

Assistant Principal Accelerator (APA)
&
Early Career Principals Academy (ECPA)

Beginning Principals: Ready from the Start

*NCPAPA Fall Instructional Symposium
December 11, 2024*


THIS SESSION

Big Ideas

- Continuous Improvement Planning
- High Expectations Culture
- Proactive, Positive Communication
- Celebrating the Small (and Big) Wins

THIS SESSION

Format

- Mini-Presentation
- Facilitated Table Talk 
- To-Do List for Back at School

“I do, We do, You do”

But First...



You!

Table Group Check In



- Name
- Role
- School/District/Organization

“I selected this breakout session because...”

Planning for Continuous Improvement

**“There are no secrets to success.
It is the result of preparation,
hard work,
and learning from failure.”**

*General Colin Powell
Former US Secretary of State*

What the Research Says...

- Principals in schools that have made **significant improvement in student achievement** did not hide bad news, but **used data** as a tool to get people to **take ownership of the problems** and to **do something** about them.
- Successful leaders go beyond student achievement data to look at **school practices**, what students are taught, how they are taught and what is expected of them.

Why the Use of Data is Important...

- Replaces hunches with facts.
- Enables us to tackle root causes instead of symptoms.
- Enables us to determine if we are accurately tracking effects.
- Assists in understanding the impact of various efforts.

Knoster Model of Change

Model for Managing Complex Change



Adapted from Knoster, T. (1991) Presentation in TASH Conference. Washington, D.C. Adapted by Knoster from Enterprise Group, Ltd.

Table Talk



What are the **structures** and **processes** you have in place for **planning and reviewing data** with your admin team?

What do you need to do next?

Establishing a Culture of High Expectations

**“If you get the culture right,
most of the other stuff will
take care of itself.”**

Tony Hsieh

Former CEO of Zappos

Raise the Bar...Merely better is not enough.

6. Do What Works; Raise the Bar

- * **Focus on successful tactics, halt others:** Successful turnaround leaders quickly discard tactics that do not work and spend more money and time on tactics that do. This pruning and growing process focuses limited resources where they will best improve results.
- * **Resist touting progress as ultimate success:** Turnaround leaders are not satisfied with partial success. They report progress, but keep the organization focused on high goals. When a goal is met, they are likely to raise the bar. Merely better is not enough.

Source: Public Impact

Table Talk



What **systems** and **processes** are in place
to **accelerate** a culture of
high expectations?

What do you need to do next?

Communicating in a Positive and Proactive Manner

**“Effective teamwork
begins and ends
with communication.”**

Mike Krzyzewski

Retired Head Basketball Coach, Duke University

Questions educators ask next:

- How are we doing?
- How can we improve?

HERE'S WHAT:
(What are the facts?)

SO WHAT:
(What does this mean?)

NOW WHAT?
(How do we respond?)

Questions others ask

Parents

How is my child doing?

How does he/she compare to other students?

How is my child's school doing?

What are they doing to improve?

Community

How are our schools doing compared to other districts? Other states?

Will our schools' performance attract businesses and residents?

Are we getting a good return on our investment?

State Leaders

How are our schools doing?

How do we compare to other states?

Are we getting a good return on our investment?

Table Talk



What **systems** and **processes** are in place
for **proactive** and **positive**
internal and **external** communications?

What do you need to do next?

Kindling a Spirit of Celebration

“In the end, it’s all about the moments we remember with joy. Your wins, no matter how big or small, deserve to be celebrated.”

Angela Chee

Actress, Former News Anchor, Podcast Host

Huddle Groups: School Turnaround Leader Actions



SCHOOL TURNAROUND LEADER ACTIONS

1. Focus on a Few Early Wins; Use the Momentum

- * **Collect and analyze data:** Successful turnaround leaders are focused, fearless data hounds. Initially, turnaround leaders personally analyze data about the organization's performance to identify high-priority problems that can be fixed quickly.
- * **Make action plan based on data:** Turnaround leaders make an action plan that includes annual goals and major steps, with enough detail that each group in the school community knows specifically what they need to do differently. This allows people to focus on changing what they do, rather than worrying about impending change. Plan should cover years 1 – 3, with more detail for year 1.
- * **Focus on a few early wins in year 1:** Successful turnaround leaders choose a few high-priority goals with visible payoffs and use early success to gain momentum. Although limited in scope, these "wins" are high-priority, not peripheral, elements of organization performance, and they are bold in speed and magnitude of change. Early wins are critical for motivating staff and disempowering naysayers.

2. Lead a Turnaround Campaign

- * **Communicate a positive vision:** Turnaround leaders start their turnaround campaign by communicating a clear picture of success and its benefits. This motivates others to contribute their discretionary effort.
- * **Gain support of key influencers:** Turnaround leaders gain support of trusted influencers among the staff and community, then work through these people to influence others.
- * **Silence critics with speedy success:** Turnaround leaders use early wins not just for success in their own right, but to cast vocal naysayers as champions of failure. This reduces leader time spent on "politics" and increases time spent managing for results.

Source: Public Impact

Winning Culture Momentum...

**My win
of the day...**

Table Talk



What **systems and processes** are in place
to **celebrate small wins?**

Milestones? Big achievements?

What do you need to do next?

Thank you for leading our schools!



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