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# Coaching Principals and District Level Leaders

— MASA Great Start Cohort Session —  
on April 27, 2023

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# Presenters

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# Overview

As a school district leader, one of your most critical responsibilities is the **supervision, evaluation, and support** of those you supervise, including strategies to assure high performance.

For superintendents and assistant superintendents, these positions include **principals and district level employees.**

This session focuses on **why** coaching and evaluating are so important and **how** you can carry out these responsibilities in ways:

- consistent with **legal and ethical standards;**
- **clear and respectful;** and
- **create a healthy culture,** where leaders focus on your **mission** and all continue to **learn and support** one another.

# Objectives of this Session

1. To share what **research and experience recommend as wise practices** for the recruitment, selection, mentoring, evaluation, coaching and support of educational leaders; and
2. To specifically **address topics or questions important to do you.**

# Principles for Leading Leaders

# Principle 1: *Know your purpose and and learn what motivates those you supervise and support*

- Qualities of great educational leaders
- Purpose: Your “Why”
- Understanding and mentoring each employee

## Activities:

- Consider a leader you admire. Why? What qualities of character or other factors influence your choice?
- We'll offer a framework for understanding:
  - *Employee motivation;*
  - *How employees build and maintain relationships; and*
  - *Job specific skills*

## ***Principle 2: Demonstrate integrity, and model legal and ethical conduct***

- **Administrator Code of Ethics**
- **Legal standards based on continuing contract and tenure laws for licensed employees**
- **Understanding levels of authority**
- **Examples of laws that your principals and district leaders must know**
  - **Data Practices/FERPA**
  - **Maltreatment of Minors**
  - **Open Meeting Law**
  - **PELRA**
  - **Minnesota Human Rights Act**
  - **ADA**
  - **FMLA**
  - **Fair Labor Standards Act (wage/hour law)**
  - **Steps for responding to a complaint**

## **Principle 2 Continued: *When you receive a complaint, when is an investigation required?***

- **Steps for responding to a complaint**
- An investigation is required if the fact as alleged, if true, constitutes a violation of law or policy
- **Protocols for responding to a complaint**
  - When is an investigation required?
  - What three questions that should be answered when a complaint is received?
    - Paid administrative leave?
    - Maltreatment of minors report?
    - Who conducts the investigation?
  - What are important employee rights related to an investigation?



## **Principle 3: *Lead with confidence, and respond with humility***

- **Characteristics of effective leaders**
  - **Character**
  - **Vulnerability**
  - **Modeling a learning organization**

### **Activity**

- **What words do you think your principals and district level staff use to describe you?**
- **What word would you want to “earn” ?**

## ***Principle 4: Understand and practice components of effective supervision and evaluation***

- 1. Clear and Compelling Standards**
- 2. Gather evidence**
- 3. Coach**
- 4. Develop**

## **Principle 5: *Model, mentor and support***

- **Qualities of a mentor**
- **Matching employees with mentors**
- **Monitor and measure**

### **Activity**

- 1. Describe a person who has been (or still is) an important mentor for you.**
- 2. What qualities does this mentor demonstrate?**

# Applying the five principles for Leading Leaders

## ***Principle 1: Know your purpose and and learn what motivates those you supervise and support***

### **Activity**

- **Ask behavioral questions and listen for evidence of :**
  - **What motivates this leader?**
  - **How does this leader build and maintain relationships?**
  - **What job-specific skills and preferences stand out?**

## ***Principle 2: Demonstrate integrity and model legal and ethical conduct***

### **Case study**

**You receive a call from a neighboring school superintendent who alerts you to a conversation with one of her principals, who was at a conference the previous week with your high school principal.**

**Your learn that the complainant/neighboring principal suspects that your principal is involved in an inappropriate relationship with a high school student.**

**You had earlier received a similar concern from one of your own principals but had not taken action, concerned about the reputation of your high school principal.**

**What actions will you take and in what order?**

## **Principle 3: *Lead with confidence and respond with humility***

### **Personal reflection**

**Consider a time you were criticized for a decision or action you made in your duties as a leader, one in which you reacted defensively but afterwards regretted how you acted.**

**Why do you think you acted defensively at the time?**

**What insights do you have about when you are most vulnerable to reacting defensively and what strategies might you consider that will help you abide by this principle?**

## *Principle 4: Understand and practice components of effective supervision and evaluation*

### **Activity:**

- 1. On a scale of 5, with (5 high and 1 low) how well do you believe your current system for evaluating principals and district level leaders meets all four of the components of an effective supervision and evaluation system?**
- 2. What action steps for improvement will you take first and why?**



## **Principle 5: *Model, mentor and support***

### **Case Study**

**One of your elementary principals is well liked by students, popular with parents, and highly regarded in the community. New in your role, you realize that while the principal seems well liked by many of the staff, the turnover of newer staff is significant.**

**Looking more closely, you find that the principal has not completed any performance evaluations on staff for several years despite clear directions to do so and extensive training.**

**What actions would you take and why?**

# Questions and follow-up

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