRINCIPAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

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

Joe Fenbert

*Communications and Curriculum Coordinator
Association of Washington Student Leaders*

Most of the world's great minds have weighed in on the importance of play. Albert Einstein regarded play as the key to unlocking creativity and imagination, saying "Play is the highest form of research." Plato touted play as the touchstone to character building by stating: "You can discover more about a person in an hour of play than in a year of conversation." Margaret Mead made the case that we all need play, all the time. She said, "Play is not just for kids, it is for all of us. It is

utterly false and cruelly arbitrary to put all the play and learning into childhood, all the work into middle age, and all the regrets into old age." And, the master of play himself, Dr. Seuss, concludes: "Did you ever fly a kite in bed? Did you ever walk with ten cats on your head?...If you never did, you should. These things are fun and fun is good." The Association of Washington Student Leaders (AWSL) has created an elementary workshop called *All Play: Inclusive Games and Activities* to bring back play and make it a positive experience for all involved.

Continued on page 18

IN THE ERA OF HIGH-STAKES TESTING, IT IS EASY TO FORGET THAT *“fun is good.”*

Even U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, a leading advocate of testing mania, is starting to see the lack of fun in education: “I believe testing issues today are sucking the oxygen out of the room in a lot of schools.” If we as educators want to make a difference, we need to get out there and join kids in their play! As Mr. Fred Rogers believes, it could be the most important thing we do: “It’s the things we play with and the people who help us play that make a great difference in our lives.”

PIONEERING PRINCIPALS OF *play*

Thanks to some pioneering principals of play, more than 1,000 students from five elementary schools began this school year with a dose of play. The goal of the All Play workshop is to expose students to the power of the AWSL Play of Allegiance: “*Play fair, play fun, everyone plays with everyone.*” The workshop is broken into 60-90 minute sessions with about 90 students each. Students learn inclusive games that can be played at recess, in classrooms, during lunch or while standing in line. The workshop includes the All Play manual that contains more than 100 games. Here’s what the pioneering principals have to share about their All Play experiences:

Assistant Principal Emrie Hollander of Neely-O’Brien Elementary (Kent SD) wanted to provide another layer of support for her students with the All Play workshop. “It is important for students to begin the school year feeling connected both to school and to one another. You never know which experience is going to connect a student to school. Our classrooms are doing some great work to incorporate social-emotional learning. The All Play workshop allowed us to add a student leadership component. On rainy days at recess, many students stood under the eaves of our buildings staying dry. Now, I see our recess teachers leading games and the students leading games instead of just standing. We also have 20

RANDY FURUKAWA

Neely-O’Brien Elementary students (Kent SD) engage in the All Play workshop.



The AWSL All Play facilitators are ready to play games...are you?



RANDY FURUKAWA

applications from our 4th and 5th grade students to be 'play leaders.' The plan is for the older students to lead play at the start of school recess when all the students are arriving. We plan to outfit them with All Play Staff t-shirts to make them very visible. Having older students lead games at morning arrival will be a great way to build community first thing in the morning."

Principal Tammy Jones of Riverview Elementary (Snohomish SD) was also aiming to boost her school's student leadership program with the All Play workshop. "This is our first year of having student leadership at the school. We have 50 students in the 5th and 6th grade

AWSL PLAY ACRONYM AND THE AWSP LEADERSHIP FRAMEWORK EVALUATION CRITERIA

P = People who can play together, can learn together.
(Closing the Gap)

L = Leadership and life skills are learned through play.
(Creating a Culture)

A = All Students Belong (ASB)
(Ensuring School Safety)

Y = Yippee! Let's have fun together!!!
(Engaging Communities)

that are interested in working with younger students through mentoring, tutoring and leading recess games. This leadership team also plans our monthly assemblies, organizes service projects, makes morning announcements and helps us implement our character education program, Project Wisdom. Learning about their own leadership styles and skills have helped them build the capacity to be more inclusive of others and to enter in more collaborative leadership experiences. They understand now that it is more about serving others and not just being in the spotlight and receiving recognition. An added bonus of the All Play workshop has been our teachers are now interested in incorporating some of the table games into their classrooms as energizers and icebreakers."

“ Having older students lead games at morning arrival will be a great way to build community first thing in the morning.”

Emrie Hollander
Assistant Principal, Neely-O'Brien
Elementary (Kent SD)

Continued on page 20

Principal Amy Sturdivant of Weyerhaeuser Elementary (Eatonville SD) used the All Play workshop to add to an already robust and inclusive recess program. “Our students already lead imaginative games with each other on the playground. The All Play workshop has given us more games to choose from and supports our school-wide initiatives around kindness and collaboration. Our 5th grade students have demonstrated amazing leadership at recess, as we’ve allowed them to take ownership of leading the play of the newly learned games. They facilitate games independently and work hard to include as many kids as possible.”

EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH REGARDING *play*

Neurophysiologist and educator Dr. Carla Hannaford states in her book *Smart Moves: Why Learning Is Not All in Your Head*: “Physical movement and emotional safety, from earliest infancy and throughout our lives, plays an important role in the

creation of nerve cell networks, which are the fundamental ground of learning.” So, a good game of tag at recess is not just a child’s version of a coffee break, it is, as Hannaford suggests, a “spark which activates our attention, problem-solving and behavior response systems so we gain the skills necessary for cooperation, co-creativity, altruism and understanding.” Play primes our learning pump.

The American Academy of Pediatrics states in the article “The Crucial Role of Recess in School” that “recess is a necessary component of a child’s development and, as such, it should not be withheld for punitive or academic reasons.” A recent study noted that up to 40% of U.S. school districts have reduced or eliminated recess to allow more time for core academics, and one in four elementary schools no longer provides recess to all grades. Ironically, many schools are cutting recess to improve academics, and in

doing so, are undermining a student’s chance for academic success.

SETTING THE TONE WITH *play*

Play is not about setting the tone; play *is* the tone! If you’re ready to promote emotional safety, connect with the community, boost student leadership and liven up your school’s culture, grab a Dr. Seuss Hat and join in the fun. ■

RECESS RESOURCE

Playworks (playworks.com), which started in 1995, is one of the first organizations to promote recess. Their site is loaded with research articles, games, success stories, and products. Consider using a professional company like this one or the AWSP-sponsored All Play workshop (www.AWSLeaders.org) to get kids playing.

The goal of the All Play workshop is to introduce students to the AWSL Play of Allegiance: “Play fair, play fun, everyone plays with everyone.”



RANDY FURUKAWA

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DERAILING

School Leadership Distress

For principals, there is no shortage of stress triggers, but these tips may help.

Cathie E. West

Educational Consultant and Author
cathieileenwest@gmail.com

PRINCIPAL EVALUATION CRITERIA
Creating a Culture, Managing Resources

My mind was racing as I left a School Board meeting that had drawn to a close after running into overtime. Although I had experienced a succession of long, tiring work days I was energized by the meeting's focus — raising student achievement in mathematics. Principals had reported innovative ways they were making gains and I

child's learning, keep up with job demands, and support the people I served. What I didn't know was that fear is a manifestation of *anxiety* which in turn is triggered by *stress* (Foxman, 2007).

School Leadership Stress

Stress is “a physical, chemical, or emotional factor that causes bodily or mental tension and may be a factor in disease causation” (Merriam-Webster,

Stress Clues

When does *routine* stress become too much stress? Foxman lists “headaches, backaches, difficulty relaxing, muscle twitches, and low energy” among the signals of stress overload (2007, p. 62). A compromised immune system, irritability, insomnia, and depression are other glaring indicators (Queen & Queen, 2005). For principals these symptoms spring from such a multiplicity of sources that stress overload seems inevitable.

Continued on page 22

had picked up strategies I was eager to try. As I entered my car, an exhausted looking colleague approached to air his concern about the School Board's increasing emphasis on boosting test scores. “I'm not sure I can do much more,” he lamented before unexpectedly asking, “What motivates you anyway?” I wish I could say I had shared an inspirational core belief but in truth, my first response was: “Fear.” I thought at the time I was making a joke and so did my colleague — we laughed then headed for home. But as I drove the familiar roads back to my family I realized how true my reply *had* been — I feared I would be unable to improve every

2008, p. 1235). Unfortunately for principals there is no shortage of stress triggers — misbehaving employees, out of control students, irate parents, contentious unions, and demanding accountability mandates to name just a few. Because stress can lead to health, social, and emotional problems it should not be ignored (Ginsberg, 2008).



Leadership Stress Sources

Principals manage a myriad of demanding situations. The most draining include children who have been abused; the unexpected deaths of students or employees; and 911 calls for medical or law enforcement assistance. Less dramatic stressors — but no less powerful — include efforts to raise student achievement, managing tight budgets, and taking disciplinary action against staff members violating directives. Although these stress producers may seem overwhelming, stress is manageable with the right strategies.

Stress Management Strategies

The interventions that follow are the ones that kept me in the principalship for thirty-five years. These strategies spring from the fields of medicine, psychology, and the social sciences; the wisdom of veteran colleagues; and my own efforts to stay fit and energized.

Perfecting Performance

Principals improve performance by mastering the knowledge and skills outlined in resources like *Leading Learning Communities: What Principals Should Know and Be Able to Do* (NAESP, 2008).

Principals also grow by engaging in coursework, reading professionally, and collaborating with colleagues (West & Derrington, 2009). Principal collaboration includes participating in book studies, discussing promising practices gleaned from conferences and webinars; and joining leadership development consortiums, such as the Washington State Leadership Academy (www.waleadershipacademy.org). Perfecting performance requires persistence but the payoff is higher productivity but lower stress.

Stay Healthy

For busy principals a healthy lifestyle seems impossible. Long workdays cut into exercise routines and make fat laden “fast food” the default meal on the run. Given the time crunch, how can school leaders stay fit?

Good health begins with a strong commitment coupled with the right interventions. These might include

a comprehensive medical check-up, joining a gym, consulting a counselor, or enrolling in a weight loss clinic. For optimum impact, healthy practices should be incorporated into one’s day to day activities. Here are a few easy to implement ideas:

- **Schedule time to exercise:** Regular aerobic exercise improves physical, cognitive, and emotional functions (Ratey, 2008). I rise at 5:00 AM to get in the exercise I need on my treadmill. I skim through journals as I work out so catching up on professional reading is an added benefit.
- **Pair a healthy activity with a work related task:** Take students ready to “blow” on strolls through the campus, supervise soccer at recess, or deliver “good news” notes to teachers.
- **Take control of your food intake:** Bring a healthy lunch, like yogurt and a granola bar, to work every day; keep nuts and dried fruit on hand so that you can pass up the office candy bowl; and surreptitiously deep six the pastries left on your desk as gifts.
- **Relax:** Read to kindergarteners; help a developmentally delayed student learn a life skill, like tying shoes; or take a few moments for reflection and meditation.

Incorporating healthy practices isn’t rocket science but it does require

Get your life back on track and derail school leadership distress with a few stress-management strategies.

dedication and planning. Better physical and emotional health makes these efforts invaluable.

Stay on Top of Your Workload

Chaos is a salient feature of leadership life but if things get too chaotic even the best administrator could become discouraged. To gain control of a mushrooming workload identify priority responsibilities; set incremental supporting goals; and chart accomplishments. I was once the evaluator of forty-three employees but “chunked out” this intimidating responsibility into achievable weekly objectives. I took the same approach with the implementation of Common Core State Standards and Washington’s Teacher and Principal Evaluation Program. I created weekly and monthly time lines that laid out manageable units of work. When leadership responsibilities are perceived as manageable, stress subsides.

Reduce Clutter

If your office looks like a cyclone hit it, think about the impact. Unfiled documents are hard to find, time sensitive material gets buried under desk debris, and valued supplies become inaccessible. Reduce frustration by keeping things orderly on a day to day basis. An uncluttered environment is restful to the eyes and essential documents and tools remain at your fingertips.

Derail Your Distress

The stress that accompanies leadership life can be distressing. Fortunately stress can be derailed by identifying stress triggers, recognizing signs of overload, and using strategies that keep stress symptoms at bay. Derailing stress will not only improve job satisfaction but guarantee a long and rewarding leadership career. ■


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About the Author

Cathie E. West (cathieeileenwest@gmail.com), who served as school administrator for over 35 years, is an educational consultant and author residing on a farm in Colville, Washington.


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Dual Enrollment

Building Bridges from High School to College and Careers

Noreen Light

Associate Director
Washington Student Achievement Council
noreenl@wsac.wa.gov

Randy Spaulding

Director of Academic Affairs & Policy
Washington Student Achievement Council
randys@wsac.wa.gov

What better way to set the tone of a college-going culture than to provide

college-level learning experiences for all high school students through dual-credit programs? All students—especially underrepresented students—would have greater opportunities to complete high school, earn college credit and graduate from college if the barriers to dual-credit participation, financial and otherwise, were removed.

Dual-credit programs provide rigorous coursework that can fulfill high school graduation requirements, college general education or elective requirements, or offer an early start toward STEM careers. Dual-credit programs also save money. Earning dual credit while in high school can significantly reduce the time and money required for students to complete a postsecondary degree.

The Challenges

In Washington, a variety of dual-credit programs offer academically prepared students the opportunity to earn college credits while still in high school. There are course-completion options, such as Running Start, College in the High School, and Tech

Prep, as well as standardized exam options, like Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and Cambridge. Unfortunately, the differences between the various dual-credit options have been unclear to students, and not all options are available statewide.

Cost has also been a critical barrier. For example, students in College in the High School pay up to \$350 per course. In Running Start, students must provide their own transportation and books. Tech Prep lost all federal funds in recent years, which decreased dual-credit opportunities in technical fields of study. And, although some low-income waivers are available, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and Cambridge programs all have associated fees. An investment of \$30 million over the next biennium would fund College

“Dual-credit programs provide rigorous coursework that can fulfill high school graduation requirements, college general education or elective requirements, or offer an early start toward STEM careers.

in the High School course tuition for more than 75,000 courses and serve more than 30,000 students.

Eliminating Barriers

In 2014, the Washington Student Achievement Council began convening a cross-sector group

Summary of Proposed Policy Changes

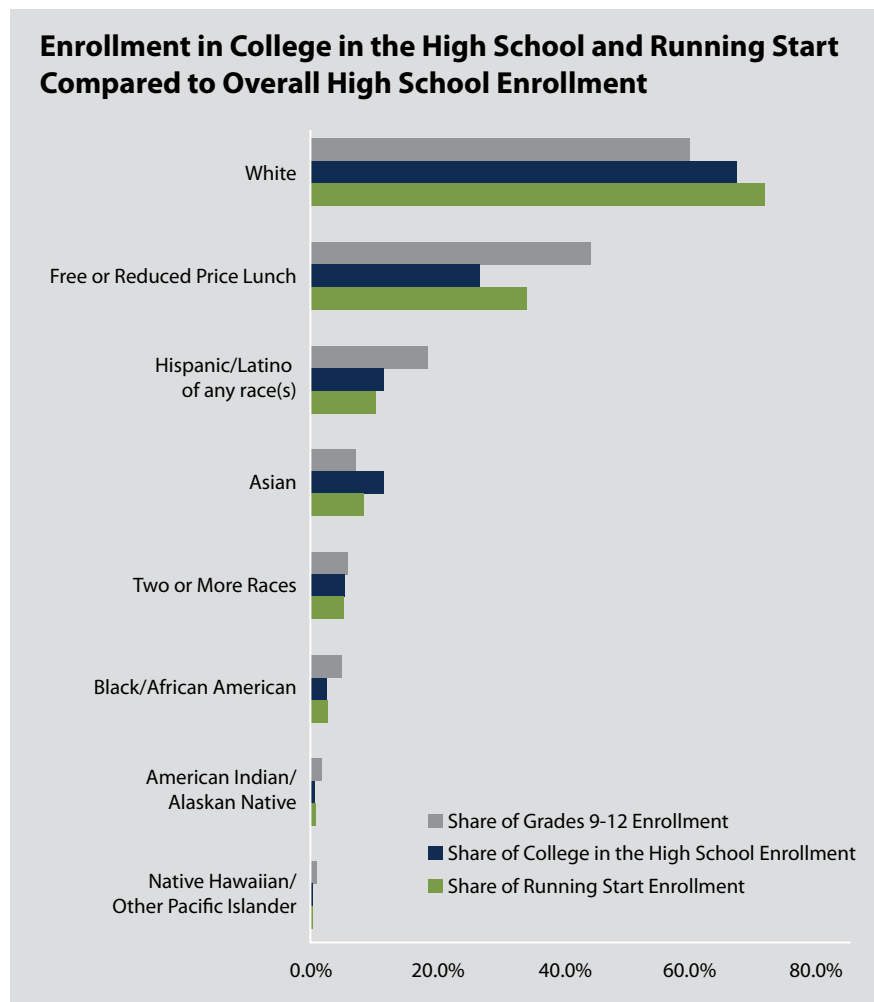
- Supports quality by adopting standards that are informed by nationally recognized models.
- College in the High School: Student pays no fees. K-12 keeps the full 1.0 FTE. College receives \$70 per credit, per student. Students are eligible from 9th to 12th grade.
- Running Start: Schools can apply for Accelerated Learning Incentives grant funds to assist students with transportation and books.
- Dual-credit programs include both career and technical education and general academic coursework.

of educators and administrators to identify barriers and make recommendations for improvement in dual-credit programs. Based on input from this workgroup, the Strategic Action Plan dual-credit proposal was formed. It addresses persistent barriers that result in disparities in student access to, and completion of, dual-credit programs.

The following dual-credit policy and funding changes are proposed in the Washington Student Achievement Council's 2014 Strategic Action Plan:

- Eliminate student costs in the College in the High School program.
- Expand eligibility for College in the High School to academically prepared 9th and 10th graders.
- Provide opportunities for both academic and technical education courses.
- Provide flexibility in the Academic Acceleration Incentive program to assist students with transportation and book expenses associated with the Running Start program.
- Support program quality through adoption of standards informed by national models.

Under current law, no state funding is provided to assist with costs to postsecondary institutions for the College in the High School program, and students enrolled in these programs are not counted toward institutional enrollment targets. Because the program generally relies on tuition revenue for support, students who are not able to pay course fees may be excluded from earning credit—despite a student's academic ability and completion of college-level work. In addition, while 9th and 10th grade participation in



other programs (particularly AP) is on the rise, the College in the High School program—which, prior to 2009, was open to all high school students—is now limited to students in 11th and 12th grade. Making policy changes in these areas would allow students to benefit from dual-credit coursework based on their readiness to succeed in the courses, rather than their grade level or financial status.

Looking Ahead

This fall, the dual-credit workgroup convened by the Washington Student

Achievement Council will continue their work, with a focus on reducing student costs and expanding access in order to reduce opportunity gaps resulting from existing barriers and inconsistencies. By fall 2015, the workgroup will forward their next set of recommendations to the Council, with the goal of increasing the participation and success of low-income and underrepresented students in Running Start, Tech Prep, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and Cambridge International programs. ■

Further Information

OSPI dual-credit programs and data: <http://k12.wa.us/secondaryEducation/careercollegereadiness/dualcredit/default.aspx>

WSAC dual-credit policy: <http://www.wsac.wa.gov/college-credit-high-school>

WSAC dual-credit workgroup meeting materials and resources: <http://www.wa-dualcredit.wikispaces.com>



Pateros ASB student officers Irish Easter, Ashton Steggall, Lorie LeDoux, and Lauren Gestin stand in front of the school's "Rising from the Ashes" mural.



Rising from the Ashes

Setting a Tone of Gratitude in the Midst of Loss

Mike Hull

K-12 Principal
Pateros SD

Lois A. Davies

Superintendent
Pateros SD

PRINCIPAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

Creating a Culture, Ensuring School Safety, Managing Resources, Engaging Communities

One hundred heroes walked single file into the Pateros School Gym to a standing ovation Wednesday, November 26, 2014. The students and the staff of the Pateros School District cheered for their invited guests as they crossed in front of them. Each guest received handshakes, hugs, and a certificate of heroism thanking them for making a difference in the

lives of those who were now applauding them. These fire fighters, law enforcement, first responders, relief workers, chaplains, volunteers, friends and family showed courage and compassion during a time we desperately needed it — a time of immense loss for our community.

Continued on page 28

The Carlton Complex Fire was started by lightning strikes on Monday, July 14 and traveled on Thursday, July 17 at a speed of a football field a second to become the biggest fire in Washington state history. The fire took 20 percent of the homes in the Pateros School District. Four school districts were directly impacted, including Brewster, Okanogan, and Methow. In Pateros, over 10 percent of our students lost their homes, which translates to two or three students in every class. Over 10 percent of our staff members also lost their homes. One hundred percent of our community was evacuated and went without electricity or phone service for eight or more days.

Amazingly, only one life was lost during the fire.

The Pateros community and school district has been working to rebuild ever since, but we haven't lost hope. Instead, we've risen from the ashes even stronger.

Dealing with the Staff's Loss

After the fire, we contacted every member of our staff to let them know upfront that they had our utmost support for anything they needed. Five staff members lost everything they had. In our conversations with staff, we gained a clearer picture of how each individual was impacted by the firestorm. The majority of our

staff members have been friends and colleagues for many years, and our hearts went out (and continue to go out) to those who lost so much.

It was important for us not to dwell on their loss. Instead, we aimed to keep an open door and be ready to hear their stories when and if they wanted to share, rather than bringing it up in every conversation or singling them out in a public gathering. We let staff know that we are here for them. We continue to work hard to avoid singling anyone out while still conveying that pride should not keep them from accepting the help being offered. Help can be difficult to receive, yet acceptance and a simple

Principal Mike Hull sets a fun and positive tone with Pateros School District students.

CHRISTUMBUSCH



“ The counseling community made it clear that displaced students would be best served by returning to their previous school and friends. Reestablishing normal routines is an important step in creating a new sense of security.

thank you can bring healing for all when the exchanges occur with dignity, grace, and privacy.

PTSD Support

It quickly became clear in the relief effort that counselors and case workers were needed in Pateros. We sought and welcomed qualified volunteers immediately and worked hard to obtain funding for permanent paid counselors. It is essential to find professionals that have the expertise in trauma counseling to help the students, families, and neighborhoods affected by this tragedy. We were aware that many students who did not lose their homes also needed support. As with the adults, we were careful not to publicly single out any students who had experienced loss.

The school teamed with the long-term recovery group and others to create the needed infrastructures and facilities to house caseworkers. The Spokane regional service network invited Pateros Schools and Okanogan Behavioral Health (OBH) to apply for a grant that will provide one counselor and one caseworker starting January of 2015. Volunteer chaplains, counselors, and trained volunteers came to the school

September through December. We had to be intentional in coordinating the efforts to provide the needed support. While the support for crisis counseling in Okanogan County is in place, it has remained our goal to be proactive and prevent the need to move into crisis mode.

Returning to Normalcy

Our goal was to have as many students as possible return to school after the fire, even though many students had to move away to a different town. The first step was to contact each student's family. We sent letters to the last known address and phoned or spoke in person with each family advising them on our school's status and the available services. Our transportation department did a fantastic job of making sure every student had a safe and timely ride to school. We teamed with neighboring districts to pick up and transfer students to our buses. When needed, we had a van go into the other districts, with their permission, to pick up younger students.

The counseling community made it clear that displaced students would be best served by returning to their previous school and friends. Reestablishing normal routines is an important step in creating a new sense of security. As the winter months arrived, we offered to provide transportation funding for the families and share the costs with the other districts in an effort to help students retain normalcy. In some cases the whole family moved to other districts too far away to transport, so they enrolled in those districts. In a few cases the students went to live with other family members in separate communities while the parents worked on obtaining a home for the family. Again, we communicated often about the kids with the districts that were welcoming them. The primary concern was to see that the kids were established in a safe and nurturing

setting with supportive adults engaging them in learning.

A Community of Connectedness

When reflecting on the lessons learned from this experience, two thoughts emerge: the importance of being connected with a strong network of support, and the need for each person to have a sense of making their own choices. When we are connected and able to have ownership of where we are headed, it enables us to see the bright spots and become hopeful. The generous offers of help with materials, manual labor, and financial contributions have been amazing.

The Pateros School District served as the major distribution center for 15 days, from July 19 to August 2, serving meals three times a day, every day. Over 2,000 individuals came through multiple times to pick up needed supplies, water, and a warm meal. An average of 250 spontaneous volunteers served with the pre-recovery and relief work daily. Students, families, and staff from Pateros joined in the volunteer work. It was amazing to recognize so many faces of educators and community members that came from across the state to join in the work of response.

Chaplains and volunteers with experience and training in disaster recovery joined our effort the first evening. What started as a few quickly grew in numbers. They made themselves available to help our community process the events and to assist us in pacing ourselves for the work ahead. Several groups from the national Volunteer Organizations that Assist in Disasters (VOAD) came alongside in the recovery and rebuilding process. The goal has been to build local support systems that have local ownership and reflect the tenacious personalities of the people who live

Continued on page 30

in the communities impacted by the fire. Local community members naturally stepped into leadership roles. Their leadership capacity grew with experience, coaching, and debriefing. The learning curve was steep and many rose quickly to the challenge. The volunteers who had experience in disasters quietly helped community members recognize their own strengths and abilities. The local leaders continue to organize the rebuilding process that will take place over the coming years. The school continues to be an integral part of the community's recovery.

A Dinner of Gratitude and Hands of Coping

The Pateros Associated Student Body (ASB) Officers attended the Washington Association of Student

Leaders (WASL) summer conference. They returned with clear ideas and specific plans to infuse our school with positive attitudes. On the first day of school, the leaders used signs and activities to set a positive tone for the year. In October they met with the school administrators and a facilitator who specialized in assisting with recovery after trauma.

The Pateros ASB declared November as a month of gratitude. The ASB leaders worked with their teachers to organize a series of activities. The first week of November, each K-12 student was offered postcards to invite guests to attend a Dinner of Gratitude on November 24. The high school students created a Hallway of Thanksgiving using black lights, covering the walls with black paper, and posting the things they were

grateful for on neon paper across one side of the hallway.

The second and third weeks of November, students were provided with writing prompts to share about acts of courage and compassion they experienced and to describe ways they respond to stress. Two days prior to the Dinner of Gratitude, 7-12 grade students joined with K-6 students in the elementary classrooms and took turns reading the stories of courage and compassion they had written. Using neon paper, they traced their hands and wrote down different ways they cope when they feel stressed. The older students assisted younger ones in cutting out the traced hands and hanging them on the other side of the Hallway of Thanksgiving. On the day of the Dinner of Gratitude, guests walked through the decorated hallway

Superintendent Lois Davies and Principal Mike Hull stand in front of a decorated wall in the Pateros Hallway of Thanksgiving.

CHRISTUMBUSCH



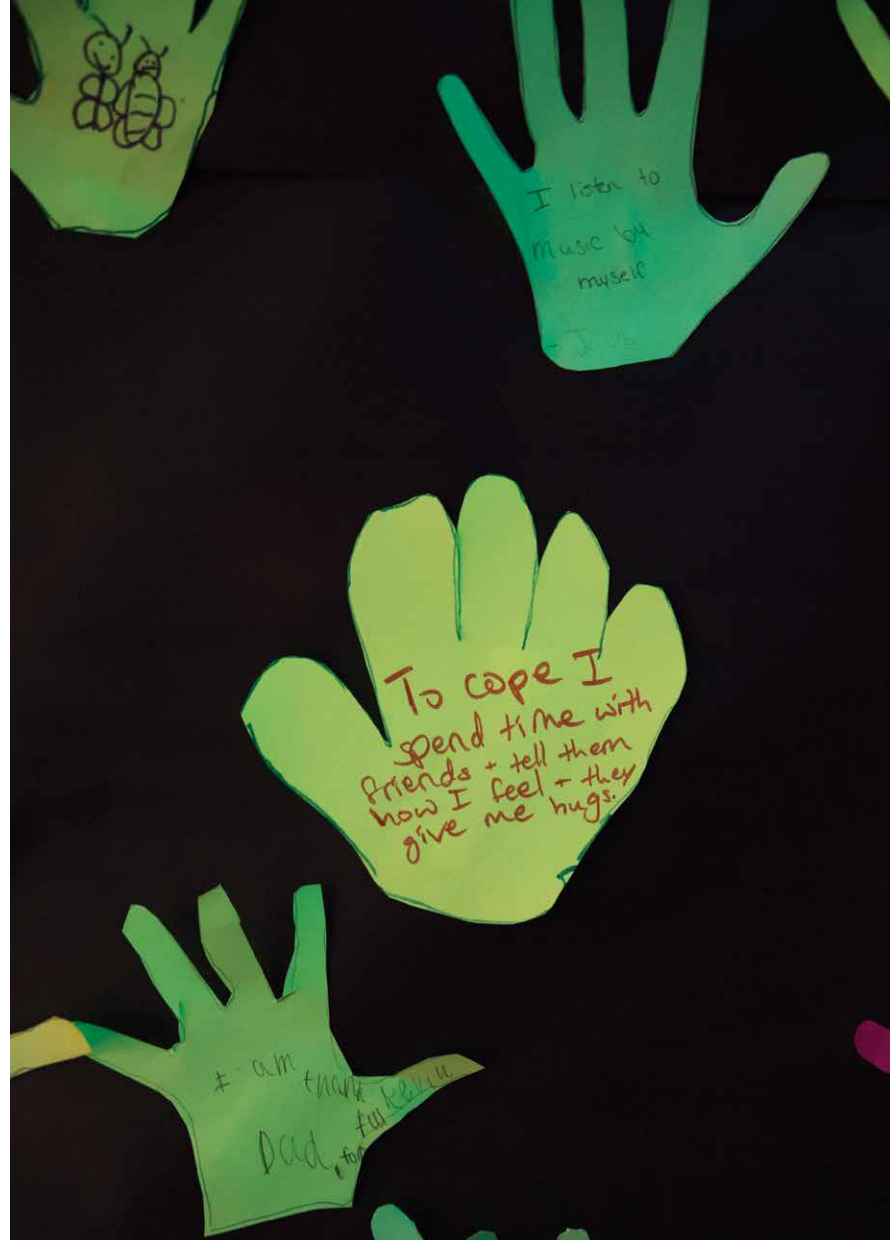
“ There is no simple way to thank all of you who walk beside us. Our gym is not big enough to hold all of the people who went above and beyond to help us emerge whole, strong, and richer for having walked this journey.

on their way to the gym where they joined all the students and staff members who had invited them.

Moving Forward in Hope

School opened five days late, only 55 days after the fire engulfed our town. With \$2.25 million in damages to the school, we accessed the Emergency Repair Pool provided by Washington state legislators. This allowed us time to sort through the details of insurance and FEMA Public Assistance while still moving ahead with the repairs and replacements. The majority of the projects were completed in a three-week period. The contractors put other projects on hold so they could complete the cleaning, replace the roof, repair the electrical damage, update older flooring, and replace the carpet and ceiling tiles that had smoke damage. They followed through on their commitment to have our doors open by September 5. Amazing people worked hard to help our community to return to a new, wholesome normal.

Dedicated teachers who normally have access to classrooms and supplies all summer put together their lesson plans on a very short timeline. They only had four days over a weekend to prepare onsite. They rose to the occasion to provide



To decorate the Hallway of Thanksgiving, Pateros students traced their hands and wrote down ways they respond to stress.

CHRIS TUMBUSCH

smiles and a warm welcome to all who entered their classrooms. Our entire staff placed the kids first. We have never been so proud or so moved to see such a resilient and committed group of professionals.

Much to Be Thankful For

On Celebration Wednesday, November 26, the heroes gathered on the new bleachers across from the students and staff in the gym. All of those gathered listened to “A Changed Gratitude,” a poem written by a 17-year-old student. The firestorm on a Thursday in July transformed us all. As we prepared for the Thursday of Thanksgiving, we knew there was much to be grateful for, much we had taken for granted, and many who cared.

There is no simple way to thank all of you who walk beside us. Our gym is not big enough to hold all of the people who went above and beyond to help us emerge whole, strong, and richer for having walked this journey.

Pateros Strong: Building a Culture of Persistence. ■

How You Can Help

The Community Foundation of North Central Washington supports all areas impacted by the fire. Visit www.cfnw.org to make a donation online for the Carlton Complex Fires.

A TAP on the SHOULDER

The Principal's Role in Encouraging Future Leaders

PRINCIPAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

Improving Instruction, Managing Resources

Donald Larsen, Ph.D.

*Associate Professor
Western Washington University*

Joseph Hunter

*Assistant Professor
Western Washington University*

James Everett

*Principal, Meridian High
Meridian SD*

Tarra Patrick

*Principal, Totem Middle
Marysville SD*

Kristen Sheridan

*Principal, Sand Hill Elementary
North Mason SD*



There was a time — not many years ago — when a district, upon announcing a principal vacancy, might expect to receive inquiries from dozens of eager, well-qualified applicants. In the second decade of the 21st century, after conducting a nationwide search, a district may receive a bare handful of applications. In some cases — and particularly where a high school principal's position is open — the district may open and re-open the search two or three times before a satisfactory pool of applicants can be assembled.

“As goes the principal,
so goes the school.”

So, in the current school climate that includes demands and mandates not imagined a generation ago, what might prompt an otherwise happy, fulfilled, successful teacher or ESA to make a transition to school administration? Many of us who are principals or assistant principals, whether we have been in an administrative role for 20 years or 2 years, may recall a tap on the shoulder from our principal or superintendent, giving us gentle encouragement to consider pursuing an educational administration program that would lead to principal certification. We might also recall that, until that moment, we had not contemplated such a career move; in fact, we may have bridled at the very thought of accepting a role on the “dark side” of the profession.

The principalship is, without a doubt, one of the most noble roles to which a professional educator can aspire. Research shows that the principal is the single greatest influence in shaping a school in which students flourish. As goes the principal, so goes the school.

Three Principals Reflect on Developing Leaders

We invited three Washington principals to reflect on what motivated them to seek a leadership role in education. While all three offered insights about the upside aspects of the principalship, they also contemplated why a Washington principal might not offer the catalytic “tap on the shoulder.”



**James Everett,
Principal,
Meridian High
School**

Upon completion of his principal preparation

program, James moved from assistant principal to principal in less than a year at Meridian High. His transition into school leadership was not the result of a sudden epiphany. Instead, over a period of time, while he remained in a classroom position, he had multiple opportunities to develop his leadership capacity while he kept the prospect of becoming a principal at arm's length.

For James, the grain-of-sand-in-the-oyster moment that crystalized his aspirations came as a nudge from his superintendent.

“Five years into my teaching career, my then-superintendent had the ‘what are your long-term plans’ conversation with me in his office. He mentioned seeing promise in me and wanted me to know he would support me if I made a decision to pursue administration.”

Because he enjoyed the opportunities he found as a teacher and in other roles in his district, 10 years would elapse before James explored his options as a school administrator. “I fought the urge for four or five years,” James recalls. “I was coaching. I was heavily involved in teaching adult technology courses in Washington and other states. I had a young family

with two elementary-aged children. My time was limited, and I didn’t think there would be any flexibility to squeeze in an administration program, much less be able to afford it.”

Pushing James toward administration was a growing sense that, while he was enjoying success in the classroom, there might be a broader, more influential role in his future. He wanted to make a difference. “I had gotten to a point where I wanted to positively impact the educational system — and that still drives me today.”

James takes his responsibility to pay forward seriously in his role as principal. He is alert to those teachers who show the requisite spark of aptitude for leadership. Yet not everyone who aspires to become a principal is driven by motives to lead, inspire, and shape an effective teaching and learning community.

“As practicing building principals, we have a vital responsibility to endorse and sponsor those who demonstrate promise in this field.”

“I am wary of those seeking administration for a jump in salary — or who lack the desire to lead, fail to express interest in students and service, or rarely demonstrate a willingness to seek opportunities to grow programs and increase student achievement. I would encourage them to seek a different path. The future in educational administration must be filled by those who exhibit passion, desire, and leadership.”

James harbors no illusions about the challenges that inhabit the principal's office. Mandates such as

Continued on page 34

TPEP and Common Core require an administrator's engagement. Over the past three years, he has overseen construction of a new high school on the same site where Meridian High School has stood since 1911. "There is no doubt about how demanding a building administrator's role has become. In fact, it's been a challenging role for a long time," James acknowledges, "and yet incredibly satisfying."

"There is not a lot of talk about the exciting, fulfilling parts of being a building administrator. They exist in the everyday rewarding work with our students, families, and communities — but we are too often consumed with the fast pace of the here and now — while also preparing for what is coming next. We don't take the time to reflect or share our successes — though doing so could help create a positive perception of the principalship."

What responsibility does the principal hold for shaping the future of school administration? "The truth is that this work is too important to promote those who aren't prepared or willing to put in the time and energy to lead well," James avers.

"As practicing building principals, we have a vital responsibility to endorse and sponsor those who demonstrate promise in this field — and to encourage those who may be seeking an administrative role for inappropriate reasons to consider another avenue."



**Tarra Patrick,
Principal,
Totem Middle
School**

While many in our profession follow a career trajectory

from undergraduate education to the classroom to the principalship, Tarra's leadership journey began in the U.S. military. Yet education and educational leadership were

deeply rooted in her thinking and aspirations, having been influenced by her mother, whose career in education included several leadership roles.

“Talking with successful administrators who have more experience shows me that these individual situations are not the sum of this experience.”

"My goal coming into education was always to work toward administration," Tarra recalls. One of her early opportunities for leadership grew out of her role as a teacher on special assignment — a math TOSA. In her TOSA position, she was supporting teachers in all her district's secondary schools. "I began to see the work of educating our students on a more global level; I started to see myself as being able to do the work of an administrator." Finding the right "fit" was part of Tarra's objective in becoming a school leader. "In order to have peace within, you have to have a job that allows you to work in alignment with your thinking."

Like James, Tarra is not convinced that every good teacher should be encouraged to transition from the classroom to the principal's office.

"I think that a person could be a very successful teacher, but not be in the right space to pursue administration. It would not be good for a person who desires power, sees the administrator/teacher relationship as adversarial, or is only looking for the pay increase."

But Tarra does not see being a gatekeeper as an appropriate role for the principal. "No one has the right to decide for someone else when they are 'ready.'" Although there may be scenarios in which she would choose

not to write a letter of reference for someone she believes has the wrong motivation or skill set to become a principal, "I would never position myself as a barrier to that person's progress."

Tarra acknowledges that there are "inside" and "outside" conversations about her role as principal.

"When I speak to people outside of administration, I talk about the positive aspects of the principal's role. When I speak to fellow administrators or those who have been administrators, I talk about all the wacky situations, unhappy adults, and struggles of the job. I think we do this because, when we get together, we are often looking for support for the difficult work. We are looking to commiserate over the things we can't share with other groups of people. Talking with successful administrators who have more experience shows me that these individual situations are not the sum of this experience."

Tarra feels that a key role for the principal is to provide leadership opportunities for teachers, and to be available to support teachers as their skills as leaders emerge. In her estimation, though, the low-hanging fruit in principal development is likely to be found among assistant principals who are ready to make the next transition. "Most importantly, principals have a great duty to help APs become principals. It is our responsibility as principals that we create an environment where APs have the opportunity to develop building leadership skills."



**Kristen
Sheridan,
Principal,
Sand Hill
Elementary
School**

Kristen's passion for the

classroom and effective pedagogy permeates her thoughts about school

administration. Before she seriously contemplated becoming a principal, she had opportunities as a teacher to take on leadership roles. “It felt good being able to make global and systemic changes to our school system,” she recalls. Like James, she was passionate about implementing strong, effective pedagogical practices in her own classroom, and she enjoyed sharing her successes and challenges with colleagues. However, she felt that her reach beyond her own classroom was limited. “I found that in an instructional leadership role I could make an impact on instructional practices beyond my classroom.”

“ Just as I was provided opportunities to take on leadership roles, it is equally my job to provide those opportunities to staff within my building.”

Having a strong mentor to model effective leadership may be the ideal context in which an aspiring principal might develop the chops to embrace an expanded role in school leadership. But with several years’ experience in the principalship, Kristen is not naïve about survival in the role and the need to maintain a sense of balance. Reflecting on Dr. Seuss’s admonition that “life’s a Great Balancing Act,” Kristen says, “The current demands of the principal’s role are quite large.” She adds:

“Balance is what you must do as a principal or assistant principal: balance the instructional leadership role with the management components of the job; balance the emotions of the staff, students, and parents; balance the schedule, the interventions, the extensions; balance

implementation of curriculum, instruction, and assessment; and the list continues.”

The administrator’s job is fraught with demands that, Kristen believes, can be turned into exciting and fulfilling components of a principal’s role. “The grass is green where you water it. Although our roles are demanding, we must find those fulfilling moments.”

Do principals and assistant principals have a duty to encourage and mentor new leaders into the profession? “Absolutely,” Kristen says. “Just as I was provided opportunities to take on leadership roles, it is equally my job to provide those opportunities to staff within my building.” Kristen welcomes the prospect that she might support a colleague who, like her, feels that pull toward the principalship.

The Challenge

Each of these principals — James, Tarra, and Kristen — offers a different perspective on the role of the principal in identifying and supporting future educational leaders. A common thread emerges: as building administrators, we have a duty to encourage and support those who show promise as tomorrow’s Washington principals and assistant principals. They are not immune to the challenges that accompany their work, not least of which are mandates from the state and national levels; but they — and you — are also in the best position to connect the dots between the budding leadership attributes a teacher or ESA may show and the door to the principalship that might be opened.

Who in your building is ready for that tap on the shoulder from you? ■

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Bellingham's Strategic Plan Creates a District-wide Culture Shift

PRINCIPAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

Creating a Culture, Ensuring School Safety, Managing Resources

Tanya Rowe

*Executive Director of Communications and Community Relations
Bellingham PS*

Jacqueline Brawley

*Communications Manager
Bellingham PS*

As instructional leaders, our work tends to focus on improving systems through all types of strategies. There's Response to Intervention (RtI) strategies, behavioral and de-escalation strategies, communications strategies, safety and security strategies, and the list goes on and on and on...

And yet, it's easy and at the same time, tragic, to neglect to build and then continue to strengthen the foundation that needs to be in place before any of these strategies can be highly effective: school culture.

Peter Drucker, a past president at Ford Motor Company, who coined the famous phrase, "Culture eats strategy for breakfast," understood that any company that disconnects the two puts their success at risk.

What's Culture, Anyway?

School culture sounds nebulous and elusive. Yet, spending time at any school — especially in the lunchroom with kids, staff lounge or on the playground with parents — will begin to provide insight into how the school really works.

The Glossary of Education Reform says this about school culture: "The term school culture generally refers to the beliefs, perceptions, relationships,

attitudes, and written and unwritten rules that shape and influence every aspect of how a school functions, but the term also encompasses more concrete issues such as the physical and emotional safety of students, the orderliness of classrooms and public spaces, or the degree to which a school embraces and celebrates racial, ethnic, linguistic, or cultural diversity."

Talk of school or district strategic plans, mission, vision and core beliefs can usually send most principals running from a room because too often, they've been involved in committee processes that result in cumbersome documents that do little more than take time and then collect dust.

The Bellingham Promise

In 2012, Bellingham Public Schools set out to buck this trend, and we looked to colleagues around the country who were having success. We then engaged students, staff, parents and our community in shaping our 2-page strategic plan, known as *The Bellingham Promise*, through a process open to everyone. Three years later, the result is a culture shift with principals not only being able to articulate a common focus for our



Principal Jay Jordan with Shuksan Middle School students.

entire school system, but who are enthusiastically working closely with staff, students and parents to nurture school culture around this collective commitment and share their success.

Here are some thoughts on the topic from two principals known and respected for their work in the Bellingham area — Jay Jordan of Shuksan Middle School and Jeff Vaughn of Bellingham High School:

Q: What are your communication practices for creating culture?

Jay: Language is important in culture. People are always more important than any one issue or a single behavior. If a student is going through a hard time, it's important in how we talk about that student and make positive assumptions about intentions. A foundation of culture is how we talk to each other, how we treat each other, and how we



Principal Jeff Vaughn addresses his students at Bellingham High School.

talk about each other. Shuksan is a place where there is a lot of “positive gossip.” That’s a sign of a great culture. We think about each other in a positive light. We don’t talk about each other behind our backs. Instead, we problem-solve together. We’re all part of the solution.

Jeff: Since I took over the role as principal, we created an e-blast. It goes out to all members of our community (staff and parents) and includes highlights of the past week, events coming up, and celebrations of kids and staff that we think anyone might want to see and hear about. We (the school administrators) regularly do classroom visits. We went into every classroom the first week of school to talk about Bellingham High School’s collective commitments and how we, as a school, all take care of each other, and how the *Bellingham Promise* impacts us all. We also held a staff retreat before the school year started. It was simple: we just spent an afternoon together and got to know each other better. We worked in teams and played games and worked on connections and teamwork. We also meet with classified staff regularly. We want this to be the

most welcoming, caring school it can possibly be for our students and community. We hold open houses and many evening activities with parents to get them involved, too.

Q: What are the most influential factors in trying to change a school’s climate?

Jay: Climate has a lot to do with how both students and staff treat each other — especially when we disagree. A telltale sign of our climate is the way we treat students when they are misbehaving. The most important thing I do is model. I treat others how I want to be treated. I smile. I’m friendly. I go where the issues are, the disagreements are, and work on solutions. I am present.

Jeff: I had the great fortune of being a part of the team that re-opened this school 15 years ago after a two-year closure. We were able to build the school climate together from the ground up — from leadership, teachers, staff and students. That’s why students wrote and developed our collective commitments. Now they keep it alive, year after year. They believe we can be different from most other schools. We have students who are proactively sharing with other students, especially underclassmen, about how things work in our school. We rarely have fights and use restorative practices when there are issues. Students believe in our collective commitments, and we allow them to grow our culture around these commitments. We have very few school rules listed because everything falls under the collective commitments. It’s student-led and that’s very important.

Q: How do you work to set the tone at your school?

Jay: I set the tone by honoring and recognizing hard work — both our students and staff. You may have heard of this concern about “false praise.” I don’t believe it’s a negative

thing. When I speak to future teachers and college students who are going into education, I always bring this up — the idea about false praise and the concerns we hear about it. But in education, we praise kids for doing real things. That’s what we’re supposed to do. Recognition is important. We’re in the development business. We’re in a culture about recognizing kids for doing the things that we want them to do. I just can’t believe we’re doing harm because we’re giving praise for the right kind of behavior.

I also think it’s important to remember that culture isn’t something you buy. I didn’t send my staff to a training on culture and *BOOM*, it just happened. Culture has to be about working together to make things better. It’s active problem solving — then making sure everything can be understood by our kids.

Jeff: I just come to work. Truly. I work hard to keep this great climate and culture alive. We, as administrators, staff and students, talk about it at every meeting and focus on it every day. ■

Bellingham High School’s Collective Commitments:

- We believe in treating all members of the BHS community with dignity and respect.
- We believe in taking care of this great place.
- We believe in producing quality work.

Find the details of each of Bellingham High School’s Collective Commitments at <http://bellingshamschools.org/collective-commitments>.

View the two-page *Bellingham Promise* strategic plan at www.bellingshamschools.org.

Financial Literacy

and Student Activities

Martin E. Fortin, Jr.
Director of Learning Centers, AWSP

PRINCIPAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

Creating a Culture, Managing Resources, Closing the Gap

National Standards for Financial Literacy

In 2013, the Council for Economic Education issued the National Standards for Financial Literacy. The document provides a framework for teaching personal finance from kindergarten through 12th grade. The intent of the standards is that every student should be able to make sound financial decisions, understand the economic reasons for those choices, and know the basis for their decisions. The standards contain these areas of knowledge and understanding that they consider fundamental to personal finance:

- Earning Income
- Buying Goods and Services
- Using Credit
- Saving
- Financial Investing
- Protecting and Insuring

Each of these six standards includes benchmarks outlining what a student should be able to understand. The benchmarks also emphasize decision-making skills aligning planning and goal setting, financial decision making, and assessing outcomes to each standard.

Drawing Parallels

Secondary students involved in extracurricular activities address these standards in a most practical way and at a very high level. Washington statute and administrative code requires student engagement in the supervision of those public funds dedicated to Associated Student Body programs. The day-to-day operations of the ASB require student officers to address each of these standards as they relate to running the extracurricular business of clubs, classes, and athletic activities. There are parallels to personal finance and the administration of public money for student programs in each element.

Earning Income. Student officers are charged with oversight of all fundraisers for student activities. This work includes approving the intent of the fundraiser, monitoring income, controlling inventory, and reconciling revenue and expenses. In addition, student officers must work to determine profit and eventual use of the money earned.

Buying Goods and Services. The control of ASB fundraising also includes the student's input into the selection of vendors,

“

As students engage in this process, they learn lifelong skills, making them better consumers and managers of their own finances. The practice of supervising Associated Student Body funds provides for an advantage that will last a lifetime.

recommendations to their principal for contracts, and the formal approval of all purchases as indicated in student minutes.

Using Credit. The approval of purchase orders for both fundraising and equipment or supplies implies the extension of credit. Students learn that those funds are now encumbered and are no longer viewed as part of the money available for use. In addition, it is a shared responsibility with the adviser's and principal's approval whenever



Snohomish High School ASB students talk budget.

VINCE IVELIA

the ASB general fund loans or grants money to clubs, classes, or sports. Students work to assure that the grant money is spent wisely and loans are repaid.

Saving. A major spring activity for officers in secondary schools is the development of the annual budget, which includes carefully anticipating revenues and expenses based on past performances, and future plans with an eye to unanticipated expenses, and those periodic opportunities like athletic playoffs. Finally, the students must plan for carryover funds to start the next year with needed cash before revenue streams flow again.

Financial Investing. In consultation with their advisers and bookkeepers, students learn to read and monitor financial statements including starting funds, revenue, expenses,

transfers, and investment income from the local county treasurer. These statements are approved at student council meetings and posted on a school's website annually. Student leaders learn to invest in club and class activities and evaluate the outcome of their actions.

Protecting and Insuring. During the course of this experience, student leaders learn generally accepted accounting principles; the need for strong internal controls; compliance with local, state and federal laws, rules, and guidelines; and the process of stewardship of public money generated in the students' interest.

A Lifelong Advantage

Throughout this process, students work with adults in applying decision-making skills and setting goals for the ASB operation. Their continual evaluation of the process and product, and communication among the students and staff stakeholders, leads to sound financial decisions designed to meet state audit standards. As students engage in this process, they learn lifelong skills, making them better consumers and managers of their own finances. The practice of supervising Associated Student Body funds provides for an advantage that will last a lifetime. ■

Learn more at
www.councilforeconed.org/resource/national-standards-for-financial-literacy.

A New Identity: THE ASSOCIATION OF WASH

Susan Fortin

Director, Association of Washington Student Leaders

PRINCIPAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

Ensuring School Safety, Improving Instruction, Engaging Communities, Closing the Gap

AWSP's student leadership programs were facing an identity crisis.

Our letterhead said Washington Student Leadership, but schools joined the Washington Association of Student Councils. Defining ourselves by student council alone seemed limiting. A group of student leaders, advisers, and principals took a serious look at the scope of our programs and concluded that we were more than either name suggested.

Student Leadership in our state is sponsored by the **Association of Washington School Principals (AWSP)**. A logical connection for our partnership with principals is to call the student leadership division the **Association of Washington Student Leaders (AWSL)**.

Student Leadership is All-Inclusive

Our new identity reflects the inclusive view of leadership that is prevalent in Washington schools and is promoted through our work. Student leaders

come in all shapes and sizes and do a variety of things aimed at creating strong schools. The work happens through ASB, cheerleaders, leadership teams, student-led service projects, clubs, fine and performing arts, and curriculum courses — just to name a few. AWSL embraces the leadership efforts of all students. Elementary-level safety patrols and recess buddies, middle-level student leaders engaged in authentic student voice initiatives, and high school leaders embracing mentoring and community connections are all leaders and

making a difference in their schools. This is what the Association of Washington Student Leaders (AWSL) represents.

Why the link to AWSP?

Principal support for student leadership began in 1956 with sponsorship of the first summer leadership camp. Principals serving on the AWSP Student Leadership Committees guide programs to best meet the needs of schools. With the AWSP Leadership Framework being the evaluation framework for virtually all Washington principals, an even stronger link to student leadership has been established. The eight criteria that principals are responsible for and evaluated on are also areas student leaders directly impact. Now, more than ever, it is crucial that student leaders and principals partner in Creating a Culture, Ensuring School Safety, Planning with Data, Aligning Curriculum, Improving Instruction, Managing Resources, Engaging Communities and Closing the Gap. The AWSP Leadership Framework

Initialisms vs. Acronyms

Initialisms are pronounced as the letters themselves. In the educational speak of Washington state, examples include OSPI, ESD, AWSP and now AWSL.

Acronyms are initials pronounced as a word. The former state test known as the WASL (Washington Assessment of Student Learning) is an example of an acronym that will live for years in the vocabulary of educators.

WASHINGTON STUDENT LEADERS

COMPASSION TO ACTION
ASSOCIATED WASHINGTON
STUDENT LEADERS

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Bridge

Breast
Cancer
Awareness

FREE
THE
CHILD

Students highlight the power of service at an AWSL Conference in Olympia.

OLYMPIA SCHOOL DISTRICT

User's Guide, created to support the AWSP Leadership Framework, contains a chapter called Partnering with Student Leaders.

Will our school still be a member of WASC?

Joining the Washington Association of Student Councils (WASC) was the old way to affiliate your school with the work of Washington Student Leadership. Now, schools will be joining the Association of Washington Student Leaders. Benefits include: discounts on AWSL programs; subscription to the electronic newsletter, In the Loop; special publications; eligibility for recognition programs; direct entry into the student leadership database; and the knowledge that your membership fees directly support the work of AWSL. Membership fees for the 2014-15 school year are: \$75 High School, \$65 Middle Level, \$25 Elementary.

What are the programs of AWSL?

We will continue to offer leadership opportunities for student and advisers through a variety of

approaches. AWSL services include workshops, conferences, custom programs for individual schools, publications, award programs, adviser trainings, and Summer Leadership

and Cheerleadership Camps. For more information on our programs, visit www.AWSLeaders.org. ■

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GRADUATION

PRINCIPAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

Creating a Culture, Planning with Data, Closing the Gap

Vicki Bates

*Director of Principal Support
and Middle Level Programs, AWSP*

Dave Martinez

*Assistant Principal
Sunnyside High, Sunnyside SD*

Ryan Maxwell

*Principal
Sunnyside High, Sunnyside SD*

View of the 2014 Graduation Ceremony at Sunnyside High School.

CURTIS CAMPBELL



ON FOR ALL

Sunnyside High School Leaves No Room for “the Gap”

“Give us a 9th grader and we can get that student to graduation.

Our community should hold us accountable to do so,” proclaims the administration of Sunnyside High School (SHS). The administrative team indeed sets the tone. The school’s population is 90% Hispanic students and 100% of students receive free or reduced price lunch. Further, SHS owns all students in its boundaries, as it reclaimed the students of its alternative school in 2007.

With the commitment of leadership over the last five years, the graduation rate at Sunnyside High School climbed from a low of 46% in 2007 to 85.1% in 2013, while student attendance, enrollment, and achievement have risen as well. Sunnyside is identified by OSPI as one of four leading districts in the state achieving the least disproportionality for students in poverty within the context of high graduation rates.

Continued on page 44



Owning It

Ownership and accountability for improving school culture and student performance began squarely on the shoulders of the administrative leadership team at SHS. Under the leadership of then principal Chuck Salina, the team internalized the words of Carl Glickman:

Teachers are in the forefront of successful instruction; supervision is the background, providing support, knowledge, and skills that enable teachers to succeed. When improved instruction and school success do not materialize, supervision should shoulder the responsibility for not permitting teachers to succeed.



CURTIS CAMPBELL

278 students have graduated over the past four years that would not have graduated if Sunnyside High had maintained its previous graduation levels.

As such, school improvement efforts at Sunnyside first addressed schoolwide culture and systems of support. The second focus of the work included PLC systems and goals, with classroom instructional goals following only after the other components were put in place.

Roles within the administrative team are defined with clear accountability

for ongoing monitoring and support. A small number of key quantitative (and sometimes qualitative) metrics for each area of responsibility are identified for formative data collection and monitoring. For example, each administrator is assigned academic departments. Administrators monitor student failure and meet with content PLC teams to confer on strategies for supporting students for each department on a weekly basis. Other examples of regularly monitored data include the number of students earning their way in/out of Grizzly Time (required for students with less than 94% attendance and/or a C+ GPA), teacher perceptual data of levels of support from the counseling office, student behavior data, and level of teacher interaction with parents. Leaders are continually monitoring their data with rigor.

All Hands on Deck

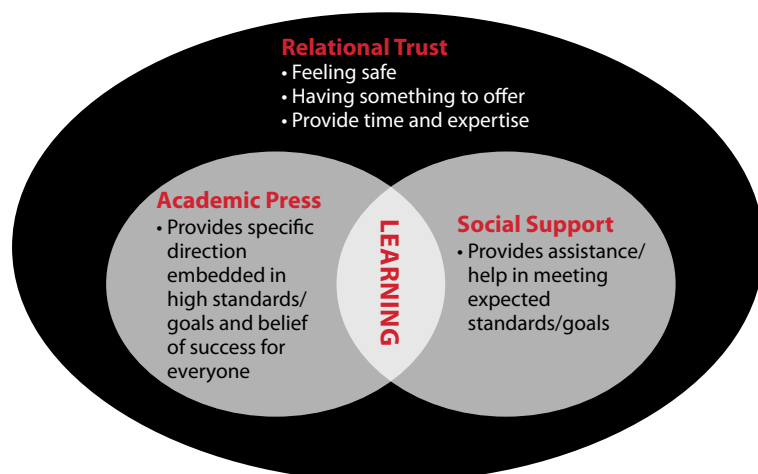
Faced with a low attendance rate, high failure rate, and a large caseload of students off track for graduation, the administration and counseling teams partnered in fall of 2010 to establish the *All Hands on Deck* approach to monitor and intervene to keep students on track. As an outgrowth of a problem-of-practice approach within their PLC structure,

counselors created a color-coding system for identifying student needs, shifting from a reactive to proactive approach. This weekly monitoring system continues in use today with each counselor accountable for a caseload of seniors. One of the assistant principals has direct responsibility for tracking and supporting 5th year seniors. Teachers report an appreciation for counselors as partners in assisting them with student success.

Letting Students Take the Lead

Student leaders have been an integral part of the transformation at Sunnyside as well. In the fall of 2010, students were called to action when half of them were asked to stand in the gym to represent the portion of students who would not graduate if the trend at SHS continued. Students in leadership classes (traditional and recruited nontraditional leaders) initiated attendance drives and encouraged positive school changes through assemblies and schoolwide promotions. All students were called to be part of a new vision for their school and community — to be personally committed to their own achievement and as supports to one another. Students became invested in the school and its reputation.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



Three-pronged Philosophy

Leaders at Sunnyside enacted a three-pronged philosophical framework that continues to form the foundation of their efforts today: **Academic Press, Relational Trust**, and **Social Support**.

Leaders at Sunnyside believe, “Combining academic press, relational trust, and social support supports all parties within the reform effort and makes a more successful, stable, and sustainable model.”

A shift in the mindset of the leaders around what both students and adults in the school were capable of achieving was critical at the outset of the change process. The administrative team acknowledges strongly that the development of meaningful, sustained relationships — adult to adult, adult to student, and student to student — were essential to creating the culture necessary for changing outcomes at Sunnyside High. This relational trust creates a climate in which all stakeholders feel safe and as though they have something authentic to offer.

Given this priority, administrators spend approximately 70% of their time out of the office; routinely checking in with students and the adults in the school to maintain trust via open lines of communication and active problem-solving. District practices have changed to allow this focus so administrators are not pulled from the schoolhouse during the instructional day.

Within this environment of trust, high academic press is defined by high and clear standards for student performance and a belief that all can achieve. When combined with supports for achieving these standards, learning occurs.

Secret to Success

This blend of high expectations combined with strong support are

suggested in these comments from Ashley, a senior transfer student to SHS this year:

I am now attending SHS and progressing toward my goal. What one school told me was impossible another told me was possible and I wouldn't have to do it alone. They said it wouldn't be easy, but if I was willing to put in the hard work, I would succeed and that's all I needed to hear to start me on my journey.

While they have put “programs” in place at the school, the leadership team at Sunnyside High School will tell you it is the philosophical orientation and commitment that guides the work that makes the programs successful, not the activities themselves. The leaders have been willing to take on and learn new behaviors in service of creating the conditions for changing school culture, systems, and, ultimately, outcomes for students. As a result, 278 students have graduated over the

Sunnyside School District Graduation Rate Trend

Graduation Year	Graduation Rate
2007	46.0%
2008	49.9%
2009	49.7%
2010	64.8%
2011	70.9%
2012	78.4%
2013	85.1%
2014	84.7%

past four years that would not have graduated if SHS had maintained its previous graduation levels. Assistant Principal Dave Martinez proclaims, “We were once considered a dropout factory and are now considered a choice school.” What a difference for the lives of these students and the culture of a community! ■



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Our quarterly profile of educational leadership in Washington state.

Dr. Anthony Craig

Dr. Anthony Craig is the recipient of the 2014 WSASCD Outstanding Young Educator Award. He was presented with the award at the October Washington Educators' Conference in Seattle.

Anthony is currently principal at Quil Ceda Tulalip Elementary School in Marysville School District. He is also serving on the AWSP Diversity Task Force this year.



NATE DAVIS

How long have you been a principal?

I am currently in my fourth year as principal. Prior to serving as principal at Quil Ceda Tulalip, I was an instructional coach and kindergarten-first grade teacher at the same school. I have been at this school since my student teaching in 1999.

Who or what inspired you to pursue a career in education?

My dad was a teacher for over 30 years and has always been a major influence in my life. Many members of my extended family — aunts, uncles, and cousins — are also educators. It really is our “family business.”

My maternal grandmother encouraged our family to work hard in school and to truly value educational opportunities. Educational systems have historically failed to serve Native communities. My grandmother helped us imagine what schools could and should be for our people and

“My grandmother helped us imagine what schools could and should be for our people and encouraged us to affect change in the educational system.

encouraged us to affect change in the educational system. I decided in kindergarten that someday I would be a kindergarten teacher so I could offer a positive experience to students. My parents and grandmother have encouraged me since then!

What do you think is one of the biggest diversity challenges facing schools today?

One significant challenge in this area is around notions of what it means to be “culturally responsive” and how to establish schools that can be described as such. Teachers I have

the privilege of working alongside strive to develop culturally responsive practices that meet the needs of our students. We approach this through open dialogue about race and culture and through formal professional learning structures that allow us to participate in genuine inquiry through which we are able to refine practices that are truly culturally responsive.

Additionally, my colleagues and I are working to inspire more of our students to become teachers in the future. The teaching force would benefit a great deal from the development of more teachers of color, and for our region, more American Indian teachers to serve communities like ours.

From your point of view, what does it mean to serve the “Whole Child?”

Our school’s official school-improvement plans include initiatives to serve the “whole child.” Rather than settling for simply “bumping” standardized test scores, we aim to

offer an educational program that educates and develops students through improved academic skills, enhanced social-emotional wellbeing, and rich cultural knowledge. We say that our students should be healthy, empowered scholars who have deep traditional knowledge.

Our work serving the “whole child” has included work around intrinsic motivation and maintaining a “growth mindset” for learners, understanding compassion and kindness, and teaching and modeling the value of the Tulalip Tribes.

“ Be a learner — every day. Learn from every student, from every classroom walkthrough, from every family interaction. Be a learner!

What do you do in your school to unite others and build strong relationships?

We work to stay connected through genuine collaboration. Educators in the building are united around a common vision that encourages problem solving, innovation, and shared leadership — our relationships develop by maintaining an action orientation that leads us toward our shared goals. The same is true for relationships with families and other community stakeholders — by collaborating with families and community members, the whole child can be considered in ways that reveal new strategies that lead toward success.

What is your life motto?

I think my life motto is still developing and adapts based on

Continued on page 48

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current circumstances. For now, I can offer two quotes that drive me in my work and life:

First, a quote from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. that in many ways helps me maintain forward momentum even when the challenges of “school improvement” are weighing heavy on my shoulders. I am reminded that our students rely on our daily work in schools to help empower them to chart a successful course in life. *“Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.”*

The second quote comes from a young Tulalip elder. When discussing the need for ongoing advocacy work she said, *“We must do work that liberates the souls of our grandmothers.”* We have incredible opportunities in contemporary times that were once denied our elders and ancestors. The fact that schools once served as mechanisms to eliminate tribal cultures motivates me to create systems through which tribal cultures are honored and celebrated through our daily teaching.

How do you balance work and family life?

My wife is a teacher in my school — and has been since before I moved to Tulalip. Her dedication to our community inspires me. Further, all four of our children have gone through our school as students — our youngest child is now a third grader there. Our work and family life are connected in countless ways — our students, our teachers, our community members have become our family.

What is one thing you would like to tell any principal new to his or her profession?

Be a learner — every day. Learn from every student, from every classroom walkthrough, from every family interaction. Be a learner! ■



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Looking for Silver Linings in the Passage of I-1351

Gary Kipp

AWSP Executive Director

With the recent

passage of Initiative 1351, I have been looking for a silver lining, something to be hopeful about.

At the same time, I have been reading Michael Fullan's new book, *The Principal: Three Keys to Maximizing Impact*. In his book, Professor Fullan teaches us the difference between a principal being an instructional leader and leading learning. The latter, according to research, has the most impact on student learning.

What if we take that concept and apply it to the flexibility we are afforded in Initiative 1351?

What if we added a teacher without re-dividing our students?

Crazy, I know, but stay with me.

When leading learning, Fullan writes, "...the principal's role is to lead the

“ ... there is a provision in I-1351 that, if used wisely, might allow us to crack this crust of tradition and provide the foundation for actually leading learning ...

school's teachers in a process of learning to improve their teaching, while learning alongside them about what works and what doesn't.”

From the research work of Viviane Robinson, Helen Timperley, Ken



Leithwood, Tony Bryk and Lyle Kirtman, Fullan draws the conclusion that:

“...groups of teachers, working together in purposeful ways over periods of time, will produce greater learning in more students, thus if principals directly influence how teachers can learn together, they will maximize their impact on student learning.”

I believe most principals would agree with this conclusion, but struggle with implementing it because of time — time for teachers to watch each other teach and time for them to get together to talk about their practice.

So what does this have to do with Initiative 1351?

On the surface, I-1351 calls for a significant increase in the number of individuals (teachers and others) that a principal is to supervise and evaluate, with an infinitesimal increase in principal support. This further exacerbates a condition brought on by E2SSB 6696 and ESSB 5895, which has resulted in a principal's day being saturated with dealing with instruction *one teacher at a time*. The

notion of leading learning by explicitly influencing groups of teachers is an impossible expectation. There is no time left for the principal to do that.

With every teacher added under I-1351, there would automatically be another subdivision of the student population. This is the result of very traditional thinking and what I like to refer to as the Mitosis Myth — the more you divide groups of students into smaller groups, the more learning will increase.

But wait — there is a provision in I-1351 that, if used wisely, might allow us to crack this crust of tradition and provide the foundation for actually leading learning, as described by Fullan.

The fine print of 1351 states:

“Districts that demonstrate capital facility needs that prevent them from reducing actual class sizes to funded levels, may use funding in this subsection (of course, there is no funding in the whole thing, let alone this subsection, but I continue) for school-based personnel who provide direct services to students.”

Continued on page 50

It doesn't say direct services *all the time*.

What if we were to hire another second grade teacher without having a room to put him in? Instead, we add him to the other second grade teachers without re-dividing the students. We now refer to these teachers as a learning team. We charge them with the responsibility to create schedules and strategies that would facilitate their watching each other teach and learning from each other.

What if we found a way to have time for the principal to lead this team as much as she leads the individuals who happen to be in this team? What might this concept look like at the middle and high school levels? If we are to believe the best education researchers, this strategy is likely to produce greater learning than simply re-dividing the students, and letting their teachers continue to struggle in isolation.

We now have the incredible opportunity to add a teacher without adding another class, or at the secondary level, five more sections of classes. We would do this for the expressed purpose of increasing the impact on learning.

It may be counterintuitive.

It may come with resistance.

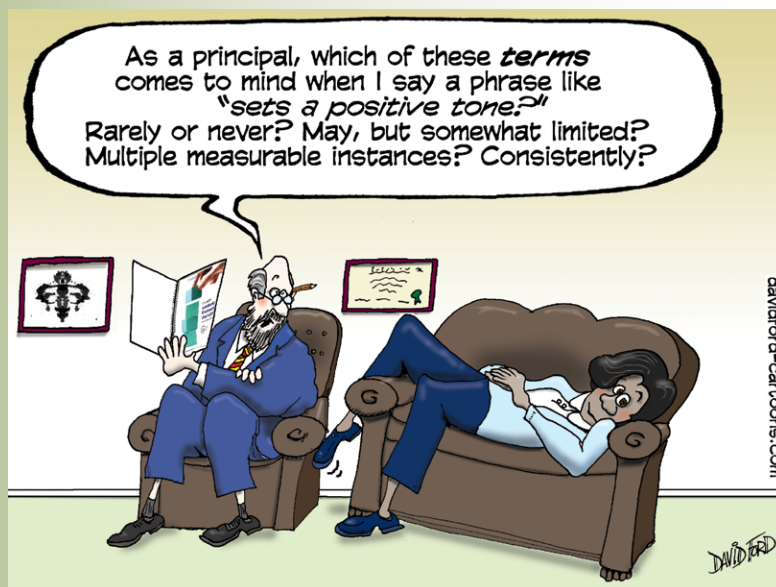
But it may just crack the crust of tradition and be the beginning of a transformed culture where teachers are expected to learn from and with each other, and principals are expected to learn along with them as they lead teams to maximize the impact on students. ■



Gary Kipp has served as AWSP's executive director since 2003. He has more than 40 years experience as a teacher, assistant principal, principal and assistant superintendent.

Humor me!

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