

Workshop 8

Building a Plan for Reform

PRINCIPLE: Principal as Navigator Through Chaos

FOCUS QUESTION: How do we figure out where to begin? And how do we keep everybody involved and on track?

Where to begin? We revisit a few of the principals in this series who have been through the process of initiating a reform effort in teaching and learning in math or science as they look back to the very early stages of the process. This workshop promotes ways to overcome obstacles and work toward the goal of sustained and coherent change in math and science. We watch our panel participate in an activity on creating a continuum of support for reform.

Preparatory Readings

We suggest that you read the following article, included in the Appendix at the back of this Guide, prior to viewing Workshop 8:

“Guidelines for Action: What’s Worth Fighting for in the Principalship” (Fullan)

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Video Clips

Montage—All shows

“Starting points”

Principals featured in this series describe the first steps they took in their reform efforts.

Speech—Rob Evans

“Why resistance?”

Evans, in a keynote address to a large group of teachers and principals, talks about resistant teachers in the context of why people in general resist change.

Wendy Shapiro—Taylor Elementary School

“Overcoming resistance to change”

In her previous job as principal of Taylor Elementary School in urban Philadelphia, Wendy Shapiro implements a new math curriculum. She brings the faculty together to articulate the problems they are having with the program.

Additional Activity—Panel

As a group, you may want to try the panel activity on creating a continuum of support. Here is an outline of the activity:

1. Panel brainstorms a list of ways principals support school change. Write first individually, then brainstorm.


Example: I buy cookies for staff meetings
I make sure that everyone has the textbooks they need
I make it my business to learn about math and science

2. Compile a continuum that ranges from higher-level to lower-level support.
3. Using the continuum, discuss what is meant by ‘support’ and the factors that influence the type of support the leadership gives to a program/project.

Eight Lessons of Change

- You can't mandate what matters.
- Change is a journey not a blueprint.
- Problems are our friends.
- Vision and strategic planning come later.
- Individualism and collectivism must have equal power.
- Neither centralization nor decentralization works.
- Connection with the wider environment is critical for success.
- Every person is a change agent.

Support From a Principal

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- Make sure all "voices" are heard
 - Broker support from central office
 - Change schedule
 - Collaborate and become a model for change
 - State that change is not clear for all stakeholders
 - Protect learners' time and space
 - Identify and remove impediments
 - Identify resources
 - Model risk-taking
 - Communicate the ideas
 - Give your time
 - Money for subs
 - Provide media support and community support
 - Help in the healing process
 - Provide opportunities for seeing/hearing/reading about reform to meet learning styles of different constituents
 - Provide release time
 - Be a good listener
 - Provide facilitator to "give objective" feedback
 - Bring in resources and/or experts
 - Attend workshops
 - Provide opportunities to staff to visit other places
 - Be patient and passionate
 - Provide refreshments and space
 - Be present and introduce the session

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Discussion Questions

(remember to choose a Structure from those listed on pages 12 to 14)

What do I do about dissident voices?

How can I know if we are on track?

Given that we know that change is chaotic, how can I keep things going?

If we are a collaborative organization, how hard can I keep pushing?

Where would you start? And why?

What data are valuable to use as you carry out a plan?

How far ahead can you plan?

How can change be documented to help sustain the effort?

What else can be done to sustain the work?

Bibliography

Deal, T. E. and K. Peterson. *The Principal's Role in Shaping School Culture*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, 1991.

Fullan, M. *The New Meaning of Educational Change* (2nd ed.). New York: Teachers College Press, 1992.

Fullan, M. *Change Forces*. Bristol, PA: Falmer Press, 1993.

Fullan, M. "Guidelines for Action." *What's Worth Fighting for in the Principalship*. New York: Teachers College Press, 3 (1997): 25-41.

Newmann, F.M. and G.G. Wehlage. *Successful School Restructuring*. Madison, WI: Center on Organization and Restructuring of Schools, 1995.

Perkins, D. *Smart Schools*. New York: Free Press, 1992.

Sarason, S. B. *The Predictable Failure of Educational Reform*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1990.

Sarason, S. B. *School Change*. New York: Teachers College Press, 1995.

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Schein, E. "How Can Organizations Learn Faster? The Challenge of the Green Room." *Sloan Management Review* Winter 1993: 85-92.

Web Sites

AASA Total Quality Network. Internet Address: <http://www.aasa-tqn.org>

Accelerated Schools Project.

Internet Address: <http://www-leland.stanford.edu/group/ASP/index.html>

Annenberg Institute for School Reform. Internet Address: <http://www.aisr.brown.edu/aisr>

Association for Effective Schools. Internet Address: <http://www.mes.org>

ATLAS communities. Internet Address: <http://www.edc.org/FSC/ATLAS>

Coalition of Essential Schools. Internet Address: <http://www.ces.brown.edu/ces>

Eisenhower National Clearinghouse (ENC). Internet Address:
<http://www.enc.org/classroom/index.htm>

MiddleWeb. Internet Address: <http://www.middleweb.com/index1.html>

The National Center for Restructuring Education, Schools and Teaching (NCREST).
Internet Address: <http://www.tc.columbia.edu/~ncrest>

Project 2061. Internet Address: <http://project2061.aas.org/pdp/>

Blueprints for Reform. Internet Address:
<http://project2061.aas.org/tools/bluepol/blpframe.html>

Serendip. Internet Address: <http:serendip.brynmawr.edu/>

The Well Connected Educator. Internet Address: <http://www.gsh.org/wce/>

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Readings

“Tinkering with TIMSS” (Bracey)

“Revolution in One Classroom” (Cohen)

“Professional Development for Principals: Seven Core Beliefs” (Evans and Mohr)

“Science Education—How Curriculum and Instruction are Evolving” (Freedman)

“What’s Worth Fighting for in the Principalship” (Fullan)

“Talking to the Public about Public Schools” (Kernan-Schloss and Plattner)

“Building Professional Community in Schools” (Kruse, Seasore, and Bryk)

“The Principal as Team Builder” (Maeroff)

“Enabling Professional Development—What have we learned?” (McLaughlin)

“A Conception of Authentic Human Achievement” and “Authentic Assessment Tasks”
(Newmann, Secada, and Wehlage)

“Facing the Consequences” (Schmidt)

“Moving from Publicity to Engagement” (Thompson)