

FOURTH EDITION

The **Principal's** **Companion**

Strategies to Lead Schools for
Student and Teacher Success

PAM ROBBINS | HARVEY B. ALVY

Foreword by Kent D. Peterson



Contents

Foreword	ix
<i>By Kent D. Peterson</i>	
Preface	xi
Acknowledgments	xvii
About the Authors	xix
Part I: The Principal's Many Roles	1
1. Leader as Learner	3
Principal as Lifelong Learner	3
Learning in Many Contexts	4
The Expanding Role of the Principal	8
A Global Perspective	9
When Old and New Ideas Converge	10
Reflections	14
2. Leader as Manager	15
Instructional Leadership Requires Effective Management	16
Management Responsibilities and Strategies	17
Crisis Management Planning	24
A Final Observation Regarding School Management	32
Reflections	33
3. Leader as Shaper of School Culture	35
Defining Culture	36
Core Values and Beliefs Are the Heart of Culture	39
The Physical Environment Reflects	
Core Values: Portraits of Practice	40
Rituals Display Core Values and	
Call Attention to What Is Important	42
Celebrations Call Attention to What Is Important	45
How People Spend Time Reflects Core Values	46
Norms Are the Unwritten Rules of Culture	47
Powerful Stories Communicate and Reinforce Cultural Values	48
Reading, Transforming, or Shaping a Culture	51
Final Thoughts on Culture	57
Reflections	58

Part II: Critical Skills for Effective Leadership	59
4. The Art of Human Relations: Getting the Job Done	61
Task and Relationship Behaviors	64
Differentiated Support	65
Personality Styles	65
Recommendations for Skillful Human Relations	66
The Role of Emotions in the	
Organization: Remembering the Heart	70
Reflections	72
5. Managing Time: Leading With Purpose	73
Brevity, Fragmentation, and Variety	74
Techniques for Time Management	74
Managing Bifocally	76
Multitasking: A Modern-Day Solution or Hazard?	77
Final Thoughts on Using Time	79
Reflections	80
6. Effectively Working With the Central Office: Coordinating Teaching, Learning, and Professional Development	81
Caught in the Middle	82
How Is the School District Governed?	82
Communication Between the	
Schools and the Central Office	83
The District Office as a Teaching and Learning Center	84
The District Office and Principal	
Evaluations: Partnering for Success	85
Management Tips for Working With the Central Office	86
Maintaining a Strong Relationship	
Between the Central Office and the School	87
Forging a School and Central Office Partnership:	
Putting Staff and Student Learning First	88
Reflections	89
Part III: Honoring the School's Mission	91
7. Understanding, Planning, and Implementing Change	93
Guiding the Change Journey: Three Questions	94
Understanding Change	95
Change Brings Loss and Resistance	96
Change Influences Individuals and the Organization	97
Failure, Risk-Taking, and Conflict: Ingredients for Change	98
Strategies to Promote Trust	99
<i>With Konni deGoeij</i>	
Classical Insights Regarding Change and	
Continuous Improvement	101
Three Phases of Change	102
A Look at Change From the Individual's Perspective	103
Stages of Concern	105

Some Final Thoughts on Change	106
Reflections	109
8. Building a Vision and a Mission Together	111
Reflecting on Vision and Mission	111
Why Have a Shared School Vision and Mission?	112
School Activities That Highlight the Mission	115
Mission-Building Activity	116
Developing Yearly School Improvement	
Goals to Accomplish the Mission	117
Reflections	122
Part IV: Working Together to Build a Learning Community	123
9. Enhancing Teacher Growth Through Supervision and Evaluation Practices Designed to Promote Student Learning	125
Issues and Dilemmas	125
Essential Ingredients for Successful Supervision	127
Effective Instructional Strategies	130
Brain-Compatible Teaching Practices	133
Guidelines to Successfully Navigate	
Through Required State and District	
Teacher Evaluations Frameworks	136
Increasing Teacher and Administrative	
Understanding Through Reflective Clinical Supervision	139
Tips for Conferencing and Observing	143
Walk-Throughs, Instructional Rounds, Snapshots, or Drive-Bys	148
Guidelines Related to Evaluation and Legal Concerns	150
Final Thoughts on Supervision and Evaluation	152
Reflections	153
10. Maximizing Feedback About Teaching: Differentiated Professional Growth Options	155
Reflections on Feedback	155
Creating the Environment for Maximizing Feedback	156
Building a Foundation: Getting Started	157
Moving Toward Collaborative Feedback	157
Differentiated Professional Growth	
Options: How the System Works	158
Sources of Feedback: Categories and Approaches	159
Self-Assessment: Establishing Benchmarks of Progress	164
Individual Reflection and Institutional Renewal	164
Reflections	165
11. Building a Collaborative School: The Power of Teacher Leadership and Community	167
Portrait of a Collaborative School:	
A Professional Learning Community	168
An Image of Reality: Obstacles to Collaboration	169

The Case for Collaboration	169
Moving Toward Collaboration	172
Necessary Conditions for a Collaborative School	174
Teacher Leadership and the Collaborative School	178
The Principal and Collaboration	180
Some Final Thoughts on Collaboration	180
Reflections	181
12. Fueling the Learning Organization Through Professional Development	183
Why Professional Development?	183
Professional Development Defined	184
Standards for Professional Learning	184
Creating a Context Where Professional Learning Thrives: Some Guidelines	185
Leadership Teams and Professional Learning	190
Optimizing the Individual's Professional Learning Experience	191
Central Office Support for Professional Learning <i>With Elsie Rodriguez</i>	192
Final Thoughts on Professional Learning	193
Reflections	194
13. Faculty Meetings: A Tool for Capacity Building	195
Faculty Meetings as Learning Opportunities—Getting Started	196
The School Mission and Faculty Meetings	197
Increasing Teachers' Roles in Faculty Meetings	198
Successful Faculty Meetings: Stories of Practice	199
Faculty Meeting Strategies That Work!	201
A Final Thought	207
Reflections	208
14. Asking the Right Questions About Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment: Getting to Know the C.I.A.	209
We Live in Interesting Times	209
Asking the Right Questions	210
Continuing the Curriculum Discussion	229
Reflections	229
Part V: Starting Effectively and Staying the Course	231
15. First Days of School	233
Logistical Concerns	234
Beginning-of-the-Year Faculty Meetings Set a Tone	237
Departmental and Grade-Level Meetings	240

Orienting Teachers Who Are New to the School	241
Teacher Time in the Classroom	243
Welcoming Students and Parents	243
Be Visible on the First Days of School	244
Reflections	244
16. Tips: Ideas That Work and Align With the School's Mission	245
Organizing Your Time	245
Additional Helpful Ideas to Stay on Task	246
Tips From a Superintendent: What Makes a Successful 21st Century Principal?	247
<i>By Dr. Deb Clemens</i>	
The School Budget: Commonsense Efficiency Tips Based on the Mission	250
Providing Experiences to Celebrate the School's Culture	252
Tips on Opening a New School	255
<i>By Dr. Becky Berg</i>	
Tips on Using Technology to Enhance a Principal's Performance	257
<i>By Brent Howard and Scott Friedman</i>	
Using Tips in Your Setting	262
Reflections	263
Part VI: Embracing Your Constituencies	265
17. Working With Parents and Partnering With the Greater Community	267
Effectively Communicating With Parents	267
Building Bridges With the Parent Community	270
Additional Ways to Bring Parents and Community Members Into School	274
Broadening School Support and Partnerships	275
Community-Based Organizations	276
Seeking School Support Through Educational Grants	278
Reaching Out and Working With the Media	279
A Reflection on Partnering With Parents and the Community	283
Reflections	284
18. Making a Difference for Students: The Heart of the School	285
The Challenge of Excellence and Equality, Social Justice, and School Leadership	286
"Those Kids" and Their Stories	287
The Right to Be a Child and to Make Mistakes	288
Maximizing Opportunities for Students With Disabilities	289
Response to Intervention	292

School Discipline: The Principal's Role, the Discipline Gap, and Promising Options	293
Broad Disciplinary Guidelines	297
Reducing Bullying Behavior	298
Cyberbullying and Social Responsibility	301
Supporting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Youth	302
Graduating America's Youth: Making Progress on a Long Road	303
Principal Lori Wyborne: Making a Difference at Rogers High School	306
Student and Teacher Resiliency	308
Final Thoughts on "Those Kids"	309
Reflections	310
Part VII: The Principal's Professional and Personal Worlds	311
19. The Newcomer to the Principalship	313
Problems That Challenge New Principals	314
A Profile of the New Principal	317
Helping Prospective and New Principals Make the Grade	318
Practical Suggestions for Newcomers	320
Final Thoughts on the Newcomer Experience	322
Reflections	322
20. Taking Care of Yourself	323
Achieving Success Over Stress	324
Taking Control of Time	325
Towards Realizing the Vision: A Personal Mission Statement	326
Gaining Perspective by Spending Time With Students	327
Body and Mind: Healthy and Ill Together	327
Reflections	330
21. Keeping the Professional Candle Lit	331
Institutionalizing Professional Learning	332
Reflection as a Tool	335
A Principal's Portfolio	335
Other Growth Opportunities	336
Reflections	337
22. Reflections on the Principalship	339
Serving the School Community	339
Where Do We Go From Here?	343
The Good School	344
Take Time to Smell the Roses	345
Reflections	346
References and Additional Readings	347
Index	363

Dear Faculty,

Over the years I have asked each faculty member with whom I have worked to give me helpful hints to improve my job performance. I know that you are all very busy, but I would appreciate it if you could take a few minutes to answer the questions below and help me evaluate my performance so I can do a better job next year. Obviously, your comments will remain confidential. If you would like to remain anonymous, please word process your comments. Please put your comments in the "Harvey" envelope on Prema's desk. I would appreciate your comments by the last faculty day, May 27.

Thanks, Harvey

1. What are some of the things that I am currently doing that you would like to see me continue?
2. What am I currently doing that you would like to see me discontinue next year?
3. What suggestions do you have to help me improve my job performance (e.g., Is there a particular area that I should pursue for additional training? Is there a book or article that you suggest I read?)?
4. Do you have any additional comments?

This procedure is simple to execute and often yields constructive feedback and helpful ideas. It also provides an opportunity for the principal to assess the perceptions of staff in relation to his or her self-perception. Feedback can be enhanced when the perspectives of students, classified staff, parents, assistant principals, and community members are solicited. This type of feedback, often referred to as *360-degree feedback*, can offer multiple perspectives for consideration.

Principals who keep reflective journals often share insights derived from this activity with staff, which sometimes encourages staff members to become reflective about their own craft experiences and practices. Supporting the notion of leader as learner, Barth (1990) emphasizes principals' tremendous capacity to release energy in a school by becoming sustained, visible learners. Barth also describes the phenomenon of an "at-risk" principal as any educator who leaves school at the end of the day with little possibility of continuing learning about the work that he or she does (cited in Sparks, 1993, p. 19). Rolf P. Lynton of the World Health Organization has also offered some powerful insights about reflection by noting that we all go through events on a daily basis. What distinguishes an *event* from an *experience* is that an event only becomes an experience after you have time to reflect.² Each experience offers an opportunity to learn. When teachers, students, and parents see a principal's desire to learn and share ideas, norms and expectations that celebrate learning can develop within a school. Moreover, the *learning leader* model transfers to the classroom, where teachers demonstrate for students that they, too, are both leaders and learners.

3. **Determine Goals and Objectives**—determination of which threats and hazards will be addressed, ranking the risk possibility and developing goals and objectives for each one
4. **Plan Development (Identifying Course of Action)**—based on threats, hazards, and determined objectives, an action plan is developed with scenarios addressing “the what, who, when, where, why and how for each threat and hazard” (p. 14)
5. **Plan Preparation, Review, and Approval**—draft plan reviewed by key stakeholders including “first responders, local emergency management officials and staff” (p. 16)
6. **Plan Implementation and Maintenance**—stakeholders hold meetings, train based on specific roles and responsibilities, executing drills, reviews, and continuous revisions with community partners. “Plans should evolve as the school and planning team learn lessons, obtain new information and insights and update priorities” (p. 22). Download the complete Guide at: rems.ed.gov/docs/REMS_K-12_Guide_508.pdf

Crisis Planning: The Nuts and Bolts

Although the preceding Guide provides general planning steps, very specific practical elements of a good plan need to be considered. The following “nuts-and-bolts” suggestions were adapted from several excellent sources (Bagin & Gallagher, 2001; Dwyer, Osher, & Warger, 1998; Lawton, 2002; Lerner et al., 2003; National Mental Health Association, 2006; National School Public Relations Association, 1996; U.S. Department of Education, 2013; Warner, 2000). An effective plan should include the following practical elements:

- The rationale for the plan (e.g., zero tolerance for bullying, supervising hallways), noting that prevention is the first step to avoiding a crisis
- A list of crisis team members; although the school will have a core team on campus for the initial crisis period, an expanded team should be included in all planning and used during the crisis (e.g., principal; assistant principals/deans; counselors; school psychologists; classified representatives such as secretaries, teacher aides, and custodians; central office personnel; school nurse; school security officers; appropriate safe and drug-free program coordinators; law enforcement, fire, and emergency service personnel; community social service and health service agency representatives; clergy; media representatives; parent and student representatives)
- A generic form to define and assess a crisis situation
- Generic procedures that go into effect for all crises

5

Managing Time Leading With Purpose

What you pay attention to, and spend time on, communicates what you value.

—Kent Peterson

Time is the one resource we all share. However, what we choose to do with the time we have, how we actually spend our time, differs widely across individuals. No one actually “manages time.” However, we can try to manage our use of time by clearly identifying our personal and professional goals and scheduling our time to reflect those goals. Easier said than done! The discrepancy between the amount of time that principals want to spend on the area of curriculum and instruction and the time they actually spent on the area is considerable. This is true for new or veteran principals and has been a constant source of dissatisfaction among principals for decades (Alvy, 1983; Johnson, 2008). In a Public Agenda study, cosponsored with The Wallace Foundation, principals who wanted to spend time on “curriculum, teaching technique, mentoring and professional development” were quite discouraged in how their time was used: “Just 1 in 10 principals [was] satisfied” (Johnson, 2008, p. 75). However, in the Public Agenda study, the principals did feel like they were doing better than previously. An intriguing aspect of the study related to why some principals thought they were doing better than others as instructional leaders. Johnson stated that the principals fell into two categories, “transformers” or “copers” (p. 73). The transformers believed in their kids to a greater