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Cover illustration by Cathy Bacile Cunningham, Phil Marrah, and Mitch Smith.
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• Extras (choose 1 or 2)
  nuts, carrot, avocado, peanut or almond butter, honey, fresh mint, vanilla, cinnamon, chocolate syrup, oats or oatmeal, ground flax seeds, spinach, nutmeg, cocoa powder

Add items to blender. Pulse until smooth.
Pour into cups and serve or hold at 41°F or below.
As I prepared to write this column about Leadership, I looked up the simple definition of the word and was actually disappointed in what I found.

Definition of leadership:

1. A position as a leader of a group, organization, etc.;
2. The time when a person holds the position of leader;
3. The power or ability to lead other people.

Maybe it is just me, but in my experience of three decades as a leader in public education, it has always seemed much more complicated to me!

I then considered peppering all of you with wise quotes from famous leaders about leadership, as there are certainly many of those that are available. However, anyone could do that, and that did not seem genuine. So, I finally decided that in the limited space that I have, I would cover three areas that have floated up to the top for me throughout my career and especially while I have been at MASA over the past 20 months.

1) Relationships. In reflecting on my career, every position I have been in has required me to build genuine and trusting relationships with a variety of people. As you have probably experienced, I have had those situations where I had to have a working relationship with someone I did not necessarily trust or like. I have not always handled those the best, but in my older age I have come to understand how important it is not to close the door on those with whom I might consistently disagree, and to try to develop some level of positive relationship with everyone.

2) Know your stuff. It is one thing to have good relationships, but another to really (really) know what one is talking about. There are no shortcuts to reaching this level, and it is a never-ending challenge. However, quality leadership requires expertise and, as we know, that is always a work in progress as we move through our ever-changing profession.

3) Be true to yourself. Fortunately, there were only a few times in my career that I absolutely had to make a decision that went against my belief system. In those situations, the decisions were not illegal or immoral, but the position I held required me to go against a belief that I held close. On those rare occasions, I really had to reflect on what I was doing (and why) and then move on as soon as possible after that decision.

Of course, there are many, many other characteristics of effective and successful leaders, but at the time of this writing and based on what is going on in my career right now, these were the three areas that seemed to be the most relevant. What are your three?
What constitutes effective leaders remains a debatable paramount issue across all sections in the education arena. Is it reaching student growth targets, balancing budgets, creating safe environments for learning, and/or reaching other established goals and targets that are components of this definition? School boards, teachers, parents, policymakers, superintendents, principals, and the community all vary on their description of effective and efficient leadership.

Although the need for effective education leaders is constant, the pressure for results in various areas is episodic. More than at any time in history, education leaders are pressured by policymakers, school boards, governments, parents, and the community to demonstrate success despite ever-changing policies, assessment programs, cut scores, and accountability targets.

In terms of accountability, Bredeson and Kose (2007) describe it as a governance shift from local to state. Superintendents need a particular set of transitional leadership skills for negotiating the sometimes chaotic and often uneven terrain of internal and external accountability systems within volatile and often times uncertain education reform environments.

In Bredeson and Kose’s study, two sets of questionnaires and structured interviews were performed 10 years apart to create emerging data. The results indicate there is a mismatch between what leaders are interested in focusing on (curriculum and instructions) and the realities of the system (budget management and other daily tasks).

The public expects performance from leaders on improving student outcomes. Over the years, the role of education leaders has changed dramatically. The responsibility for education leaders has shifted over time. And although they are held accountable for student results, many superintendents find that the actual day-to-day activities are far from the role they need to play to yield an acceptable increase in student achievement.

Student achievement and acquisition of standards shape the requirements and criteria of leaders in school systems. Leaders are required to implement major school policy and education reform agendas that are centered on an unbalanced scale of snapshot data.

Fullan (2009) reviews the history of large-scale education reform and makes the case that those large-scale or whole system reform policies and strategies are becoming increasingly evident. Fullan writes about some specific cases of whole system reform in which progress in student achievement was evident. In 2003-2009, an expansion of the number of systems engaged in what he calls tri-level reform—school/district/government in countries outside of the US. It appears that closer to home, the presence of a “policy without a strategy” (Fullan, 2009) often appears on the doorstep of superintendents.

As large reform policies are developed, the implementation of complex voluminous policy reform needs to be managed by education leaders. As policy is developed to affect the education outcomes, policy implementation is an area that needs attention. Firestone (1989) argues that an examination of school district leadership would help policymakers understand whether reforms were viewed as opportunities or constraints.

So why do you lead? You lead because your leadership is critical for the success of your organization. And because, notwithstanding the changes, pressures and complexities, you are darn good at it!
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When you looked at the cover of this magazine, you saw the new MASA logo. After decades of MASA being associated with an “M” perched atop “ASA,” MASA’s visual identity has gotten a makeover that was officially unveiled at the MASA 2016 Fall Conference. The new logo is sleek and stylish, and it illustrates the professional organization that MASA strives to be for all of our members.

This fresh look encapsulates MASA’s core values of Service, Leadership, Collaboration and Excellence, which are represented in its colors and in its design.

Service is represented by the shades of green.

Leadership is represented by the shades of blue.

Collaboration is demonstrated by the inner portion of the ring that maintains a sense of unity for MASA and our members.

Excellence is represented by the outside border of the ring, maintaining integrity and quality.

These core values are the commitment that MASA makes to its members every day. They are more than just words to the MASA staff: They are the driving force behind all of the work that goes into supporting the superintendents, first-line assistants and educators that work hard every day to ensure Michigan schoolchildren get the education they need to compete in the 21st century.

A new logo means nothing without a commitment to our members to continue working hard on your behalf, and that is MASA’s promise to you.

Cathy Bacile Cunningham is the Communications and Marketing Director for MASA. Contact her at 517.327.9251 or ccunningham@gomasa.org.
When we talk about innovation in education, the focus is often on the role that technology plays in our classrooms and how the devices are leveraged to transform learning. In Fraser, we have been fortunate to equip our students with mobile devices on a one to one basis, provide wireless access throughout the district, and implement a learning management system to extend learning beyond our regular school day. Without question, access to these resources has made a difference in the opportunities our students have to demonstrate mastery across all grade levels and content areas.

However, rather than focusing on how the digital resources have transformed our classrooms, I would like to share our story of how we are transforming the structure of our school system to increase flexibility in our schedules, create a common language for competency-based education, implement practices to support student voice and choice in their learning, and redesign static physical spaces to accommodate preferred learning styles.

With a laser focus on systems thinking and design, our staff continues to review current practices and policies to support student achievement within a new model of school. The current reality of our model of schools is for students to be assigned
grade levels based upon the year they were born and to be placed into a cohort of their peers of a similar age. Our students are then promoted to the next grade level with students achieving at varying points of mastery and academic proficiency but advancing as a cohort or class. Our current model also asks our classroom teachers to differentiate instruction for every child in the classroom with the goal of personalizing learning for each student while maintaining the structure of our traditional model of academic progression.

With the goal of personalizing learning for every child in our district, our staff has undergone an in-depth review of our systems, policies, and practices to reimagine how learning should occur to better meet the needs of the students who are coming to us today. This includes the review of necessary changes to our daily routines to allow for flexibility in pace, path, and place for student learning.

As we go through this transformation process, one of our primary challenges is how to create a school model that minimizes the academic impact of grade-level time constraints, without losing the sense of community, socialization, and peer support that comes from belonging to a cohort of students of similar ages.

What we found through all of this work was the systemic need to go further in our structural rethinking in order to provide students with deeper learning opportunities and to increase student ownership in their learning.

Our new reality is that teachers are everywhere, and there is a difference between personalizing learning and making learning personal. Often, personalizing learning is accomplished by the teacher developing a learning playlist or script for the students. However, when learning becomes personal, a student understands what has been mastered and where gaps may exist in their learning. Once understood, the students are able to be authors of their learning.

In Fraser, the primary goal of our district strategic plan is to develop a school system that allows students to move on when ready, meaning, as a student demonstrates mastery in a content area, they are able to gain access to the next level of resources regardless of the amount of time that was required to demonstrate proficiency.

Our challenge as district leaders is to develop an educational system that allows the students vertical access to the academic resources they need to continue their learning progression at their pace. For some students, these structural changes will provide the opportunity to move at a faster rate of speed. For others, it may mean they will be provided with additional time to demonstrate mastery prior to moving on. In order to accomplish this goal, our staff works diligently to leverage data, in cooperation with the student, to determine individual learning paths and strategies.

When we share our work with others, we highlight the work our staff has
done to establish a strong Multi-Tiered System of Support, which incorporates student voice in the learning process and includes the practice of students establishing learning goals and monitoring their progress on a regular basis. This work has been combined with a focus on implementing the Growth Mindset work of Carol Dweck to impact and improve our culture of learning.

During the past several years, Fraser’s teachers have worked diligently to create a common language that allows us to design, plan, and deliver instructional strategies to support our shift to a competency education model. This requires a high level of understanding around pedagogy and instructional design. Fraser teachers are committed to rethinking their practice, and they have been purposeful in designing lessons that use a combination of best practices, which includes Direct Instruction, Inquiry Model, and a Constructivist Approach to student learning.

To achieve a competency education model, we are defining our competencies collaboratively to study the Common Core State Standards, Next Generation Science Standards, the C3 Framework for Social Studies, and the Michigan State Standards to create a comprehensive continuum of competencies that will allow students to progress through the curriculum at their own pace and utilize multiple means of expression.

Finally, we are in the process of transforming our static, physical spaces of our buildings and learning environments from their traditional focus into flexible places focused on providing students the ability to learn anytime, anywhere, and at any pace. Classrooms and learning spaces throughout the district are being redesigned to incorporate the preferred learning styles of students.

Beginning with the 2016-2017 school year, Fraser High School will implement flexibility at the end of the school day for eligible students through a flexible seminar period. This seat time waiver, granted with permission from the Michigan Department of Education Innovation Council and State Superintendent Brian Whiston, and approved by the Fraser Board of Education, will be offered to juniors and seniors who meet specific academic and disciplinary requirements.

This program is designed to allow students the chance to experience more personal responsibility and to prepare them for the freedom of the post-secondary environment. Students who are not eligible to leave campus will be able to utilize the class time to improve their academic achievement. The graphic above provides a timeline for the transformation process at FHS.

The transformation within Fraser is not complete. In many ways, we are still in our infancy in this process of true systemic change. However, as we lead students down a path of owning their learning and redesigning our processes and physical space, we continue to make positive adjustments. Students in Fraser today are beginning to readily identify their learning styles, strengths, and areas of needed improvement. The result is a strong community of learners prepared for the world beyond high school.

Dr. David Richards is Superintendent of Fraser Public Schools. Contact him at 586.439.7000 or David.Richards@fraserk12.org.
Leaders have the ability to bring out the best in people, which can be both difficult and rewarding work. This work requires ambition, a service-focused attitude, and an ultimate goal of inspiring their district to be great.

MASA asked superintendents to share their thoughts on what leadership means to them.

Here’s what six Michigan superintendents had to say about the role of leadership in their practice:

**David Tebo**
Hamilton Community Schools
“Leadership in education is tougher and more exciting that it has ever been. I believe leaders have to have courage, as we transform education from what it was to what it can be. We are faced with the challenge to educate and inspire every one of our learners so they can meet their individual potential. That means mixing what worked, what works and what might work as we adapt to each new group of students. As leaders we have the opportunity to paint a picture of what’s possible if we have the courage to learn and innovate alongside our staff and students.”

**Teresa Belote**
Bronson Community Schools
“One of my favorite sayings is a leadership quote attributed to Sheryl Sandberg: ‘Leadership is about making others better as a result of your presence and making sure that impact lasts in your absence.’ To me, vision, credibility, courage, compassion, humility, and frequent failures are important ingredients for a successful leadership recipe.”

**Dr. Steve Mathews**
Novi Community Schools
“Leadership is about making relationships with people, about listening to what their concerns are and then try to provide the support that they need to be successful. I’m only successful if the people who work for our district are successful.”

**Michele Lemire**
Escanaba Area Public Schools
“Using district teams consisting of board members, staff, and parents, we must intentionally create the conditions for student success, focus our collective efforts, and agree to relentlessly work toward meaty annual benchmarks that are rigorous enough in order to move the bar closer to our goals. At the same time, we need to recognize the vulnerability of our staff and support them as they take risks in attempting new strategies designed to increase student success.”

**Dr. Amy Kruppe**
Hazel Park Superintendent
“There is no job too small or large when it means that you are shaping and saving lives of children every day. How fortunate I am to every day serve students and families in Michigan that are accessing our public schools. I can’t think of a more rewarding job than when a child or a parent thanks you at the end of the day.”

**Shawn Hale**
Bullock Creek School District
“The job of a superintendent is very challenging. With these challenges, many great opportunities are born allowing us to inspire and empower students, staff and community. I am learning that leading a district is really about collaboration. I believe that people choose to work in education because they really do want what is best for kids. Taking the opportunity to collaborate and help others become the best version of themselves stands to impact students in a positive way. I’m learning what it takes to do this job well and know that I have much work to do. My key to surviving my first year was to develop a network of fellow district leaders that were willing to mentor and guide me through some very tough challenges. I am grateful to those leaders and know that I could not have survived my first year had they not taken time to guide me.”

There are many responsibilities as a leader, which include innovating, motivating, collaborating, and inspiring those around them. Consider this shared wisdom as an offering of collective insight as you shape and lead your district.

Mitch Smith is a Communications Specialist with MASA. Contact him at 517.327.9244 or mitchsmith@gomasa.org.
Why should I introduce NAMI Ending the Silence at my school?

- 50% of all lifetime cases of mental illness onset by age 14; 75% by age 24.
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- Free of cost to schools, youth and communities.
- For more information contact NAMI Michigan at info@namimi.org or call 517.485.4049.

About NAMI Michigan?

NAMI Michigan is the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the nation’s largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for persons living with serious mental illness and their families. NAMI is Michigan’s voice on mental illness.
Educational leadership is not easy. Everyone can do it better than you, but no one wants your job! In Jim Collins’ complementary book to his bestseller, *Good to Great*, he refers to the complexity of social sector leadership, including schools. Collins confesses that leadership in systems where all of the variables can’t be controlled is the toughest of all leadership challenges; educational leadership may be one of the most difficult.

I believe the secret to success in leading educational systems to success is found in creating, building, and monitoring an effective vision for the future. As a teacher, building administrator, local superintendent, and intermediate school district superintendent for the past 25 years, I’ve seen too many K-12 educational institutions just surviving until the next count day by doing what we did last year.

We can, and should, do better for our students, staff, communities, and taxpayers. The more laser-focused a school system can be, the more support, progress, and success it will have over the long haul. A school system will not be successful without a focused vision.

**Vision Casting**

Leadership requires purpose, conviction, and a vision of where you and your customers want to go.

The leader has an important role in casting the vision for the institution. Communities, schools, staff, and students will help support that vision if they know where their district is headed, the plan on how to get there, and what the desired outcomes are at the end of the journey.

Information is the key to putting together a good vision that makes sense to all parties, provides a positive future, and inspires others to join in the journey; if they help paddle the boat in the same direction — that’s even better!

Obtaining quality information to form the vision needs three parts to be successful:

- Collection;
- Analysis; and
- Synthesis.

Data is your friend when it comes to vision casting.

**Collection of Data**

Today’s technology makes gathering useful information easier than it was 10 years ago. Simple and inexpensive survey tools, like Zoomerang and SurveyMonkey, can quickly gather important data to begin the discussion of where the institution should go. Inexpensive doesn’t always ensure quality. Spend extra time making sure all surveys are short (no more than 10 questions), open-ended for feedback, and collect the specific data you are seeking.

Since the district’s vision will only be as good as the data that is collected, paying an outside service to gather additional anecdotal data through interviews, focus groups, community meetings, etc., will often be worth the extra expense. Nothing is more demoralizing than climbing the ladder that is put on the wrong wall!

Using contact systems—such as e-mails, direct mailings, and district newsletters—can point students, staff, and community members to surveys, websites, and social media contact points to share their thoughts.

The pools of potential data sources are endless, so focus on the most effective data that will help form the correct vision. Student achievement history, economic forecasts, population trends, etc., need to be included in the discussion.

In all cases, make sure all of the data is easily accessible on your website for those who want to view the journey as it occurs.

**Analysis of Data**

As with gathering data, outside experts can help shape your surveys and anecdotal data, and can also assist with analyzing the mountain of data that will be collected.
If the economic resources aren’t available to purchase professional assistance, connections with other educational leaders in Michigan can be very helpful, especially if they are of similar size and culture. Using other interested parties within your school system, such as teachers, support staff, administrators, board members, and community members, can also help create a more global view.

**Synthesis of Data**

Educational systems without laser-focus will not hit targets. Once data begins to tell a story, the preferred future of where the district will go must be boiled down to the most important goals that will help the system arrive there. Two or three goals should be the maximum, with a shelf life of three to five years. They should also be easily recalled in one or two words. The details of the goals may be a long and complex sentence for a plaque on the wall, but the most effective goals will be easily summarized. If everyone knows the direction, and they can quickly reference it, then they are more likely to apply the goals to their world. The more eyes you can have look at the goals in the setup phase, the more likely quality systems can be put in place to carry out those goals.

**Implementation and Execution**

Once you have the system’s goals for the next three to five years, the real work begins!

The leader still has to plan years ahead of the system so each vision can build on the next. They must also lead with a core set of operational principles that never change from vision to vision: ours are the seven principles found in *Good to Great*.

Once the vision is cast, start setting up monitoring systems, check on progress throughout the months and years, and adjust accordingly as progress ebbs and flows. The key to achieving useful and productive goals that inspire forward momentum for an organization is in the setup: casting the correct vision for the district shouldn’t be complex, just effective.

Dr. Curtis Finch is superintendent of Mecosta-Osceola Intermediate School District. He can be reached at cfinch@moisd.org and followed on Twitter @CFinchMOISD.
School districts and other educational entities struggle to manage data well. The primary issue is that districts have a variety of data systems that don’t talk well with each other, creating silos of information. Where districts and ISDs lack the time, money, and talent to integrate their systems, they struggle with duplicate entry, poor data quality, and difficulty collating usable information across systems. The districts and ISDs that are able to gather sufficient resources to manually integrate systems enjoy fewer data issues, but still struggle to keep up with changing environments and data demands.

Further complicating the matter is that each district has a unique combination of applications from other districts in the state. That means that integration solutions that work for one district must be tailored or re-written for other districts. It also means that any attempt to pull data consistently across districts is challenged by the different data definitions and export formats that are provided by each system. In short, data management is a major challenge for schools. Our recent ROI Study has concluded that districts in Michigan spend over $160 million per year on data management, data integration, data quality, and reporting data to federal and state entities.

How can TRIG’s Data Integration Activity Help?

The vision of TRIG’s Data Integration Activity is to streamline the use of educational information statewide, through common data and common solutions. The concept is to take the most commonly used systems in the state, in each category (SIS, SE, Food Service, Library, Learning Management, etc.) and have them all exchange information using a common set of specifications. Once all systems are talking in this common language, information can be exchanged easily between systems. The initial results of that will be a significant reduction in cost and the amount of time expended on integration itself. The ROI Study concluded that the data hubs, once fully implemented, will be able to save Michigan districts $56 million of the more than $160 million currently being spent. However, the real benefit lies in the ability to pull data from systems more quickly and easily so that actionable information can be used at the school, district, regional, and state levels to improve education.
How Will We Accomplish This?

The Ed-Fi Alliance, a subsidiary of the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation, produces a toolkit that many states are starting to use for this purpose. The toolkit includes standard data definitions, data exchange specifications, a database model to house the data, a dashboard development framework, and a high quality base dashboard that can be expanded upon. Using the Ed-Fi Solution, the Data Integration Activity has created a “data hub” concept that will serve as the mechanism to manage school data well into the future. Specifically, we have created five regional data hubs that will provide for data integration of the districts in each TRIG region.

The key to this work has been to create a web-based administrative tool called the “cockpit.” The cockpit application manages the entire process, making integration a simple point and click operation for district users. It also serves as a basis for data quality reporting, a statewide single sign-on, consolidation of state reporting work, and much more. Having accurate, clean, up-to-date data in the hubs will also allow us to utilize standard early warning systems, student and classroom level dashboards/reports that will allow for far greater collaboration around appropriate, and timely interventions. Additionally, this will allow us to have a more consistent way to gauge what particular practices are having the greatest impact.

The biggest challenge is that the project can only move forward as fast as system vendors create connectors to their systems. Fortunately, vendors are beginning to do that work as it benefits districts in many states.

What Can the Michigan Data Hubs Do Now?

The data hubs are currently able to integrate with five major student information systems and can exchange data with a growing list of school data systems including alert, assessment, discipline, food service, learning management and special education systems. Additionally, dashboards are in place that include an early warning system for students at risk of dropping out, a number of state reporting error check reports, the ability to create MSDS collections, the ability to opt-in to three state reporting initiatives and a statewide single sign-on. New users of the data hubs are on the rise and districts are enjoying the ever-growing benefits that the hubs provide.

Can Districts Get Involved Today?

Yes! To sign up for the data hubs and for implementation steps, visit the TRIG website at http://22itrig.org/activities/data-integration/districtapplication/ and click on the sign up link.

Don Dailey is Project Manager for the TRIG Data Integration Project. Contact him at 269.250.9264 or don.dailey@kresa.org.
Creating a System to Positively Impact Early Literacy

By Nell Duke, Ed. D., Naomi Norman, Susan Townsend, and Tanya Wright, Ph.D.

Time is of the essence. With only 46% of Michigan third-graders proficient on the M-STEP this year, and with Michigan ranking in the bottom 10 states for literacy on the 2015 Fourth Grade NAEP (Michigan Achieves! 2016 Michigan State of Education Report by The Education Trust Midwest; https://midwest.edtrust.org/michiganachieves), it is time for educators to work together to improve outcomes for students. A group of stakeholders in Michigan came together to do just that. The results will instill confidence in educational leaders that strong guiding documents and a plan for support are available.

Collective impact (Kania & Kramer, 2011) is a framework to tackle deeply complex, broad-scale initiatives in an innovative, structured approach to cross-sector collaboration resulting in lasting change. Successful collective impact relies upon intentional collaboration, a common agenda, consistent measures of progress, communication systems, and an organizational structure. The Early Literacy Task Force, convened by the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators General Education Leadership Network (GELN) is a great example of collective impact in action. In less than one year, the Early Literacy Task Force has assembled key stakeholders and is launching a plan to deliver on its goals in support of early literacy in Michigan.

When the Michigan Department of Education released grant opportunities for each intermediate school district in the state to hire a literacy coach and create professional learning opportunities in literacy, GELN recognized the need to convene key stakeholders. GELN determined to focus on increasing reading achievement for Michigan’s students, developing quality literacy instructional practices in the classroom, and underscoring the necessity of making literacy a focal point of policy and funding support.

GELN Early Literacy task force formally launched in December 2015 under the direction of co-chairs Naomi Norman and Susan Townsend. The group included representatives from K-12, ISDs, educational organizations, and higher education. Initially, the task force addressed the effective deployment of early literacy grants and recommended strategies for developing a collaborative statewide network of support for early literacy.

The task force identified and prioritized early literacy needs into four emerging areas that focused the work: instructional practices, professional learning, systems building, and communication and logistics.

Once priorities were identified, literacy researchers Nell Duke, Ed.D., University of Michigan, and Tanya Wright, Ph.D., Michigan State University, began developing two documents for the Task Force: Essential Instructional Practices in Early Literacy: Prekindergarten and Essential Instructional Practices in Early Literacy: K to 3.

Introduction to Documents and Key Elements
The Essential Instructional Practices in Early Literacy: Prekindergarten and Essential Instructional Practices in Early Literacy: K to 3 focus on a small set of research-supported literacy instructional practices. We believe that the use of these practices in every classroom every day could make a measurable positive difference in the state’s literacy achievement. For example, Essential Instructional Practice #2 for prekindergarten calls for “Read aloud with reference to print.” The document explains that this involves daily read-alouds with verbal and non-verbal strategies for drawing children’s attention to print and lists five examples of such strategies. Research suggests that print-referencing read alouds can foster literacy development (Justice & Ezell, 2002; Justice, McGinty, Piasta, Kaderavek, & Fan, 2010).

In developing the documents, we drew heavily on relevant research. As we define it, research is systematic collection and analysis of data in answer to a question. Research is defined such that multiple answers are possible, including answers that the researcher did not expect.

Just because something is written in a book or by someone at a university does not necessarily make it research or even research-informed.

We drew heavily on actual research, much as would be expected in other fields, such as medicine or environmental science. We chose our words carefully both to stay as tight to the research as possible and to make sure the documents remained accessible to a wide range of readers. For example, in “The teacher avoids attempting to incentivize reading through non-reading-related prizes such as stickers, coupons, or toys . . . ,” we were
drawing on research suggesting that rewarding students with non-reading-related prizes (as opposed to books or the like) makes it less likely that students will choose reading as an activity later (Marinak & Gambrell, 2008).

When making this point, we avoided jargon such as the “reward proximity hypothesis” (that the most effective rewards are those that are as close as possible to the desired behavior) to maximize accessibility. We hoped that this attention to detail would maximize the degree to which the documents could help us coalesce as a state and improve literacy outcomes for our students.

The Essentials formed the foundation of other documents created to address priority areas. Following the adoption of Pre-K and K-3 Essentials, Kristy Cooper, Ed.D., and Melissa Usiak, Ph.D., Michigan State University, led the development of the task force document Essential Schoolwide Practices. Susan L’Allier, Ph.D., led the development of Literacy Coaching Essential Practices. The task force adopted an aggressive timeline, and meets monthly during the academic year to continue to advance this important work.

From Written Practices to Implementation: Developing a Theory of Action
The task force includes members from many groups and represents diverse perspectives. We see the importance of not only defining core instructional practices, but also identifying other supports and activities that contribute to literacy success for students. This includes the school-level activities, literacy leadership and coaching models that are necessary to support quality literacy instruction.

Our theory of action to support successful readers at third grade requires a structure of supports from the system to the student level.

If we have literacy instructional essentials articulated and adopted at the system level,

• then we can align literacy policies, funding, initiatives, and resources throughout the system.

If we focus on literacy at the school level in an intentional, multi-year manner,

• then coaching can be embedded and sustained as a professional learning approach.

If teaching teams and individual teachers are supported by quality coaching,

• then we can develop instructional skills so we have high-quality instructional practices in every classroom, for every student, every day.

If we have the core essential instructional practices occurring in every classroom, every day,

• then ALL students will further develop their literacy skills, improving third- and fourth-grade reading scores.

Professional Learning Approach
To support teacher learning around these early literacy instructional practices, the task force recognizes the importance of job-embedded ongoing
professional learning opportunities (Learning Forward, 2012). In particular, after learning new skills, teachers need opportunities to practice and receive feedback as they try to employ those skills in the classroom (Joyce & Showers, 2002). A coaching model provides these targeted and supportive learning opportunities at the school and classroom level. As a teacher learns about new practices, a coach provides modeling, observation and feedback for specific teachers and teacher teams. They assist with lesson planning, interpreting diagnostic assessment, and analyzing student data. At the building level, they provide literacy leadership, facilitation of group learning, and support the literacy initiative more broadly. This approach supports the specific skills needed to use the early literacy instructional essentials effectively every day in every classroom with all students.

The coaching model is being initiated through an MDE professional development grant focused on developing skills in ISD early literacy coaches, as well as the resources they will need to support the coaches and teachers in local districts. This grant, managed by task force partners, provides ISD early literacy coaches access to resources and supports, including:

- Professional learning specifically related to the instructional essentials, coaching essentials and school-level literacy leadership;
- Access to university researchers who are experts in the area of early literacy;
- A statewide professional learning network of colleagues supported by a literacy coaches’ coordinator whose primary responsibility is to develop and provide ongoing support to the statewide network of ISD coaches; and
- Print, video, and digital resources about effective literacy instruction, coaching, and leadership (learn more about the print, video, and digital resources in the sidebar).

Join the Effort to Improve Literacy

The GELN and its Early Literacy Task Force believe the collective impact process is the way to advance large-scale improvements in literacy for Michigan’s students and educators. School leaders who want to learn more may get involved.

- Visit MDE Early Literacy webpage (www.gomaisa.org/general-education-leadership-network).
- Visit the GELN website (www.migeln.org) where you can find copies of the Pre-K and K-3 Early Literacy Instructional Essentials and other supporting documents.
- Add your voice in advocacy for expanded literacy funding.
- Contact your ISD to find out how it is supporting early literacy in your area.
- Direct questions to Susan Townsend (susan.townsend@jcisd.org) or Naomi Norman (nnorman@washtenawisd.org).

References


The development and implementation of online training modules and resources to support the professional learning of literacy coaches, PreK-3 classroom teachers and administrators represent a key component of the MDE grant awarded to MAISA and Michigan Virtual University (MVU). These resources will serve to ensure that professional learning options on the literacy instructional essentials are accessible.

“One size fits all” professional learning does not meet the needs of today’s educators. A blended training model that includes online and face-to-face is critical. Initial work has begun to create an innovative, research-based delivery system of professional learning and corresponding supports. Key priorities guide this work:

- Create and implement a common coaching framework, support system and resources and provide intensive training in summer/fall 2016;
- Create high quality Pre-K-3 teacher instructional modules that include a rich library of video instruction segments that demonstrate teachers implementing essential instructional practices for each of the 10 key literacy practices and rich, research-based content and resources to ensure knowledge and skill development in the Essential Instructional Practices in Early Literacy; and
- Create a wrap-around system of support for Pre-K-3 educators, including a statewide literacy mentors’ network and online professional learning community for all Michigan early literacy educators.

Through the development and implementation of resources, the initiative will ensure a consistent, ongoing source of support for high quality literacy coaching, the development of core instructional skills for teachers, and a clear understanding of the essentials for administrators.

As professional learning modules and supporting resources are developed and vetted, they will be made available through MVU’s Professional Learning Portal. Through professional learning created in this project, Michigan’s Pre-K-3 teachers, ISD/ESA literacy coaches, and school administrators will be able to demonstrate increased content knowledge, understanding and skill in literacy essentials. The funds allocated to this work will, ultimately, improve the literacy skills of all Michigan students.

Tamara Bashore-Berg is Executive Director of Professional Learning Services at Michigan Virtual University. Contact her at 517.324.5387 or tbashoreberg@mivu.org.

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Not long ago, I retired from the Michigan Public Schools Retirement System and have embarked on a new journey as a consultant for the Michigan Association of School Administrators to provide training to intermediate school district and local district leaders on the School ADvance evaluation tool and process.

Recently, I was asked by former colleagues why I said yes to teaching educational leaders on the School ADvance model. It only took me a few moments to summarize my thoughts.

1. School ADvance is based on credible research. The School ADvance model is based on research by Dr. Patricia Reeves, her colleagues at Western Michigan University, the researchers at McREL, Dr. Marzano’s group, and others. The Michigan Department of Education has endorsed this model.

2. School ADvance is manageable. The School ADvance model is a rubric-based tool that allows leaders to phase in all the characteristics over a three-year period. In this day of “race without pace” in education, leaders are extremely caught up in the day-to-day operations of management and teaching and learning. Internalizing the characteristics over time and building a systematic process for collecting evidences will help ensure leaders are successful.

3. School ADvance provides clear, consistent targets identified by the leaders to become effective and highly effective leaders. The School ADvance model is clear in the language, focuses on the positive attributes of school leaders, guides the summative evaluation conversations between the evaluator and evaluatee, and is based on a consistent set of evidences that are determined by the team themselves.

4. School ADvance aligns with the continuous improvement plan cycle. This is my favorite part of the School ADvance model! The model links directly to an ISD or local district improvement plan and/or strategic plan. Through the training, leaders learn the steps necessary to be effective in their practice and model these characteristics consistently for staff. School ADvance allows leaders to learn how to:
   - Identify their three top initiatives/programs/strategies found in their plan and link them to 8-10 characteristics found in the School ADvance evaluation rubrics each year;
   - Identify evidences to verify implementation of the characteristics and determine the process for evidence collection;
   - Conduct a self-evaluation reflectively with integrity to find their leader growth edges;
   - Create their annual leader growth plans;
   - Develop student success models to assist in measuring student growth; and
   - Create an evaluation system that can be embedded within the day-to-day operations.

Because of my belief in the continuous school improvement process, and learning how School ADvance can assist in the development of highly effective leaders, I am all in on sharing this tool and process with my colleagues around the state. After the first seven training sessions across Michigan this summer, here is some feedback regarding leadership and purposeful evaluation.

“I truly believe that having a focus on improvement through collaboration will foster a more positive culture. It is also beneficial to have a common language regarding improvement and student success. The five Domains in the framework focus on student achievement and leading by example, and the process leads to innovation using a growth mindset!”

“This tool is well put together and comprehensive. I appreciated the time to work with my team to outline our process and identify our characteristics for which we will be using for evaluations this year.”

“This training connected the actual work we are doing in the district with what I will be evaluated on this year. I feel like this training also gave me great tools to establish my evidences.”

Sara Shriver is a School ADvance Trainer with the Michigan Association of School Administrators.
Bringing the Happiness Advantage to Schools

By Dr. Bobby Moore

Teachers and school leaders can cultivate the mindset and behaviors that have been empirically proven to fuel greater success and fulfillment. The old paradigm, “If I am good at my job, my students learn at high levels, and I am highly successful, it will bring me happiness,” has now been debunked by more than a decade of groundbreaking research in the fields of positive psychology and neuroscience.

Carol Dweck’s work on growth mindset has been popular in education, but most of the research has only been applied in the context of teachers fostering a growth mindset in students. We know from John Hattie’s research that when a group of educators develop the mindset that they do, indeed, have a great impact on student learning and that collective efficacy is achieved. Collective efficacy has an effect size of 1.57, much higher than the .4 effect size, which is said to equate to a year’s worth of growth.

Applying the research of positive psychology in our schools is more than telling staff to be happy, focus on the positive aspects of your job, and pretend challenges and obstacles do not exist. To embed these practices, we must relearn some of our behaviors and change some of our mindsets that have had a negative impact on success and fulfillment. As Shawn Achor, author of The Happiness Advantage: Seven Principles of Positive Psychology that Fuel Success and Performance at Work, explains, “Happiness is not the belief that we don’t need to change. It is the realization that we can. Happiness and optimism are the precursors to success, not merely the result.”

When I first heard Achor’s TED Talk, which has been viewed more than 14 million times, I did not immediately make the connection to how his research could improve schools. I viewed it as an opportunity to work on my own mindsets and behaviors, which hopefully would contribute to my own success and fulfillment. That changed after I saw Achor’s keynote at the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) Conference last year in Phoenix, during which he talked about the transformation of Cardinal School District in Iowa. The new superintendent of Cardinal, Joel Pederson, turned around the culture and performance of the district by implementing Achor’s core principles from The Happiness Advantage. Read the district’s story in the September issue of AASA School Administrator.

I was excited about the potential of Achor’s research to help create more positive school cultures, but I was still a little skeptical about how. So, I reached out to Dr. Randy Poe, a former Kentucky Association of School Administrators and Kentucky School Boards Association superintendent of the year, who had also brought The Happiness Advantage to Boone County Schools. Over the years, I have come to respect Poe as a leader committed to pedagogy, research, and practice. His district is one of the highest performing in the state of Kentucky, and I frequently bump into him and his staff at national conferences sharing the district’s work.

I asked Poe bluntly, “Why did you choose to implement Shawn Achor’s work in Boone County? Was it really needed, or did it turn out to be a distraction to all the other great things you are doing?”
He paused for a second to reflect and then said confidently, “Jim Collins (Good to Great, 2001) discussed the importance of getting the right people on the bus; Daniel Pink (Drive, 2009) shared how to keep those people engaged and motivated; and Shawn Achor’s work is important because it not only keeps the wheels on the bus, but keeps them moving in the same direction. Culture matters!”

Poe is so committed to the power of positive psychology in schools that he requires all new leaders to develop a 21-day action plan on how they will develop their own mindsets and behaviors (one of Achor’s principles). He also clearly communicates to principals that they are responsible for their schools’ culture (and results). This conversation confirmed for me the importance of working with leaders and teachers and giving them the tools and resources to own their own happiness.

Next, I had the opportunity to join Dr. Lisa Hagel, superintendent of Michigan’s Genesee Intermediate School District, and her staff as they engaged in the Orange Frog Workshop™, a two-day, experiential workshop developed by the International Thought Leader Network (ITLN) and Achor, which is rooted in the core principles from The Happiness Advantage. To serve as a starting point for the workshop, Achor wrote The Orange Frog, a parable that illustrates the journey to creating a happier, more productive, more satisfying life and workplace. Witnessing firsthand how the workshop fostered collaboration, trust, and the ownership of important behaviors associated with a healthy school culture, I was excited to share the opportunity with the superintendents and principals that Battelle for Kids works with across the country.

As Achor explains, most people think the science of happiness is useful for the people around them, but the person we have the greatest power to change is ourselves. We have all felt and observed the power of negative emotions in our schools. This negativity can infect a group of people almost instantly. Fortunately, positive emotions are also contagious, which makes them a powerful tool in our quest for high performance in the workplace. More importantly, the power to spark positive emotions multiplies if you’re in a leadership position.

Battelle for Kids is excited to announce an exclusive partnership with ITLN to help bring The Orange Frog Workshop™ to K–12 education. Learn more at www.bfk.org/orangefrog.

References

Bobby Moore is a Senior Director at Battelle for Kids. All views expressed in this article are his own. Contact him at bmoore@bfk.org or follow him on Twitter @DrBobbyMoore.
Rigor, relevance, and relationships. While these memorable concepts helped us question the status quo in education, they have done little to change the basic system of K-12 education in the United States. Consider the trend in NAEP scores for high school students if you need evidence. Granted, it’s a big system, and it would be unrealistic to expect it to turn around on a dime. At the same time, we seem to struggle with our sense of urgency, and, to me, relevance is the propeller in the 3-R’s trio.

It’s notable that so much of the focus in education reform has been on improving relevance in the classroom, while seemingly neglecting the need for relevancy in educational leadership. To give an analogy, it’s like asking NASA to re-engineer practices on the launch pad without changing anything in the way of the company mindset. At best, changes in the classroom will be incremental if we start the relevancy proposition there.

This can be a very uncomfortable process for those who earned their credentials in a largely homogenous environment. If your new recruits seem slightly strange and you don’t really understand the concepts they’re floating, then you’re probably on the right track.

That school leaders embody the skills and qualities to liberate relevance in themselves and others. What are some of those qualities, you ask? Flexibility, risk-taking, curiosity, to name a few. Got a staff member who complained when you asked him or her to consider aligning their work schedule with the needs of students or families? There’s your dead weight on this mission.

That we invite staff at all levels to question our relevance to the customers’ needs. An organizational culture of inquiry should be easy for those of us in education, shouldn’t it? Imagine if we modeled learning in every dimension for our students, i.e., real-time adjustments to our philosophies and practices that demonstrate that we are learning and evolving, even as we are liberating their potential. Imagine even further if our mantra was to “blow our students’ minds by blowing our own.” Isn’t that the essence of an education? To expand one’s mind beyond the known?

- That we make peace with the idea that reform is not just something that happens to us, but rather that it is essential to the growth and evolution of our industry (which starts with those who lead that industry). We can’t ask our classroom teachers to improve their relevancy while ours just gets a spray tan.

Re-forming around the needs of our customers and stakeholders is our form of continuous improvement, of staying real with what’s going on in our world. Done in response to perceived changes in our environment, it feels mildly uncomfortable. Done in anticipation of changes we cannot even quite articulate, it feels like risky business. That is the dark side of the moon that we must pursue vigorously. Or risk being left behind in the voyage of human evolution.

By Julia Gillespie

Relevance: It Starts with Leadership

Julia Gillespie is Deputy Superintendent for Operations of Ottawa Area ISD. Contact her at 616.738.8940, ext 4091, or jgillesp@oaisd.org.
As we began another school year just a couple of months ago, superintendents had an opening day just like the Major Leagues. In fact, baseball has parallels to our annual events in our school districts. As school districts we have done our spring training, summer draft and made the trade deadlines for call-ups to fill our rosters.

Our spring training is the professional development and growth through summer workshops, college courses, and curriculum reviews. Through these we are building our team confidence, our teaching and learning skills, and giving ourselves opportunities to work with other teachers to figure out what is best for our students and their learning.

Spring brings a wave of retirements with fond memories, some relief and the sense of accomplishment. Summer is busy filling vacancies with the best teachers available. Finding the right teachers who can balance the team is what hiring is all about.

Opening day of school brings joy, tears, and excitement to our students. It is festive, rooms are decorated, bulletin boards are filled with encouraging thoughts, and everyone is eager to get back into the routine. Teachers have their classrooms ready. Students have their supplies. Teachers and students have a fresh start to a 180-day schedule covering nine months of teaching and learning. Every day brings an opportunity to up our game.

And every baseball game starts with an opening pitch. Our superintendents begin their opening day with their faculty and staff with an opening address. A strategic plan, thought, or course of action will be shared. Pitchers have the opportunity to wind up, come to a set, balk, or throw a strike/ball/wild pitch. Occasionally, we hit a batter or bean our foes. Superintendents set the tone with their pitch and delivery just like pitchers do.

We have starting pitchers, long relief, short relief, and closers. Most superintendents want a long-term contract with their specialty. We have business managers, curriculum leaders, and human resource personnel wanting to become a superintendent. It is our job to groom the next season of leaders. The best superintendents have broad experience. In all we do, just like throwing strikes, teaching and learning in the classroom should always be our focus.

Pitchers, like hitters and fielders, have statistics. We have local assessments, ACT/SAT scores, and state tests that define our ability to educate our students. Statistics become overused, abused, and are time consuming. Like pitchers, we work hard to do our best and bring our best stuff daily. Our pundits can find someone or someplace doing better. The difference is that baseball has had similar measurements for years while education finds new ones continually. We need to settle down, find meaningful measurements, and achieve our goals—both personal and organizational—in our case, set by the local board of education.

We know that students learn better from those they like and respect. When expectations are higher and personal, performance improves. This means that teaching and learning needs to focus on relationships, rather than test result concerns. Testing pressure has negative impacts when what we all want is one year of student growth annually and content competency. Students and parents will reap the benefits when teachers help create the relationship. Caring, listening, and understanding teachers get the most from their students.

Pitchers need tremendous support from teammates. Fielding behind the pitcher is vital. The play of the fielders is equal to the work of building principals. When principals are working well with the faculty, staff, students and parents, it makes the school year much better. You know what a team feels like. The principal is essential in our world of education. When we have a weak fielder, it seems like the ball is always hit their way. We all need to know how to handle the throwing or fielding error. The swinging “K” or the double play erases the error and kills the rally. When the game is on the line, we need the support of teammates.

Think back to your opening day. What was your pitch? How did you deliver the ball? Who caught the ball or strike? Every pitcher wants a great catcher, as well. A catcher can frame the pitch for the umpire or block the ball in the dirt. Catchers give signals to the pitcher. As superintendents, we get signals from the Board of Education, community, parents or colleagues. Superintendents can use this information to know how to pitch to each batter. Listening becomes vital, much like the conference on the mound.

Sooner or later, a pitch has to be made. Timing is essential. Stepping off the mound is a part of the game. Pitching over the plate becomes essential.

Superintendents tend to like opening day. They like to throw out the first pitch. How many innings we work is determined by the pitch count. So your words count, just like each pitch. Know what makes for an easy inning and take advantage of the opportunity to throw a no-hitter. Most superintendents just want to finish what they started—educating students to do their best! PLAY BALL!

Dr. Gary C. Niehaus is Superintendent of Schools at Grosse Pointe Public School System. Contact him at 313.432.3004 or gary.niehaus@gpschools.org.
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This fall, MASA launched two in its new series of four Horizon Leadership Academy programs for MASA members and other educational leaders around the state. The two Horizon programs underway include:

**Sustain Excellence**

Endorsement for Current Superintendents

*Sustain Excellence* is a specialty central office endorsement program for current superintendents, focusing on leadership. For many superintendents, professional learning feels either too time-consuming, not flexible enough, or like it was designed for someone else. MASA’s *Sustain Excellence* is developed specifically for current superintendents.

*Sustain Excellence* highlights:

- The program is job-embedded and relevant;
- It is research-based with practical know-how from national and international experts;
- It provides time to collaborate with peers to improve practice and learn together.

**Navigate Leadership**

Endorsement for Aspiring Superintendents

*Navigate Leadership* is also a specialty central office endorsement program for aspiring superintendents and first-line leaders, focusing on leadership.

*Navigate Leadership* highlights:

- The program focuses on the unique needs of an aspiring superintendent or first-line administrator;
- It offers job-embedded opportunities to practice learning;
- Provides a chance to grow alongside peers;
- Requires supervisor reference.

The *Sustain Excellence* and *Navigate Leadership* curricula focus on four big ideas.
For those superintendents or first-line leaders who need their MDE administrative certification, MASA is partnering with the Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals to link our central office specialty endorsement with MASSP’s alternative administrative certification program, Path to Leadership, which currently is the only alternative administrator certification in Michigan.

Sometimes, it’s the little things that can make a big difference. That’s why MASA is partnering with Battelle for Kids and Michigan Virtual University to create a microcredential course for all school administrators:

**MASTERY**

**SPARK GROWTH**
Professional Learning for First-line Administrators

Spark Growth
Spark Growth was initiated in response to the needs of Michigan first-line leaders. Last spring MASA leaders met with a representative group of first-line leaders. Some of these leaders have aspirations of applying for a superintendency, and others shared they had no aspirations of becoming a superintendent, they just wanted to hone their craft and network with others.

MASA listened and will plan a series of four-day professional learning opportunities this coming year in support of first-line leaders. This fall, the MASA team is collecting more information from first-line leaders statewide, using what is learned to develop Spark Growth’s curriculum and networking opportunities.

The MASA team is interested in hearing from you and your region teams about future ways MASA can support your development and the development of leaders in your region. Contact Chris Wigent, Tina Kerr, or Cindy Ruble at MASA with ideas, questions and future opportunities.

Cindy Ruble is Associate Executive Director of Instruction, MASA. If you are interested in enrolling or would like more information, contact her at 517.327.5910 or cruble@gomasa.org.

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**INSPIRE INNOVATION**
Microcredentialing for All Administrators

Inspire Innovation
Inspire Innovation will provide an online, rigorous, competency-based curriculum to strengthen the skill sets of current superintendents and aspiring superintendents.

MASA staff surveyed and/or met with more than 200 educational leaders across Michigan to identify skill development needs. Based on feedback from these educators, four areas surfaced as priority skill areas for growth:

1. Communication skills
2. Superintendent/board relations
3. Finance
4. Human resources

The first micro-credential course will focus on improving, boosting, enhancing and growing communications skills. The MASA team is partnering with Battelle for Kids, a not-for-profit organization focused on developing innovative services, solutions, and products for schools and their leaders, and Michigan Virtual University to build a rigorous communication curriculum to support educational leaders’ needs. The communications microcredential is slated to be launched in spring 2017, followed by microcredential courses on superintendent/board relations and finance later in 2017.
What might it feel like to be a teacher in 2016?
What might it be like to be a parent in 2016?
What might it be like to be a child in 2016?

These are all important questions to consider for anyone leading learning as an educator today. This is not simply an exercise of imagining what life might be like in someone else’s shoes. Rather, developing empathy means listening to others, as well as trying to see the world from their perspective, through their eyes. It is an iterative process of attempts, feedback, course corrections, and building understanding each step of the way.

As we think about advocating for children by engaging lawmakers and state leaders, it is all about relationships. But how do we best build these relationships?

If we use empathy as our guide, the most effective advocates first attempt to see things from the perspective of a lawmaker who has been on the job for perhaps a few years. Realizing that our elected officials are bombarded with a slew of complex policy issues—health care, transportation infrastructure, taxation, insurance regulation, budgeting, energy, and so much more—it is no wonder that they might initially be a bit distanced from our requests. It can be overwhelming when, for instance, a topic like evidence-based strategies to help young students master the skill of reading comes up in a debate. Who does a lawmaker turn to in such situations? This is where you, as a professional educator, can make a difference as you advocate for kids.

Steven Covey is famous for advising that we should first seek to understand others before we invite people to understand us. By building a relationship with a lawmaker, you can begin to understand their world, who they are as a person, their likes and dislikes, and the things that are important to them. Before you ask your representative where they stand on an issue, ask them about their own family; ask them about their job; ask them what they are passionate about. After you begin to build a connection on these common human elements, you then have a solid foundation to invite them into your world. It is then that they will see you as the professional expert and resource that you are. It is never too early or too late to start building these relationships.

The second set of relationships effective school leaders build as advocates are those with the parents and families who entrust their children to your care. Here the work is both similar and different. Parents already know you and likely trust you. What they do not know about is the complexity of educational policy and funding in Michigan. In this respect, effective leaders unpack this complexity a little bit at a time. Having an established parent advisory group that meets regularly is a great way to build both allies and expertise in your community. Parents do not need to know about every nuance of Sec. 147c to be effective, but they do need to feel confident in their knowledge of an issue in order for them to reach out to their elected official and, better yet, ask their neighbors to do the same. You cannot build such capacity overnight. With sustained efforts over time you will build a knowledgeable and trusting team who are ready to act to always do what is best for children.

As the leader of K-12 education in your community, you have transformative power in the combination of your professional knowledge and your capacity to building trusting relationships with parents, families, and the lawmakers who represent all of us. You represent the unheard voices of your students and Michigan’s children. Keep up this critically important work. The children of Michigan are counting on you!

Daniel Behm is Superintendent of Forest Hills Public Schools. Contact him at 616.493.8800 or dbehm@fhps.net.
Tell a Colleague

97% of attendees felt this conference met or exceeded their expectations.

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The general sessions were amazing. The focus of the importance of human beings in the educational process was on target!

Who Attended by Title
- Superintendents
- First Line Administrators
- Aspiring Superintendents
- Business Affiliates
- Associate Members
- Educational Partners
- Retirees

Who Attended
- 899 Attendees
- 73 Presenters
- 43 Sessions
- 110 Exhibitors
- 44 Sponsors
- 90% Hot Topic Session Approval Rating
- 2,579 SCECHs Earned
- 50 New Superintendents

Who Tweeted
- 450+ Tweets sent using Twitter hashtag #masa16

Who Viewed
- 1,060 Coffees Consumed (estimated)
- 10,000+ Times MASA Events App was opened

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