

13th Annual

# Thinking & Learning Conference

**TOM HIERCK**

Sunday 22 May

**Start with 'Why'**

Session 1

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**MELBOURNE**

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# TOM HIERCK

Tom Hierck has been an educator since 1983, in a career that has spanned all year levels and included many roles in public education. His experiences as a teacher, school leader, department of education project leader and executive director have provided a unique context for his education philosophy. Tom is a compelling presenter, infusing his message of hope with strategies culled from the real world. He understands that educators face unprecedented challenges and knows which strategies will best serve learning communities. Tom has presented to schools across North America and internationally, imparting a message of celebration for educators seeking to make a difference in the lives of students.



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## Authentic Alignment

**Authentic Alignment** is the process by which schools:

- **Explore** core beliefs and **develop** your guiding school mantra.
- **Envision** and **create a description** of the school you seek to become.
- **Reconnect** with the moral imperative of your **collective commitment** to the Five Essential Elements of a PLC.
- **Systematically integrate** the mantra, vision, and commitments into existing school structures.

The four stages of creating a **Culture of Authentic Alignment**:

1. The WHY
2. The EYE
3. The HOW
4. The NOW

Four Stages of Authentic Alignment	
<b>The WHY</b>	Schools <b>identify</b> their fundamental purpose, <b>and develop</b> their guiding school mantra.
<b>The EYE</b>	Schools <b>envision</b> and create a description of the school they seek to become.
<b>The HOW</b>	Schools <b>connect</b> with the moral imperative of your <b>collective commitment</b> to the Five Essential Elements of a PLC.
<b>The NOW</b>	Schools <b>systematically integrate</b> mantra, vision, and commitments into existing structures.

**The WHY** is the **process** of exploring your schools core beliefs, habits and assumptions. The goal is to get clear on your school's fundamental purpose. The end product of the **WHY** is the development of your school's guiding mantra. A mantra is akin to a motto, albeit more fundamental to a school's internal purpose than simply a slogan. It's concise, repeatable, and core to a school's existence. The mantra is easily understood, easy around which to rally, and represents the unwavering core values that drive your daily work. Your school's mantra encapsulates the answers to questions like:

- What do we believe?
- What do we want to achieve?
- Why do we go to work each day?
- Why does our school exist?

**The EYE** is the **process** by which you develop a clear, compelling vision of the school you want to become. Schools need to develop a detailed description of what they want to become.

- What does our school look like when it's a GREAT place for students?
- What does our school look like when it's a GREAT place for teachers?
- What does our school look like when it's a GREAT place for parents?

**The HOW** is **process** by which schools connect with **moral imperative** of they make **collective commitments** to the Five Essential Elements of a PLC. Those five elements are:

1. A Focus On Learning
2. The Collaborative Culture
3. Clearly Defining What Every Student Needs To Learn
4. Constantly Measuring Effectiveness
5. Systematically Responding When Students Do/Do Not Learn

The **NOW** is the **process** of systematically embedding the **WHY** (beliefs), the **EYE** (vision) and the **HOW** (collective commitments) into existing school structures. Three practices will ensure that the work of actualizing these deeply held cultural beliefs remains at the front and center in everything a school does. These three practices are:

1. Aligned feedback
2. Aligned storytelling
3. Aligned celebration

# The EYE

"Take up one idea. Make that one idea your life—think of it, dream of it, live on that idea. Let the brain, muscles, nerves, every part of your body, be full of that idea, and just leave every other idea alone. This is the way to success."

The Swami Vivekananda

**The EYE** is the **process** by which schools **envision** and develop a clear, compelling picture of the school they want to become. What will your school look like when it's a GREAT place for students?

- What does our school look like when it's a GREAT place for students?
- What does our school look like when it's a GREAT place for staff?
- What does our school look like when it's a GREAT place for parents?

***In 3 Years, What Do We Want Our Ideal School To:***

Look Like	Sound Like	Feel Like

**For clarifying the EYE for Your School or District, ask:**

1. Can you describe the school we are trying to create?
2. What would our school look like if it were a great place for students? What would it look like if it were a great place for teachers?
3. It is five years from now, and we have achieved our vision as a school. In what ways are we different? Describe what is going on in terms of practices, procedures, relationships, results, and climate
4. Imagine we have been given sixty seconds on the nightly news to clarify the vision of our school or district to the community. What do we want to say?
5. Decades from now, if they build a statue to remember your school, in one sentence, what will the plaque say?

Point to the future and describe, in clear terms, the school you imagine that doesn't yet exist. If others volunteer to help build that future then, and only then, do you become a leader.







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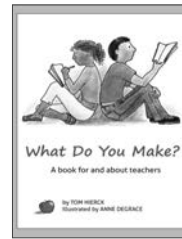
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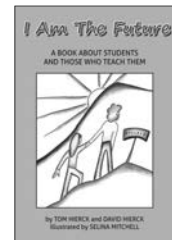
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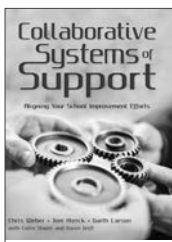
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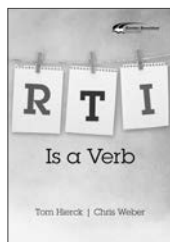
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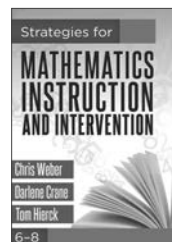
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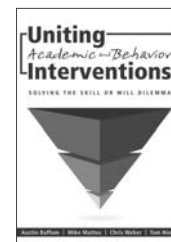
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