



16th Annual
Hawker Brownlow
**Thinking &
Learning**
Conference

the teacher's conference

ANTHONY MUHAMMAD

FRIDAY 17 MAY

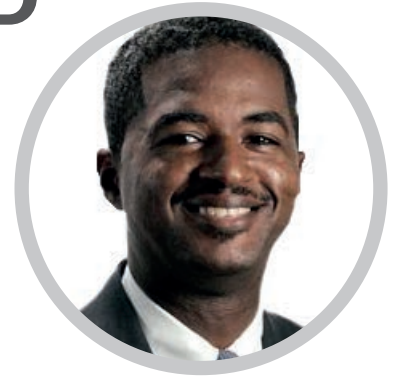
Session 1

**What is School Culture and
Why Should I Care?**

MELBOURNE

ANTHONY MUHAMMAD

Dr Anthony Muhammad is a much sought-after educational consultant, having served as principal for a middle and high school and as a middle school teacher and assistant principal. His tenure as a practitioner has earned him several awards as both a teacher and a principal. As a researcher, Anthony has published multiple books and articles, and he regularly gives seminars on the subject of transforming school culture. Anthony's most notable accomplishment came as principal of Levey Middle School in Michigan, a National School of Excellence, where student proficiency on state assessments more than doubled in five years.



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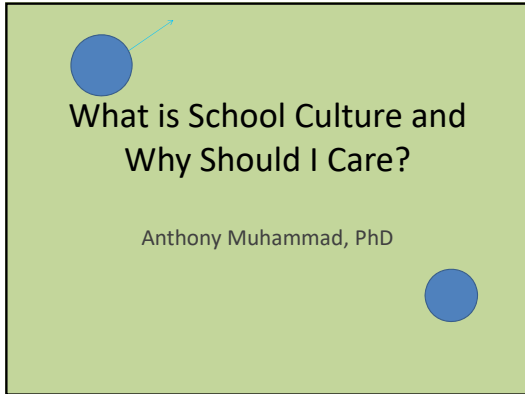


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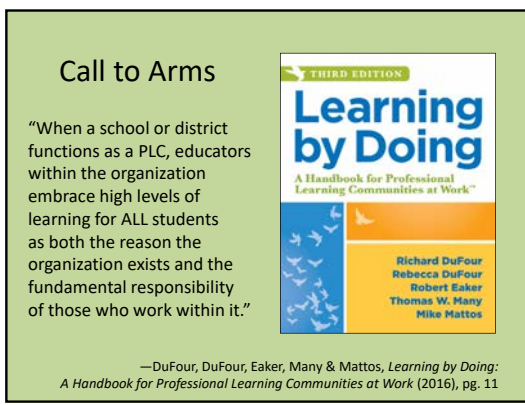
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What is School Culture and Why Should I Care?

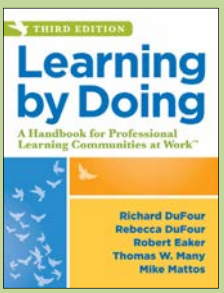
Anthony Muhammad, PhD

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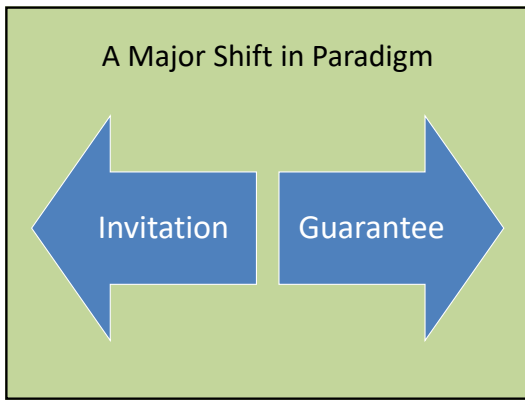
Call to Arms

“When a school or district functions as a PLC, educators within the organization embrace high levels of learning for ALL students as both the reason the organization exists and the fundamental responsibility of those who work within it.”



—DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, Many & Mattos, *Learning by Doing: A Handbook for Professional Learning Communities at Work* (2016), pg. 11

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A Major Shift in Paradigm

Invitation Guarantee

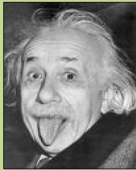
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What Has History Taught Us?

All students have not benefited equally from access to educational institutions?

4

**What's Next?
Is Change Necessary?**



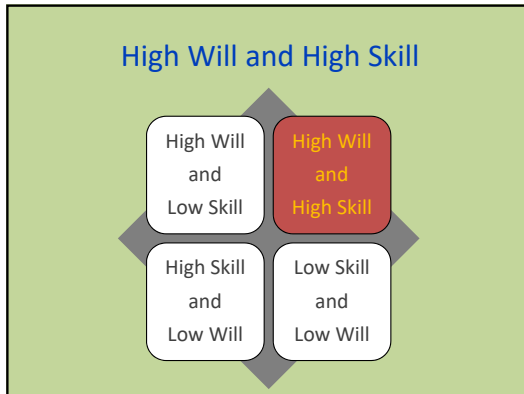
"Insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result."
—Albert Einstein

5

Two Forms of Change

- Technical–structural (skill)
- Cultural (will)

6

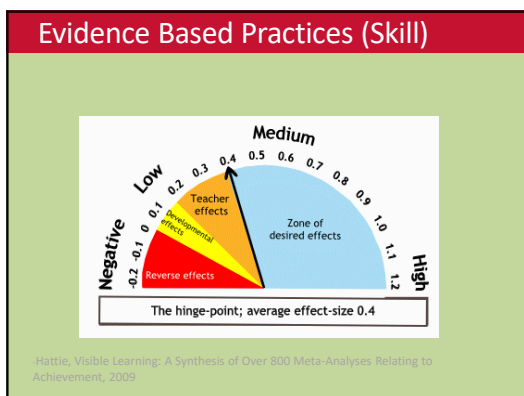


7

Technical vs. Cultural

- Both forms of change are essential to improving organizations.
- Schools tend to focus heavily on technical changes and spend little time on cultural change.
- Deep change cannot be accomplished without cultural change.

8



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Four Corollary PLC Questions

- What do we want student to know and be able to do?
- How do we know if students have learned?
- How do we respond when students don't learn?
- How do we respond when students have learned?

10

Professional Learning Communities

Targets	Evidence	Action
Q1. What do we want students to know and be able to do?	Q2. How will we know if they get it or can do it?	Q3. How will we respond when they don't learn? Q4. How will we respond when they do learn, or already know it?

11

Evidence Based Practices (Skill)

Desired Practices (>.4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teaching clarity (.75)• Providing formative evaluation (.9)• Feedback (.73)• Response to Intervention (1.29)
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PLC Lite

“‘PLC Lite’ is the most accurate way to describe the current state of most professional learning communities around the country. Educators rename their traditional faculty or department meetings as ‘PLC meetings’, engage in book studies that result in no action, or devote collaborative time to topics that have no effect on student achievement – all in the name of the PLC process.”

“The Futility of PLC Lite” by Rick DuFour and Douglas Reeves in Phi Delta Kappan, March 2016 (Vol. 97, #6, p. 69-71)

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Valley of Decision....



Is your school...

“Flirting” with or “dating” the PLC process?

Or

Are you “married” to the process?

—Williams and Williams, Starting a Movement: Building Culture From the Inside Out in Professional Learning Communities (2012)

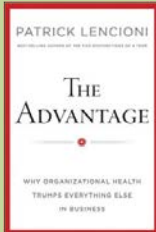
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PLC “Lite-ese”

- “We are having conversations”
- “We are in different places. Some of our PLC’s are further along than others”
- “District initiative”

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Don't Underestimate Culture



“The health of an organization provides the context for strategy, finance, marketing, and everything else that happens within it, which is why it is the single greatest factor determining an organization’s success. More than talent. More than knowledge. More than innovation.”

—Lencioni, *The Advantage: Why Organizational Health Trumps Everything Else in Business* (2012), p. 2

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Choosing Being “Smart” Over Being “Healthy”

Smart

- The “sophistication bias”
- The “adrenaline bias”
- The “quantification bias”

Healthy

- Build a cohesive team.
- Creating clarity.
- Reinforcing clarity

—Lencioni, *The Advantage: Why Organizational Health Trumps Everything Else in Business* (2012)

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Avoiding Culture

“Most leaders prefer to look for answers where the light is better, where they are more comfortable. And the light is certainly better in the measurable, objective, and data-driven world of organizational intelligence (the smart side of the equation) than in the messier, more unpredictable world of organizational health.”

—Lencioni, *The Advantage: Why Organizational Health Trumps Everything Else in Business* (2012), p. 7

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School Culture

“School culture is the set of norms, values, and beliefs, rituals and ceremonies, symbols and stories that make up the ‘persona’ of the school.”

—Peterson, “Is Your School Culture Toxic or Positive?”
Education World (2002)

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Complexity of Cultural Change

- Anthropology
- Sociology
- Psychology
- Political Science
- History
- Economics

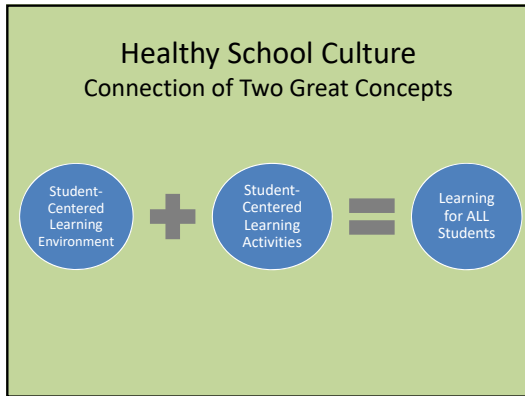
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“Healthy” School Culture

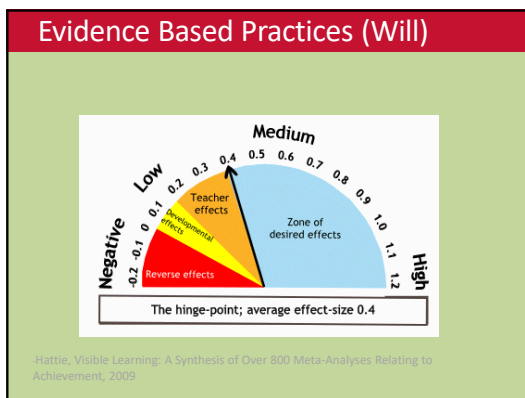
“Educators have an unwavering belief in the ability of all of their students to achieve success, and they pass that belief on to others in overt and covert ways. Educators create policies and procedures and adopt practices that support their belief in the ability of every student.”

—Peterson, “Is Your School Culture Toxic or Positive?”
Education World (2002)

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Predeterminations

- Perceptual
- Intrinsic
- Institutional

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Teacher Estimates of Achievement

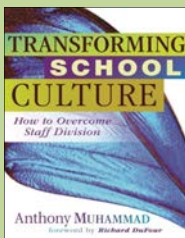
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Perceptual Predetermination

“Perceptual predetermination involves an educator’s own socialization and the impact of that socialization on his or her practice in the classroom, including expectations for student performance.”

—Muhammad, *Transforming School Culture: How to Overcome Staff Division* (2009), p. 21



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Stereotypes

“To help simplify a complex world, people develop mental models called schemas. Problems arise when people start to oversimplify schemas. Oversimplified schemas are known as **stereotypes**. **Stereotypes** are fixed impressions and exaggerated and preconceived ideas and descriptions about a certain type of person, group, or society.”

—Langlois, Kalakanis, Rubenstein, Larson, Hallam, & Smoot, “Maxims or Myths of Beauty? A Meta-Analytic and Theoretical Review,” *Psychological Bulletin* (2000), p. 390

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Crucial Conversations

- Conflicting opinions
- Potential to become highly emotional
- Stakes are high

Patterson, et.al, *Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking When the Stakes are High* (2011)

29

Corrective Lenses “The Optometrist”

Combat false/incomplete information with better information.

Try:

- Enlightenment
- Encouragement
- Experimentation



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Pause to Think

- What are the most prevalent “dangerous synonyms” used in your environment?
- How have stereotypes shaped learning environment?
- What do you plan on doing when you return to “correct the vision” of those who need a “prescription” in your school?

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*Collective Teacher
Efficacy*
1.57

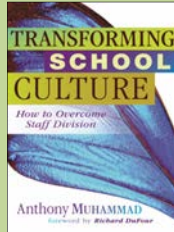
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*Student Self-Reported
Grades (Student
Confidence/Efficacy)*
1.44

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Intrinsic Predetermination

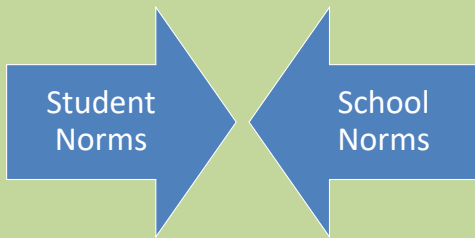
“Intrinsic predetermination is the student’s perception of his or her probability of success in school. The messages that students receive from their environment—the home, community, and school—can either build their confidence or work to destroy it.”



—Muhammad, *Transforming School Culture: How to Overcome Staff Division* (2009), p. 23

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When Cultures Collide



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Assimilation or Education

Assimilation

- Control
- Manipulation
- Standardization
- Docile

Education

- Liberation
- Development
- Creativity
- Empowerment

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Gifted and Talented Education

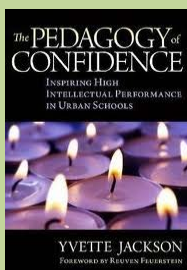
“Gifted and talented education works for two reasons: the student believes that he is gifted and the teacher believes that he is gifted. Based on this agreement, the teacher and student create the right learning environment and they utilize rigorous learning activities. All human beings possess a gift; the key is to identify and capitalize on it.”

—Renzulli, “What Makes Giftedness? Reexamining a Definition,”
Phi Beta Kappan (1978)

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Pedagogy of Confidence

- Identify and activate student strengths.
- Elicit high intellectual performance.
- Provide enrichment.
- Integrate prerequisites.



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The Maestro

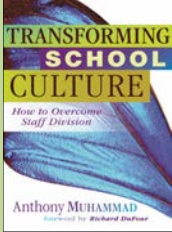
Blending the best in students with the best in the institution to create beautiful music



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Institutional Predetermination

“I contend that we have institutional barriers in place that make the job of educating every student very difficult.”



—Muhammad, *Transforming School Culture: How to Overcome Staff Division* (2009), p. 25

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Pause to Think

- When students collide with the norms of expectation in your school, does your school seek to “control” or “liberate” them?
- Does your school honor the gifts and talents of all of your students?”
- How do you plan to approach the “efficacy” of your staff when you return?

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Policy Elephants

- Student placement in advanced coursework
- Biased policies around ethnicity and economic class
- Discipline/expulsion policies
- Graduation standards/policies

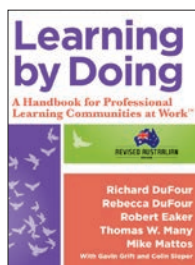
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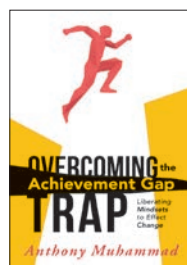
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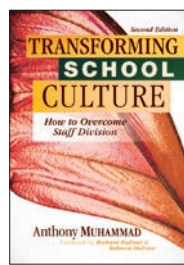
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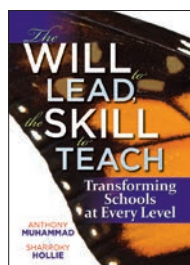
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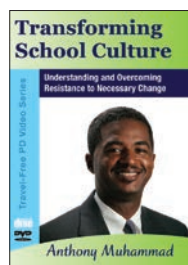
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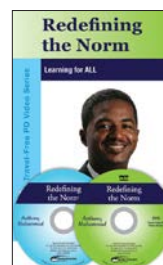
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