A TRIBUTE TO JANE BRADBURY
Retiring UASSP Secretary

A GREEN CANYON TRADITION
by Shane Jones, Green Canyon High School

CAVEMAN COALITION
Peter Glahn, American Fork High School

HEAD, HAND, HEART, & HARDBALL: LEADING POSITIVE CHANGES
by David Boren, BYU

HOW ATHLETICS CAN POSITIVELY IMPACT A STUDENT’S LIFE
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SPOTLIGHT:
Cedar Valley High School “Jet Time”

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Here we go again! The 2021-22 school year is off and running, and maybe it’s not quite back to normal, but it’s still a daily opportunity to help students learn and grow. Each day provides the same opportunity to educators if they will take the time to reflect and re-imagine their own practices. President Kim Monkres encourages us to reflect and re-imagine so many of the decisions we made last year and utilize those successes and failures to improve our practices as school leaders. Reflection should be part of our regular routine as leaders. In this issue, we took some time to reflect on the dedication and service of Jane Bradbury, UASSP Executive Secretary for the past 18 years. Jane’s dedication to Utah school leaders has been unparalleled and she will be missed. Unlike many of you, I’m grateful I still get to see Jane and her husband walking around our neighborhood regularly. I have been lucky enough to associate with both of them for many years. We also have the chance to celebrate Kip Motta’s appointment to the NASSP as president elect. We know he is an outstanding example of diligent leadership in Utah.

This issue also highlights some school programs that provide ideas for helping our students connect to their school and to each other. Peter Glahn’s school started a “Caveman Coalition” to bring all of their student leaders together and break down barriers in their large population. Similarly, Shane Jones describes their leadership summer camp and how lessons learned rafting a river together teaches their student leaders about planning, leading, and consciously contributing to a successful school year. We impact students in many ways, none quite as obvious as how athletics can help students learn character development, connection, and confidence as described in Mike May’s article. If you’re looking for ways to thoughtfully incorporate social emotional wellness, then the new Administrative Spotlight feature on Cedar Valley High School will be helpful for you.

But, if your focus this year is on addressing changes within your faculty, then David Bowen has some ideas on the key factors that can help you move staff members to make positive changes. Finally, Todd Quarnberg counsels principals to understand their own power as leaders and to harness resources from every possible source to improve your school culture, especially when overcoming difficult challenges. As leaders, we don’t have to have every answer, we just have to be willing to go find answers from the best sources. Thanks for all the submissions, please keep finding ways to share your successes and ideas with other Utah school leaders.

Julie Barlow grew up working in the family printing business before becoming an English teacher and yearbook adviser. She began her 24 year teaching career at Green River High School then Layton High School. She was an assistant principal and is currently the Director of Humanities in Davis School District.
Decisions. Decisions. There is no doubt we spend the majority of our day making decisions. It has been suggested that we make approximately 35,000 decisions each day (Krockow, 2018), exhausting, right? Even more mind-blowing is we make 226.7 decisions each day on what to eat (Graff, 2018). My number is significantly less than this. I’m usually deciding between tacos and nachos, which is a win either way.

The past school year was one full of constant decision-making. Some decisions were made for us and were out of our control, but still left us with the task to decide how to do what we “usually” do while navigating the muddy waters of political discord, constantly changing health mandates, the mental health of our students and faculty, and oh, ya- learning! It was exhausting, and frankly not an experience I ever want to repeat. In fact, navigating a global pandemic has now become one of my least favorite activities. It replaced running. However, not all was lost, right? Sure, it was insane, but if we take a moment to reflect, we lived through some great moments and some we would rather forget.

I began to reflect on the moments of the past year, and what lessons I could learn from good or poor decisions, systems that were or were not put in place, and wins or losses (both personal and professional).

I won’t bore you with my list of multiple pages, but what I will tell you is the process of reflecting has helped me know what I do NOT want to do (go through a global pandemic is at the top of the list) and what I learned about me, my team, and what I really envision for both. I took a moment to discern what was within my control to do differently. It allowed me to reflect on the many decisions we make, as administrators, on behalf of ourselves and others, and to be more mindful of what truly matters. What is a priority, and what can wait? What is for me to decide, and what can I delegate? Again, more decisions. However, the reflection in and of itself is a great start to prioritizing our mission and beliefs. Did I think back on this past year and wonder, “What was I thinking?” or “I completely missed the mark on that one!” Of course I did! I also cut myself some slack for navigating through a global pandemic. And, you should too! With a little chaos thrown into our routines, procedures, and systems, the pandemic forced us to look at how we did things and imagine what it would look like if we did them differently. There is no doubt that something played out differently than before; I mean come on, limited spectators at games? Just an example, but can I get an “Amen”? (This is definitely a sarcastic example, as I terribly missed the energy the students bring to our games).

The reflection process should be added to our routines and systems. We should practice reflection to adapt to possible changes in the learning landscape and re-imagine our path forward. After taking the time to reflect, take a moment to think about what actions, changes, decisions you were forced to make, and the positives that came from them. For example, the use of technology. Although I would much rather meet with people face-to-face, I was able to attend meetings, and get acquainted with some awesome people that I may not have had the opportunity to meet without the ease and convenience of virtual meetings. When students were quarantined, they had the opportunity to Zoom into their actual class period and still be a part of the class discussions and activities. Many of our teachers were regularly recording their lessons and posting them to Canvas. At first, this was to benefit those students who had to be quarantined, but we quickly realized it was beneficial to all students and to teachers as well. It provided opportunities for teachers to reflect on their teaching and make adjustments where needed. One more example that has been phenomenal for our school is Lunch-N-Learn. Due to the restriction of travel, and the cancellation of pretty much every learning conference, we decided to designate some time to provide some professional development and learn from each other. Once a month, during lunch, we delved into topics such as positive student interactions, executive functioning in secondary students, and collective teacher efficacy. It was a great way for us to continue our learning, to focus on what we could control, and to make connections with each other during a time where connecting seemed pretty hard to accomplish.

I have more examples of what we re-imagined, and I learned so much from many of you about what you did differently, I am hopeful you have some of your own examples. Make a list! Put it in writing. You may be surprised at how well you all did. We are in the business of creating, implementing, and progressing. Progress is difficult without imagination. There will always be roadblocks. Hopefully, not on the scale of a global pandemic, but we have the opportunity to take time to look at our roadblocks and re-imagine how we might be able to accomplish our mission and vision for our schools. As you begin to make plans for next year, do not let a good lesson go to waste. Reflect on your learning and re-imagine your future!


A professional organization has a need for an Executive Director, a supportive governing Board and maybe the most important ingredient, a dedicated, professional (Secretary) Administrative Assistant... enter... Jane Bradbury.

Jane came to UASSP after we had experienced a revolving door of secretaries. I had four in six years. My last outgoing secretary before Jane, suggested I interview a friend of her mother for the position. I agreed to interview Jane Bradbury and was pleased to find someone who was eager to come and work part time for UASSP.

Jane was such a valuable person in helping to modernize our operation. We had just begun to utilize today’s technology for finance, communications, membership, elections, awards, and publications to name a few. Our office had a giant learning curve. Jane worked hard to make things flow smoothly, and to ensure that we had the necessary programs and equipment to enable us to meet the needs of the organization.

It was rewarding to see her interact with the UASSP Board and the membership at our conferences and board meetings. She is very congenial and so willing to come early or stay late to make sure all would be ready for the meetings and especially the UASSP Conferences. I found the key to having a strong professional organization is to provide high quality professional development.

Our UASSP Professional Development Conferences are a lot of hard, tedious work and unless you have been there and done that, you don’t realize the hours of coordination and planning that takes place long before the conference. Jane is a master at getting the details and materials ready so all who attend feel it was worth their time and effort.

I found Jane to be a very dedicated and caring person. She has been a tremendous asset to UASSP. As the former Executive Director of UASSP, I know I can speak for the Board Members and Membership in thanking Jane and wishing her the very best in her retirement and hope that she has joy in all she does.

Carl Boyington, Former UASSP Executive Director

It has been a little while since I have been able to give Jane a hug and I wish I could give her one right now. I want to thank her for all that she did for me as I served on the UASSP executive board for a few years. I could always count on a kind and patient reply when I would call, email, or text the many questions that I had as I learned about how the organization worked and provided support for administrators throughout Utah. She even provided counsel and direction on things that had nothing to do with UASSP which helped me get to know her on a more personal basis and I appreciate that the most. I hope and pray that she and her family are doing well and that this next step in her life will bring her closer to them. Good Luck!

Ken Rowley, Former UASSP President

Jane is an amazing secretary. She has a wealth of knowledge about the processes and procedures for both UASSP and NASSP that benefited the board and members. She made sure all of the details for conferences and meetings were taken care of so the board could focus on the matters at hand. More importantly, she is a genuinely kind person. Her service and contribution to UASSP is unmatched. I don’t know how I could have done my job without her. She will definitely be missed. I wish her well in her retirement.

Jess Christen, Former UASSP Executive Director
Jane is hard working and dedicated to her job. Her kindness is contagious. She always treats people with kindness and respect! We love her and will miss her!

Shawn McLeod, Former UASSP President

I cannot say enough great things about Jane! She was always so efficient, kind, and considerate to all. She took great care of all of us in the organization and never wanted to be highlighted even though she did so much behind the scenes and was a huge part of UASSP's success.

Suzie Jensen, Former UASSP President

Jane is a friend that you choose to make family! Thank you for taking care of me for years and all that you have done for me and others! You will be missed! Love you my dear friend!

Jim Young, Former UASSP President

I have known who Jane is for a long time. After all, we have all been getting emails and seeing her at conferences for years! I just started in this new role as the Executive Director of UASSP and have had the chance to work closely with Jane for a short time. I am amazed at her institutional knowledge about... everything! It didn't take me long to see first-hand what an amazing person she is. She is loving and caring and speaks so highly of the secondary administrators in this state. I am certainly going to miss working with her. She has been the heart of UASSP!

Good Luck with your new chapter Jane - you certainly deserve it!

Rhonda Bromley, UASSP Executive Director

I have been a member of UASSP for the past 24 years, and I can’t remember a time when Jane was not helping run the association. She has been instrumental in organizing all the conferences for UASSP principals and Administrative Assistants. When I served on the boards, Jane was the go-to for information and communications to the members. I know all educators who have interacted with Jane will miss her and wish her the very best as she moves forward with her life. Thank you, Jane!

Kip Motta, Former UASSP President/Current President-Elect NASSP
Jane makes everyone around her better. I can’t add or take away from that statement about Jane. She is just one of the best I have worked with and has no agenda, no concern for bringing attention to herself, just works to support the organization.

Steve Park, Former UASSP President

Sweet Jane - Her service to secondary administrators for decades is greatly appreciated. Her expertise, kindness, and patience has been a staple of UASSP. I wish her the best on her next adventure.

I will miss you! We will all miss you! Best wishes!

Kim Monkres, Current UASSP President

Jane has always been the calm in the storm. When you need help or a kind ear, she was my go-to person.

Happy trails Jane. You will be missed!

Kim Baker, Past UASSP President

From the first time I met Jane, she became an integral part of our student leadership programs. She is kind, hard-working and a dear friend. I am grateful for all of our talks at the registration table over the years. I will miss her more than she will know but wish her all the best as she enters retirement.

Know I am here should you ever need anything. It’s the least I can do after you taking care of me for the last 15 years!

Charisse Hilton, UASSP Executive Board 15 Years and counting...

Congratulations to Jane on her retirement from UASSP! I’ve always appreciated how Jane is willing to do whatever the UASSP board asks of her. Jane helped me out as I served as president elect, president, and now as past president. She is positive and kind. Jane has maintained the institutional knowledge our association has needed as leaders come and go from the board. I’m thankful for Jane and her dedicated service. She persevered through the pandemic and kept us all afloat. Thanks for everything Jane!”

Rae Garrison, UASSP Past President

CONGRATULATIONS!

Kip Motta, Principal of Rich Middle School, is the new President-elect of the National Association of Secondary School Principals.

Kip Motta’s educational career covers the past 38 years. During this time Kip has taught and coached at every level possible from grade school to the professional level. For the past 25 years, Kip has served as the principal of Rich Middle School and North Rich Elementary. Kip served as the Utah Association of Secondary School Principals (UASSP) Small Middle School Board member from 2011 to 2014. He was then elected as the president-elect, president, and past-president of UASSP. At the end of his past-president term for UASSP, Kip was elected as a board member for the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP). This past July, Kip was elected as the president-elect of NASSP and will continue as the president and past president of NASSP for the next three years. Kip is very excited for the opportunity to represent principals not only from Utah, but from across the country, and to bring his voice and experience to elevate the impact school leaders have on the future of our world.
What happens when you combine 50 students from different grades, backgrounds, and interests and give them a few leadership workshops and plenty of free time over a three day two night period of time over summer? The answer is connection.

Lack of connection was already the cause of so much of our students’ pain and heartache as we started this decade, but the pandemic shut down seemed to exacerbate the problem. While there is no silver bullet to resolve isolation and loneliness among today’s teenagers, that doesn’t mean we can’t begin somewhere at our schools to help students connect.

We started the Caveman Coalition at American Fork High School as an attempt to start a ripple effect that breaks down social barriers among our large population of students (2,400 students 10th-12th grade). We asked our teachers to identify students from different clubs, teams, and organizations who might be open and brave enough to connect with others outside their group. We then invited those students to a leadership camp at Utah State University Eastern.

The objective was to build community and learn about leadership. To do this, we divided our 50 students into 7 “families” who each had a camp counselor (six influential teachers and one admin). The families were immersed in interactive workshops, games and we combined all students for entertainment, freetime, and a whole lot of reflection. Seeing the barriers break down among our students was one of the most meaningful experiences I have had in education.

Students who were reluctant to participate in the first place reported that they met so many amazing people that they would never have known before. One student stated on social media that it was the happiest he has been for a very long time. The camp was just the kickoff event for the coalition and we hope that these students will connect others outside of their silos when the school year starts. We already have plans to grow the coalition and to meet and serve throughout the year.

Peter Glahn is the principal of American Fork High School in the Alpine School District.
A Green Canyon Tradition

by Shane Jones
Principal, Green Canyon High School

My daughter is an engineer, and her career has some perks, but one of the things she has always been jealous of in my career is that in education we have beginnings and endings. We have a finish line every year. We wrap things up, we walk them across the stage and we say goodbye to students that have been with us for the last four years. It’s a feeling of completion that other careers don’t get, at least not on a yearly basis. We take a break (not a long one for us administrators) but still a break, and following the break, we start over again. We get a new start, a renewal filled with rejuvenation and a sense of anticipation. A new beginning with new teachers, new students and new plans. To be truthful, when summer begins to wind down, I get a little sad the break is over, but as soon as I feel the excitement of the students, I start getting excited too. I get why my daughter is jealous; there really is something nice about getting a fresh start. For us at Green Canyon the excitement starts in mid-July. The temperature is hot, the river is calling, and it is time to get our two leadership teams together to run the river. We gather our adult leadership team and our student council and drive to Alpine Junction, Wyoming. The purpose of this trip is to expose our students to some leadership activities, provide some structured planning time, get to know each other and to have a whole lot of fun.

We get up nice and early because we have a lot planned for day one. We load up a lot of food and snacks (Principal Dave Swenson doesn’t go anywhere without a lot of food and snacks) and are on the river by 11:00. Our first run is about teamwork and taking care of each other. We discuss expectations and safety requirements first. We ride through some pretty fun rapids but to do it safely, it takes all of the students paddling as a coordinated, communicating team. Dave leads them down the river, sharing bits of leadership wisdom interspersed with some water fights with the adult leaders’ raft. We float several sets of rapids and the excitement and adrenaline are high when we make it to the bottom for lunch. The students and adults set up lunch and get to know each other while Dave heads to Jackson Hole to save seats at the Bar J Wranglers. We always go to Jackson Hole to give the students a chance to look around and do a little sightseeing or shopping but, the real purpose of going to Jackson Hole is to go to the Bar J Wranglers. Most of our students have never seen the Bar J Wranglers or been exposed to western music. We attend the dinner program to show our students that the stars of the Bar J Wranglers lead by serving. Before the stars sing, they help prepare and serve the meal to all the customers. They are a great example of dedication, leadership, purpose, and humility, all qualities that we want our student leaders to have or develop.

Day two and three we give the students an opportunity to plan and ask questions over breakfast. We typically cover activities, dances, student involvement, and follow-up to lessons learned from the Bar J Wranglers. Some years we will do this planning on a hike to Jenny Lake or Inspiration Point. A great view and some poignant questions can help students start to keep journals of their senior year. This year we spent some time at Bear Lake playing games, but we always make a final run down the river. On our second run we stop and do some cliff jumping into the river, a great chance to force ourselves out of our comfort zones and try a new challenge. It is always fun to watch the students and adults do something they have never done before. Three days away from home getting to know our student leaders has always helped us get a good start to our school year and help make some connections with our student leaders. It’s a tradition I hope we can continue for years to come.

Shane Jones started his career in Kimberly, Idaho as a high school counselor. He then spent twenty years at Sky View High School as a counselor, teacher, coach, athletic director and administrator. His new passion in education is social and emotional Learning. He is now learning how to be an empty nester with his wife Judy.
Heads, Hands, Hearts, & Hardball: Leading Positive Changes

by David Boren
Director of BYU School Leadership Program

A good head and a good heart are always a formidable combination. - Nelson Mandela

In his book, The Happiness Hypothesis, Jonathan Haidt presents this simple, but effective, framework for personal and organizational change (also see Switch by Chip & Dan Heath). Imagine a person riding an elephant, wanting to get from point A to point B on a path. In order to arrive successfully, three conditions must be met: the rider must know the destination and how to get there, the elephant must want to move, and the path must be sufficiently clear of obstacles. The rider represents the rational and visionary side of change, the head; the elephant the emotional and motivational side, the heart; and the path the environmental and ability side of change, the hand. All three are essential for any successful change initiative. If the rider, or head, is unclear, the elephant will wander or walk in circles. If the multi-ton elephant, or heart, is unmotivated and refuses to move, then the rider’s vision and clear path are useless. A path full of obstacles could thwart the most visionary rider and most motivated elephant. In short, for any successful change effort, we must attend to head, hand, and heart. If you have ever struggled with a personal or professional change effort, it may have been an issue of head, hand, or heart.

Head: Compelling Why & Clear Vision

“’If school leaders cannot provide a compelling why, the staff will not care about the what.’”
Buffum, Mattos, & Weber, 2012, p. 21

During my first year as a principal I recognized the need for my teachers to improve their collaborative work together. As I combed through the research, the lesson study approach seemed like a good fit for my school. I sent my teachers home over summer break with several articles on lesson study, and I then spent the summer putting together budgets, plans, schedules, and processes to effectively support it. When we met in our first faculty meeting of the following year, I figured that the summer readings had already made a very convincing case for the “why” of lesson study, so I spent the bulk of the meeting covering the logistical plans for how we would successfully carry it out. I left the meeting energized, sure that lesson study was going to take off in our school. I knew my top-notch teachers loved their students and truly wanted to improve. Elephant motivated. Schedules, budgets, and other supports were in place. Path cleared. The articles made lesson study a no-brainer. Rider clearly understands the vision…not so much. After a few months, only one team had started experimenting with lesson study. I gathered my school leadership team and asked them why nobody was engaging in lesson study. I was caught off guard when one of my most respected and experienced teachers asked, “Why are we even doing this?”

Anthony Muhammed explains that change will produce “very few positive results when used by people who do not believe in the intended outcome of the change” (2009, p. 15). My teachers as riders did not have the vision for the why of lesson study; they needed more than a few stuffy research articles to help them see the vision for a compelling “why”.

Howard Garner (2004), Simon Sinek (2011) and others recommend an array of strategies that help organizations better understand the why behind a change effort.

- Clarify the larger vision & destination - Sometimes we as a school are not clear about our larger purposes. Why change if we don’t know where we’re going?
● Rational reasoning – Examine the pros and cons. Deeply study and dialogue best practice literature and research.
● Examine evidence – Examine a variety of evidence from our context that make the need for this change clear (student scores, demographics, surveys, focus groups, observations, etc.).
● Inside experts – Invite teachers from your own faculty to share their success stories about this change. A peer testimonial is more compelling than an administrative mandate.
● Outside experts – Muhammad and Cruz explain, “People who have never had exposure to an alternative find it difficult to envision change” (2019, p. 13). A fresh perspective from outside can expand our worldview of options. This might come from a prominent presenter or the teachers from the school down the street.
● Short experiments or pilots – Invite a small group to try it out first, experience its benefits, and work out some of the bugs.

Unfortunately, in my lesson study debacle, I only weakly used the rational reasoning approach, and eventually the initiative died, because it was not clear to teachers how this change would help us achieve our overall mission and vision. If I had used several of these approaches with my faculty, the rider would have had a more clear and compelling vision, and perhaps better progress would have been made. How can the riders at your school gain a clearer vision?

Hand: Skills & Support

“There is no point in plowing what you can’t water.”

-Jim Grant

I continued to feel frustrated with our collaborative efforts in a PLC, and decided to address my concern head-on with the school leadership team. Our district had been engaged in the PLC process for over ten years. Why were we struggling so much with PLCs?! One teacher was brave enough to admit, “Honestly, we don’t really know what we’re supposed to be doing during collaboration time. We know collaboration is important and want to do it effectively. We just don’t know how it’s supposed to work. Nobody has ever really taught us how. If you’ll teach us, we’ll do it.” Nods of agreement around the room confirmed to me that they knew collaboration was important and really wanted to do it effectively. This was not a head or heart problem. This was a path, or hand, problem. They needed skills and support. “When leaders...combine too much motivation with too few opportunities to improve ability, they don’t produce change; they create resentment and depression. Influence masters overinvest in strategies that help increase ability” (Patterson et al., 2008, p. 112). The ball was in my court; I needed to help build their collaboration skills and provide support.

Linda Darling-Hammond (2017) and others propose some great strategies for helping build the skills and capacities of educators in any change initiative:

- Learn together - Read articles, watch video clips, and attend trainings, conferences, and classes together.
- Study positive examples - Visit other schools and teams that are bright spots.
- Focus and simplify - Focus improvement efforts on those areas most important to your school. Break mastery into small, meaningful goals, and implement incrementally.
- Adjust time, schedules, budgets, and spaces - Get creative with time, space, and funds to clear the path. As Heath and Heath explain, “Tweaking the environment is about making the right behavior a little bit easier and the wrong behaviors a little bit harder” (2010, p. 183).
- Ongoing coaching, feedback, and reflection - Jim Knight observes: “I seem to learn best when someone shows me how to do it, watches me, and then gives me feedback” (2007, p. 110).
- Experiment & take risks - Ensure there is a safe culture of productive risk taking, responding to failure, and making gradual improvements.

I learned a valuable lesson. I could not ask more from my already overworked teachers without providing more support. Richard Elmore explains the importance of such reciprocal accountability: “For every increment of performance I demand of you, I have an equal responsibility to provide you with the capacity to meet that expectation” (2004, p. 93). “Leaders must learn to differentiate between exposing educators to best practice and ensuring that staff can actually carry out the specific knowledge and skills aligned with best practice” (Muhammad & Cruz, 2019, p. 65). How can you better clear the path at your school?

Heart: Trust & Motivation

“It is so much better to touch hearts than to twist arms.”

-Neal A. Maxwell

While my teachers’ knowledge and skills with respect to collaboration and PLCs gradually improved, I recognized that for some of them, it was somewhat of a mechanical process, devoid of much passion. Identify essentials, teach, assess, intervene, extend, repeat. The rider knew this was important, the path was clear, and the elephant was trudging down it, but with little excitement. Fortunately, I had heard about another school that had found one way to
get the elephant really moving with respect to PLCs. The principal filmed several students talking about their dream jobs and then created a touching video that helped connect the dots between the stories of each child and how the PLC process would support each child's dreams. It was powerful and definitely touched hearts. There was no finger pointing or hard feelings, but truly a motivation to be better for kids. The elephant at that school was no longer engaged in a slow trudge, but a purposeful march.

Stories touch hearts. Daniel Coyle explains: “When we hear a fact, a few isolated areas of our brain light up, translating words and meanings. When we hear a story, however, our brain lights up like Las Vegas, tracing the chains of cause, effect, and meaning. Stories are not just stories; they are the best invention ever created for delivering mental models that drive behavior” (2018, p. 182).

In addition to touching hearts through stories, we can clear the path by creating psychologically safe and trusting cultures (Edmonson, 2019). When it comes to influencing others, the quality of our relationships tends to trump everything else. “Effective leaders know that people are not their best asset; they are their only asset, so the need to nurture, develop, and strengthen relationships is at the very core of what good leaders do” (Leithwood et. al, 2013, p. 261). We are fooling ourselves if we think we can make long-term, positive change without trusting and caring relationships. Megan Tschannen-Moran (2018, p. 71) warned, “The mind does not consent to an idea until the heart internalizes that idea on a cellular level” and that only happens when people feel safe and trusted. Here are a few strategies for touching hearts.

- Tell stories - Make this change real, vivid, personal, relevant, and close to home.
- Tap identities - Clarify how this change aligns with the best of who we are as educators and that failing to do this would go against our noble identity.
- Focus on progress - Focus on progress and establish that we are already well on our way. We are not starting from scratch here!
- Share & synergize - Gain momentum through sharing our collective efforts. It is so motivating to hear the good work of others and know that we are in this together!
- Communicate caring, candor, & humility - Do we truly listen? Are we real with others? Do others see us as human—willing to ask for help, apologize, & forgive?
- Be reliable - Can others rely on us to follow through and to keep our word?
- Value others - Do others know that we care more about them than any particular outcome?

As hearts are touched and trust improves, the elephant wants to move. Emotions do indeed significantly affect cognition” (Oatley, Keltner, & Jenkins, 2006), so let’s find ways to engage emotionally. How can you better touch hearts at your school?

Hardball

“Peter did not feel very brave; indeed, he felt he was going to be sick. But that made no difference to what he had to do.” -C.S. Lewis, “The Lion the Witch & the Wardrobe”

Despite our best efforts to touch head, hand, and heart, there are nearly always a few teachers that continue to struggle with a needed change. Here’s an example. One day while travelling to a meeting, I was stewing over what to do about a teacher resisting a schoolwide change initiative. Head, hand, and heart had been addressed, but she still struggled and refused to participate. I wasn’t sure what to do. Should I just let it slide? Was it worth the potential fallout? How would my silence be interpreted by the rest of the faculty? I recalled the THINK acronym my mom taught me when considering whether to have a hard conversation.

T - Is it True?
H - Is it Helpful?
I - Is it Inspiring?
N - Is it Necessary?
K - Is it Kind?

I answered “yes” to each of these questions, but was still hesitant to address this situation. It was not going to be pretty. I arrived at the meeting and noticed an array of Dove chocolates spread across the meeting table. I grabbed one, hoping that some chocolate would take my mind off this struggling teacher. The first chocolate I opened had this pointed advice:
Maintain respect & dignity of others regardless of the struggle or situation.

Provide honest feedback, simple directives, ample support, & clear consequences.

Support & celebrate progress, however small.

Give the energizing silent majority center stage rather than the draining vocal minority.

Clarity decision-making processes so there is no question as to how we get things done.

Change behavior or change scenery when there is no other alternative.

References


Thank you, Dove! The meeting ended, and before the day was out, I had met with the struggling teacher. While the meeting was indeed uncomfortable, this teacher was able to move forward productively thanks to many of the following strategies (see Cameron 2012 and Muhammad & Cruz 2019):

- Maintain respect & dignity of others regardless of the struggle or situation.
- Provide honest feedback, simple directives, ample support, & clear consequences.
- Support & celebrate progress, however small.
- Give the energizing silent majority center stage rather than the draining vocal minority.
- Clarify decision-making processes so there is no question as to how we get things done.
- Change behavior or change scenery when there is no other alternative.

One caution. Sometimes as leaders we jump too soon to playing hardball before really ensuring that we’ve attended to head, hand, and heart. However, when all three have been given plenty of attention and resistance reigns, “a leader can fairly conclude that the individual, who has all the tools and opportunities for change, has drawn a line in the sand and challenged the leader’s authority... The leader has a right to collect the return on his or her investment” (Muhammad & Cruz 2019, p. 19). Any hardball needed at your school?

Conclusion

“The human soul does not want to be fixed, it wants simply to be seen and heard.”

-Parker Palmer

Head, hand, heart, and hardball. Some of the world’s most noble and celebrated leaders have used these powerful tools to bless and build the greater human condition through positive change. As school leaders we use these tools because we deeply respect, cherish, and prioritize the wellbeing of each individual within our stewardship, and value their growth and contributions to our schools (see Buber, 1970 & The Outward Mindset, 2019).

If your school is working through a change process, it might be worth reflecting on how well you are attending to rider, elephant, and path, as well as the deeper motives for that change. Surely, we live and progress best when we neither deny ourselves the verdict of the head nor the intimations of the heart, but seek a working harmony of both” (Brown, 1938, p. 150). How might you improve the harmony of head, hand, heart, and hardball at your school?

David Boren is the director of Brigham Young University’s School Leadership Program, and most recently worked as a principal in Alpine School District.
More than ever we are seeing the positive effects of student participation in athletics due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It has caused us to reflect on the question, “What is the value of sports?” aside from the periphery of high-light tapes, endorsements, business, entertainment, school pride, etc.

I would like to discuss three main benefits of athletics that positively affect students:

1) Character development
2) Connection
3) Confidence

Participating in athletics provides an opportunity for a student athlete to develop traits such as honesty, leadership, trust, courage, and patience. However, one of the most important traits, one that is so very much needed in this day and age to face the challenges of our current world is resiliency. Athletic competition is loaded with opportunities to overcome adversity and challenges. There are no better places than daily practice and games to develop an individual’s capacity to adapt to challenges, perform under pressure, and respond to failure. Developing grit, which is defined as courage and resolve or strength of character, is the byproduct of daily competition provided by athletic programs.

The feeling of connection that comes from being a member of a team can have a powerful, positive effect on a student. Acceptance, respect, and appreciation for one’s teammates aren’t just abstract ideals, but the DNA of success. Teams that are united value diversity because they understand that each team member has a particular role. Not everyone can be a tall center or a quick guard or a quarterback with no linemen. In all the pomp and circumstance of sports, it’s easy to miss that teamwork is the answer to our collective dilemma. Teamwork is essential in today’s society that is fueled by individualism, polarization, and devisiveness. The principles of teamwork that can be learned by student athletes can help undo this trend.

As student athletes experience the results of hard work, both in practice and games, it raises their level of confidence both in themselves and their team. It is true that success breeds success but it also breeds confidence. It comes both in victory and defeat. Experiencing a tough loss and being able to bounce back the next game is a powerful confidence builder. Learning from adversity both individually and as a team can install resilience and grit which boosts a participant’s self confidence.

These are just a few of the positive benefits of athletics that can play a major role in the participant’s character development. There are additional benefits that can add to a student’s ability to be a successfull and productive member of society.

Mike May is currently serving as the assistant principal at Canyon View Junior High School in Alpine School District.
Our students are currently experiencing unprecedented trauma and more mental health conditions than ever before. The focus of social-emotional wellness (SEW) in schools is paramount. Research has proven that when social emotional needs are not met, students are not equipped, empowered, or engaged in the learning process. Social and emotional well-being provides a crucial foundation where students are ready and able to learn. Its importance leads to some challenging questions for leaders in education: how does a school systematically provide opportunities to educate the “whole child”? How does one guarantee a viable SEW in the high school experience? How do we ensure that every child has a teacher/mentor that values connection? How do we find all these amazing teachers that are emotionally stable themselves? How do we equip and empower our teachers so they can provide what students need emotionally?

These questions led to two years of seeking answers, reading books and articles, and talking to community stakeholders. Then I met Nate Crandall, a psychology and science teacher who was deeply committed to SEW. We both “nerded out” on next-level stuff and the vision caught on as our new school, Cedar Valley High School, was established. Our community and teachers were excited to hear of the SEW focus. Every new hire was committed to the cause. Soon the administration team, our School Community Council, School Leadership Team, PTSA, District SEW leadership, and counselors were ready to support this new initiative.

One of the main obstacles to this great program was the issue of credit or where to fit the class into the school day. Anna Butler, lead counselor, and Mari Braithwaite, ASD Director of Secondary Curriculum, led the effort in finding ways to offer credit for students. There were many other considerations and hours of discussion required to finally launch the program.

The first two years of the program, SEW and literacy were the focus. Starting this year, counselors have collaborated to add weekly state comprehensive guidance and college, career readiness lessons, and a YouScience system. YouScience is a platform that measures aptitudes to uncover students’ natural talents, match them to careers, and give them personalized feedback on how their abilities can be utilized in school, work, and in their daily lives. The system also allows students to access their individual portfolios up to ten years after graduation.

What sets this apart from other programs is that students are kept with the same teacher all four years within the community. Aviators “hijacked” the idea behind homeroom, advisory and flexmodels and have created a period called “Jet Time.” We even created an original novel to reflect our values and our Aviator theme, “Light the Fires, From Turbulence to Triumph.” Students participate in close-reading literacy activities and apply the SEW principles within the book to their own lives. Students also learn skills such as: communication, mental health habits, focus, emotional regulation, time management, and discipline.
Jet Time:
- Is a research-based, science-backed concept that provides a credit-bearing class period.
- Creates avenue for generating more connections with fellow students and significant non-parental adults.
- Uses face-to-face interaction, a specially written book, and a Canvas course to deliver literacy and social and emotional wellness instruction that provides students with skills and direction needed for the future.
- Provides all students with activities and lessons that encourage postsecondary education and career opportunities.
- Integrates data collection tools that will allow Cedar Valley to track gaps in learning, skills, knowledge, and equity.
- Provides students with opportunities to create YouScience portfolios.

Students do this all under the guidance of a committed teacher-mentor who works with their class to create a safe space where they can recognize, understand, and value both themselves and one another. The importance of this effort cannot be underestimated. The research shows that improving connections, self-awareness, and emotional regulation skills benefits teens in the short and long term. As Aviators, we challenge the students and teachers to reach for the skies.

“I have loved how CVHS has incorporated both literacy and SEW (Social & Emotional Wellness) into their Jet Time. These are both essential topics for teens that can easily get overlooked in secondary school. Our students are facing more right now than they ever have in the irregular day-to-day life. CVHS uses JetTime to promote dispositions that help students feel more confident and connected to those around them. They also magnify this time by including literacy components that support student reading and comprehension through connected text. I am grateful to have my children at a school that values literacy along with my child’s emotional wellbeing.”

-Jessie Cannon, Research & Evaluation, Alpine School District

Bibliography
I want you to know what I have learned in the three years of being the Principal of Herriman High School. Before I came, Herriman High School, the staff, students, and community had just endured a contagion, a “suicide contagion”. During this time the previous principal of Herriman was under a great deal of pressure. This broad-shouldered man carried the weight of the world and death with much of the blame that was directed at the school. Every staff member was going through different levels of PTSD. I know this sounds extreme, but there is no other way to describe what I saw. If you will allow me to offer an extreme comparison, I may be able to describe what I felt when I arrived.

I was a child during the Vietnam war. I was old enough to remember the news and watched American citizens stand at the airport gates in protest. I remember the banners that stated, “The blood of innocent lives were on the soldiers’ hands,” as they returned from war. They were inappropriately blamed for a larger problem they did not create, and in short, made to feel that they returned in disgrace. In comparison, in the eyes of some, my staff was inappropriately seen as disgraced.

During the contagion year, I was the principal of the school just south of the Herriman boundary. I saw the social media damage to the school when it was labelled as a broken shell, impossible to repair. I can’t speak for Herriman High during the painful 2017-18 school year, because I wasn’t a staff member at the time. Maybe the school could have reacted differently, but hindsight is 20/20 and we must learn from past mistakes to become better. I have learned I do not deny my responsibility when the responsibility is mine to take. During my first year at Herriman I did not have a lot of room for any mistakes to be made. What I could see when I arrived was the importance of sharing the burden to find relief and move toward healing the community. I am no miracle worker. I told my staff if they believed I was sent to Herriman to fix the “suicide problem”, they would be sadly disappointed.

The first step I made was becoming visible as a member of the community. When a finger was pointed in our direction, I pointed back. I did not point my finger out of anger, but I pointed and asked the question, “What are you doing to help our students?” In a short period of time, I saw individuals and groups of people working with the school to address the issues. You could see that “aha moment” in peoples’ eyes when they realized we couldn’t fix the past, but we could change the way we work together as a single focused community. We no longer had individuals on social media and news outlets pointing fingers, because we were finally in this together. I remember talking to ecclesiastical leaders for support. We invited a multitude of social workers to be part of a solution. More importantly, we had a community who began asking themselves what responsibility they would share going forward. There were only two school counselors and a handful of staff who stayed after that difficult year. I don’t blame anyone who left, it was part of their journey to recovery. Even experienced career counselors needed personal counseling to move forward. My job was not to rebuild the school, it was to support the staff and put bricks and mortar in their hands. We still have PTSD in our building, but you should see the “monument” they built as a beacon of community hope.

I have been asked several times, “If you had to do your life all over again, would you make the same decisions that you have made in this lifetime?” The answer is simple, yes. However, the
outcomes of a new life may send me in a different direction. I have learned that it is not me alone who shapes my destiny. My life’s direction is laid out before me on small cobblestones with names carefully engraved on each stone. The names on each stone represent the lives of those people who I serve and have served me. One stone may send me in a direction that can assist me when I am influenced by personal storms, personal pain, and outside variables for which I have no control. My life do-over would include spending the time to look at the path ahead and spending more time choosing the direction that will allow me to see a beautiful sunset, people holding hands, and feeling the swelling in my heart when I see an act of service to someone who needs additional help. I believe if we choose the right path we receive gifts of tolerance, consensus, and love. We need to take a moment to relish the experience before we rush off to the next adventure. Has my journey left me tired? Yes! So I need to stop and spend some time looking back at the path to remind myself what I have accomplished so far in this life. I will survive knowing I can change the world one child at a time. But so can you! In today’s schools, it will take all of us to solve the problems educators face.

I often tell my assistant principals that I pray for a time in the future where I feel I am an instructional leader again. Our schools have evolved into institutions where our most important job is looking at the social and emotional health of the students and staff in our buildings. I am still a leader at Herriman High, but I find myself contemplating the definition of an instructional leader, because it is vastly different from the definition I was taught when I received my Masters Degree in Education Administration at Utah State University. I thought I would always measure my leadership with graduation rates and standardized test results; the number one priorities of principals in the past. What has taken its place as a priority? The social and emotional health data I receive by surveying our students. Not that learning goals and graduation rates aren’t important but now we understand that students will not succeed if the social and emotional health of students are not addressed.

I believe our profession has evolved, it mirrors scientist’s explanation of the quick end of the Jurassic period when meteor strike wiped out dinosaurs on the earth. It was quick! Now, we will see if we adapt and survive in the complicated world ahead. I couldn’t have predicted this sweeping change in the 25 years I have been a school administrator. Personally, it has caught me off guard. What lies ahead for the next generation of administrators? I worry! I hope the next generation prepares now and looks closely at the cobblestone path ahead. Those who are just starting their administrative journey need to look deep into their souls to find their own “power of one”. That power is thing that will help them see how they can make a difference. They will need this power to impact the future they face. May they become the “leader” (instructional, emotional, technological) the future requires.

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