



GREAT
SCHOOLS
PARTNERSHIP



NEW ENGLAND
SECONDARY SCHOOL
CONSORTIUM

The Role of Principals

In Leading the Implementation of Personalized Learning

March 17-18, 2016
High School Redesign in Action



Is a non-profit support organization based in Portland working nationally with schools, districts and state agencies, providing coaching, and developing tools.



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NEW ENGLAND
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CONSORTIUM

Great Schools Partnership has served as the coordinator of the **New England Secondary School Consortium** since its inception in 2009

We Believe

In equitable, personalized, rigorous learning for **all students** leading to readiness for college, careers, and citizenship

We Believe

That schools must simultaneously attend to
policy, practice, and community engagement

We Believe

School improvement is **context-based**,
not one-size fits all

The Role of Principals in Leading the Implementation of Personalized Learning

**How to Approach
Your Work Mindfully**

TODAY'S

PRESENTERS

From the Great Schools Partnership

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Leadership Moments I

Think about a **challenging** leadership moment.
Revisit this as an observer.

- What do you notice about your attitude at the time?
- What actions did you take in that moment?

Leadership Moments II

Think about either a **rewarding or successful** leadership moment.

Revisit this as an observer.

- What do you notice about your attitude at the time?
- What actions did you take in that moment?

Outcomes

Identify personal leadership strengths
and challenges

Outcomes

Define key areas and influences on the work and success of a principal.

Outcomes

Reflect on and identify ways to use key findings from positive psychology, neuroscience and mindfulness to improve efficacy.

Agenda



Introductions

Examining Leadership “Moments”

Implications of Behavioral Research for the Principal

Vulnerability & Courage

The Role of Mindfulness in Leadership

Reflection and Goal Setting

Closing & Commitments

Resources

greatschoolspartnership.org/nessc16_principals

Foundational Premises

We know...

The principal's role is influential and highly complex

Kenneth Leithwood and his colleagues found that "it turns out that **leadership** not only matters; it is **second only to teaching** among school-related factors in its impact on student learning" (2004, p. 3)

Furthermore, über-researcher Bob Marzano notes that **leadership** could well be considered "the **single most important aspect of effective school reform**" (2003, p. 172).

Foundational Premises

We know...

Leadership requires managing a specific role in a specific context

Principals, in particular, must create both a **school culture and infrastructure** that support effective teaching and learning practices by transforming the structures, processes, and performance throughout the school environment (Childs-Bowen, Moller, & Scrivner, 2000).

Foundational Premises

We know...

Leadership also requires managing ourselves

...our thought patterns can affect everything from our **perceptions of reality** to the **moods of those around us.**" (Webb, 2016)

If you are leading anything at any level, you are driving some kind of plan or agenda, but **some kind of plan or agenda is also driving you.** It is out of your awareness." (Keegan and Lahey, 2009)

Foundational Premises

We know...

It is challenging to sustain this work

Unfortunately, it's no surprise that a recent report indicates that **over one fifth of new principals leave the job within two years** (Burkhauser, Gates, Hamilton, & Ikemoto, 2012).

[T]he WestEd Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning reports that **principals are dealing with competing pressures** that may ultimately make the job untenable (Bland et al., 2011).

Foundational Premises

We know...

Recent research in neuroscience, psychology, and economics is relevant to solving these puzzles.

...when you can **clearly and objectively see when and how you are triggered**, you can begin to effectively deploy mental and emotional strategies to skillfully navigate those situations. (Tan, 2015)

The secret lies in learning some of the science explaining **how the brain works**, and **why people behave the way they do**. Less of the day seems driven by chance once we understand some of the forces that shape our **choices and our emotions....** (Webb, 2016)

Science Essentials

Two-System Brain

Deliberate system—analytical; “slow”

- don't overuse or overload this system

Automatic system—instinctive; “fast”

- work to slow this system down;
check for blind spots

Science Essentials

Discover-Defend Axis

In discovery mode, we motivate ourselves, often with intrinsic rewards.

In defensive mode, we are less flexible and smart.

- our brain goes into fight-flight-freeze

Science Essentials

Mind-Body Loop

The deliberate brain works better with sleep, exercise and mindfulness.

Physical and mental are connected.

- gut instinct, power poses

Brené Brown

Guideposts for Authentic Living

- Cultivating Authenticity:
Letting Go of What People Think
- Cultivating Compassion: Letting Go of Perfection
- Cultivating a Resilient Spirit:
Letting Go of Numbing and Powerlessness
- Cultivating Gratitude and Joy:
Letting Go of Scarcity and Fear of the Dark
- Cultivating Intuition and Trusting Faith:
Letting Go of the Need for Certainty

Brené Brown

Guideposts for Authentic Living

- Cultivating Creativity: Letting Go of Comparison
- Cultivating Play and Rest: Letting Go of Exhaustion as a Status Symbol and Productivity as Self-Worth
- Cultivating Calm and Still:
Letting Go of Anxiety as a Lifestyle
- Cultivating Meaningful Work:
Letting Go of Self-Doubt and “Supposed To”
- Cultivating Laughter, Song, and Dance:
Letting Go of Being Cool and “Always in Control”

Brené Brown video excerpt

The Power of Vulnerability | Brene Brown | TED Talks



Discussion at Tables

“I know that vulnerability is the core of shame and fear and our struggle for worthiness, but it appears that it is also the birthplace of joy, of creativity, of belonging, of love and I think I have a problem.....”

—Brené Brown

Think about what she says in light of your own leadership moments and what we just discussed about recent brain research.

What insights emerge about your own leadership work?

Reading and focus question:

How can mindfulness support your work as a leader?

- Read *If Mindfulness Makes You Uncomfortable, It's Working*.
- As you read, underline or highlight two quotes that speak to the focus question.

Reading and focus question:

How can mindfulness support your work as a leader?

- Stand up, walk around and find one person that you have never met. Read each other your first quote and have a brief conversation.
- Find a different person you haven't met and read each other your second quotes, followed by a brief conversation.
- Return to your tables.

Goal Setting + Reflection

Reflection

- Revisit your leadership moments
- Place yourself on the continuums and reflect
- Set some goals
- Share at your table, including your commitment to a specific action by a specific date, and how you are going to hold yourself accountable to your commitment

Questions?



Resources

- **TED Talk: The Power of Vulnerability**—Brene Brown:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iCvmsMzIF7o>
- **If Mindfulness Makes You Uncomfortable, It's Working**, Amy Jen Su, Harvard Business Review Blog, 12-29-15
- **How to Have a Good Day**, Caroline Webb, 2016

Additional Resources

- **Just 6 Seconds of Mindfulness Can Make You More Effective**, Chade-Meng Tan, Harvard Business Review Blog, 12-30-15
- **The Power of Idealistic-Realism: How Great Leaders Inspire and Transform**, Douglas R. Conant, Harvard Business Review, 1-12-12
- **The Principal Influence: A Framework for Developing Leadership Capacity in Principals**, Pete Hall, Deborah Childs-Bowen, Ann Cunningham-Morris, Phyllis Pajardo, Alisa A. Simeral, ASCD, 2015
- **Immunity to Change: How to Overcome it and Unlock the Potential in Yourself and Your Organization**, Robert Keegan and Lisa Laskow Lahey, Harvard Business Press, 2009



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THANK YOU

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