

# ROOT, ROOT, ROOT FOR THE HOME TEAM

*Every principal deserves to be a part of a strong team*



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## PRINCIPAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

*Creating a Culture, Managing Resources*

**B**ottom of the inning, two outs, runners on second and third. My son steps up to the plate.

As I watch from the bleachers, I hear the chatter from the team dugout getting louder and louder.

“Come on, you got this!”

“You know what to do.”

“Atta boy, rip a shot!”

“Find some green!”

“Here we go!”

“Hey now!”

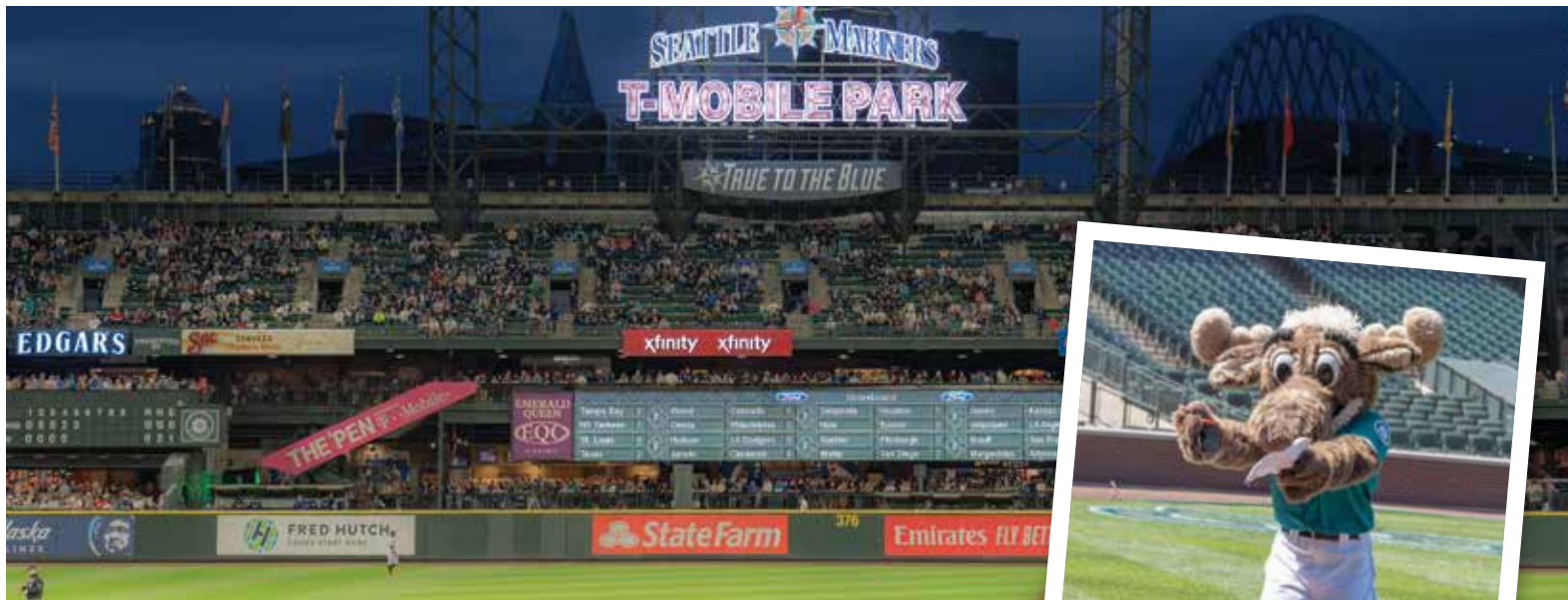
“Every principal deserves to be part of a strong team and connected to a network of colleagues with similar hopes and dreams for their buildings, staff members and students.”

Eventually my son connects with the ball for a double, a couple of RBI's and the inning continues.

The team now focuses its energy, encouragement and trust in the next batter. Without the presence of the team, it would be easy to feel defeated and alone. Knowing your team is rooting for you and supporting you creates a strong bond and a deep sense of responsibility to the success

of the entire team. The power of a team is real. The power of teamwork is impressive. A team endures through tough times, celebrates the good times, and encourages each member to better themselves each day.

The Webster's Dictionary definition of teamwork is, “joint action by a group, in which each person subordinates her or his individual interests and opinions to the unity and efficiency of



T-Mobile Park, the newly named home of our home team.



the group.” This is certainly accurate, though, in my opinion, it does not do justice to the impact that a true team and effective teamwork can achieve.

Mia Hamm, one of the greatest athletes and competitors we’ve ever seen, said, “I am a member of a team, and I rely on the team, I defer to it and sacrifice for it, because the team, not the individual, is the ultimate champion!”

Many principals, especially at the elementary level, are the only administrator in their building. Principals in extreme rural areas may be the only administrator in their entire district. This can feel like the batter stepping into the box, ready to do their job, but with no dugout chatter, no energy and no encouragement from teammates.

The job of the principal is becoming more and more complex. Every principal deserves to be part of a strong team and connected to a network of colleagues with similar hopes and dreams for their buildings, staff members and students.

The University of California Los Angeles Educational Evaluation Group conducted a study of school leaders who are part of a principal leadership network. Participants reported that because of the connections to other building leaders, they found increased self-assurance in their ability to make cultural changes,

change classroom practices and ultimately improve student outcomes (UCLA Education Evaluation Group, 2017). Principals also reported that their leadership networks fostered a sense of mutual responsibility and accountability among members. This is similar to the support the batter feels from his team in the dugout. Just as in baseball, we experience increased confidence when we have the connection and support of a team.

“ So, what are you waiting for? Imagine hearing the roar of your teammates cheering as you cross home plate. There is nothing better than being part of a team.”

One of the best ways to get connected with other principals is by attending any of the fun and engaging AWSP professional learning events. There, you will meet other leaders (your teammates!) from across our state allowing you to begin developing your professional network. Each AWSP professional learning workshop I attended introduced me to incredible leaders, exciting content, and the opportunity to learn with other administrators from our state.

Perhaps you would like to reach out locally to other principals to create your own network. Did you know AWSP can support this idea with grant dollars? AWSP provides Networked Improvement Community Grants of up to \$800 for members to initiate problem-solving projects, research efforts and other relevant team-oriented projects, by creating teams within districts or across districts.

AWSP is ready to help you get connected with your colleagues. Your association exists to support principals and the principalship in the education of all students. AWSP believes strong leaders create strong schools and strong students. The goal is to have you feel connected and empowered to be the best leader possible.

So, what are you waiting for? Imagine hearing the roar of your teammates cheering as you cross home plate. There is nothing better than being part of a team.

Play ball! ■