

Leading in Crisis

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Presented by the Principal Impact Collaborative

Agenda

- ✓ Give leaders a platform to discuss and brainstorm the many challenges associated with leading amidst the covid-19 reality
- ✓ Understand how best to prioritize their many competing priorities and develop a plan to distribute their leadership across teams to effectively manage through this new reality
- ✓ Understand how to leverage the covid situation to build the leadership capacity in others
- ✓ Share practical resources that can be of use

“Try looking at your mind as a wayward puppy that you are trying to paper train. You don’t drop/kick a puppy into the neighbor’s yard every time it piddles on the floor. You just keep bringing it back to the newspaper. So I keep trying gently to bring my mind back to what is really there to be seen, maybe to be seen and noted with a kind of reverence.”

—Anne Lamott, from *Bird by Bird*

The task of leading during a sustained crisis— whether you are the CEO of a major corporation or a manager heading up an impromptu company initiative—is treacherous. Crisis leadership has two distinct phases. First is that emergency phase, when your task is to stabilize the situation and buy time. Second is the adaptive phase, when you tackle the underlying causes of the crisis and build the capacity to thrive in a new reality. The adaptive phase is especially tricky: People put enormous pressure on you to respond to their anxieties with authoritative certainty, even if doing so means overselling what you know and discounting what you don’t. As you ask them to make necessary but uncomfortable adaptive changes in their behavior or work, they may try to bring you down. People clamor for direction, while you are faced with a way forward that isn’t at all obvious. Twists and turns are the only certainty.

Yet you still have to lead.

This crisis gives business leaders the opportunity to lead from the front. From those I've talked to and what I'm seeing, I'm hopeful. As they're confronting this crisis, leaders should be asking themselves: Are you spending enough time taking care of yourself, e.g., by meditating so that you can be the best version of yourself leading others? What actions are you taking to help the people around you? How will you measure your own performance? How do you want your leadership from this time to be remembered?

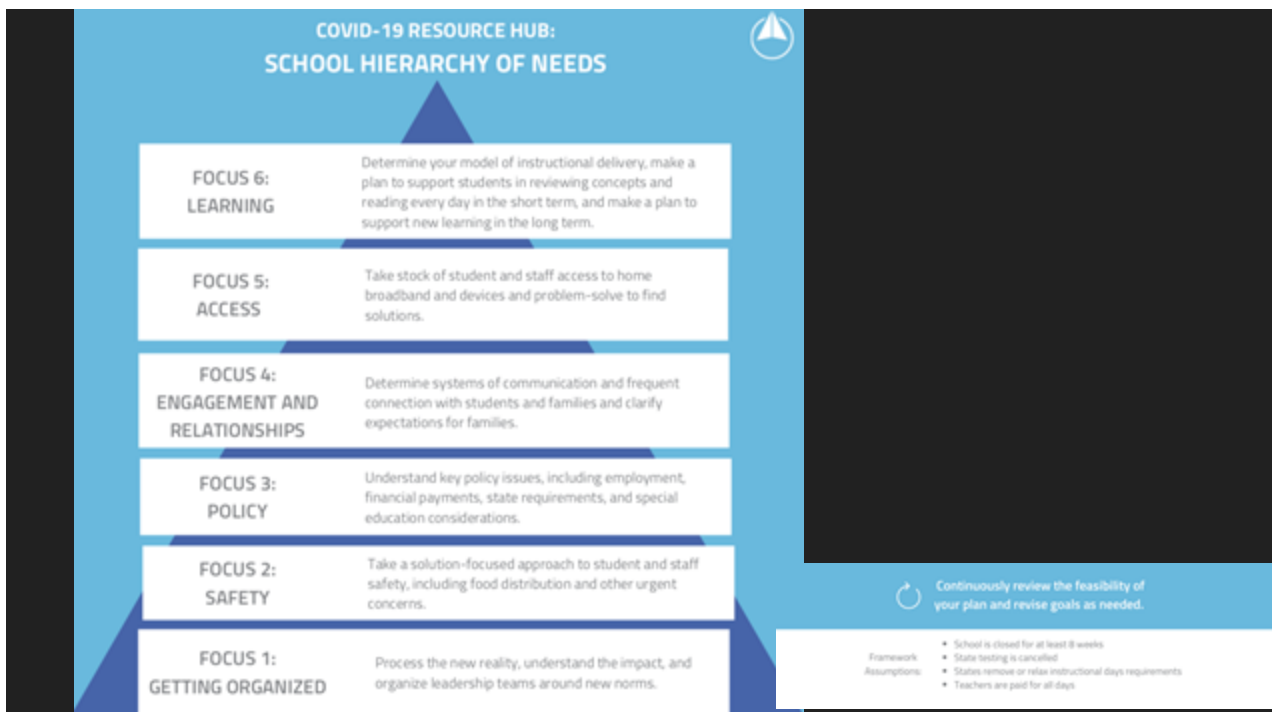
A Time to Lead with Purpose and Humanity

At every crisis in one's life, it is absolute salvation to have some sympathetic friend to whom you can think aloud without restraint or misgiving.

-Woodrow Wilson



- 1) Focus on the physical.
- 2) Stay connected to people.
- 3) Block off time in your calendar.



Expand: "Safe enough to try"

221

Decisions we make each day about food alone

30K

Decisions we make during a single day

?

Decisions we make in times of crisis or emergency

Decision Fatigue



Safe Enough to Try



“When staff and school teams work with the new rule of aim for “safe enough to try”...instead of consensus, it can become a mantra that empowers teams to take action.”

- Anthony Kim and Alexis Gonzales-Black,
The New School Rules

- Is this good enough for now?
- Is it safe enough that if it fails, we have time to recover?
- Shift from “Does everyone agree?” (consensus) to “Is this safe enough to try?”

Education

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Expand: “Safe enough to try”

Delayed
Decision-Making



False promise of
consensus



Defaulting to a
Decider-in-Chief



With a partner in a breakout room, 3 minutes to discuss
How are you distributing leadership on your campus?



COVID-19 Task force

- Meet regularly (almost daily) to review new information
- Create/update internal comms doc
- Makes decisions for team as a whole
- Avoids consensus pitfalls and operates with a "safe enough to try" mindset



Established project leads

- Use internal comms doc to make decisions for individual projects, teams, district partners
- Lead communications with district partners
- Capitalizes on established structures



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Shelby McIntosh 4:5

@channel FYI that c updated. Specifically before, anything that document, so I recon

You will notice that there a specifically for our DI team for communicating with cli document is a work in prog document will continue to @janicevargo @David Har



Shelby McIntosh 12:38 AM

FYI - I've updated our [internal response document](#) with the changes to our policies Anthony referenced earlier this evening (remember all changes since our last update are in blue). I know not everyone is on this channel yet, so this notification also went out via email.

More details coming soon (such as navigating travel cancellations and making some decisions around office and remote work). We'll be discussing those more tomorrow and will have more updates as soon as those decisions are made. In the meantime, post any and all questions here! GSuite Document ▾



Coronavirus Response
Document from Google Drive

MARCH 12



What this might look like after



Post COVID-19 Task force

- Meet regularly to review new information
- Create/update internal comms doc
- Makes decisions for team as a whole
- Avoids consensus pitfalls and operates with a "safe enough to try" mindset
- Does not need to be the same group as pre-crisis



Established project leads

- Use internal comms doc to make decisions for individual projects, teams, district partners
- Lead communications with district partners
- Capitalizes on established structures

Practice: Tension Map

| | Group Consensus | Top-Down |
|----------------|---|--|
| + Advantages | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone is engaged • Get team buy-in • More complete picture of data and information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fast • Someone with experience makes the final decision • Clarity about who is making decision |
| -Disadvantages | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slow • End up with the average of all options | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can feel disempowering to team • One person may make decisions with limited data |

Practice: Tension Map

| | Group Consensus | "Safe Enough to Try" | Top-Down |
|----------------|---|---|--|
| + Advantages | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Everyone is engaged Get team buy-in More complete picture of data and information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires clarity about who (which role) is accountable for area of work Spreads decision making ownership Requires the decision-maker think through data + resources they need to make decision | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fast Someone with experience makes the final decision Clarity about who is making decision |
| -Disadvantages | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slow End up with the average of all options | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can create discomfort if you are shifting from a consensus approach, or top down approach. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can feel disempowering to team One person may make decisions with limited data |

- Success
- Challenge
- Decision you need to make in the next day or two?

Got

Give

Need

