

AUGUST 2025						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Calendar

Children's Eye Health and Safety Month

Aug 26: Women's Equality Day

Aug 28: Rainbow Bridge Remembrance Day (lost pets)

OTHER SIGNIFICANT RECOGNITIONS:

- Krishna Janmashtami begins (Hindu holiday)
- Eid al-Adha (Islamic holiday, celebrated in July or August)
- Al-Hijra (Islamic holiday, celebrated in July or August)

IMPORTANT SCHOOL/DISTRICT DATES:

Principals have one of the most important, rewarding, and demanding jobs on the planet. As a school leader its your job to tell the story of your building and the success you're having. Check out the myriad of awards and recognition programs available to you and your school. Shout the good things from the mountaintops!

August

Things to Consider

- ☐ Work with the office team for yearly planning.
- ☐ Write a "welcome back" newsletter.
- ☐ Establish a theme for the year.
- ☐ Communicate back-to-school events and news through website and social media.
- ☐ Plan positive behavior rewards for the year.
- ☐ Plan an event to meet new staff.
- ☐ Organize new employee orientation.
- ☐ Review/develop alternative schedules (i.e., half day, early/late release).
- ☐ Review code of conduct and discipline plan with all stakeholders.
- ☐ Work with support staff to anticipate and welcome students who might struggle with the transition back to school.
- ☐ Hold parent/family meetings with students with attendance/behavior concerns to establish a solid working relationship up front.
- ☐ Schedule safety drills.
- ☐ Communicate updated health protocols.

Student Leadership

- ☐ Join or renew your AWSL Membership.
- ☐ Connect with AWSL if you are/have a new adviser in your building.
- ☐ Purchase AWSL curriculum and resources.
- ☐ Register for ASB finance workshops for advisers, administrators, bookkeepers, and students.
- ☐ Register for AWSL's Equity and Awareness Training for school teams.
- ☐ Book AWSL's Reimagining Recess programs for your elementary school.
- ☐ Book a beginning of the year retreat at Cispus.
- ☐ Adults: Register for the National Conference on Student Activities.
- ☐ Secondary: Encourage students to join the AWSL Student Voice Network.

Culture

Building Relationships Challenge



Plan a parent meeting for those who will be new to the school along with the parents of the students transitioning in. Include communication between school/home, code of conduct, athletics, and parent involvement opportunities.

Leave a note and a small gift (piece of candy, fun school supply item, t-shirt, etc.) in the staff mailboxes on the first day. The note can be a preprinted cardstock bookmark with a welcome and reminders.

Greet families and students as they arrive. Make sure school counselors provide buddies/student mentors to new students.

For your first faculty/staff meeting of the year, break the ice with a photo sharing game. Ask each individual to pull out their phone and select one of their favorite photos from the summer. Then, tell them to find someone they don't know well in the room and share the photo and explain why it's their favorite. After 3-5 minutes, have them find a new partner and share, and so forth. If someone doesn't have a phone picture, they can simply provide a verbal description of their favorite summer moment and why.

Belonging Challenge

Review data on all the various diverse cultures that exist within your learning organizations (staff and students). How do you acknowledge and celebrate their cultural backgrounds (holidays, etc.)? See resource — Equality, diversity and inclusion: simple principles to start getting it right.

Student Centeredness

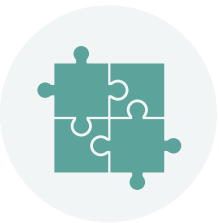
- Conduct/oversee new student orientation.
- Conduct opening day student assembly to reaffirm expectations, vision, etc.
- Prepare and distribute student accommodations (IEPs, 504, etc.) as well as allergy and medication lists for teachers and other appropriate staff.
- Schedule hearing and vision screenings.

Traditions/Celebrations

Plan assemblies and special events (i.e., Homecoming, dances, etc.).

Systems

Vision/Mission



- Prepare school opening inspirational remarks for staff. Be prepared to reaffirm the shared vision for the school.
- With school improvement team, finalize school improvement goals and objectives and improvement plans for the school year based on state student achievement data from the previous school year.

Communication

- Send letters to students with schedules for opening day.
- Using multiple means (registration materials, social media outlets, local newspaper, community agencies, etc.), share information about free and reduced breakfast and lunch programs and encourage all that are eligible to participate.
- Send a parent letter, email, social media, or website message the first week with a welcome and any important dates/reminders for the first week of school. Emphasize immunization exclusion information. Include a personal invitation to the school's Open House.
- Review school website to ensure annual calendar and staff information is current.
- Post laminated directional signs in hallways and classrooms to help students find their classrooms. Ensure important information is posted in classrooms and around the school. For example, opening day bell schedule.
- Prepare announcements that need to be made to open the day. Provide reminders for staff regarding forms that may need to be distributed and collected from the students.
- Prepare opening remarks for first day assembly.
- Develop staff group text, email, and/or emergency telephone list (staff only).
- Post all programs, performances, meetings, and athletic events on the district calendar.
- Promote your free and reduced lunch program and encourage all that are eligible to participate.
- Ensure that all parents and students receive the student handbook.
- Distribute faculty and staff handbooks to appropriate faculty/staff members and collect acknowledgment of receipt forms. Review key provisions with appropriate faculty/staff members.
- Conduct Open House/Back-to-School Night.
- Meet with key school committees, coaches, and team members to finalize plans for the upcoming school year.
- Working with sponsors/coaches, meet with all Fall extra-curricular participants and parents to review rules and code of conduct.

- Create "Who is in charge when the principal is out of the building" list and distribute to faculty and staff.

Collaborative Leadership

- Working with leadership team, prepare for Open House/Back-to-School Night.
- Working with appropriate individuals, prepare for fall field trips. Obtain School Board approval if necessary.
- Schedule meetings (principal/faculty/staff) with all key groups to discuss concerns, needs, and goals for the year.
- Meet with school counselors to review policies for college visits, standardized testing, identifying kids who are not on track, providing scholarship information, social-emotional support, etc.

Safety

- Review school safety plans with staff. Ensure emergency systems are in order.
- Review updated student handbooks with all staff members (instructional and non-instructional).
- Finalize dates for fire, disaster, and emergency drills. Communicate protocols to staff and parents.
- Ensure all faculty and staff have access to mandated training courses.

Operations

- Conduct final building walk-through with head of maintenance including sport fields and facilities.
- Review budget needs and expenditures.
- Review first day procedures with transportation, first day count, etc.
- Ensure all needed supplies have been received and teachers have what they requested.
- Ensure facilities are reserved and ready for concerts & other extra-curricular activities.
- Prepare fall event coverage schedule including sports, fine arts, etc.
- Ensure athletic director and coaches have completed all required WIAA training (concussion, etc.).
- Provide training for individuals handling money (ticket sales, concession stands, fund raising, etc.) to ensure district policies and procedures are followed.
- Finalize all fall athletic/fine arts transportation schedules.
- Schedule fall activities photos.

Learning

Instruction

- Spend time in the classroom early and often to identify struggling teachers and provide support as needed for success. Consider walkthroughs during non-instructional times to build relationships with staff as well.
- Review school's instructional playbook (key instructional strategies, procedures — “What we should always see,” “What we might see, What we should never see,” etc.) with faculty and staff.



“The best leaders are those who inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more.”

- John Quincy Adams

Assessment

Review assessment calendar with staff.

Human Capital Management

- Review updated enrollment for any necessary staffing changes.
- Prepare a substitute teacher availability list. Have teachers prepare substitute folders and emergency lesson plans.
- Conduct required staff state mandated trainings.
- Conduct new staff orientation.
- Conduct substitute teacher orientation, build relationships with your guest teachers ahead of the year-cover the school wide expectations and how to ask for help/support when in building.
- Review district evaluation policy and procedures with all staff members (instructional and non-instructional).
- Distribute documentation on evaluation timelines.
- Define and communicate protocol for formal and informal classroom observations and walkthroughs.
- Ensure that staff members have a copy of their specific evaluation instrument.
- Ensure all teaching credentials are registered.
- Visit all classrooms to connect, offer encouragement, and provide assistance. Give particular attention and time to new teachers.
- Meet with new teachers weekly during the first month of school to share/clarify information and gather feedback.

Reflection and Growth

By the first day of student attendance, obtain and review the administrative evaluation tool for the year. If you will be evaluating school leaders (assistant principals, deans, etc.), ensure you have issued them the written notice of evaluation as well as the rubrics and ratings matrix.

August



Connecting to the AWSP Leadership Framework

- 1 Creating Culture:** Prepare powerful welcome back activities for your students, staff, and community.
- 2 Ensuring School Safety:** Develop/modify and review school safety plans with staff.
- 3 Planning with Data:** Review previous year data and create a plan for improvement or talking points for back-to-school with teachers.
- 4 Aligning Curriculum:** Give your staff the gift of time to curriculum map based on the identified standards.
- 5 Improving Instruction:** Model strong instruction as you prepare and plan your kickoff staff days.
- 6 Managing Resources:** Prepare, prepare, prepare for your most precious resource: students and staff. How will they know they will be well cared for?
- 7 Engaging Families and Communities:** Use social media to promote your message, reminders of events, etc.
- 8 Closing the Gap:** Use your “gap analysis” as the driver of your back to school events with all stakeholders.

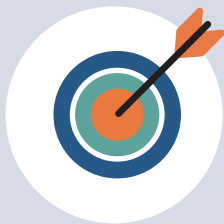
WHAT SHOULD YOUR PRINCIPAL SUPERVISOR BE ASKING YOU RIGHT NOW?

August Focus: Culture Building | Systems Alignment

“How are you setting the tone for a positive, inclusive school culture as staff and students return?”

“In what ways are your operational systems (schedules, communications, safety, etc.) setting staff up for success from day one?”

August



SCHOOL LEADER Tips for You

Procedures, procedures, procedures! Take the time up front to set procedures you'd like to use throughout the year. Make sure staff who are new and returning are aware. Often we continue to hire new staff members as the year is starting. Be sure these folks know the procedures too.

Revisit or redevelop your shared vision and build your purpose around it. Have clear goals based on your vision. Create a plan for the year to assess possible student skill or academic gaps and intervene or spiral in those skills appropriately.

Meet the students where they are! Celebrate the return of school and acknowledge the esprit de corp...we are in this together!

Learning Renewal...

In the post-COVID era, schools are still struggling to address the learning loss that occurred during that time. Use these questions to reflect as you continue to build back learning that was lost.

Learning Renewal Questions

- What data do we have which will allow us to analyze the current performance of our students? Are we consistently looking at both formative and summative data? Are we lacking data that we need to consider collecting?
- How can we simplify the planned curriculum to allow for quality catch up of core components?
- What remedial tutoring programs are needed to support students, especially marginalized students? Could some of the remedial work be accomplished remotely using technology before and/or during the school year?
- What changes should be made to our master schedule or school calendar to meet students' learning needs?
- What education stakeholders can play a role in the learning recovery process: teachers, other educational professionals, volunteers, peers?
- What supports are needed for teachers to adapt to the learning demands? Time for planning? Materials? Professional learning?
- How do we keep parents informed about learning levels and student progress? How are we engaging with parents as partners in their student's education?
- How do we ensure we are having honest and transparent conversations regarding our students' learning needs and how to meet them?
- What accelerated learning interventions are needed to address any learning loss that has occurred especially in the areas of literacy and numeracy?

Suggested First Faculty Meeting Activity

After thinking about the questions yourself, choose 3-5 for a discussion with your teachers and staff.

- Form small groups. Divide staff into groups of five by numbering off. Give each group a marker and a large sheet of paper to write their answers.
- Start the discussion. Everyone gets the same question and a set amount of time (about 5-7 minutes) to talk and write down their ideas. Give a one-minute warning before time is up.
- Share and build on ideas. Pick one group to share their answers using their chart. Then, ask other groups to add new thoughts or expand on what's already been said. Write down these ideas as you go.
- Repeat with a new question. Give each group a fresh sheet of paper and a new question. Follow the same process.
- Keep the conversation going. Encourage teams to continue these discussions in their grade level or department meetings by coming up with more questions to explore. Plan time in the next faculty meeting for groups to share what they discussed.

This activity helps everyone learn from each other and keeps important conversations going!

"Wins" for August

THANK-YOUS TO WRITE:

NEXT MONTH'S LEADERSHIP MOVES:

A LESSON LEARNED:

READING LIST:

Self-care plans for next month:

SEPTEMBER 2025						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
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September

Calendar

National Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15 - Oct. 15)

Sept 8: International Literacy Day

Sept 11: Day of Remembrance / Patriot Day

Sept 15-16: Mexican Independence Days

Sept 17: Constitution Day

Labor Day is celebrated the first Monday in September. (Check your calendar!)

The first day of Autumn falls between Sept. 21-24. (Check your calendar!)

OTHER SIGNIFICANT RECOGNITIONS:

- Navaratri begins (Hindu Holiday)
- Rosh Hashana (Jewish holiday)
- Yom Kippur (Jewish holiday; falls in September/October)
- National Grandparents Day

IMPORTANT SCHOOL/DISTRICT DATES:

Pro Learning & Resources

ESD Regions & AWSP Grade Level Leadership Committees

Washington State is divided into 9 Educational Service Districts (ESDs) and thus our AWSP Grade Level Leadership Committees (GLLC) have regional school leadership representatives in each of these districts. AWSP GLLC's are organized with regional elementary, middle and high school leaders that serve 3 year regional representative terms. Regional representatives are always on the lookout for new leaders to step forward to assist with leadership responsibilities and event planning. Regions host and participate in a wide range of activities which include student supports (AWSL), school leader recognition events, social and professional networking opportunities, professional development, and local legislative advocacy work.

Bookends: AWSP's Print Newsletter

Bookends of School Leadership is AWSP's print newsletter. A tangible way to keep you informed and inspired, highlighting key AWSP programs, professional learning, and the incredible work of school leaders like you. With so much happening, we know emails and e-newsletters can be easy to miss—so consider this your “in case you missed it” resource, delivered straight to your hands. Stay connected, stay inspired, and keep leading strong—Bookends is published twice a year to “bookend” your year and support you along the way.

September

Things to Consider

- ☐ Give instructional staff classroom observation schedule or information.
- ☐ Schedule meetings for the month (grade levels, department meetings, parent meetings).
- ☐ Do a final walkthrough with the custodian.
- ☐ Take stock of student/school fundraising efforts; discuss with PTA/PTO/athletics department.
- ☐ Do you have a plan for how to notify staff in an emergency? (Phone tree, email, app?)
- ☐ Schedule safety drills.
- ☐ Review all school safety drill procedures.
- ☐ Ensure teachers have been given current IEPs and 504s for students with learning differences—review of classroom accommodations.
- ☐ Develop staff professional learning plan (include SPED).
- ☐ Plan inclusive school spirit activities to celebrate students and staff.
- ☐ Schedule an admin-counselor meeting.
- ☐ Review the student activity calendar.
- ☐ Establish a shared decision-making process.
- ☐ Meet with ASB coordinator and student council for beginning of school activities.

Student Leadership

- ☐ (Secondary) Register for Fall Programs.
- ☐ (High School) Encourage students to apply to teach a small group workshop at the Fall Leadership Conference.
- ☐ (Elementary) Connect with AWSL about our Elementary Programs.
- ☐ ALL: Renew or join AWSL Membership.
- ☐ ALL: Let AWSL know if you have a new adviser.
- ☐ ALL: Purchase AWSL curriculum and resources.
- ☐ ALL: Register for ASB finance workshops for advisers, administrators, bookkeepers, and students.
- ☐ Adults - Register for the National Conference on Student Activities.

Culture

Building Relationships Challenge



As an ice-breaker activity for your September faculty/staff meeting, ask each individual to share with a colleague one word they would use to describe the opening of the school year and why. Each person gets one minute, then rotates to another. After a few rounds, pull the group back together and ask individuals to share their favorite word they heard. Then, break into smaller groups and identify what worked well, what needs improvement on flip chart paper. Come back to share with entire group. Collect responses to update planning for the next year.

Belonging Challenge

Ask your staff to set one equity goal to better understand the various cultural groups that exist in their classrooms. Provide staff with data on student's racial identities and/or ask your parents to share cultural values/beliefs that impact learning. Consider having staff share their goals with their peers during a PLC or full staff meeting.

Write an equity focused Leadership PGP goal-have a colleague(s) join you and learn, collect your equity clock hours for recertification with a committed group of school leaders in your system.

Student Centeredness

- Conduct hearing and vision screenings.
- Host Lunch with the Principal- student voice listening session.

Traditions/Celebrations

- Finalize plans for homecoming activities.
- Plan for fall sports awards ceremonies.
- Plan for fall quarter PBIS reward assembly and activity.

Systems

Vision/Mission

Finalize, receive board approval, and implement School Improvement Plan.

Communication

Communicate the results of first quarter benchmark assessment with students and parents.

Collaborative Leadership

Working with leadership team(s), prepare for Parent/Guardian and Teacher Conferences.



Safety

Send notices for students who have yet to turn in physicals and/or receive required vaccinations.

Operations

- Send notices for students who have yet to pay fees.
- Conduct student picture day.
- Prepare for any Fall Season Post Season Tourneys you may be hosting — participants and parents to review rules and code of conduct.

Learning

Reflection & Growth/Result-Oriented



Begin the teacher observation process with the establishment of growth or improvement plans and pre-observation conferences. Assess and reflect on professional and student growth goals and plans.

Assessment

Conduct first quarter benchmark assessment.

Human Capital Management

- Provide in-service for new teachers focused on effective assessment and grading including the process and guidelines for submitting grades. Invite all staff to attend.
- Provide in-service for new teachers on how to prepare for Parent/Guardian and Teacher Conferences.



Connecting to the AWSP Leadership Framework

- 1 Creating Culture:** Make a commitment to remember every student's name. Be visible everywhere, every day.
- 2 Ensuring School Safety:** Conduct a school-wide, full-scale multi-level evacuation drill.
- 3 Planning with Data:** Organize your school's Data Team to identify and analyze grade level data and systems to monitor student achievement.
- 4 Aligning Curriculum:** Follow up with grade levels, department heads on their identified standards and instructional and assessment schedule.
- 5 Improving Instruction:** Work with your support person to backwards map your evaluation cycle with all employees for the year.
- 6 Managing Resources:** Establish a schedule for regular staff meetings with all stakeholder groups in your school (classified, support, custodial, etc.).
- 7 Engaging Families and Communities:** Schedule and plan a Family Fun Fair that is designed to increase back-to-school participation of all families.
- 8 Closing the Gap:** Establish your school's "Guided Coalition."

WHAT SHOULD YOUR PRINCIPAL SUPERVISOR BE ASKING YOU RIGHT NOW?

September Focus: Instructional Leadership | Building Relationships

"What are you learning from your initial classroom walk-throughs, and how is that shaping your instructional priorities?"

"How are you intentionally building relationships with students, staff, and families this month?"

September



SCHOOL LEADER Tips for You

Schedule everything on your calendar. Keep a task list and delegate as much as possible to people you trust.

Block out time on your calendar that is sacred to the task, and let your assistant know that you should not be bothered unless there is an emergency or “right away” need. Without this, things will be overwhelming as they build up.

Find your calendar method ... the phone is great, but it’s nice to come in to see a whole day laid out. It is something you have to spend time with organizing either daily, weekly or monthly. A good calendar saves you from missing something.

How do you use your time?

Time is one of a school leader’s most valuable resources—and often, the hardest to manage. Before the school year takes off, take 2–3 days to track how you’re actually spending your time. This simple activity can help you align your daily actions with your leadership priorities.

Step 1: Track Your Time

- Choose 2–3 typical workdays to track.
- Use your phone or device to set a reminder every 10 minutes.
- Each time it goes off, log what you’re doing using the following codes:

Code	Domain	Examples
C	Culture	Relationships, equity, student-centered work, staff wellness, celebrations
S	Systems	Discipline, communication, operations, planning, meetings
L	Learning	Instruction, walkthroughs, assessment, PD, staff development
P	Personal	Breaks, lunch, non-work tasks
O	Other	Anything that doesn’t fit above

Step 2: Analyze Your Data

- Count how many entries fall under each code
- Calculate percentages: Entries per domain ÷ Total entries = % of time spent.

Example: 23 entries coded as Systems ÷ 57 total entries = 40% of time on Systems.

Step 3: Reflect & Adjust

- Use these reflection questions:
- Am I spending time where I intend to—especially in my priority areas?
- What am I avoiding, intentionally or unintentionally?
- What leadership domain feels most natural to me?
- Where do I need to grow?
- What tasks could be delegated or restructured?

Understanding your dominant leadership domain (Culture, Systems, or Learning) can help clarify where you’re leading from—and what might need more attention.

Step 4: Make a Plan

- Based on your findings, set 1–2 clear goals for better time alignment.
- Adjust your schedule, delegate tasks, and restructure routines to support your leadership priorities.
- Reassess in a few months by tracking again for 2–3 days.

“Wins” for September

THANK-YOUS TO WRITE:

NEXT MONTH’S LEADERSHIP MOVES:

A LESSON LEARNED:

READING LIST:

Self-care plans for next month: