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Impact Journal

Impact Journal is an open-ended theme journal published by the Utah Association of Secondary School Principals (UASSP). Impact is published twice each year.

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Impact Journal Publication Guidelines

Impact Journal is an open-ended theme journal published by the Utah Association of Secondary School Principals (UASSP). We welcome opinion essays, interviews, program descriptions, research reports, theoretical pieces, school climate pieces, reviews of books, humor, satire, poetry, and cartoons.

Impact is published twice each year to correspond with the UASSP annual winter and summer conferences.

Form
• Impact editors use American Psychological Association (APA) style manual.
• Manuscripts can be sent by e-mail attachment.
• Most of our articles are between 1000 and 3000 words.
• Submit a cover sheet with the manuscript. The cover sheet should include the title, author(s), each author’s present position and school (if applicable), each author’s academic status (if applicable), each author’s mailing address, telephone, and email address.

Submission deadlines are November 15 and April 15 of each year.

Manuscripts will be reviewed as to content and acceptability. Authors should assume that manuscripts will be edited to conform to length and clarity.

Send manuscripts electronically to the editor.

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Bountiful, UT 84010
The past year launched an adventure for me in genealogy as I sent samples to Ancestry and 23andMe. Although Utah has long been involved in the trend that has become mainstream, I had never considered the pursuit. The thought of an ancestral profile was too tempting. Even close relatives would not be sharing my exact origins. As I reviewed my digital pie chart, the immensity of individualized profiles of all sorts available to us in many worlds intrigued me.

Our articles focus on individualized services that personalize experiences. Mary Kay Kirkland leads with critical information about changes in AdvancED in the 2017, and a major theme is the personalization of the journey. Schools will operate within their own contexts, and AdvancED will continue the examination to further accommodate the multiple educational paradigms evolving today.

Cheryl May’s article embodies the theme of individual profiles through an exemplary report on one school’s implementation of ALEKS, a program designed to personalize the math experience for every student. At an Open House at for legislatures and STEM personnel, I loved seeing the pie chart of skills displayed on individual student platforms.

The motif of legislative interface is also evident in Mark Whitaker’s excellent piece on the importance of the educator voice in politics, and he provides practical and persuasive strategies to encounter our government and strategize our efforts. Although educators and legislators sometimes seem to be from opposite poles of the globe, Mark’s recommendation to focus on our shared DNA makes sense.

Travis Thurston extols the power of individualized professional development. Cultivating autonomy, achievement, and support to fashion individual experiences fosters motivation, and tools such as digital badges make the complexity of personalized programs manageable. Kevin Strong’s article on personal development through embracing abundance gives ideas on capitalizing our individual strengths.

David Boren’s readable and substantive exploration of trust is an extension and evolution of the practical guidelines he has given us for organizational survival. Bob King and Parker King, father and son, symbolize genetic connections through their collaboration on the stunning starry cover, and Dave Tanner’s photography adds collections of people perspectives of landscape that move our individually to our ability to connect. Carl Boyington, Jane Bradbury, Brent Sumner, and our sponsors ensure the survival of our journal.

My genetic profile was a balm to individuality. Paradoxically, this perspective and my purpose mutated. Ethnicities, such as Greek slash Italian slur, and geographical boundaries like Balkan blur. My pursuit of a unique profile expanded to crave genetic connections, find relatives on family trees, and ultimately ponder my role in the whole of humanity. I realized that to fully appreciate my place on a family tree, research and communication in a collective context is necessary and rewarding. That is what our journal achieves this time: individualized services in an organizational family encouraging research and communication in rich networks.
Is education an event or a journey? I think we could all agree that education is much more than an event that starts when we enter our first educational institution and ends when we leave after a given number of years. Education is the beginning of a collection of moments that serve as light posts to a never ending journey. So what about accreditation? Is the accreditation process an event or a journey? AdvancED has a vision that the process of accreditation should be more than just an event that an institution prepares for every five years; accreditation can and should be a continuous improvement journey guided by a community-inspired vision to create a world of opportunities for every learner.

In 2012, AdvancED merged with the Northwest Accreditation Commission and began providing quality resources and services to support the continuous improvement process for both public and private education institutions in Utah. In keeping with our deeply ingrained vision of continuous improvement, every five years, AdvancED revises the Standards and accreditation protocols that guide our work to align with current research and best practice and to ensure we are addressing the ever-changing dynamics of the many learning environments within the institutions we serve. The new 2017-18 AdvancED Standards and Protocols will help institutions move from an event-driven process in which every institution must meet the same expectations-to a continuous improvement journey in which each institution can personalize and customize their experience based on the strategic goals and objectives they have identified.

The new AdvancED Performance Standards and accreditation protocols will be implemented for all institutions scheduled to host an on-site external review during the 2017-18 school year. To assist schools as they prepare to utilize the new protocols and standards, we are providing a brief overview of the updated process.

Through the new standards and protocols, AdvancED has identified three distinct phases of the continuous improvement journey for all accredited institutions. The three phases are:

**Learn and Share**

The Learn and Share part of the journey provides an opportunity for each community of stakeholders to share their perspective and experiences and to learn about how the work of the school impacts every stakeholder including, and most importantly, students. This is a time for institutions to either initiate or continue their improvement journey. Stakeholder groups will be identified and engaged in the journey to inform the process and to bring voice to the school community.

New survey and inventory tools and resources have been developed to assist the institution in gathering stakeholder perspectives on climate, culture, leadership, and engagement.
The new 2017-18 AdvancED Standards and Protocols will help institutions move from an event-driven process in which every institution must meet the same expectations—to a continuous improvement journey in which each institution can personalize and customize their experience.

Examine and Plan
During the Examine and Plan phase of the continuous improvement journey, the institution’s leadership team will conduct a self-analysis to examine the work of the school against a set of research-based factors. They will analyze and consider the conditions that impact the quality of the institution as they collect and examine evidence that reflects these conditions. As the leadership team shares their findings with stakeholders, a vision of the institution’s strategic goals will emerge to guide their continuous improvement journey.

Diagnostic tools have been developed to assist the institution in identifying the presence or absence of effective practices and to measure how much of certain attributes are evident in the institution. Two diagnostic tools institutions will be asked to use during the Examine and Plan process include the School Quality Factors Diagnostic and the Impact of Instruction Diagnostic. The purpose of these diagnostics is to engage the school community in critical discussion, organize deliberations, focus on stakeholder perspectives, and evaluate the overall effectiveness of school improvement efforts.

Act and Evaluate
The third and final stage of the school’s continuous improvement process is to Act and Evaluate. During this phase the school will initiate actions, gather evidence and determine results. Based on the data generated during the two previous elements of the journey, the leadership team with stakeholders will determine the next steps necessary to advance their continuous improvement process and to reaffirm the institution’s commitment to the vision and strategic goals identified.

AdvancED has developed an Action Planning Map to assist the institution in prioritizing the actions they plan to implement based on the data they have collected and analyzed throughout the internal review process.

School Quality Factors
One of the biggest changes to the updated accreditation protocol will be that school leaders will no longer be required to rate their institution using the AdvancED Standards and Indicators. Leaders will instead rate the institution relative to an identified set of School Quality Factors. The seven quality factors have been identified based on AdvancED’s deep experiential base combined with a 21st Century perspective and the Effective School’s Correlates identified by Dr. Lawrence Lezotte through his ground-breaking research on the fundamental characteristics common among successful schools. The correlates are as relevant today in organizing and focusing improvement efforts as they were decades ago. The seven factors which describe the characteristics of unusually effective schools can be used as a lever for change and improvement.

The AdvancED School Quality Factors include:
- Clear Direction
- Healthy Culture
- High Expectations
- Impact of Instruction
- Resource Management
- Efficacy of Engagement
- Implementation Capacity
Diagnostic tools have been developed to assist the institution in identifying the presence or absence of effective practices and to measure how much of certain attributes are evident in the institution.

Leaders will instead rate the institution relative to an identified set of School Quality Factors.

The eProve platform aligns the institution’s improvement efforts through six comprehensive modules that empower school leaders to make sense of and use their data effectively, offering a valuable companion on the journey of continuous improvement.

Internal Review vs. External Review
The Internal Review or what was formerly known as the Self Assessment component of the school’s accreditation process has been renamed as the Improvement Journey. During the Improvement Journey, each school will work through the three phases identified previously, Learn and Share, Examine and Plan, and Act and Evaluate. The resources and tools provided by AdvancED will include stakeholder surveys and inventories as well as diagnostics and plans. During the external review process, school leaders will engage with the on-site peer Review Team in sharing the data and plans generated through their Improvement Journey.

Using the data provided prior to the external review and supported by deliberations with the leadership team, stakeholder interviews, and classroom observations conducted while on-site, the Review Team will utilize a four-point rubric to rate the institution on each of the Standards in the three Domain areas. The Review Team will also provide a final Review Report with priorities identified for the institution to consider as they move forward on their continuous improvement journey.

The Future of AdvancED Accreditation
The Utah AdvancED Operations Office is
The Internal Review or what was formerly known as the Self Assessment component of the school's accreditation process has been renamed as the Improvement Journey.

As institutions progress through this new and innovative continuous improvement process, AdvancED is committed to ensuring that the process will evolve to become increasingly customized and personalized to meet the specific improvement needs of each institution. We are also exploring options, tools, and resources to provide alternative types of External Reviews that will provide support for continuous improvement in the way that is most helpful to the improvement efforts of each institution. The joy of a journey is learning and discovery, and our intent is to ensure that all internal and external travelers will discover significance and purpose.

References
AdvancED website, www.advanc-ed.org/eprove/ Introducing eProve™, a state-of-the-art productivity platform for continuous improvement, eProve Solutions

Mary Kay Kirkland is the Director of Utah AdvancED. She has been an integral part of accreditation in Utah and nationally for many years. Please contact Mary Kay for information about training and reviews. She can be reached at mkirkland@advanc-ed.org.
Centerville Junior High’s math department, implemented the web-based, artificially intelligent assessment and learning system ALEKS two years ago under the direction of our principal, Spencer Hansen. ALEKS stands for “Assessment and Learning in Knowledge Spaces” and is based on the research completed in mathematical cognitive science by Dr. Jean-Claude Falmagne at New York University and the University of California, Irvine and Dr. Jean-Paul Doignon at the University of Brus- sels. Knowledge Space Theory is discussed at length in Falmagne and Doignon’s monograph, Learning Spaces (2011) and in the article, “Introduction to Knowledge Spaces: How to Build, Test, and Search Them” (Falmagne, et al., 1990).

Dr. Falmagne, with the support of a multi-million dollar grant from the National Science Foundation, worked with a team of software engineers, mathematicians, and cognitive scientists, to use this theory to develop a technological framework to create computer algorithms to construct discipline-specific knowledge structures (knowledge spaces) to be used to design individual approaches to learning. This system (ALEKS) has now been made available to millions of students in mathematics, science, and business courses in K-12 schools, colleges and universities throughout the world (ALEKS, 2016).

This adaptive digital learning technology has been utilized and supported by 100% of our math teachers creating impressive math gains in just two years. ALEKS uses artificial intelligence to map the current knowledge of each student. When a student begins the program, he/she completes a Knowledge Check that assesses his/her current course knowledge and uses that information to tailor an individualized approach detailing in a pie chart the information that the student currently comprehends. After this initial knowledge assessment, the student is then prepared to utilize ALEKS in Learning Mode. In this mode, the student is given a choice of topics based on the prerequisite level of knowledge of the student. Videos and detailed explanations, including content available in Spanish, are available to students if they struggle with a topic and need additional support. As topics are mastered, ALEKS continually updates the knowledge map (pie chart) of the student. The system avoids multiple-choice questions by using algorithmically generated questions that require an open-ended response. In addition, to ensure that there is long term retention of the concepts, ALEKS also periodically reassesses the student.

This program is used with 100% fidelity by all math teachers in all grade level math classes, our three math intervention programs, our credit recovery program and as a bridge program for students during the summer. Students are expected to use ALEKS a minimum of 45 minutes to one hour each
week in the classroom with many students easily exceeding that weekly goal by also using ALEKS at home and in math intervention classes and homework labs after school as part of individual math teachers’ efforts to incentivize the use of ALEKS.

**Data on Achievement**
With the successful implementation of ALEKS over the last two years, Centerville Junior High has experienced impressive growth in math achievement. Three years ago (2013-2014), 48.5% of our students were proficient in math based on SAGE results.* After the first year of the ALEKS implementation (2014-2015), 55.2% of the students were proficient, and last spring (2015-2016), 63.1% were proficient. This is an increase of 14.6% since we began using ALEKS and is 16.6% higher than the State average of 46.5% math proficiency in 2016. In addition, we have made impressive gains in specific demographic groups, including a 5.6% increase in proficiency for Students with Disabilities, an increase of 7.9% for Economically Disadvantaged students and a 26.4% increase in proficiency for Limited English Proficiency students (USOE, 2016).** The ALEKS option to present material in Spanish has been invaluable in helping many of our English language learners.

**Differentiation**
The most important benefit of ALEKS has been its ability to provide differentiated instruction. Initial knowledge checks, individualized learning paths, and individual modules that break down skills and concepts into smaller chunks allow students to master the content in a non-threatening manner that builds confidence and meets the individual needs of the student. With an adaptive system of learning, students do not become discouraged because they are continuously building on their strengths instead of focusing on their weaknesses in math. Because of this design, this tool is ideal for remediation, acceleration, and retention. This year, our math department has also begun using ALEKS to design and administer common formative assessments to analyze student results to further strengthen instruction. After assessing the students, teachers can run individual detailed student reports that provide specific information on how students did on mastering identified standards. This capability has important implications for teachers on designing instruction and re-teaching opportunities.

**Parent and Student Feedback**
Besides remarkable quantitative results, equally positive anecdotal results have been evident since using ALEKS. A parent recently told me that his student loves ALEKS because it doesn’t make him feel “stupid.” This dad said his son always felt embarrassed...
This is an increase of 14.6% since we began using ALEKS and is 16.6% higher than the State average of 46.5% math proficiency in 2016.

This technology cannot replace an effective teacher, but it can enhance instruction and have a positive impact on increasing math gains and more importantly, build confidence and motivation in learners.

ALEKS helps create a new mindset in the student that they can be “good” at math. It is exciting for me to see a kid get his test score back and say he has never gotten a B or an A on a test before now. This program works by building confidence and encouraging effort.”

Besides using ALEKS in the regular math courses, we also use the program in our intervention classes. Mr. McKay states that “ALEKS gives these kids something at their level they can feel successful with while relearning missed concepts from prior years. They actually feel ‘smart’ like they can do it so that mentality carries over into my regular class as well and they usually score at or above my class average on grade level.” The impact on student motivation cannot be over-emphasized. Many students struggle with math because they lack the confidence to excel. The theoretical concepts behind ALEKS, designed a system that helps students build knowledge (Newman, Griffin, & Cole) by creating an ideal zone of proximal development (Wass. & Golding, 2014) where students have the necessary inherent knowledge to proceed with confidence and to continue to build new knowledge.

Jeff Wilkinson, another math teacher, uses ALEKS for remediation and to retest students who received a low score on a chapter test. He states that, “Students can learn the missed concepts, then come in and retest for a higher grade. I really feel tests are just

Teacher Feedback
To further highlight this point, I would like to share a quote from our Math Department Chair, Bill McKay: “I get emails from parents telling me how appreciative they are because math is actually their student’s favorite class now after struggling in math for years.
part of the learning process at this age because so many kids are still developing study habits to be successful.” The system allows teachers to easily customize their instruction and assessments while generating useful and informative reports on how students scored on individual questions tied to specific standards. This enables teachers to pinpoint specific areas of strengths and weaknesses in their instruction and re-teaching efforts.

Conclusion

Our principal, Spencer Hansen, states, “Adaptive learning serves a crucial role in individualizing mathematics instruction in ways a classroom teacher does not have the ability to do. Digital natives who have been raised with technology respond to the interactive features and intuitively progress by monitoring their own learning trajectory.” This technology cannot replace an effective teacher, but it can enhance instruction and have a positive impact on increasing math gains and more importantly, build confidence and motivation in learners.

The successful implementation of the ALEKS program at our school was made possible through grants and support provided by the State of Utah and the Utah STEM Action Center. The STEM Action Center has provided training and negotiated license costs that enabled our school to purchase the additional licenses we needed this year that were not covered by the grant. Without this support, we would not have had the financial resources to provide this valuable learning tool to our students. One goal of this paper was to provide evidence of the efficacy of adaptive learning systems in mathematics and to emphasize the importance of making this technology available to schools in the state of Utah and the nation. We are confident that with the continued support of the state and the Utah STEM Action Center, schools using this technology will continue to make even more impressive gains in math achievement in the future.

*The first year of the SAGE assessment (2013-2014) used a non-adaptive system of measurement.

**The population of English Language Learners is <10%.

Cheryl L. May, EdD, is the Assistant Principal of Centerville Junior High in Davis County School District. She is a former adjunct professor at the University of Utah in the Department of Educational Leadership & Policy. She received her master’s in Instructional Technology-Utah State University and a master’s in Education-Eastern Washington University. Her Doctorate of Education was in Educational Leadership & Policy-University of Utah.

She welcomes email for any requests or conversations regarding ALEKS. She can be reached at clmay@dsdmail.net.
Our elected representatives need (and even want) administrators’ insights and expertise as they formulate legislation, allocate funds, and make decisions.

Politics and public education have an interesting relationship. Various political groups use the public schools as a battleground to sort out legal and social issues, politicians champion or decry public education as part of a larger political platform, and state and federal legislatures pass laws and allocate funds based on their perceptions and opinions of public education.

Like many of you, I sit back and watch these happenings with various emotions—sometimes amusement, sometimes anger. Beyond sending an email to my local representative voicing support for various bills, I’ve never done more than this.

That all changed this year. As the Middle School Principal of the Year, I had the opportunity to meet with lawmakers at both the state and federal level. It was an enlightening experience. I learned that our elected representatives need (and even want) administrators’ insights and expertise as they formulate legislation, allocate funds, and make decisions. As the state legislative session approaches, here are ten tips for advocating effectively:

1. Understand the reasons you should be advocating. The primary reason you should make your voice heard is because state legislators and federal delegates make decisions that affect you, your employees, and your students. They have direct influence on funding and budgets, standards, assessments, curriculum, accountability, certification, evaluation, and other critical issues.

2. Lawmakers are regular folks like you and me. Those at the state level have jobs beyond their legislative responsibilities. Most do not write their own legislation. They sponsor bills that are proposed to them by outside groups or individuals. Providing constructive feedback or criticism of the language of these bills is not going to personally offend them and may help them as they amend the language of the proposed bills.

3. Most lawmakers have a keen interest in public education. True, some are interested because they see it as a failed system in need of reform and mandates, but most are open to solutions and perspectives shared by those of us in the trenches. Being a school leader, you have unique insights and experiences that can help legislators and policy makers understand the needs of students and schools, and thus make better decisions (Neal, 2016).

4. Your voice is powerful, and the voice of an individual person can have an impact on how people vote. While the voice of one can be significant, the voice of a collective group of individuals will be even more impactful. Representatives will listen to you, especially as you share practical examples of how schools are influenced by their decisions.

5. Get informed. Do some research before communicating with your representatives. Make sure you understand the issues, the legislation, the costs, and the impacts. Utilize your professional organization to help you. UASSP and NASSP monitor upcoming
6. Don’t advocate for unrealistic or unnecessary legislation. While it would be great to have $800 million for an initiative you think is critical for student learning, you have to understand that legislators are juggling multiple bills and budgets. Our needs have to fit into the big picture of everything else that is going on in the state or country. Invest your time and energy into issues that have the greatest impact on student learning and are likely gain the support necessary to be successful (Neal, 2016).

7. Make a pitch and ask for something. Legislation sessions are short and busy. Legislators won’t have great deal of time to read emails or engage in lengthy meetings. Be brief and direct in your communication. Articulate clearly what you want, why you think it is important, and what the impacts will be (Karhuse, 2016).

8. Invest in relationships. Your representative may be your representative for years to come. Get to know him or her. Get to know other lawmakers who could become allies. Get to know other professionals who have common interests and goals. Building networks and coalitions can lead to better understanding and more efficient advocacy.

9. Thank them. Follow up with an email or personal note thanking your representatives for their time even if they disagreed with your stance or made a decision that was not aligned with what you thought was best for students. If their vote aligned with your philosophy, thank them and encourage others to thank them, as well (Karhuse, 2016).

Although the State Board ruled in favor or transfers, this group of educators is on the record for voicing opinions in the ongoing struggle to ensure fair and reasonable transfer and eligibility rules. For more information on the transfer topic and action taken, see http://www.deseretnews.com/article/865668999/State-School-Board-approves-new-athlete-transfer-rule.html. Perhaps reading my article will emphasize the importance of advocacy and inspire you to unite your voice for your causes.
10. Offer yourself as a resource. Let your representative know you are anxious to help whenever and wherever possible. For example, after meeting with one of Representative Jason Chaffetz’s staffers, he immediately emailed me with questions and my opinions on the Common Core. He did this because I told him I would be glad to answer any future questions he may have about education. He had a question within the day that he wanted my insights on. In addition to inviting people to ask you questions, invite them to your school to see what your day is like and invite them to student activities and other school events to see what benefits various programs provide to students.

A recent experience in the state of Utah highlights the need for school administrators to be involved as active political advocates. This past September, the State School Board was considering making a dramatic change to current practices regarding high school eligibility and transfer rules in relation to extracurricular activities. In essence, the board was considering allowing student athletes to transfer schools as they pleased. Under this rule, a student could move from school to school and still maintain eligibility. In fact, a student could have played football at one school, basketball at another, and baseball at a third all in the same year.

A group of district administrators, school administrators, coaches, parents and UHSAA leaders intervened to express concerns over the proposed changes. The State Board heard comments and concerns from the group and tabled the proposal based on their feedback. One member of the State Board, David Thomas, said, “I’m receptive to (those) public comment(s), especially for my own constituents … in regards to transfers and eligibility” (Lockhart, 2016). The group was not large, but they made their voices heard. Although the State Board ruled in favor or transfers, this group of educators is on the record for voicing opinions in the ongoing struggle to ensure fair and reasonable transfer and eligibility rules. For more information on the transfer topic and action taken, see http://www.deseretnews.com/article/865668999/State-School-Board-approves-new-athlete-transfer-rule.html. Perhaps reading my article will emphasize the importance of advocacy and inspire you to unite your voice for your causes.

I am grateful for the past year I’ve had as the Utah Middle School Principal of the Year. The experience has opened my eyes to the need for school administrators to advocate politically and professionally. I’ve come to better appreciate my role as an ambassador of education. I encourage you to get involved at any level possible. Your voice truly matters.

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Mark Whitaker is the principal of Mountain Ridge Junior High in Alpine School District and NASSP 2016 Utah Middle Level Principal of the Year. Mark can be reached at markwhitaker@alpinedistrict.org
Three Keys to Becoming a Champion for Individualized PD

Travis N. Thurston, M.E.T.

Introduction
While professional development should improve the quality and effectiveness of our teachers, we as instructional leaders often miss the mark with our programming. Many teachers express that traditional offerings appear to be a top-down approach (Glickman, 2001) and have little relevance in their own classrooms (Baker, 2014). Traditional or standard professional development offerings have come under fire recently because of their fragmented nature with little or no follow up (Lucilio, 2009). Further, Tienken and Stonaker (2007) report that teachers gain more from professional development outside the constraints of the large-group workshops which is traditionally how we try to engage our teachers. From the lens of instructional leadership, there are many institutional barriers that can impede teachers from engaging in meaningful professional learning. We may not provide adequate resources or only coordinate sporadic opportunities, or our school policy may only recognize one type of formal professional development (Caffarella & Zinn, 1999).

Accompanying the evidence that instructional leaders are not performing as well as we could be in this arena, a growing body of research from the psychology and organizational behavior disciplines centers on intrinsic motivation and has direct implications for the effectiveness of individualized professional development in our schools.

Motivation and Self-Determination Theory
Motivation is the central theme of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) which postulates that everyone has three innate psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000). These needs are not only viewed as being necessary for motivation, but are considered a requirement for overall well-being. Autonomy plays to our need for choice and the inherent need for self-directedness. Competence speaks to our need for achievement and the satisfaction of knowing we are accomplished, or at least striving to become so. Relatedness not only suggests our need to feel connected with others but it also speaks to feeling satisfied with work because it has a noble purpose to help others.

Whereas extrinsic motivation tends to carry a negative connotation, intrinsic motivation can be viewed as the pure desire to do something, whether that’s learning something new or perhaps being a teacher. Whatever the case, traditionally we hold intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in a dichotomous balance. However, Gagne and Deci (2005) suggest that motivation should be viewed as a continuum with amotivation (lack of motivation) on one end and intrinsic motivation (inherently autonomous motivation) on the other with four varying degrees of extrinsic

A growing body of research from the psychology and organizational behavior disciplines centers on intrinsic motivation and has direct implications for the effectiveness of individualized professional development in our schools.
motivation between. SDT therefore removes the dichotomous perspective of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation and posits that given the right mindset, factors that could potentially be viewed as extrinsic motivators can be internalized by an individual and therefore enhance intrinsic motivation (Niemiec & Ryan, 2009). Overall, SDT offers a framework for understanding motivation and presents these three psychological needs as autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

Using a self-determined model of motivation for individualized professional development, these needs are reflected in the form of choice, achievement, and support.

**Choice Matters**

Key 1: Instructional leaders should support teachers by allowing them to identify their learning need and providing choice in the topics teachers can engage in. Autonomy and choice go hand in hand. Feeling as though we have a choice works to fulfill our need for autonomy which in turn builds our intrinsic motivation (Hidi, 2016). And, allowing autonomy through choice is vital, as some argue that we are biologically programmed with a desire to make our own choices (Leotti et al., 2010).

Providing choice can take the form of allowing teachers to determine topics for breakout sessions on mandatory professional development days or allowing teachers to engage in informal learning opportunities with teachers across the district or state. Another option is allowing teachers to find forums that provide real takeaways or actions that they can implement in their own classroom right away (Baker, 2014).

What’s more, as you become a champion for individualized professional development by providing choice to your teachers, you’ll find that “Teachers can learn how to become more autonomy supportive” (Reeve & Halusic, 2009, p. 151). In other words, as we become more learner-centered in our approach to professional development, our teachers become more learner-centered in the way they teach in their own classrooms. Consider the following strategies to build a framework of choice:

- Create a committee or task-force for professional development. This allows for your teachers to formulate their needs based on contextual characteristics of their own classrooms within your school (Guskey, 2009). This will also create a greater sense of buy-in, and potentially remove skepticism of a top-down mandate for individualized professional development.

- Send some of your teachers to a local educational unconference or edcamp. These types of events are ideal for allowing choice for your teachers, as the edcamp model provides an organic learning experience and allows participants to drive the topics that they will engage in (Gustafson, 2016). Providing this experience will also encourage your teachers to plan their own edcamp at your school.

**Achievement Matters**

Key 2: Instructional leaders should support teachers by creating alternative measures of achievement and recognize informal learning as professional development. Competence in SDT can be confused with simply having a basic understanding of a skill. Elliot and Dweck (2005) equate competence as a benchmark for measuring achievement motivation, but as it relates to individualized professional development, we will view achievement as a measure of improvement or as the attainment of predetermined learning goals.
Seat time has traditionally been our standard measure to acknowledge achievement of our teachers, which is especially true in relation to formal professional development or education: workshop, endorsement, advanced degree. As you become a champion for individualized professional development, you will support the notion that recognition of learning doesn’t end with formal programs; badges or micro credentials can serve as evidence of continuous improvement (Diaz, Smith, & Petrillo, 2014). Digital badges provide the flexibility to acknowledge achievement of learning outcomes and provide the vehicle to attach artifacts as evidence that learning has occurred and that strategies were implemented into the classroom (Fontichiaro & Elkordy, 2016).

Another way to acknowledge informal learning in adult education is by learning contracts. Learning contracts provide a standard way for learners to select topics of study, set learning goals, identify a learning strategy, and provide a framework for accountability of learning (Knowles, 1986). Learning contracts for teachers are ways to individualize professional development, because “teachers change at different rates according to their needs, backgrounds and abilities. We [as instructional leaders] have to trust people to improve without constantly trying to quantify that improvement (Sanfelippo & Sinanis, 2016, p. 109). For those unfamiliar with what learning contracts entail, a sample learning contract is available in the appendix. Consider the following strategies to build a framework of achievement:

- Identify reputable institutions that provide digital badges or create your own.
- Recognize that seat time isn’t the best measure of professional learning and consider using micro credentials to document professional learning (Gustafson, 2016).
- Start using learning contracts to track individualized professional learning. Empower your staff to become agents of their own professional learning by introducing learning contracts for teachers to set goals, and track their own learning. (Sanfelippo & Sinanis, 2016).

**Support Matters**

Key 3: Instructional leaders should support teachers with a vision for learning and development, connect teachers to helpful resources, and allow collaboration and sharing. Teachers need an instructional leader who is focused on a vision of learning and development not only for students, but for teachers too (Zepeda, 2012). Teachers need a leader to remind them to consider the noble purpose inherent in this profession, as “self-determination, and feelings of purpose are characterized as being critical determinants of intrinsic motivation (Davis, et al., 1997, p. 28). As you become a champion for individualized professional development, your teachers will see that you are committed to allow them to learn on their own terms and in their way and that you’re willing to provide resources to help them succeed. In SDT it is also necessary to provide optimal challenges and positive-constructive feedback without engaging in judgmental or demeaning evaluations to foster improved intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Moving toward individualized professional development is not intended to force teachers to silo themselves or even to encourage them to do so. Quite the opposite in fact. Not only do teachers need supportive administrators, but they are also in need of dependable peer support networks (Zinn, 1997). Consider having teachers share what they are learning with their peers in a formal setting like faculty meeting or PLC’s, but also provide opportunities in non-formal settings.
via social media, or in a newsletter/email format. Also, encourage direct peer support in the form of instructional design assistance (Roby, et al., 2013). Consider the following strategies that can be immediately helpful to build a framework of support:

- Connect your teachers to helpful resources. Not only finding resources for teachers for the topics they're interested in learning more about, but identify when multiple teachers are interested in the same topic and connect them to collaborate (Sanfelippo & Sinanis, 2016).

- Allow teacher collaboration and informal sharing using digital tools. This can be in the form of a shared Google doc displaying topics that each teacher is studying or creating a Voxer or Slack line for back channel communication between teachers (Gustafson, 2016). Encourage your teachers to build a professional learning network on Twitter, and engage with other teachers in Twitter chats on educational topics, like #UTEDCHAT.

**Conclusion**

Programs like Worlds of Learning and Teacher Learning Journeys have been developed to support individualized professional development (Gamrat, et al., 2014) and serve as great examples of what individualized learning for teachers can look like. Find what works for you and your teachers because as learners endorse SDT autonomous forms of motivation, they are more likely to persist, learn better, and be satisfied with their learning experience (Guay, et al., 2008). Simply put, becoming a champion for individualized professional development requires a self-determined mindset that puts learning first, not only for your students, but for your teachers as well. By focusing on choice, achievement, and support, you will find that teacher motivation surrounding your individualized professional development program will build quickly and create a culture of self-determination among your teachers and students.

**References**


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Organizational behavior, 26(4), 331-362.

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### Sample Learning Contract

Adapted from Knowles (1986)

*Provided by the University of Waterloo, Centre for Teaching Excellence*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learner:</th>
<th>Learning Experience:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>What are you going to learn? (Objectives)</strong></th>
<th><strong>How are you going to learn it? (Resources and Strategies)</strong></th>
<th><strong>Target date for completion</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Itemize what you want to be able to do or know when completed.</td>
<td>What do you have to do in order meet each of the objectives defined?</td>
<td>When do you plan to complete each task?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>How are you going to know that you learned it? (Evidence)</strong></th>
<th><strong>How are you going to prove that you learned it? (Verification)</strong></th>
<th><strong>Advising faculty member feedback (Evaluation)</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is the specific task that you are to complete to demonstrate learning?</td>
<td>Who will receive the product of your learning and how will they evaluate it?</td>
<td>How well was the task completed? Provide an assessment decision.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Travis N. Thurston, MET, is Senior Instructional Designer for the Center for Innovative Design and Instruction at Utah State University. He can be reached at travis.thurston@usu.edu.
When I set out to compile the world’s best information on personal development, it took me five years of research until I wrote and published my first book Being Wise. I have since worked with for-profit and not-for-profit organizations where I have been pleasantly surprised how innovative and amazing the people are and the things they create. If we were to take an inventory right now of what is around us, we might see all sorts of technology such as smartphones, computer screens or airplanes overhead. We may also see all sorts of things that have been manufactured such as a stapler, carpet flooring, or automobiles. There are all sorts of people, places and things all around us from the person in your office whose strength is knowing the words to every song or to the Egyptian pyramids to the many items you use throughout your daily routines.

If we were to go back in time to 1200 B.C. the Greek warriors trying for 10 years to breach the walls at the city of Troy were unsuccessful. They gathered their strengths of woodcarving together, built a beautiful wooden horse, filled it with skilled warriors and left it outside the gate. The city of Troy accepted this gift into their city and when night fell the warriors climbed out and that was the end of Troy. This invasion was thinking outside of limited options and thinking bigger.

When we think in our time of a party, it is planned and guests arrive, balloons are added, a clown entertains, a friend is enlisted to share their magic tricks and talents, music starts up, food arrives, and fireworks go off. All of this is abundance and this abundance adds to the party. Ask yourself: How can I think bigger? What about a mechanical bull instead of a Trojan Horse? Acknowledging and embracing abundance creates more.

Do most people think in terms of abundance? Not really, but the few that do seem to be the most popular, the most creative and the most innovative.

When you think bigger you cultivate a variety of interests and your conversations are of more interest.

How to get the most out of the Abundance all around us:

1. Know what you want. If you were asked what your favorite dessert is, what your favorite color is, or what is on your bucket list, do you know?
2. Network with others. As you talk with others and they with you, inevitably both of you learn about what you want and instinctively as decent human beings, we want to be part of helping people get what they want.
3. Think Bigger. There is more than the obvious abundance around us. If this wasn’t true we wouldn’t have the great technology, wonderful people, and many things we enjoy today.

I wish for you and your team that throughout your day today that you will continue to recognize the plentiful options, opportunities, and strengths all around us!

Kevin Strong is a speaker and author with Real Life Advantage. For more information, see www.RealLifeAdvantage.com. He can be reached at Kevin@reallifeadvantage.com
Trust Tune-Up: Principal Trustworthiness and Visibility

David McKay Boren, PhD

A few years ago a friend gave my son a bicycle that was in serious need of a tune up. The gears and chain were rusty, and the nuts and bolts were loose. While the basic frame and major components were of high quality, riding that bicycle was not fun. We tightened nuts and applied generous amounts of WD-40 to the gears and chain. Thus began my son’s love of WD-40. He was fascinated by how much smoother his bicycle functioned with regular WD-40 treatments. What initially appeared to be a low-quality bicycle, has with regular tune-ups, served my family well for many years.

No matter what type of school we inherit as a principal, there will always be a need for regular tune-ups. Some schools with high-quality teachers, worthwhile goals, research-based programs, and cutting-edge technology still struggle to enjoy a smooth ride simply because they are in need of a trust tune up. Trust is both the glue that holds schools together (Morgan & Hunt, 1994) and the lubricant that allows schools to run smoothly (Creed & Miles, 1996). Low-trust schools are like a bike with loose nuts and a rusty chain. Anyone that trying to help a low-trust school to improve and change may be in for a bit of a rough ride.

As an idealistic new principal, I decided to tackle what I saw as an outdated and ineffective teacher schedule. I hoped to replace it with a schedule that would create much more time for teacher collaboration. Little did I know I was riding a rusty bicycle. When I initially brought up the idea of revising the schedule, sparks flew. I was a little confused about why this schedule revision was so difficult. The proposed ideas were grounded in solid research and best practice, and they actually made a lot of practical sense. We eventually got a new schedule that first year, but it took tremendous amounts of time, effort, capacity building, and patience. It was like riding an old rusty, unlubricated bicycle…uphill…on ice…against the wind…in a blizzard…alone. No fun!

A few years later, the schedule needed another major revision. Remembering the intense struggle from our last schedule review, I was not particularly excited about engaging in this uphill battle again. I was absolutely flabbergasted when I presented this need to the leadership team and they responded with a can-do, no-drama attitude. While it still required plenty of time and effort, the entire process was more efficient and effective. It was like riding a tuned-up, lubricated bicycle, surrounded by a team all headed in the same direction. Much more fun!

So how’s the ride at your school? Are you due for a trust tune-up? Regardless of your school’s current levels of trust, the following tune-ups are a good reminder for any school leader seeking to increase trust in the school.

Trust Tune-Up #1: Become More Trustworthy

While it might seem simplistic, the first step of a trust tune-up is to examine our cur-
Regardless of your school’s current levels of trust, the following tune-ups are a good reminder for any school leader seeking to increase trust in the school.

thirteen trust building behaviors to see if there are any areas in which we can become more trustworthy. How might your teachers, students, and parents respond to the following statements about your trustworthiness?

Benevolence
- The principal knows and respects me professionally and personally.
- The principal really listens and cares.
- The principal expresses sincere appreciation for my efforts.
- I know my good name and reputation are safe with the principal.

Honesty
- The principal talks straight with me and is transparent.
- The principal gives me accurate, real, and helpful feedback.
- The principal tells the truth and keeps promises.

Openness
- The principal is approachable and accessible.
- The principal shares struggles/triumphs openly, and apologizes when necessary.
- I feel safe talking openly to the principal about my struggles.
- The principal includes me in decisions and leadership.

Reliability
- The principal follows through on commitments.
- The principal holds himself and others accountable.
- The principal takes action on the school’s professed priorities.

Competence
- The principal is well qualified for this job. She knows what she’s talking about.
- The principal is always improving her practice.
- The principal gets things done.

If you’re like the rest of us, at least a few of these caught your attention as areas for possible improvement. If we want others to trust us, “the best strategy is to use all the supports we have to get good at what we do” (Knight, 2016, p. 200). Do our knowledge, skills, and professional behaviors ever become a little rusty? Are there any areas that might need some tightening up? Improving our levels of trustworthiness will look different for every school leader. It could mean one or more of the following:
- Ask for feedback from colleagues, supervisors, parents, students, or teachers.
- Employ a personal coach to help reflect on leadership processes and goals.
- Take a class or reading a book on a high-need topic.
- Meet regularly with a team of other principals to work on shared goals.
- Join a school leadership Twitter feed or another social media networking site.
- Write down everything you say you will do and reviewing that list each day.
- Reserve five minutes at the end of week to reflect on what went well and areas for future growth.

Luckily, we all believe in our ability to grow, change, and improve (Dweck, 2006). Let’s tighten up our own levels of trustworthiness and clean off any rust that may have accumulated by choosing a few areas for personal improvement.

Trust Tune-Up #2: Visibility
As an administrator, we may be the most trustworthy person around, but if we spend all our time holed-up in our office, rarely
interacting with others, our trustworthiness will never be seen. “We have to know our stuff, and others need to know that we know our stuff” (Knight, 2016, p. 189). We must find ways to visibly interact with our students, parents, and teachers. Increased school leader visibility is positively related to an improved school climate (Smith & Andrews, 1989) and better communication between teachers and school leaders (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003). Bartell found that effective school leaders “were out in the school and in the classrooms, spending time with students and teachers. They knew their teachers and their students and cared about them” (1990, p. 126). Cotton found that “in high-achieving schools, the school leaders do not spend their time cloistered in their offices, keeping company with administrivia. On the contrary, the researchers find them to be unvaryingly present and approachable in the everyday life of the school” (2003, p. 14).

During the American Civil War, General John Fremont was an experienced, competent, and otherwise trustworthy leader, but his lack of visibility among his troops cost him dearly in the trust department and eventually in the employment department. Abraham Lincoln wrote the following about General Fremont: “He is losing the confidence of men near him, whose support any man in his position must have to be successful. His cardinal mistake is that he isolates himself, and allows nobody to see him; and by which he does not know what is going on in the very matter he is dealing with” (Phillips, 1992, p. 14). General Fremont’s lack of visibility resulted in a fairly rough ride. He didn’t know what was going on and his men didn’t trust him.

Abraham Lincoln on the other hand was both trustworthy and visible. “Lincoln spent 75% of his time meeting with people. No matter how busy the president was, he always seemed to find time for those who called on him…the door was always open and anyone who wished to come in and talk was welcome…In 1861 Lincoln spent more time out of the White House than he did in it…Throughout the war Lincoln continued to visit his generals and men in the field” (Phillips, 1992, p. 16, 19). While Lincoln’s presidency was anything but a smooth ride, his consistent visibility not only built trust, but also gave him the necessary information for increasing his own and others’ trustworthiness.

What opportunities do our teachers have to spend time with us? What’s the balance between formal, work-related time together, and less formal, low-stress time together? A few years ago some of my colleagues and I examined how different types of principal visibility impacted teacher’s perceptions of principal trustworthiness (see Hallam et al., 2013). While there were several interesting findings, the most important was that people really trust leaders that take time to get to know them in personal ways beyond the classroom. While we certainly don’t need to be unprofessionally chummy with our faculty, students, and parents, we should find plenty of opportunities to informally interact with them in low-stress ways. If our only consistent interaction with others is in high-stress meetings, evaluations, IEPs, etc., we are likely missing some great opportunities to build relationships of trust with and between our faculty and staff.

The beauty of such visibility is that it makes school a lot more enjoyable for everybody, and it can actually compensate for some of our other weaknesses. An experienced teacher reflected about his own principal’s visibility by comparing himself with General Dwight D. Eisenhower: “General Eisenhower … was very well liked by the soldiers during World War II, primarily because he spent about eighty percent of the time out in the field…That was one of his hallmarks, that he was always with the troops and that they trusted him. You know, and...
if he made a few mistakes, they were more than willing to forgive him, because he had been with them” (Personal interview with a teacher in Alpine School District).

Improved principal visibility will look different at every school. While the possibilities are endless, here are a few ideas for starters:

- Set an alarm as a reminder to get out of the office to greet students in the morning.
- Reserve as sacred a few minutes each day to drop by classrooms to chat with teachers before or after school.
- Write a complimentary note or make an uplifting phone call before leaving school.
- Schedule one lunch period a week to eat with students, teachers, or the office team.
- Drop off a treat or note on a teacher’s birthday.
- Cover classes once a month to give teachers extra preparation time.

**Now What?**

During my tenure as principal I was always intrigued by the nature of the comments that teachers and parents shared in our annual feedback surveys. We had done so much work to refine collaboration, identify essential standards, schedule intervention time, employ standards-based report cards, initiate character development, and upgrade technology. While these initiatives certainly did a lot to increase our capacity, this is not what parents talked about. Rather, their comments centered around how we as a school visibly built trust by greeting students in the morning by name, and how we spent time getting to know students in the classroom, lunchroom, hallway, and during extra-curricular activities. There was very little mention about the many programmatic initiatives and changes we had made as a school. Even teacher comments were primarily focused on whether the administrators cared about them as individuals, listened to them, included them in decisions, and respected their professional expertise. To them, trust was paramount.

I am in no way suggesting that we neglect hiring, professional development, attendance, schedules, technology, extra-curricular activities, physical facilities, and all the other important components necessary to a high-functioning school. These are like the frame, handlebars, pedals, seat, tires, brakes, and other major components of a bicycle. One of our primary roles as school leaders is to ensure that we have the highest quality components possible. What I am suggesting is that sometimes we spend a lot of time and effort seeking to upgrade components, while simultaneously neglecting those components’ maintenance. Without regular trust-tune-ups, even the highest quality components may eventually grind to a frustrating halt. So how’s the ride at your school? Is your school due for a trust tune-up?

**References**


Without regular trust-tune-ups, even the highest quality components may eventually grind to a frustrating halt.


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