Wisconsin Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

Winter 2009

Highlighter

Strengthening Leadership and Teaching for Learning

Engaging Learning

Leadership in Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

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DON’T PANIC!

By Denise Pheifer, WASCD Executive Director

Change is afoot. Our state standards are more than ten years old. It’s time to change them and DPI has that in the works. We have a new state superintendent who has announced that our state testing will change. We need a change that embraces the future. The kids in our classrooms have changed. Their lives are extremely influenced by relatively recent technologies.

Their text is hyper. Their news is instant. Their TV screens are flat and they can access the shows they want anytime, 24/7. They are connected virtually with friends, family and the world. They know who is calling them and can choose whether to answer or not. They are “wired” but they don’t have a landline. And who needs directions when you have a GPS?

As adults their books, newspapers and magazines will be electronic. Their banking will be on-line. Their cars and refrigerators will talk to them. Their homes and places of work will be green and their surgeries robotic. They are digital natives. We are the digital immigrants. In other words, their lives and experiences are much different from ours. They are already processing information differently from the way you do. And the differences will only accelerate.

Education leaders who attended the WASCD Fall Conference spent a day with futurist, Ian Jukes. He emphasized that we have to keep up or we are going to be left out. Things have to change. And they are going to change whether we like it or not. The difference is that they are changing at a much faster rate than ever before in human civilization.

It is my sense that people got Ian’s message. They stayed with him throughout the day. There were jokes about retiring but there were very few hall conversations during his presentation and when a phone call was done, it was right back to the ballroom. People did not leave early.

The question that we all have to deal with is how do we change current instruction to meet the changing needs of our students in this era of standards, assessment and accountability? Basically this is the core mission of Wisconsin ASCD and we are and will continue to take the lead on this issue through our programs, publications and participation in various related activities.

Wisconsin ASCD has been keeping you informed about the Common Core State Standards Initiative, a national reform project. This *Highlighter* includes the WASCD position statement on the Common Core and emphasizes the connection of quality standards to effective instruction and meaningful assessment. The position statement was written for you to share with your stakeholders in order to understand the Common Core Initiative and make the connection to curriculum, instruction and assessment.

The articles in this issue are from WASCD members and leaders. They are graciously sharing with you the experiences from their own schools and districts. They are listening to the call for change and are guiding others to meeting the needs of today’s learners. If you have experiences you want to share, let me know. denise@wascd.org

Oh yeah, the other thing kids will be able to do better than we do: negotiate a roundabout without that momentary sense of panic.
Many schools still reflect their Industrial Age origins…. However, there is remarkable consensus among educators, business and policy leaders in one key conclusion: we need to bring what we teach and how we teach into the 21st Century.”

DR. GENE CARTER, ASCD EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dr. Carter’s message echoed throughout this year’s Wisconsin ASCD conference entitled, 21st Century Learning: Foundations and Future Directions. It is clear that education must change in order to remain a viable social construct. The entire conference was a wake-up call as well as a call to action.

The pre-conference sounded the warning bell by describing how quickly our world is changing. Ian Jukes, Director of the InfoSavvy Group, explained that there are four global trends leading to exponential change in this digital age:

1. Moore's Law: You are able to purchase twice the amount of computing power for half the price every 12 months.
2. Photonics: The amount of bandwidth will triple every six months.
3. Internet: The Internet will be everywhere and available to everyone making the world increasingly flat.
4. Infowhelm: We have access to more data than we could ever possibly need/want.

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Wisconsin ASCD
Position Statement on the
Common Core State Standards Initiative

By Rosalynn Kiefer, WASCD Influence Committee Chair, Past President (2001-2002)

WASCD’s new position statement on the Common Core State Standards Initiative outlines key practices that should take place regarding the new Common Core standards and ensuing state assessments. In mid-September, WASCD members attended the ASCD legislative advocacy conference in Washington, DC. Among the notable speakers was the Executive Director for the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), Gene Wilhoit.

Wilhoit provided insights and answers to some key questions surrounding the appearance and design of the new standards. In June 2010, states who have signed on to the Common Core Standards Initiative and are planning their implementation, will be eligible for $350 Million for assessment creation. According to Wilhoit, this will not be a competitive grant but a cooperative grant, focusing on groups of states working together to develop common assessments.

Wilhoit further discussed his ideas of what these new assessments would look like saying they would be formative in nature, employ multiple measures and focus on growth over time. He is hoping for both new methodology and new substance. Methodologies he favors would utilize technology and provide tracking systems. Substantive changes include a desire for authentic, performance-based tests where proficiency is determined at the local level after teachers are provided with professional development to ensure validity. He envisions the states aggregating local results for their state results. We applaud this focus on best practice and look forward to the unfolding of more information through the year.

What is the Common Core State Standards Initiative?

- A joint effort between the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices in partnership with ACT, the College Board, and Achieve.
- They believe it provides a significant and historic opportunity for states to collectively develop and adopt a core set of K-12 standards in mathematics and English language arts.
- 48 states and 3 territories have signed on to the Common Core State Standards Initiative process.

What will the common core standards look like?

- Fewer, clearer, and higher
- Inclusive of content and skills
- Internationally benchmarked
- Research and evidence based
- Accessible to students, parents, and the public

What is the timeline?

- September 2009: Release public draft of college and career ready standards for public input
- December 2009: Release draft standards in Mathematics and English Language Arts for grades K-12
- January 2010: K-12 standards finalized
- First Quarter 2010: States submit 3-year timeline and process for adoption

More information at www.corestandards.org

Editor’s Note: The position statement that follows on the next few pages is also available at www.wascd.org under About WASCD > Position Statements. The statement was drafted by the WASCD Influence Committee and approved by the WASCD Board of Directors for you to use with your colleagues, staff, school board, and community in order to create awareness of this fast-track national initiative.
Winter 2009

WISCONSIN ASCD POSITION ON NATIONAL COMMON CORE STANDARDS

WISCONSIN ASCD

Issue
The Common Core Standards are on a fast track for implementation. Wisconsin ASCD’s concern centers on what will be done with these standards. How and how well they are implemented is the key—especially in the critical areas of assessment and instruction.

Purpose
As Wisconsin ASCD monitors this movement toward common standards, we are aware that this may be the first step toward nationalizing the rest of our education system. Most accounts envision a revised assessment system and eventual alignment of curricula, textbooks, and digital media with the common standards.

Rationale
American education is in an increasingly competitive situation as global contenders invest heavily in education and are rapidly closing gaps or surpassing us. In order to preserve and expand our economic well-being, it is necessary to invest in a dramatically redesigned education system including international benchmarks. This is particularly important as the National Common Core Standards are being developed with historic speed and restricted input.

Current Status
A common set of “national” standards is being developed to align reading and mathematics curricula and assessment among states and with other nations. Forty-eight states are signed on to the national Common Core Standards Initiative (WI among them). The decision to adopt them is tied to federal stimulus funds.

Proponents of the Common Core state standards argue that they are critical for economic growth. They also argue that “benchmarking” (defined as finding out who is performing better than you, then emulating and eventually surpassing them) is only possible if our curriculum and assessment are comparable or benchmarked to international standards.

Opponents fear loss of local and state control of education or question the efficacy of new standards. Research shows that high standards by themselves will not lead to increased academic performance.

We believe our efforts should be directed to the outcomes of the Common Core Standards rather than focused on debating the efficacy of having national standards. We currently have de facto common standards as each state’s standards are drawn from a common professional content area research base.
TO OBTAIN INSTRUCTIONAL IMPACT FROM COMMON STANDARDS
Wisconsin ASCD advocates these recommendations:

### Quality Standards
- Focus our attention and resources on student achievement and improving learning.
- Need to be sufficiently rigorous to describe expected skills and knowledge required in the global marketplace.
- Need to be manageable in number and emphasize key concepts, generalizations and processes of the content area(s).
- Align across and within core instructional areas.
- Focus classroom instruction and intervention so that high performance can take place in every classroom.

### Meaningful Assessment
- Aligns with the standards, local curricula and instructional materials.
- Provides timely and meaningful feedback to impact and inform classroom instruction.
- Utilizes multiple measures, both broad and balanced, to measure students' attainment of standards. This will be economically possible with a broad base of commonly held standards across the nation.
- Should be instructionally relevant for students, mirroring real world work.
- Should undergo ongoing evaluation for the optimization of student learning.
- Provides data with the ability to search and analyze multiple variables and with an option to input local data into the system for comparability and alignment.

### Effective Instruction
- Include authentic curricula based on application of knowledge and skills rather than on test preparation.
- Professional development in standards and assessment changes, alignment methods, and how changes affect classroom instruction must accompany standards implementation. Teachers and administrators need to understand the purpose, intent and appropriate use of standards in order to improve instruction.
- Training for educators in effective instructional support mechanisms for underperforming subgroups is essential.
- Ongoing identification and access to global and national experts consistent with the standards should be provided.
Once standards are approved (currently slated for January 2010 for exit high school and June 2010 for K-12 ELA and math), much work needs to be done in terms of modifying curriculum, providing professional learning, creating and validating formative assessment and providing feedback to teachers and other staff. WASCD intends to take a leading role in these efforts in Wisconsin through advocating and supporting best practices for all students.

**MANY QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION AND DEBATE REMAIN UNANSWERED AT THIS TIME**

- What happens to local autonomy under a Common Core Standards system?
- Can a reasonable, useful assessment system be developed from these Common Core Standards? Or, are we still constrained by difficult-to-interpret, late-to-report, multiple choice standardized tests? Will there be funding available for more useful assessment?
- How can large-scale assessments measure “21st century skills” with the concomitant need for professional judgment or interpretation in the assessment process?
- Can our instructional and assessment system be adapted to the rigor and intellectual demand of these standards?
- Can most districts manage the professional development and curriculum retooling, given the serious resource constraints they are currently encountering?
- How does technology and the informational restructuring it demands link to these standards?
- In addition to raising standards, inequity between various schools and types of students is a significant problem in American schools. What mechanisms are proposed to meet the new standards and also reduce inequity?
- Should a greater focus be on international standards rather than on national standards since the Common Core Standards are setting the expectation for global competition?

*September, 2009*
Producing a Teacher Leadership Culture through Professional Learning Communities

By Sandy Richert, School District of Holmen, WASCD Member Services Chair
Teri Staloch, School District of Holmen
Lisa Snyder, Merrill Area Public Schools

We all have stories of successful collaboration efforts with our colleagues. One of the authors, an educator for over 30 years, shares her story.

One of the best professional experiences I had as a teacher was when my department collaborated around the development and measurement of student learning experiences. We shared expectations, strategies, assessments, and intervention ideas. We were empowered to make decisions and expected to share best practices. This was at a time when the framework of professional learning communities wasn’t defined and widely researched.

Over the past 30+ years, a shared leadership model in our public schools seems to have become generally accepted by many scholars as a positive approach to improving education. Since 1988, researchers from the National Center for School Leadership have carried out a systematic inquiry into school leadership and its relationship to teaching and learning (Parker, 1993). “One of the most significant findings was that the principals in (successful) schools distributed leadership and decision-making responsibilities among the teachers, realizing they were in the best position to make judgments about students’ needs (Parker, 1993, p.231).

In recent years, this shared leadership has been coined “professional learning communities” (PLCs). Researchers have since validated that PLCs are important for improved student achievement and teacher leadership. Rick and Becky DuFour and Robert Eaker (2002) identify teachers as “transformational leaders” because they are

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in the best position to transform students’ lives, motivate and inspire students, and get students to do things they never thought they could do. Additionally, Linda Lambert (2003) points out that shared leadership is based on relationships, community, learning and purpose. In an era of educational accountability where the paradigm shift must be made from a focus on teaching to a focus on student learning, teachers are needed more than ever to be instructional leaders, assessment leaders, curriculum leaders, technology leaders, communication leaders and community leaders.

PLCs provide a framework to improve student achievement through distributed leadership among teachers and administrators. Teachers in a professional learning community support one another with a focus on four key questions:

1. What is it we want our students to learn?
2. How will we know if our students have learned it?
3. What will we do if they don’t know it?
4. How will we extend or enrich those that already know it?

Three years ago a new journey was forged in the School District of Holmen. There was a collective decision by the education association, the district administrative team and the school board to implement a district-wide monthly early release schedule. The monthly common staff development time served as the conduit for creating our District Early Release Vision of “Maximizing student success through staff collaboration (Professional Learning Communities).” In determining how best to utilize the time, we knew we would only successfully navigate this change as a district if we expanded the already embedded philosophy and practice of shared leadership that existed at the school level to a district-wide initiative. Although administrative support was vital to this initiative, we also recognized Gabriel’s (2005) argument that “it is the teacher leader’s interpretation, support and implementation of decisions—the teacher leader’s and the administrator’s—that move an organization forward” (p. 20). Only through empowering teachers to lead would we create the quality systems needed to produce high levels of student achievement and student development results.

Our Journey

Year 1:

An oversight committee, the PK-12 Collaborative Council, was established to develop overarching goals for the early release work and to monitor progress and assess the effectiveness of the staff development model. This committee was and continues to be made up of a cross representation of teachers as well as administrators. Aside from this committee, we knew that we needed to build shared knowledge with our teacher leaders and then empower them to lead. Seeking teacher volunteers from each grade level, content area, and program, we created a team of PK-12 Early Release Facilitators who would meet monthly for a three-hour facilitator training prior to each early release session. They in turn facilitated the session with their peers. In the first year we focused on building a common understanding of collaboration. We began to build systems that would capitalize on collaborative work, professional relationships and a culture of staff learning. By introducing the Response to Intervention (RtI) framework and with the assistance of a REAch Grant, we were able to put collaboration into practice.

The results of our first year were very favorable. Teams reported high levels of team functioning aligned to the criteria we established and monitored, and silos were being broken down between buildings and programs.

Year 2:

Because we had laid the groundwork on the purpose of teacher collaboration aligned to student learning and the RtI framework, we were well positioned to begin Year 2 by introducing the Professional Learning Community (PLC) framework. Initial response, which we blame on our lack of connecting previous learning, was that we were abandoning the work of collaboration and RtI from the previous year and were embracing

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“the latest and greatest.” We quickly recognized the need to create flowcharts and other graphic organizers that would showcase the continuation of an action plan aligned to our original vision of the early release time. A PLC operates under the assumption that the key to improved student learning is continuous, job-embedded learning for educators…truly learning for ALL!

As we built shared knowledge about the PLC framework and defined student learning results as our primary focus, PLC groups spent the year working on Essential Learning Outcomes (ELOs) and/or developing program mission, vision and values (MVV). Our facilitator trainings and early release agendas became less scripted and more authentic to the needs of each PLC group. Although we identified a flowchart with a timeline of tasks to be completed and documents to be created, we honored the individual journey of each PLC. We stayed “tight” in our expectation that all groups were moving along the continuum toward our vision but we remained “loose” in the pace with which groups accomplished their work.

The result of our second year was a success both in terms of the documents that were created, the program MVVs that were established, and by the culture of collaboration that was now institutionalized and defined as “the way we do things” in our school district. Teacher leaders, both the formal facilitators and others who assisted with subgroup facilitation, embraced the gradual release model and took full advantage of the resources available to them to make sure their groups were successful.

Year 3:

As we embark on Year 3 of our PLC journey, we have much to celebrate in terms of student and staff learning. As administrators we have been awed and inspired by our teacher leaders and the culture they have created. In a recent planning session with our district PLC Facilitators, we were reminded that strong teacher leaders can and must be empowered to lead and make decisions. We planned to have our facilitators develop their PLC goals and monthly agendas for the year; however, our facilitators clearly articulated their need to facilitate these action plans with their teams. Our teachers are now consistently given the opportunities to take risks, the professional development to be effective, the trust to be autonomous, the time for collegiality, and the belief in their honor and commitment—all essential leadership strategies for teacher leaders.

According to Schmoker (2005) in *On Common Ground: The Power of Professional Learning Communities*, teacher “isolation is the enemy of improvement” (p. 141). Schmoker (2006) further contends that teacher learning and professional development is most successful in a system of learning from other teachers instead of from an outside expert. Business and educational organizations have repeated over and over the importance of a common mission and vision. By focusing on student learning utilizing the PLC framework we have witnessed staff learning through sharing of best practices, analyzing curriculum and establishing essential learning outcomes, building common assessments and utilizing the data to inform instruction, and researching interventions and teaching strategies to assist students who need more time and support to learn. We have experienced some administrative turnover since the inception of our PLC plans and although the transitions have not been seamless, we have built the capacity for our teacher leaders to continue the district PLC work. Our teacher leaders are creating the systems and bringing to life our shared vision of maximizing student success.

Our teachers are now consistently given the opportunities to take risks, the professional development to be effective, the trust to be autonomous, the time for collegiality, and the belief in their honor and commitment—all essential leadership strategies for teacher leaders.
Monitoring Instructional Leadership
Creating the Conditions for Leaders to Better Influence Teaching and Learning

By Donald J. Viegut, Deputy Superintendent, Wausau School District
WASCD Past President (2005-2006)

Now, more than ever, principals want support in working toward improved student learning. This work is complex; however, what we emphasize, invest in and monitor gets the attention of everyone. This article is one story in regard to taking instructional leadership seriously.

What Currently Exists
A great deal has been researched and written on the topic of effective school leadership, yet a wide variety of practice is still accepted today. Are all our current leadership practices effective? Have we determined the specific support principals need? How do we move from where we are to a preferred state? In districts throughout the nation, we are experiencing a range in leadership from highly effective to questionable. For this to change, we need robust models that focus on the right issues.

On-going attention to a complete system of instructional leadership must be present. In settings where leadership is viewed as less than acceptable, some major aspect of that complete system is either missing or flawed.

Agreeing on What Instructional Leadership Is/Is Not
Instructional leadership is a focus on the key work of our core mission of teaching and student learning, with an equal focus on how we go about that work as leaders. More specifically, instructional leadership is the focus on what we teach, how we teach, how we assess, how we use data to inform our interventions and program changes, and how we grade and report to students/parents, etc. Instructional leadership is not the daily management of our schools. We manage our schools well so that we can appropriately focus on our core mission of teaching and learning. The seductive nature of the busyness of school management cannot keep us from working on our top priority work.

Broad System Components of Critical Importance to Effective Instructional Leadership
The two most important things we do in our school systems are to clearly define where we are going as an organization and to hire the best people we can to achieve that.

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Don Viegut, PhD is Deputy Superintendent of Education in the Wausau School District. He is the author, with Larry Ainsworth, of Common Formative Assessments: How to Connect Standards-Based Instruction and Assessment (Corwin, 2008). Don currently serves on the ASCD Board of Directors. He can be reached at dviegut@wausau.k12.wi.us
Agreeing on a Learner-Centered Leadership Evaluation Philosophy

The following philosophy is being advanced in the Wausau School District:

As an administrator in the Wausau School District, each of us is held to a set of high expectations and performance objectives that define leadership in our positions. From research and experience, we know leadership matters a great deal. Therefore, the administrative evaluation is centered on setting clear expectations for leadership performance, along with building capacity within our administrators to achieve those expectations. We seek to help each of our District administrator colleagues improve and grow professionally with the ultimate result of positively impacting student learning in our District.

The Administrative Evaluation is anchored in the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards, a set of model administrator standards created by the Council of Chief State School Officers, and the Wisconsin Administrator Standards, with the goal of aligning our local district evaluation targets to best practice and performance.

In addition to the broad system components listed above, certain conditions are absolutely essential to support growth in instructional leadership. Having a clear understanding of what instructional leadership is and is not helps us prioritize those things for which we hold high expectations. Additionally, the culture and climate we as supervisors create has everything to do with our results. We can either create the conditions where our administrators are working to look good, or preferably, we create the conditions for them to do good work. The latter can have very different and profound results.

High expectations absent high support is shallow and unacceptable. As supervisors, we must ensure that those being evaluated know we care about their success and growth as instructional leaders. Another influential aspect of this high support is the on-going feedback so necessary to inform our next actions. The process should be a continued reflection and adjustment of actions. Supervisors who are less effective may have a simple idea of what is good. If their practice is simply a pre/post conference with a summative write-up, a wonderful opportunity for growth is missed. The following conditions must be considered.

- A presence of emotionally intelligent leadership.
- A clear understanding of the specific, high expectations that must be held for our instructional leaders.
- Cultivating a caring, safe culture of enhancing instructional leadership practice.
- Shared definitions and common language related to your vision of instructional leadership.
- An intentional eye on processes that result in engagement, ownership and motivation.
- Allowing for differentiation in administrator goals and customizing the support.
- Appropriate, on-going monitoring of progress on goals with formative feedback.

Anchoring Into Best Practice

The rubric on page 14 is one of twenty-one leadership targets/rubrics that we have developed in the Wausau School District. We have anchored all of the rubrics in the
national ISSLC Standards. Administrators self-assess their practice against these levels of performance, and use that self-assessment (their own proficiency rating) to inform their goals and goal conference with their supervisor. An important item to mention is that for the process to be safe and effective, the administrator being evaluated owns the self-assessment. We must move goals from vague to specific, defining exactly what the administrator’s intentions will be. Does it really matter if we are giving high quality feedback on low level goals? The quality of the goal is critical.

**Monitoring the Instructional Leadership Profile of Your Administrative Team**

Understanding where we currently are anchored against a best practice can help establish an annual benchmark for growth. Monitoring a profile of your entire administrative team recognizes the need for differentiated goals among members of the team; i.e., while one administrator is developing the capacity of their school improvement planning team, another may be working toward using data to inform their next step as a building/department. The sample profile below could easily represent reality in our districts that shape goals and support.

**Leveraging Available Resources to Advance High Quality Instructional Leadership**

Continuous improvement, school improvement, instructional leadership, and improved student learning are all issues that we view as non-negotiable. We agree this work must get done, and the reality for most districts is that the work must get done with scarce resources.

To get different results we must look different, partner more, and find efficiencies in our current practice. This year, for example, we have committed to doing a series of instructional leadership capacity building initiatives in a job-embedded format as part of our regularly scheduled administrative meetings. Additionally, we view the Wausau School District as a serious partner in the regional PK-18 Council housed at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. Being part of the PK-18 Council results in professional development for all school districts in the region. Leaders from many districts put their team-think on how we can deliver these trainings economically.

These are just a few examples of working smarter to achieve better ownership, engagement, and results. The following examples are also highly effective:

- Alignment to external best practice: ISSLC Standards, Wisconsin Administrator Standards, professional associations, higher education, other districts, and state and national practice.
- Routine, job-embedded capacity building in meetings already scheduled.
- School visits with a specific purpose of monitoring goal progress and offering formative feedback. (Monitoring is not separate from daily routines, school visits, conversations and scheduled meetings.)

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We can either create the conditions where our administrators are working to look good, or preferably, we create the conditions for them to do good work.

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**Administrator/ School** | **Rubric/Goal Target** | **Growth Unsatisfactory / Distinguished**
--- | --- | ---
Administrator #1 | Quality of Faculty Meetings | ![Unsatisfactory / Distinguished](image)
Administrator #2 | School Improvement Planning Team Development | ![Unsatisfactory / Distinguished](image)
Administrator #3 | Faculty Development Plan | ![Unsatisfactory / Distinguished](image)
Administrator #4 | Use of Data to Inform Interventions | ![Unsatisfactory / Distinguished](image)
Category: Instructional Leadership and Culture that Support Student Learning and Staff Professional Growth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Targets</th>
<th>Levels of Performance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. Researching, Advocating, Supporting, and Sustaining Best Practices in Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsatisfactory</td>
<td>Basic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Does not encourage the use of curriculum maps.</td>
<td>■ Encourages staff members to use curriculum maps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Does not understand, share, or use data.</td>
<td>■ Acquires data in random fashion and does not share it with staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Does not attend data retreats.</td>
<td>■ Attends data retreats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Does not recognize the connection between data retreats and instructional practices.</td>
<td>■ Beginning to recognize the connection between data retreats and instructional practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Does not understand the value of current research and best practices.</td>
<td>■ Beginning to discover and understand current research as it connects to best practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>■ Unaware of how to promote best practices with others.</td>
<td>■ Beginning to promote those best practices with others in the building.</td>
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Individual Administrator
Self-Reflection

On-going collection of evidence of professional growth for summative evaluation conference (attach additional documentation as needed).
Focusing scarce professional development dollars.

Influencing the leadership experiences that graduate school candidates have related to their future role as a high quality instructional leader.

Challenges to Avoid

In general, any number of variables can seriously flaw effective leadership. Absence of any of the right work done in the right way is a significant factor. In some cases, this work simply does not even happen (Reeves, 2004). Additionally, toxic leadership and toxic culture does exist, making sustained growth impossible. The following challenges should be avoided:

- Becoming over-extended on less important work, keeping you from addressing the more important priorities.
- Over-ambition on initiatives that are not clearly aligned causing follower frustration.
- Too much pressure, too fast pacing of the work causing follower frustration.
- Inadequate efforts to clear the management plate, lack of empathy.
- Lack of role clarification between members of the board of education and top district leadership.
- Having an evaluation system that simply recycles/reinforces school management issues.
- A perception that you are “kinda” doing this important work, i.e., not tending to all of the system pieces well. We actually keep saying to each other, “kinda can’t happen!”
- Global ineffective feedback verses specific feedback on instructional leadership actions.
- Not addressing dysfunction and lack of accountability.

Great leaders assess their context, including likely hurdles. Those great leaders then have a plan for those challenges and, in most cases, can handle the challenge. Being mindful of those challenges to avoid is a great start to a quality plan of monitoring instructional leadership.

Summary

The following should be considered in creating conditions for leaders to better influence teaching and learning:

- A caring, safe, progressive environment.
- Clear, informed goals on instructional leadership.
- An accurate self-assessment/starting point for us as leaders.
- Actionable steps that will close the gap between our starting point and goal.
- On-going feedback on action steps toward goals.
- A continual scaffolding of action steps and goals that truly promote continuous improvement.
- On-going adjustment on the part of the evaluator in scaffolding the feedback.

Leadership matters. Valuing a system of leadership development and spending the necessary time on quality instructional leadership initiatives can improve student learning/organizational effectiveness, and can appropriately confine school management.

Engaging in this work as a collective team can be energizing and professionally rewarding. How we go about the work determines if our team feels safe, cared for and positioned to improve.

References

A 21st Century Learning Environment at the Middle Level

By Cathy Clarksen, Principal, J. R. Gerritts Middle School, Kimberly Area School District WASCD Board Member

Today the instructional practices, the required workforce skills, and the differences of today’s learners are being communicated through the concept of 21st Century learning. At J. R. Gerritts Middle School in Kimberly, Wisconsin our work is central to our mission: Learning, Leadership and Laughter…the J.R.G. Journey.

Through this mission it is our goal to develop an environment where every child is taught the skills needed to have a competitive edge in the 21st Century.

Preparation for success in the 21st Century is prioritized with ongoing work in how we approach daily instruction. Our priority is to connect our work to developing a literate adolescent. At Gerritts Middle School every teacher supports literacy.

Currently, we have training support for our language arts teachers, social studies teachers and science teachers. A collaborative environment allows for teachers to share practices with one another and creates a curiosity in many teachers to modify teaching practices and seek feedback. According to Harvey Daniels, “The 21st Century teacher must relinquish the sage-on-stage stance to become guides on the side. Instead of telling, they are showing, modeling, coaching, mentoring, and facilitating. They are ‘leading from behind,’ working skillfully in the background to channel kids’ curiosity, provide materials, structure interaction and document ideas” (Daniels, 2009).

At Gerritts Middle School we have implemented a collaborative on-going staff development experience called “Tuning.” Tuning was developed by David Allen and Joe McDonald at the Coalition of Essential Schools. The initial purpose of tuning was to examine student work. The protocol is a tool that can be used for teachers to receive feedback on various instructional efforts. We have found many rewards from using the formalized process. For example the protocol allows our school to develop a culture where constructive, honest feedback is accepted and people are regularly practicing appropriate group facilitation skills. Teachers explicitly practice the same skills that the research is recommending be implemented in the classroom. Skills needed for success during tuning include the ability to: work together, listen to one another, communicate the message, facilitate a meeting, articulate one’s thinking and accept constructive criticism. The implementation and reinforcement of these skills can be taught with ownership as teachers are engaged in an experience that requires the skills consistently.

We have also used our tuning teams to further our learning related to best practices. During meetings, groups are able to critically discuss topics such as grading because of
During meetings, groups are able to critically discuss topics such as grading because of the trust that is created as the group works together throughout the year. As a result, we have implemented a feedback system that allows communication to students, parents and teachers as it relates to employability skills in three areas: work ethic, respect and participation. Through this process we have improved our grading practices, developed common language as a school and communicated academic progress separate from employability skills.

To reach the goal of preparing all students for economic success in the 21st Century the staff has worked to understand the importance of individualizing expectations and challenging all students to demonstrate growth. “Core Stretch” classes were developed to support students who sought out further academic challenges in the areas of science inquiry, global studies, literature and writing. Furthermore, support is also offered for students who struggle with math and reading. We connect the student with a staff member daily until the student demonstrates proficiency in the gap areas. In the area of math, the student is supported by the student’s assigned math teacher. These support sessions are for concept understanding and skill development. Finally, two years ago we sent a message to all our students when we said you are capable of starting your world language high school career in seventh grade. Seventh graders complete the 1st semester of a freshman level world language class during seventh grade. Students then have a choice if they wish to continue in 8th grade. Ultimately, every adult at Gerritts Middle School contributes to preparing students for the 21st Century.

Our commitment means adults regularly wrestle with new discoveries from the latest research. In the end, educators are asked to consider this question: Is it meaningful, significant and empowering? If the answer is yes, then consider taking the risk to see what student learning comes from the experience. The literate adolescent of the 21st Century needs a multi-literate approach. A commitment to common language and collaboration allows all departments to contribute to the journey.

References:

The “tuning protocol” was developed primarily for use in looking closely at student exhibitions.

I. Introduction [10 minutes]. Facilitator briefly introduces protocol goals, norms and agenda. Participants briefly introduce themselves.

II. Teacher Presentation [20 minutes]. Presenter describes the context for student work (its vision, coaching, scoring rubric, etc.) and presents samples of student work (such as photo-copied pieces of written work or video tapes of an exhibition).

III. Clarifying Questions [15 minutes maximum]. Facilitator judges if questions more properly belong as warm or cool feedback than as clarifiers.

IV. Pause to reflect on warm and cool feedback [2-3 minutes maximum]. Participants make note of “warm,” supportive feedback and “cool,” more distanced comments (generally no more than one of each).

V. Warm and Cool Feedback [15 minutes]. Participants among themselves share responses to the work and its context; teacher-presenter is silent. Facilitator may lend focus by reminding participants of an area of emphasis supplied by the teacher-presenter.

VI. Reflection/ Response [15 minutes]. Teacher-presenter reflects on and responds to those comments or questions he or she chooses to. Participants are silent. Facilitator may clarify or lend focus.

VII. Debrief [10 minutes]. Beginning with the teacher-presenter (“How did the protocol experience compare with what you expected?”), the group discusses any frustrations, misunderstandings, or positive reactions participants have experienced. More general discussion of the tuning protocol may develop.
Many critics believe that the high school is broken and that the people who work in high schools are lazy or incapable. We believe that the high school isn’t broken. Rather, it is obsolete.

–JOE DIMARTINO & JOHN H. CLARKE

It is the rare principal that doesn’t believe his or her school can’t be better than it is. It is the rare principal that initiates a systematic process to improve it. To better understand this irony we can borrow from the laws of physics: any object at rest wishes to remain at rest (Newton’s First Law of Relativity). An object at rest will remain at rest, and an object in motion will remain in motion in a straight line at a constant speed, and if a repulsive force acts between two bodies of the same mass, they will acquire equal velocities in equal amounts of time. In other words, this concept borrowed from physics and aligned with change in schools tells us that change is hard to initiate and it is likely that forces opposing the change will yield equal and opposing forces on the changes being attempted.

As thoughtful educators we all try to do our best each day with our students. Yet, the reality is that the more intense we work, the ubiquitous problems of under achievement and disengagement seem to grow worse. Like the proverbial frog failing to leap out of the progressively warming water, many Wisconsin educators seem content with the meritocracy engulfing us regarding our students’ achievement. Perhaps one of the reasons is that we often have less than the required critical mass in a specific student category to be measured for AYP. Yet, many of these students are not achieving, but the AYP radar doesn’t detect them. We see them in our classrooms and schools every day! On multiple measures of achievement, we know that the longer a student remains in our schools, the lower they achieve (WINSS).

Redesigning Schools with the Student in Mind

In the last decade there have been hundreds of research reports and commentary on the need for changing the design of secondary schools. National statistics alone...
indicate that there is an epidemic of dropouts and multiple gaps of achievement. The Editorial Projects in Education Research Center in their April 2009 report, *Closing the Graduation Gap* states that, “...education continues to garner attention as a crucial path to economic recovery.” Yet, “…three in ten students fail to finish high school with a diploma and ...barely half of historically disadvantaged minority students graduate.” Similarly, Reporting on the Economic impact of this problem, the McKinsey & Company April, 2009 publication, *The Economic Impact of the Achievement Gap in America’s Schools* concludes that “…lagging achievement in the United States is not merely an issue for poor children attending schools in poor neighborhoods; instead, it affects most children in most schools.”

This is only the tip of the achievement/economic iceberg. There is much more to addressing the issue of lagging achievement than meets the political eye. The fact remains that America’s top students perform far below the top students in other countries. To add to the recession of achievement, just as other countries are showing trends of improvement in achievement, the trend for American students is one of widening decline.

The popular belief remains that changing the way secondary schools operate is good. Political reality and human nature instructs us that change is viewed as good only in someone else’s school. And, more commonly, if change is attempted in my school, in schools other than our own, and that if change is attempted, it is likely that the change will be resisted, and it will not be sustained or possibly not implemented at all. The adage that “this too will pass” is too often the attitude. While there are certainly exceptions to this scenario, and it is evident that there are innovative, knowledgeable and savvy principals and teachers making successful changes in their schools, unfortunately, many lack the conceptual frame of leadership and/or the practical skill and/or the political backing to successfully transform a school for students.

**The Courage to Change**

How can we design a school that supports and connects with all students, not just the “above state average ones?” The strategies and structures that have a positive impact on student achievement are well known. As educators we have been studying this for decades. We know the critical components of instruction and or school organization that are necessary to set the conditions to provide maximized student learning. The conundrum is that we don’t “do it!” We need the skill and the intestinal fortitude to move from knowing to doing. We need to move from adult comfort zones to student learning zones. We need to move from isolated self-contaminated environments to highly personalized team environments, both in our classrooms and in our school structures.

**Personalization**

Components of such schools include systems of personalization where faculty members know students well: their aspirations, their learning styles, their life and learning challenges. Then moving from knowledge to action, putting together the relationship and the instructional rigor needed to lift that student to engagement and deep understanding. Some examples of structures to help accomplish this are academies, advisories and institutes. Academies are defined by the universal characteristic of the student group in the academy. All use teaming as the foundational organization of faculty who are responsible for the students in the group. For example, a ninth grade academy is focused on the developmentally appropriate instruction, interests and grouping used to help students successfully master high school academic rigor and social adjustments. An advisory system is an excellent conduit for linking a faculty member’s deep understanding of the individual student with the support needed to promote the student’s success. Additionally, using the advisory as a link to student-led conferences

We need to move from adult comfort zones to student learning zones. We need to move from isolated self-contaminated environments to highly personalized team environments, both in our classrooms and in our school structures.

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If we are to engage all students, we can no longer afford to simply be content with the general notion that we are achieving above the state average. We know 50% of our students in Wisconsin achieve below the state average. This is simply not good enough.

**Authentic Learning**

Another strategy for engaging students is a themed institute. Like an academy, an institute is built on a common team of teachers and a common core of students. The focus is a specific career cluster, such as medical occupations, STEM, education or others. In each case the institute focuses its instruction on “project learning” with the basics being applied to the targeted content of the institute. Teachers, while multiple disciplined, are focused on the careers related to the theme. They provide projects, career opportunities, internships, trends, etc., all related to the theme of the institute. They combine the elements of knowing the student well with knowing the career cluster well, and the academic rigor required to achieve entry-level employment and college-readiness at graduation. It is all of high school—plus! These are only a few samples of what it takes to design an engaging school.

**Conclusion**

At best, national and international comparative statistics tell us that provocative change is needed in the function and form of the traditional secondary school. Intuition alone suggests this. But change for change sake is not what is being suggested here. Rather systematic and informed change is what is needed and begs the questions: What changes should be considered? What is the purpose for the change? What is the vision that will direct the change? What is the research and best practice that will structure the change? And who will lead the change?

If we are to engage all students, we can no longer afford to simply be content with the general notion that we are achieving above the state average. We know 50% of our students in Wisconsin achieve below the state average. This is simply not good enough. State test scores aside, we need to achieve above our students’ expectation. Bring them to a higher level of engagement and aspiration. Give them high quality experiences, not just more of the same when they don’t achieve. We are all working hard to help students achieve. Just as the surgeon now uses the laser and abandoned the scalpel, it is time for all of us to move from knowing to doing and change how we do school, for the purpose of engaging ALL our students, not just for the ones performing above the state average.

**References**


Last August, Learning Point Associates, the Midwest Regional Education Lab, presented a one-day conference entitled “Understanding Formative Assessment and Utilizing It to Improve Classroom Instruction.” Three of the country’s leading experts on the topic, W. James Popham, Ed.D, Margaret Heritage, and James Pellegrino, Ph.D shared definitions and research about formative assessment, how to use it to maximize student learning, and lessons learned along the way.

Setting out to clarify for the audience what formative assessment is and what it isn’t, Popham felt it important that everyone in the audience truly understand it. He defined formative assessment as follows. “Formative assessment is a planned process in which assessment-elicited evidence of student’s status is used by teachers to adjust their ongoing instructional procedures or by students to adjust their current learning-tactics.” Key to the success of this approach is the teachers’ skill in the process of collecting evidence of success, or lack thereof, and adjusting accordingly. Formative assessment is not, he stressed, merely a series of common assessments given to students.

There is a strong reason to implement and use formative assessments. Research on the topic is clear as student gains in learning triggered by formative assessments were “amongst the largest ever reported for educational interventions.” However, Popham warns they cannot raise scores sufficiently on instructionally insensitive accountability tests such as those used to satisfy the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act.

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Because there are two potential sets of players, teachers adjusting instruction and students adjusting learning tactics, Popham states that it is often confusing to lump the two together. Through a series of teachers-in-action vignettes, Popham clarified that formative assessment is present if: 1) teachers are using assessment evidence to make instructional adjustments, 2) students are using such evidence to make adjustments in their learning tactics, or 3) both of these activities are occurring simultaneously.

Margaret Heritage provided a slightly different definition of formative assessment and identified the steps teachers should take to use formative assessment. Heritage defined formative assessment as “a process that takes place continuously during the course of teaching and learning to provide teachers and students with feedback to close the gap between current learning and desired goals.”

She further defined the steps teachers need to take, namely, 1) determine learning goals, 2) define the criteria for success, 3) share these goals and criteria with students in a way they can understand, 4) elicit evidence of learning appropriate to the learning goals and success criteria, 5) interpret the evidence and use it to identify the gaps, 6) determine consequent pedagogical actions needed, and finally, 7) assist students in actions they need to take to acquire needed skills and competencies.

Heritage also shared some quotes from teachers she has assisted in the formative assessment process, who described their insights and reflections regarding the use of formative assessments in their classrooms. Melanie described it like this, “I feel like formative assessment has helped me enter into a partnership with students with regard to learning. It has helped me demystify the classroom for kids. The transparency that sharing learning goals and success criteria creates allows for so much growth for both teacher and student. The students know I am there because I have a goal for them to reach and I want them to succeed. They also know I take every opportunity (written work, conversations, response boards, etc.) to gather evidence of what they know. Formative assessment has not only changed me as a teacher but I believe it has changed the students as learners.”
James Pellegrino concluded the presentation by providing lots of specific examples of ways to maximize student learning. He emphasized that not everyone learns in the same way or follows the same paths to competence. The implication of this understanding, he stated, is that assessments should identify specific strategies, knowledge representations, and forms of activity with respect to the role they play in developmental trajectories.

Pellegrino provided several examples of technology-based programs designed to differentiate based on students level of knowledge and skill in the area. He highlighted two specific programs targeted at mathematics learning, namely ASSISTments by Neil Heffernan, Ken Koedinger et al, and Diagnostic Algebra Assessments, by Mike Russell, Joan Lucariello, et al. He provided time for all participants to visit these websites and investigate first-hand these assessments.

Pellegrino stated that all learners can be categorized into four groups, based on the types of errors made on assessment tasks. These categories included: 1) knowers, who have no real misconceptions, 2) minimal misconceivers, who have slight misconceptions, 3) robust misconceivers, who have large misconceptions, and 4) mistakers, who have no misconceptions, but make other errors. He described how the technology-based programs modeled previously adjust to these four groups of learners.

In summary, there seems to be movement of advocacy with the use of formative assessments that represents an ever so subtle shift away from external evaluation toward internal accountability, (i.e. valuing teacher judgment and autonomy). Popham believes that although formative assessments cannot raise scores sufficiently on instructionally insensitive accountability tests such as those used to satisfy the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act, there is still strong reason to use them. The research is clear that formative assessments cause large gains in overall student learning. That’s our purpose and the reason we exist—to improve student learning!

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ASSISTments  http://assistments.org/
Diagnostic: Algebra Assessments (2009, Boston College, inTASC)
www.bc.edu/research/intasc/researchprojects/DiagnosticAlgebra/daa.shtml
Midwest Regional Educational Lab at Learning Point Associates

Editor’s Notes:
1. You can find a link to all of the regional education labs on the home page of the WASCD website: www.wascd.org
Emotional Intelligence: The Link to School Leadership That Raises Student Achievement

Karen Wendorf-Heldt, Director of Education, Wausau School District
WASCD Board Member

Improving student learning continues to be a national priority in the 21st Century and the resulting demands on school leaders are great. Now more than ever, principals are seeking to increase their own effectiveness. What does it take to be an effective educational leader? Is a traditional intellect enough? What leadership practices result in greater levels of achievement for students? What impact can toxic leadership have on student achievement and long-term organizational culture? Conditions and questions such as these compelled me to investigate, in my doctoral studies, the relationship between emotional intelligence and school leaders’ engagement in research-based school leadership practices correlated to increased student achievement.

Background

In their research, Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee (2002) define emotional intelligence in four domains and connect emotional intelligence to effective leadership that enhances organizational performance. Personal competencies of emotional intelligence involve the domains of self-awareness and self-management. Social competencies involve the domains of social awareness and relationship management.

At about the same time, Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) completed a meta-analysis of 69 studies involving 2,802 schools and determined that 21 leadership practices are positively correlated to increased student achievement. Both lines of research informed my study.
My Research

My doctoral research sought to answer three questions: First, is there a relationship between emotional intelligence as defined by Goleman et al. (2002) and research-based school leadership practices that have been identified to increase student achievement as defined by Marzano et al. (2005)? Second, if there is a relationship between the two constructs, what specific research-based school leadership practices have the strongest positive correlations to each of the emotional intelligence competencies? Third, what insights can principals, who demonstrate high levels of emotional intelligence and high levels of engagement in research-based school leadership, provide into their formation as leaders and their daily leadership practice?

The results of my research yielded insights on the leadership formation of emotionally intelligent school leaders and on what emotional intelligence looks like in daily school leadership practice. My data indicated there is a strong, positive correlation between emotional intelligence and research-based school leadership practices ($r = .73$). In other words, emotionally intelligent school leaders are also likely to engage in the research-based leadership practices linked to gains in student achievement. The strongest correlations between emotional intelligence and effective school leadership practices were found within the emotional intelligence domain of relationship management.

A number of influences shape the leadership development of these emotionally intelligent principals, including personal goals and experiences, role models, family, faith and spirituality, adversity and hardship, encouragement of others, and the study of leadership. These same leaders demonstrated that they were intentional about embedding emotionally intelligent leadership practice in the daily work of school leadership.

My Recommendations

Since emotional intelligence is positively correlated to engagement in research-based school leadership practices, it is reasonable to conclude that increasing attention to emotional intelligence in leadership may also increase a principal’s engagement in the research-based leadership practices that increase student achievement. To this end, several recommendations for practice should be considered:

1. Awareness

Creating an awareness of the domains and specific competencies of emotional intelligence, the 21 research-based school leadership practices, and the correlation between the two is important for school districts to consider when seeking to positively impact student achievement. Pre-service teacher programs and administrative leadership programs should include this topic of study in their required courses. School leaders, who frequently work in stressful environments where there are many opportunities for unexpected and sometimes volatile situations to occur with children, parents and staff, can be overwhelmed by the variety and intensity of emotions that can surface during any given school day. Building awareness and creating an understanding of the critical presence of emotional intelligence in the workplace and in life can help principals navigate the frequently turbulent waters of school leadership.

Awareness of research-based school leadership practices should also be developed. We know more about what works related to effective school leadership than ever before, due in large part to comprehensive studies like the meta-analysis conducted by Marzano and his colleagues. Since school performance outcomes involve the success and future of students, there is no excuse
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for poor leadership practice, ignorance of best leadership practice, or lack of purposeful
effort and progress toward institutionalizing best leadership practice. Understanding
and enhancing emotional intelligence while simultaneously engaging in research-based
school leadership practices will likely have a synergistic effect that will propel increased
student achievement.

2. Hiring

When districts hire school leaders, they often look for qualities related to traditional
intellectual capacity in candidates, for example, knowledge of instructional practice,
effective discipline techniques, knowledge of school law, and sound fiscal management.
These qualities are important. Emotional intelligence, however, may be even more
important based upon the research. The absence of emotional intelligence may
inhibit the ability of the leader to be effective in instructional or financial leadership.
Furthermore, the absence of emotional intelligence can result in highly toxic
organizational culture, which can have a devastating impact on school staff and
student achievement.

Once hired, school principals can remain employed without regard to their
effectiveness as school leaders and their ability to increase student achievement. It
seems critical that, from the very beginning, school districts hire the best leaders who
have the greatest likelihood of tending to those leadership practices that really matter to
student achievement. The best leaders appear to be emotionally intelligent leaders.

Hiring practices, protocols, and conditions need to be framed, developed, and used
in a manner that captures an accurate portrayal of a candidate’s level of emotional
intelligence. This could be achieved through the use of reliable, validated measurement
tools, and through answers to questions posed during the formal interview process that
provide opportunities for candidates seeking school leadership positions to demonstrate
and articulate examples of their emotionally intelligent leadership. Additionally, hiring
committees and boards of education should include observations, site visits, and
interviews with those who worked with candidates for school leadership positions
to further attain specific insight into their self-awareness, self-management, social
awareness, and relationship management. Gathering 360-degree feedback will help to
provide comprehensive information upon which selection committees can make the
appropriate and best choices for administrative hires.

3. Orientation and Mentoring

After principals are hired, school districts should continue to expect and support
growth related to emotional intelligence, particularly those emotional
intelligence competencies within the domain of relationship
management. Development and implementation of high quality
orientation and mentoring programs is key. Principals interviewed
in my study noted the importance of role modeling, mentoring,
and the encouragement of others as influential on their
leadership development. Certainly those factors were
influential in my own development as a leader.

Emotional intelligence can be learned. Matching new
 principals with veteran principals, who themselves
demonstrate emotional intelligence in leadership,
could have a positive impact on the emotional
intelligent leadership development of new hires.
4. Goal Setting and Evaluation

Districts should also utilize administrative goal setting and evaluation procedures and tools that define, expect, and measure emotionally intelligent leadership. Have principals set annual goals that include the articulation of specific measurable growth targets with respect to developing the competencies that comprise emotional intelligence. Principals then provide their supervisors tangible evidence of growth related to identified targets for enhanced performance. In turn, supervisors include specific feedback related to identified targets and evidence of growth. Supervisors also provide any necessary support that encourages and provides for the development of emotional intelligence.

When school districts are serious and intentional about expecting high levels of emotional intelligence in leadership and when they approach the development of emotional intelligence in a job-embedded manner, districts will achieve what is desired—improved organizational performance. Simply hiring for emotional intelligence is not enough. Districts must develop measures to ensure that proper attention is given to emotional intelligence as a critical component of effective leadership throughout the school leader’s career.

5. Professional Development

Principals noted that the study of leadership was influential in their formation as leaders. Therefore, professional development opportunities designed to assist principals in their growth as emotionally intelligent leaders are effective. Opportunities for professional development should be intense, sustained, job-embedded, and differentiated to accommodate the diverse needs of principals within any school district. While it is important to build a common understanding of emotional intelligence and create a common language for what emotionally intelligent leadership looks like in practice, a one-size-fits-all approach to professional development will probably not be effective. Principals have differences in their own background knowledge and experiences related to emotional intelligence, and they are likely to have a variety of learning styles and preferences. School leaders will appreciate professional development that honors these differences in learning.

Conclusion

Clearly, the demands placed upon school leaders in the 21st Century call for leadership that is strong, both intellectually and emotionally. School leaders who learn to develop proficiencies in the personal and social competencies of emotional intelligence are also likely to engage in the research-based practices positively correlated to increases in student achievement. Emotionally intelligent leadership matters to those seeking to be effective school leaders. Emotionally intelligent leadership is all about how we go about our important work. Emotionally intelligent school leaders can help to create resonance within their schoolyards, hallways, classrooms, and faculty lounges. They can also create the conditions necessary for teachers, and most importantly, for students to learn to thrive, achieve, and succeed in the 21st Century.

References


Round Table Discussion Summary

By Patricia Antony, Principal,
Richmond School, WASCD Board Member

Traditionally, the last hour of the annual WASCD State Convention is spent in round table discussions examining a variety of topics critical to Wisconsin educators. This year six topics were targeted: High School Redesign, Technology, RtI, Federal Update, 21st Century Skills, and Leadership for the Future. A brief summary of each table’s discussion follows:

High School Redesign

The process of high school redesign should begin with answering the questions, “Do you need to change, and how do you know?” In order to answer these questions, you will need to collect data about the climate and culture of the school, student attitudes, student achievement, etc. Schools should also take a close look at their current decision-making structures, instructional schedules, curriculum, assessments, and common instructional practices in order to identify current strengths and weaknesses. Although there are common best practices in high school redesign, they often “look” different at each school. Practices that focus on rigor, relevance, and relationships tend to be most successful. Some examples include student advisory periods, portfolio systems, and personalizing each student’s education.

Technology

Technology in education has many lenses. The instructional integration side of technology has deep implications for professional development as teachers learn digital management systems (Moodle, Blackboard, Wiki’s, etc.) to organize their instruction. There is also the explosion of web-based resources to grapple with, including Web 2.0 tools and new digital gadgets for student use (iPods, netbooks)—more paraphernalia to enhance the classroom and help educators be more effective. At central office, IT departments are often housed under business services, but the business of technology is instruction, not “business.” And, what about the issue of internet access/security? What should be
blocked, what should be unblocked, as students themselves come to school equipped to access Facebook and other social networking sites on their iPhones in school hallways? It is educators, as well as students, who are rapidly being challenged to develop critical thinking skills to navigate the sea of choices and keep abreast of the pace of change.

**RtI**

Practical tools to facilitate RtI practices were shared, including MAPs for universal screening and Aims Web, DIBELS, Running Records, Read 180, and Read About for progress monitoring. The importance of developing common commitments to ensure quality learning at Tier 1, and the importance of equipping teachers with strategies to ensure quality learning at Tier 1 were also noted. Also considered critical to an effective RtI plan was: 1) a shared vision for student learning, 2) a commitment to utilize data to inform decision-making, 3) the development of problem solving teams, and 4) the allocation of resources to provide interventions at the upper tiers of the RtI triangle.

**Federal Update/Issues**

Since taking office, President Obama and U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan have laid out four reform priorities that are guiding the administration’s overall education reform efforts. They are: higher standards and better assessments; more effective teachers and more equitable teacher distribution; enhanced data systems and improved collection and use of data; and turning around low-performing schools.

**Common Core Initiative**—national standards in English language arts and math will emphasize fewer, clearer, and more rigorous standards. Stay tuned. Wisconsin is one of 48 states to have joined the Common Core Initiative and will align the state’s newly revised standards with the national standards being unveiled this coming school year.

**Teacher Effectiveness vs. Teacher Quality; Data Systems/Tracking Achievement**—Research has consistently shown that the two most important school-based factors affecting student achievement are the effectiveness of the classroom teacher and the school principal. From the early childhood center to the university campus, states and districts must strengthen the capacity to support educators in gaining and sustaining the professional knowledge, skills, and training to address the evolving needs of students. Teacher effectiveness is one of the Obama administration’s foremost priorities and has been included in the Department of Education’s reform efforts, as well as the proposed selection criteria for Race to the Top funds. Secretary Duncan has promoted the use of student achievement data for teacher evaluations and for such evaluations to be connected to compensation. Thus, this shift in focus will be from teacher quality to teacher effectiveness.

**21st Century Skills and Leadership for the Future**

When you have 5th graders who can join global communities at whim, you can’t use the same approach in the classroom that worked in the past. There is much unlearning and relearning that is going to be needed to teach and lead in this new era of education. The changing nature of today’s learner and the changing needs of tomorrow’s workforce challenge our notions of what’s important to learn, how and where learning should take place, and how to lead for the needed changes. Clearly, the 20th Century command and control model used for teaching and leading in the past must be unlearned and replaced with models more akin to innovation.
Lessons Learned

Many districts have systems in place that support teacher leaders and all can share experiences about the successes and areas for improvement. Our implementation has been intentional and yet responsive. Here are our big findings:

- Provide opportunities for the teacher leaders (facilitators) to come together for professional learning, planning and support.
- Spend time building trust and collaboration skills.
- Communicate priorities—What do we plan for?
  - What do we monitor? What do we celebrate?

References


President's Message continued from page 3

As a result of these exponential changes, the economy is based on new knowledge; therefore, regurgitating facts is no longer valued. Students will need 21st Century skills in order to compete.

The conference began with a welcome from Assistant State Superintendent Deborah Mahaffey, who explained the demographic and social changes that have led to State Superintendent Tony Evers’ “Every Child a Graduate” platform. Mahaffey stated that in order to reach that promise, Wisconsin must recruit and retain quality teachers, invest in innovation, ensure safe and respectful schools, advance accountability and work toward fair and sustainable funding.

Keynote speaker, Ken Kay, President and Co-Founder of the Partnership for 21st Century Skills, asked, “How well are we preparing our kids for the unbelievable changes they are facing?” The silence in the room spoke volumes. The need to “bring what we teach and how we teach into the 21st Century” was clear. As educators, we now have a choice to make: we can lead, follow, or get out of the way, but we can no longer afford to stand still.
Build your career

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Every year Wisconsin ASCD brings you national and local experts on a variety of career-building topics. School leadership needs people who can create better schools for the future through solid research, leadership and the ability to effect change. Attend any of these fine programs to learn new ideas and put yourself on the road from success to significance.

Technology for Learning: Using the Right Tools
March 17, 2010 • Brookfield
(see p. 33)

Learn to incorporate 21st Century skills in the classroom and to support these instructional strategies through the use of appropriate technologies. Bring your laptop for this hands-on program. Leave with technology-infused staff development materials or technology-infused lesson plans ready to use in the classroom.

Vocabulary Strategies for the Content Areas
February 10 & March 16, 2010 • Wisconsin Dells
(see p. 35)

Research has shown a vital path to increasing students’ academic achievement is developing their academic vocabulary (Marzano, 2004). Learn effective instruction and tools for teaching vocabulary in content area classrooms.

Formative Assessment Strategies: Why & How in Your School and Classroom
April 15 & May 20, 2010 • Stevens Point
(see p. 37)

Spend two professional days gaining a deeper understanding of formative assessment. Learn how to get reliable feedback on student progress and make effective instructional decisions.

Common Core State Standards Initiative Symposium
February 19, 2010 • Madison
(visit www.wascd.org for a registration form)

WASCD is providing a venue for state education leaders to develop a shared understanding of the Common Core Standards Initiative. Speakers include representatives from ASCD, the CCSSO (Council of Chief State School Officers), DPI and WASCD. We will explore the impact of national standards on improving classroom learning and assessment.
Wisconsin ASCD
Strengthening Leadership and Teaching for Learning

Join your colleagues. Share your expertise. Advance your career.
Wisconsin ASCD, founded in 1948, is known and respected for its high quality programs and services that support research-based, results-driven teaching and learning. Wisconsin ASCD is the professional development organization for education leaders interested in developing their careers. We are administrators, teachers, principals, superintendents, supervisors, curriculum directors, professors and others – all dedicated to quality teaching, learning and leadership for tomorrow’s schools.

Member Information

Name: ________________________________

School/District/Agency: ________________________________

Preferred address: □ work □ home

Address: ______________________________________

City, State Zip: _____________________________________

Phone: ___________________________ CESA#: ________________________

E-mail: _________________________________

Payment Information

□ 1 year $75  □ 3 years $200

□ 2 years $150  □ $25 full-time students and fully retired professionals

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Billing Address (if different from above)

City ___________________________ State ________ Zip____________________

Details

Return your completed membership form by fax or mail. WASCD • 210 Green Bay Road • Thiensville WI 53092

Fax 262.242.1862

Networking with educational leaders from around the state

Professional Growth / Reduced Registration Fees for WASCD Institutes and the Fall Conference

Publications – Highlighter newsletter and electronic eBrief

Opportunity to Influence – Stay informed about issues and learn about communicating them to stakeholders

Affiliation – Connect to the many benefits of ASCD at a local level
Many Wisconsin districts are implementing the research-based strategies from *Classroom Instruction That Works: Research-Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement* (Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2001).

Districts are also struggling to find ways to incorporate 21st Century skills in the classroom and to support these instructional strategies through the use of appropriate technologies.

This institute involves participants in guided practice with the five categories of technology:

1. word processing software,
2. data collection tools,
3. organizing and brainstorming (concept mapping) software,
4. web resources and communication tools, and
5. multimedia.

**Outcomes:**

- Gain a deeper understanding of research-based strategies for increasing student achievement.
- Learn how research supports technology as a tool to enhance student learning.
- Explore Web 2.0 tools that support communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and digital citizenship.
- Build a repertoire of practices for appropriately infusing technology into staff development and lesson plans.

Bring your laptop. Participants will receive a copy of *Using Technology with Classroom Instruction that Works* (Pitler, Hubbell, Kuhn, & Malenoski, 2007). Participants will use the book, the related wikispace, and custom materials to get hands-on experience with technology integration.

By the end of the day, participants will have created technology-infused staff development materials for their school or district or technology-infused lesson plans ready to use in the classroom.

This workshop is appropriate for curriculum directors, staff developers, principals and teacher leaders of all grade levels seeking ways to use technology more effectively in the classroom. Those who have participated in the WASCD Reading Strategies for the Content Areas program can enhance their use of classroom strategies to further improve their instruction and meet the needs of 21st Century learners.

Professional development must be planned, designed and implemented in ways that increase educators’ capacity to impact student learning (NSDC, 2001). Wisconsin ASCD is committed to providing enhanced professional development that is research-based, engaging, enduring and most effective for improving student learning in the 21st century.

**Questions?**

www.wascd.org
office@wascd.org
262.242.3771
Registration Fee
includes all workshop materials and book
(Wednesday, March 17, 2010)

☐ Member Fee $135
☐ Non-members $185
☐ Renew membership or join Wisconsin ASCD $75
☐ Late Fee (after March 12) $25

TOTAL ______

Payment Information

☐ PO # ______________________________ ☐ Check enclosed # __________

☐ Charge: Cardholder Name (as it appears on card) _______________________________________________________________________

Card # (MC or Visa) ________________________ Exp. Date __________ Three-Digit Security Code __________

Billing Address __________________________________________ City __________ State _____ Zip __________

Participant Information

Please print clearly so name badge will be accurate. To register a team with one payment source, attach a copy of this form for each attendee. Phone numbers are only used in case of emergencies. E-mails are used for program changes and confirmations.

Name: __________________________________________________________

School/District/Agency: ____________________________________________

Job/Role: _________________________________________________________

Phone: __________________________________________________________

E-mail ___________________________________________________________

Details

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Registrations are accepted on a full-payment, first-come, first-served basis only. Confirmations are e-mailed about a week before the program. Please call the WASCD office before the program if you did not receive a confirmation to determine your registration status. For all cancellations, there is a $25 processing fee. There are no refunds 3 days prior to or after the program.</td>
<td>WASCD reserves the right to move or cancel meetings because of low registration. That is why it is important to register early. In the unlikely event of a cancellation, all registrants will be notified and will receive full refunds.</td>
<td>Elmbrook School District Office 13780 Hope St Brookfield WI 53008 Directions: 1/2 mile east of the intersection of W. Capitol Dr and Lily Rd 8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. (check in: 8:00 a.m.)</td>
<td>All institutes include continental breakfast and refreshment breaks. You will have one hour for lunch on your own. Lodging Participants are responsible for securing their own lodging.</td>
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STRENGTHENING LEADERSHIP AND TEACHING FOR LEARNING

Sustained Professional Development

Vocabulary Strategies for the Content Areas

February 10 & March 16, 2010 • Wisconsin Dells

Research has shown that a vital path to increasing students’ achievement is developing their academic vocabulary (Marzano, 2004). Join over 850 teachers in Wisconsin who have participated in WASCD’s award-winning reading strategies program to make a difference in content area classrooms across the state.

The goal of quality professional development is increased student learning. To achieve this goal, teachers must develop new knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviors (NSDC, 2001). This program “walks the talk” of effective professional development and is supported by current research. It is designed for intermediate (grades 4/5), middle school and high school teachers, ELL teachers other instructional leaders, and administrators. Districts and schools will maximize their local resources to improve learning by sending a team of teacher leaders or department chairs and an administrator. This team can then take back the knowledge gained to share with colleagues and ensure implementation across the curriculum and throughout a school or district.

This program includes:

- Two full-day sessions in one semester.
- An understanding of an “academic vocabulary” and experience with an “academic notebook.”
- Research-based strategies and tools to incorporate teaching vocabulary in content area instruction, including ideas for differentiation.
- Time for collaboration, planning, practice, reflection, feedback and implementation.
- Implementation of strategies in classrooms between the two sessions.
- Professional resources.

Professional development must be planned, designed and implemented in ways that increase educators’ capacity to impact student learning (NSDC, 2001). Wisconsin ASCD is committed to providing enhanced professional development that is research-based, engaging, enduring and most effective for improving student learning in the 21st century.

Join over 900 teachers in Wisconsin who have participated in WASCD’s award-winning reading strategies program to make a difference in content area classrooms across the state.

Presented by reading specialists, Denise Phifer and Patricia Chase, providing professional development in reading for over 25 years.

Questions?
www.wascd.org
office@wascd.org
262.242.3771

Registration form on page 36
Vocabulary Strategies for the Content Areas

Registration Fee (includes all workshop materials) $249
(Tuesdays, February 10 & March 16, 2010)

Renew membership or join Wisconsin ASCD $75

Late Fee (after Feb. 3) $25

TOTAL ______

Payment Information

□ PO # ______________________________ □ Check enclosed # __________

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On-Site Registration

When space is available, you may register on site for an additional $25 fee.

Cancellation Policy

WASCD reserves the right to move or cancel meetings because of low registration. That is why it is important to register early. In the unlikely event of a cancellation, all registrants will be notified and will receive full refunds.

Special Needs

Please notify WASCD of any special needs at the time you register.

Location & Schedule

Glacier Canyon Conference Center
45 Hillman Rd, Wisconsin Dells WI 53965
800-867-9453
www.glaciercanyonlodge.com
Directions: I-90/94 Exit 92 - Hwy 12 West. At the second set of stoplights, turn right onto Hillman Rd. Follow the signs on the right until you reach the Conference Center.

Feb. 10 & March 16
8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
(check in: 8:00 a.m.)

Food and Beverage

All institutes include continental breakfast and refreshment breaks. You will have one hour for lunch on your own.

Lodging

Participants are responsible for securing their own lodging.

Return your completed registration form by fax or mail. Make a copy for your records.

WASCD
210 Green Bay Rd
Thiensville WI 53092

Fax 262.242.1862
Formative Assessment Strategies:
Why & How in Your School and Classroom

April 15 & May 20, 2010
Stevens Point

Is your target aligning curriculum, instruction and assessment to standards? Send a team to learn from the experience of WASCD leaders! Teachers get ideas and tools that can be easily implemented and shared in schools and classrooms. Administrators gain insight into strategies that can be communicated to staff and implemented through the curriculum. Spend two professional days together to learn how to get reliable feedback on student progress.

Day One
- Formative Assessment: What is it and how does it work?
- Creating Quality Assignments
- Feedback and Reflection Techniques and Practices

Day Two:
- Using and Creating Rubrics
- The Intervention Framework
- Using Data to Inform Instruction

Questions?
www.wascd.org
office@wascd.org
262.242.3771

Eileen Depka
author of The Data Guidebook for Teachers and Leaders (Corwin, 2005) and Designing Rubrics for Mathematics (Corwin, 2003)

We know Wisconsin educators are keenly interested in improving student assessment. This interactive workshop highlights several strategies that can help teachers determine what students know, what they need to know and how best to make effective instructional decisions.

Participants will receive a copy of ASCD’s Action Tool binder which includes 50 tools for teachers and students applicable to every grade level and subject area.

Participants will:
- Gain a deeper understanding of formative assessment.
- Learn techniques and view examples of a variety of assessment practices.
- Engage in activities that will serve to expand a bank of formative assessment practices.
- View feedback and reflection as important components of the assessment process.
- Build a repertoire of practices that encourage feedback and reflection.
- Expand their understanding and use of rubrics.
- View and use methods to connect data and its use to formative assessment practices.
- Create rubrics.

Professional development must be planned, designed and implemented in ways that increase educators’ capacity to impact student learning (NSDC, 2001). Wisconsin ASCD is committed to providing enhanced professional development that is research-based, engaging, enduring and most effective for improving student learning in the 21st century.
Formative Assessment Strategies

Registration Form

☐ Registration Fee
(includes all workshop materials and ASCD Action Tool) $299
(Thursdays, April 15 & May 20, 2010)

☐ Renew membership or join Wisconsin ASCD $ 75

☐ Late Fee (after April 1) $ 25

TOTAL ______

Payment Information

☐ PO # ______________________________  ☐ Check enclosed # __________

☐ Charge: Cardholder Name (as it appears on card) __________________________________________

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<td>Ramada Stevens Point 1501 North Point Dr Stevens Point WI 54481 715.341.1340 Directions: Located at I-39 &amp; Hwy BR 51</td>
<td>All institutes include continental breakfast and refreshment breaks. You will have one hour for lunch on your own.</td>
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<td>On-Site Registration When space is available, you may register on site for an additional $25 fee.</td>
<td>Special Needs Please notify WASCD of any special needs at the time you register.</td>
<td>April 15 &amp; May 20 8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. (check in: 8:00 a.m.)</td>
<td>Lodging Participants are responsible for securing their own lodging. WASCD has arranged for a special room rate of $70. Call 800.998.2311 and mention Wisconsin Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.</td>
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WASCD 210 Green Bay Rd Thiensville WI 53092

Fax 262.242.1862
2009-2010
Wisconsin ASCD Board of Directors

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Clintonville Public Schools

Tony Frontier, President-Elect
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ASCD Leadership Council
ASCD Emerging Leader 2007

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Maryjane Burdge, Secretary
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If you are looking for this ➔
YOU’VE FOUND IT!

We are very proud of the Highlighter and its improvements. The look and feel is fundamentally different from how it has been for more than a decade. We are looking forward to building on WASCD upgrades in the coming months and years. Our first goal was to give the publication a fresh look.

What do you think?
We welcome your feedback on recent changes.

Does it meet your needs?
Tell us what you’d like to see in coming issues.

Consider writing an article.
E-mail office@wascd.org

INSIDE! LOOK FOR INFORMATION ON THESE WASCD PROGRAMS FOR 2010:

**Technology for Learning: Using the Right Tools**
March 17, 2010 | Brookfield

**Vocabulary Strategies for the Content Areas**
February 10 & March 16, 2010 | Wisconsin Dells

**Formative Assessment Strategies: Why & How in Your School and Classroom**
April 15 & May 20, 2010 | Stevens Point

For details and registration forms see pages 31-38 or go online at www.wascd.org

The Highlighter is a tool to help you lead. Don’t put it on a shelf or in a pile or in the garbage. Give it away.