Lead With Intention: 8 Areas for Reflection and Planning for School Leaders

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Session 3216

Jeanne Spiller
jspiller@kcsd96.org
@jeeneemarie

Karen Power
karenpower06@gmail.com
@power58karen

How Bad Do you Need a Coffee?

What Is Your Purpose?
Our Purpose for Today

- Create an understanding of what "leading with intention" means for school leaders at all levels.
- Examine effective habits that create a positive mindset as you create and/or sustain a community focused on learning.
- Reflect and practice with tools and resources for implementing intentional daily leadership actions.
Leadership and Learning Matrix—
Dr. Douglas Reeves, The Leading Learner. ASCD, 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Luck</th>
<th>Leading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High results, low understanding</td>
<td>High results, high understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replication of success unlikely</td>
<td>Replication of success likely</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Losing Ground</th>
<th>Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low results, low understanding</td>
<td>Low results, high understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replication of mistakes likely</td>
<td>Replication of mistakes unlikely</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#Truth

During our coaching experiences, we work with leaders who genuinely want to do their best and lead with purpose.

We notice that what separates effective leaders from those with ineffective practices is a leader’s ability to stay **focused** on the right work.

Each choice that you make is a choice of intention.

—Gary Zukav, Author of *The Seat of the Soul*
Our Eight Areas of Leadership Focus:

- Intentionality
- Organization
- Shared leadership
- Evidence-based decision making
- Prioritizing the student
- Leading instruction
- Communication
- Community and relationships

Discover Together!

1. Each table will be assigned one area of leadership focus to discover
2. You will receive tools, templates, questions for reflection and quotes
3. You will have fifteen minutes to review and come to consensus on the following three questions...

15:2 Discovery
(You will have 15 minutes to review and two minutes to share your ideas!!)

1. What causes you the most challenge when you consider this area of leadership? (agree on one to report out on)
2. What is one thing that you could do right away to improve in this area?
3. What tools, resources on the table would you find the most helpful and how would you use them?
Let's Hear from YOU!!

Our Eight Areas of Leadership Focus:

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- Evidence-based decision making
- Prioritizing the student
- Leading instruction
- Communication
- Community and relationships
What Would They Say?

What is important to your school leader(s)?

How do you know?

Are their priorities clear?

Tool 1: Establishing Cohesiveness

Figure 1.7

1. What are the priorities of your school?
2. Why are these your priorities?
3. Is there a shared understanding of the why behind your priorities?
4. If yes, how do you know? If no, what are your next steps?

“Simplicity demands that leaders incessantly clarify and reinforce their priorities.”

Mike Schmoker (2016)
Loose and Tight Leadership

Leaders **offer simplicity and clarity** on what is important, through simultaneously being loose and tight in their leadership style.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples of “Tight” Expectations</th>
<th>Examples of “Loose” Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All teachers work in collaborative teams to focus on student learning.</td>
<td>How the teacher teams keep their minutes and record their student data is loose as long as they are focused on learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All teachers will participate in professional learning focused on building common understanding of classroom environment and student engagement.</td>
<td>Professional learning will be differentiated at times during the year so teachers can select which sessions to attend as needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All teachers will create an environment of student ownership of learning.</td>
<td>How teachers share learning targets and proficiency expectations with students is the teachers’ decision.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Struggle is Real!

**So Much To Do, So Little Time!**

Think about...

- What do you prioritize?
- What distractors do you struggle with on a daily basis?

Tool 2: Intentional Focus Organizer

**Figure 1.1: Achieving Focus and Staying Intentional**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distractor</th>
<th>My Intentional Focus</th>
<th>What I did</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Visit go.SolutionTree.com/PLCbooks
Example of Figure 1.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distractor</th>
<th>My Intentional Focus</th>
<th>What I did</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Smith came to my office and asked if I had a minute. I knew that it really would not be a minute.</td>
<td>Visit Ms. Peters Language Arts class to see her small group instructional practices</td>
<td>I told Mr. Smith that I had a class to attend and I would see him during his preparation time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Connect and Reflect

How do you decide on your priorities?

What do you intentionally focus on in your daily practice?

Using the template, consider what causes you to be distracted and change the direction of your focus.

Tool 3: Personal Accountability

Figure 1.4: Daily Time Log Template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Day One</th>
<th>Day Two</th>
<th>Day Three</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily Focus</td>
<td>Spending most of my time in classrooms and team meetings</td>
<td>Increasing time in classrooms and team meetings</td>
<td>Increasing time in classrooms and team meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Observations</td>
<td>48 minutes</td>
<td>100 minutes</td>
<td>100 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Discipline</td>
<td>100 minutes</td>
<td>30 minutes</td>
<td>40 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tool 4: Assess Yourself

Figure 1.5: Assessment Tool for Simplifying Focus and Actions in Daily Practice

Directions: Use the following five-point scale to self-assess your focus on priorities.
1. I am totally obsessed with this priority and recognize I have not created a simplified way for others to understand this focus.
2. I struggle some days with staying focused on this and believe others are not always sure this is a focus.
3. I speak about this priority often and have set up structures and systems that help others understand this work. However, my daily actions are not always aligned with this priority.
4. I believe most days my actions and messages represent the simplicity of what I want to accomplish at this school. However, there are times I allow distractions to get in the way.
5. I am strongly aligning all of my actions and messages so it’s simple for others to understand this is a priority.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priorities</th>
<th>Score and Reflection</th>
<th>What actions can I take to increase my focus and simplify the direction if necessary?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Priority one</td>
<td>I give myself a score of 2 because…</td>
<td>Attend collaborative meetings to observe discussions focused on setting SMART goals and determining next steps. When not at meetings, review minutes and focus on alignment of goals to actions. Schedule a monthly meeting with each team leader to review SMART goals and action steps. At faculty meetings, review the importance of SMART goals and alignment to actions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Priorities: To progress monitor the short-term SMART goals of collaborative teams and ensure their instruction and intervention plans align to the goals.

Score and Reflection: I give myself a score of 2 because… I have not found time to attend meetings or review minutes. One team leader told me that he had not set any SMART goals this year.

Connect and Reflect

Think about the last few weeks…

How did you spend your time?

How well did you communicate your priorities?

How can you use these tools?
Making an Impact in 8

Eight ideas for further reflection and action
(Here’s a Few)

**Great Leaders Do**
Communicate clearly and often beliefs, intentions, and priorities— and the why behind them— to guide the work of the school.

**Great Leaders Avoid**
Assuming staff are clear about the beliefs, intentions, and priorities after communicating them once or twice; focusing on the **WHAT** only and not the **WHY**.

Making an Impact in 8

What will you do in **8 MINUTES** to create intentionality and focus?

Ask Yourself...
• Am I clear about what I expect and what is important to me as a leader?
• How do I communicate these these things to staff?
• What would staff say if someone asked them what is important to me as a leader?

Making an Impact in 8

What will you do in **8 WEEKS** to create intentionality and focus?

Attend one or two grade-level or content-alike team meetings daily for eight weeks.

Support these teams in moving their practice closer to the expectations or refining their practices.
"If you don't know where you are going, you will end up someplace else.”
—Yogi Berra

Our Eight Areas of Leadership Focus:
• Intentionality
• **Organization**
• Shared leadership
• Evidence-based decision making
• Prioritizing the student
• Leading instruction
• Communication
• Community and relationships

Chaos or Organization
Establishing and Maintaining Organization
Practices that increase a sense of order:
✔ Clear expectations of students and staff
✔ Opportunities for students to self-regulate behavior
✔ Consistent application of expectations by adults
✔ Adult visibility
✔ Systems and protocols that organize transitions open spaces, time, and all resources to prevent chaos and disorganization

Tool 5: Organization Reflection

There are very few adults visible in the school during non-instructional times.

Observations: Teachers are in classrooms during passing periods and not in hallways. Chaos in the cafeteria with few adults present. Discipline problems are generally coming from unstructured time like hallways and cafeteria.

Lack of adult visibility
Meet with staff to review the expectation that all are in the hallway during passing periods and greeting students at the door.
Cafeteria supervision will be reviewed with team leaders/guiding coalition.
Review of discipline referrals to determine where and when.
Support staff meeting to review their role in supervision.

Figure 2.1: Template for a Reflection on Current Reality for Organization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current area of concern:</th>
<th>There are very few adults visible in the school during non-instructional times.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How do you know? What evidence do you have?</td>
<td>Observations: Teachers are in classrooms during passing periods and not in hallways. Chaos in the cafeteria with few adults present. Discipline problems are generally coming from unstructured time like hallways and cafeteria.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Root Causes</td>
<td>Next Steps (Actions) to Address This Issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of adult visibility</td>
<td>Meet with staff to review the expectation that all are in the hallway during passing periods and greeting students at the door. Cafeteria supervision will be reviewed with team leaders/guiding coalition. Review of discipline referrals to determine where and when. Support staff meeting to review their role in supervision.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Connect and Reflect

In what areas or during what times of day do you feel things are more chaotic than you would like in your school/classroom?

Do you have data or observations that could provide evidence to consider?

Connect with Tool 5: Template for a Reflection on Current Reality of Organization

Practices that Focus on Trust, Respect and Belonging

Creating a positive, nurturing climate that fosters a sense of trust, respect and belonging help students feel comfortable and safe in school and contributes to a safe and orderly environment.

Tool 6: How Do You Know When You Belong?

Teachers rate themselves
Connect and Reflect

What is the current status of Trust, Respect and Belonging in your school?

How could you use this Reflective Tool?

Making an Impact in 8

Eight ideas for further reflection and action
(Here’s a Few)

Great Leaders Do
Consider what is working and what is not regarding current safety procedures; informally ask staff and students for their opinions and listen carefully to their ideas regarding increased safety; adjust routines and procedures as needed.

Great Leaders Avoid
Keeping the status quo by averting practices that are not working or unsafe because the change will be difficult or disruptive for staff and students; making decisions without including staff and students.

Making an Impact in 8

Eight ideas for further reflection and action
(Here’s a Few)

What will you do in 8 MINUTES to create intentionality and focus?
• Walk the building each day for 8 minutes to identify aspects of school organization and safety you can improve.
• Spend 8 minutes in one or two classrooms each day with a focus on organizational structures, classroom management and safety. Follow-up with the teachers.
Making an Impact in 8

Eight ideas for further reflection and action
(Here’s one)

What will you do in 8 WEEKS to create intentionality and focus?

Consider one aspect of school organization or safety per week for four weeks. Focus on perspectives of staff, students and parents. Consider changes and work with leadership team to develop a plan.

Organize, don’t agonize.

-Nancy Pelosi

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"Shared leadership may have its greatest impact by reducing teacher isolation and increasing commitment to the common good."


Figure 3.1 Selecting and Reflecting on Guiding Coalition Members (adapted from Kotter, 2012)
Visit go.SolutionTree.com/PLCbooks to download.

Figure 3.2 Template for critical considerations when structuring teams
Visit go.SolutionTree.com/PLCbooks to download.
Guiding Questions for Leaders and Teams
(Figure 3.4)
Visit go.SolutionTree.com/PLCbooks to download.

Making an Impact in 8
Eight ideas for further reflection and action (Here’s a Few)

Great Leaders Do
Form a leadership team and provide opportunities for this team to both lead and learn, building common understanding of the work of continuous school improvement.

Great Leaders Avoid
Doing it on paper only to meet requirements for school improvement planning (a group not a team)

What will you do in 8 MINUTES to create intentionality and focus?

• Think about and write down ways you can authentically share leadership with your staff.
• Think about and write down the names of individuals currently on your leadership team. Are they the right people? If so, why? If not, how can you support and guide those who are not?
Making an Impact in 8

Eight ideas for further reflection and action
(Here’s one)

What will you do in 8 WEEKS to create intentionality and focus?

Turn over staff meetings to your leadership team for eight weeks. Give them a focus aligned with your priorities and let them own it. Reflect on the process throughout and at the end.

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“If we have data, let’s look at data. If all we have are opinions, let’s go with mine.”
—Jim Barksdale
Evidence Versus Experience

Statement: Determining your current reality should be driven by evidence.
Fact: We rely too much on opinion.

“It is human nature to use background knowledge, lean on past experiences, and influence others from our comfort zone. However clear the evidence, personal experience remains triumphant in too many decisions on education.”
(Douglas Reeves, Elements of Grading, Solution Tree: 2016)

Figure 4.1 Leadership template for data focus
Visit go.SolutionTree.com/PLCbooks to download.

Do we know Root Cause?

Reflection:
Do we say... she can’t read or do we name the reasons why she can not read?

OR

Do we say... “they came to me without the skills so I can’t teach them

OR

Do we start where they are at, based on evidence, and move them forward?
Making an Impact in 8

Eight ideas for further reflection and action
(Here's a Few)

**Great Leaders Do**
Face the facts; know what the school or district data are and what they say about current reality

**Great Leaders Avoid**
Looking at data with an objective lens; allowing excuses to mask the truth

What will you do in **8 MINUTES** to create intentionality and focus?

Listen in on part of a collaborative team discussion and really focus on what team members identify as evidence from their data. Are they truly using data to inform next steps based on what they tell them? Is there work for you to do to support team members in this area of growth?

Making an Impact in 8

Eight ideas for further reflection and action
(Here's one)

What will you do in **8 WEEKS** to create intentionality and focus?

- Establish a progress-monitoring protocol to provide continuous feedback on SMART goals to both collaborative teams and your leadership team.
- Hold school or district events to celebrate goals.
Our Eight Areas of Leadership Focus:

- Intentionality
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#TRUTH

All school AND district leaders must demonstrate an **UNWAVERING** commitment to the success of all students.

Prioritizing the Student

What do you stand for?

Are you putting students first through your school or district leadership?

In the classroom?

How do you make daily decisions with students in mind?
Scenarios that make it tough

What Would You Do?

A teacher is adamant that she knows her students best and does not need evidence from assessments to understand what students need. She just knows.

Here’s ONE way you could handle it.

“I believe you know your students well. The data will help you know them better and either confirm what you know or give you information that will help you further meet their needs. We rely on evidence to make decisions for students, not our perceptions of what they know or do not know. What you are describing is your perception, not evidence. How can I support you?”

Scenarios that make it tough

What Would You Do?

A staff member expresses his opinion that a particular student is never going to be able to master the grade-level standards and asks if he can just give the student an easier question or lower the text complexity so that the student can feel successful.
Here's ONE way you could handle it.

“Tell me about what you have done already to support the student and provide scaffolds for instruction.”

This question demonstrates that you believe the teacher has already made an effort to support the student and that supports and scaffolds are two things you expect.

To the bar and/or through the bar!

Making an Impact in 8
Eight ideas for further reflection and action
(Here's a Few)

Great Leaders Do
Put the needs of students first in all actions and decisions (every curriculum decision, every transportation decision, every human resource decision, and so on)

Great Leaders Avoid
Sending mixed messages by saying that decisions are based on what is best for students but making decisions and taking action that show otherwise

Making an Impact in 8
Eight ideas for further reflection and action
(Here's a Few)

What will you do in 8 MINUTES to create intentionality and focus?

• Conduct an informal learning walk in your school. What do the visuals say about your focus on students? What is posted, written or displayed that supports a student-centered focus?
Making an Impact in 8

Eight ideas for further reflection and action
(Here’s a Few)

What will you do in 8 WEEKS to create intentionality and focus?

Focus on one aspect of your school that you identify as needing more of a student-centered focus. Perhaps this is classroom instruction or evidence-based decisions. Spend time supporting common understanding of what is needed, clarifying expectations, and providing feedback. Celebrate small wins and growth.

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#TRUTH

Gone are the days of teachers pulling out the previous year’s laminated lesson plans without a thought of their students’ individual learning needs.

And...

In our work, teachers tell us that they are either unsure of how to improve instruction or they don’t know where to go for support.
Reflection

Your Current Reality:

✔ How are you currently supporting instruction in your school or district?

✔ What practices do you have to ensure all teachers understand the importance of effective planning and delivery of instruction?

✔ How do you demonstrate a positive mindset and expectation for learning for all? How is this related to instruction?

Making an Impact in 8

Eight ideas for further reflection and action
(Here's a Few)

Great Leaders Do
Take every possible opportunity to ensure that all staff understand instructional expectations and support implementation of expectations with professional learning, coaching, and growth-producing feedback.

Great Leaders Avoid
Providing ongoing opportunities to clarify instructional expectations and offer support assuming that staff understand expectations and do not need additional clarification or support.
Making an Impact in 8
Eight ideas for further reflection and action (Here’s a Few)

What will you do in 8 MINUTES to create intentionality and focus?
Review a lesson plan with one teacher and intentionally look for the elements of preplanning (standards, learning objectives), modeling (I do, we do, you do), formative feedback and next steps based on how students are responding to the lesson. Determine what support the teacher needs next to increase effectiveness of his or her instruction.

What will you do in 8 WEEKS to create intentionality and focus?
Provide continuous professional development of a tight element—such as how to plan instruction from an essential standard with aligned learning targets—and support deep implementation with coaching, modeling, and feedback.

Our Eight Areas of Leadership Focus:
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The Why Before the What

What is the balance in building common understanding and communicating the why with getting to the work?

What are your next steps in this area of communication and relationships?

...communication refers to the extent to which the school leader establishes strong lines of communication with and between teachers and students.

-Marzano et al., p. 46

Unproductive Listening Habits

1. Thinking of solutions while listening to someone else speaking.

2. Prying for details about what is unimportant to the theme of a conversation.

1. Dwelling mentally on a personal experience related to what is being described.

-Garmstrom (2008)
**Productive Listening Habits**

*Active Listening is KEY!*

1. Asking clarifying questions.
2. Reframing the conversation.
3. Closing your mind to other thoughts.

**Professional Practice**

*Pay attention to your listening habits for a day.*

- Which do you engage in most often?
- How does your listening either contribute or detract from your ability to build community in your school?

**Crucial Conversations**

Habits 3-5 from Covey’s 7 Habits of Highly Effective People (1989)

3. Put First Things First
4. Think Win-Win
5. Seek First to Understand, then to be Understood
Put First Things First

‘Putting first things first means organizing and executing around your most important priorities.

It is living and being driven by the principles you value most, not by the agendas and forces surrounding you.’

DR. STEPHEN R. COVEY

Crucial Conversations

3. Put First Things First

You take care of critical issues and address what needs to be addressed, including difficult discussions that may be uncomfortable.

Clear is Kind, Unclear is Unkind. -Brene Brown

Think Win-Win

“When one side benefits more than the other, that’s a win-lose situation. To the winner it might look like success for a while, but in the long run, it breeds resentment and distrust.”

-DR. STEPHEN R. COVEY
Crucial Conversations

4. Think Win-Win
Helps focus critical conversations...
1. Script Key Points and Notes
2. Establish a respectful and private location
3. Assume positive intent
4. Establish a calm, respectful, and direct approach with your body language, tone and choice of words
5. Be a great listener!

Seek First to Understand

"If I were to summarize in one sentence the single most important principle I have learned in the field of interpersonal relations, it would be this: Seek first to understand, then to be understood."

DR. STEPHEN R. COVEY

Crucial Conversations

5. Seek First to Understand, then to be Understood
Take the time to fully understand the why behind the conversation- Ask questions and seek to deeply understand the concern, question, etc.
Connect and Reflect

1) What are some strategies you can use to remind yourself about these 3 habits?
2) How difficult is this for you currently?
3) What will you do to create intentionality around this practice?

“The art of communication is the language of leadership.”
—James Humes

Making an Impact in 8
Eight ideas for further reflection and action
(Here’s a Few)

Great Leaders Do
Work intentionally on listening skills and their ability to understand the points of view and needs of others.

Great Leaders Avoid
Leading from a position of my way or the highway, listening superficially, and disregarding the opinions and perspectives of others.
Making an Impact in 8
Eight ideas for further reflection and action
(Here’s a Few)

What will you do in **8 MINUTES** to create intentionality and focus?

• Spend eight minutes with one person in authentic communication. Focus on the messages that create two-way.

Making an Impact in 8
Eight ideas for further reflection and action
(Here’s a Few)

What will you do in **8 WEEKS** to create intentionality and focus?

Meet one-to-one with each staff member and focus on listening, learning and supporting.

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Making an Impact in 8

Eight ideas for further reflection and action (Here’s one)

**Great Leaders Do**
Encourage and model strengths-based thinking with collaborative teams as an important skill when helping them meet the needs of students.

**Great Leaders Avoid**
Allow deficit-based conversations to be the norm as collaborative teams work together (“That is just how John is” or “When Patricia retires things will change”).

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Making an Impact in 8

Eight ideas for further reflection and action (Here’s a Few)

What will you do in **8 MINUTES** to create intentionality and focus?

Reflect on a recent situation in which you had to take a position as a leader. Were you able to lead in a way that demonstrated characteristics of leading by permission? Consider what more you could do to strengthen this skill?
Making an Impact in 8
Eight ideas for further reflection and action
(Here’s a Few)

What will you do in 8 WEEKS to create intentionality and focus?

Meet with a community organization that you would like to begin a partnership with and work with them to determine ways that your school could provide outreach and support. Implement a project that involves your school and that community organization.

How did we do?
Lead with Intention

| Achieving More and Moving Intentionally | Establishing and Maintaining Organisational Intention
| Challenges | Challenges |
| Building Shared Leadership Strengths | Using Evidence for Decision-Making Intention
| Challenges | Challenges |
| Prioritising the Student Strengths | Leading Instructional Intention
| Challenges | Challenges |
| Facilitating Communication Strengths | Developing Community and Relationship Intention
| Challenges | Challenges |

Take our 3 minute survey!
kickup.co/2019LF

Session ID: 3216

NOTE: Session ID should be in all CAPS and is case-sensitive.