

PARSS eNews

===== A PENNSYLVANIA EDUCATION NEWS BLAST =====



Dear PARSS Members,

Thanksgiving traditions provide a welcome break from our busy lives to reflect and be grateful.

High on my list of items to appreciate is the large association of PARSS educators who so devotedly serve rural communities. Each of you chose this path so you could make a difference in the lives of the students we serve. Many of you go to extreme measures to consistently make a positive impact in your district. You also dedicate much of your lives to advancing your certifications and commitments that improve your performance and leadership skills.

I am grateful for all that you do and remain hopeful that you, in turn, will find gratitude for your own endeavors. Value the improvements, the upgrades, even the challenges you've faced this year. Each experience has made you stronger and savvier for the next time.

Here at PARSS, we are thankful for the opportunity to work with you and for you. As always, we extend our warmest Thanksgiving wishes and encourage you to enjoy time shared with family and friends.

Sincerely,
Edward Albert, Ed.D



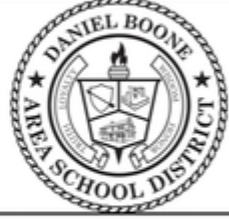






MEMBERSHIP UPDATE!

**PARSS Membership has increased
to more than 250 school districts
and intermediate units. Thank you!**

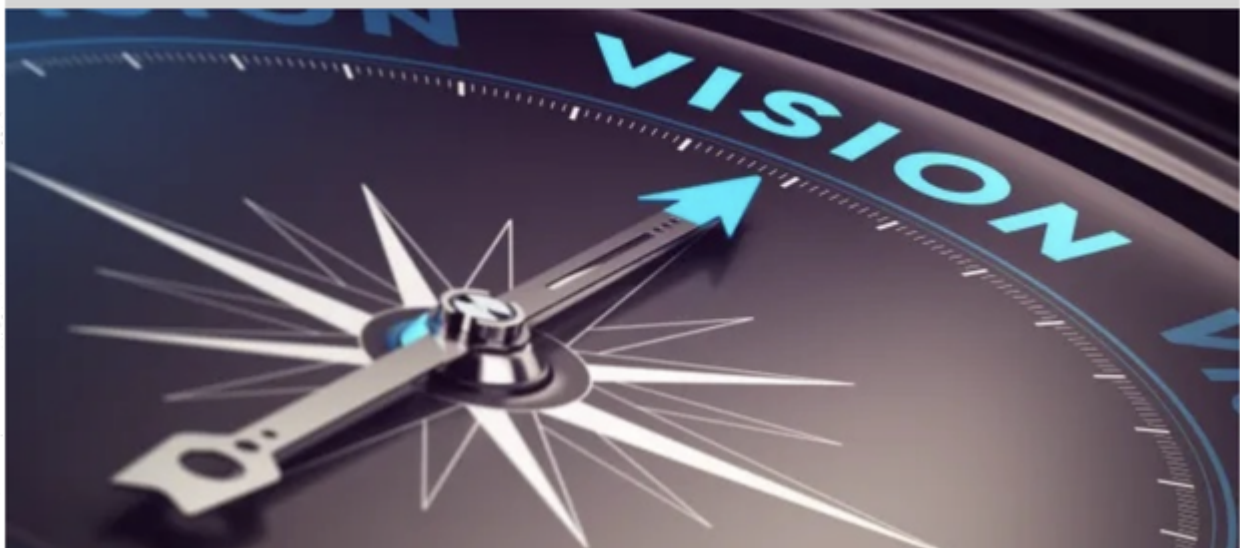
Note: If you know of a neighboring
school district that is not a member,
please reach out to them and ask them
to join. Remember -- Advocacy is not a
spectator sport!



**PLEASE HELP US WELCOME OUR
NEWEST PARSS MEMBERS!**

Ambridge Area School District	Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit 21	Daniel Boone Area School District
		
Laurel School District	Lehigh Area School District	Northern Lebanon School District
		
Northwest Area School District	Riverside Beaver County School District	School District of Borough of Morrisville
		

Judgement Outperforms Rules



Several recent crisis situations have developed with the airlines when adherence to a rule superseded good judgement. Organizations respond with new or additional rules to address incidents that weren't conducted in favorable or appropriate manner. As the rules accumulate,

trying to figure out how to respond to a similar but different situation gets increasingly complex.

Additionally, for school systems, the presence of more and more rules and regulations increases the likelihood that the rule will be ignored or forgotten. Subsequent failures to comply with the rule expand liability and increase the risk of a difficult situation going from bad to worse.

Organizations that thrive have a deep and clear devotion to their mission and guiding principles. Leaders who devote their time to building profound understanding of the values and principles of the organization are free to follow the members of the organization to make judgements about how to respond to advance the values and mission.

Judgement outperforms rules! Organizations that operate this way focus on selecting, trusting and preparing their people to exercise judgement in alignment with the organization's core principles and values.

SEVEN SECRETS TO BECOMING A COMMUNICATOR-IN-CHIEF

Great communicators never take communication for granted. They're constantly developing, advancing, and sustaining their message. They have an uncanny knack for adapting each message to a given audience or purpose without missing a beat. Great communicators are keenly aware of how much their words matter. To become a great communicator-in-chief, consider these seven secrets:



- **Make it sound easy.** Complicated subjects need to be simplified. When talking about issues like the budget or test data, keep it conversational.
- **Get close and personal.** Speak to groups as if they are individuals. Stand next to the crowd rather than above the crowd. Use pronouns like *us*, *we*, and *ours*.
- **Let silence do the talking.** When we're quiet it gives us a chance to hear the meaning behind the message of others. It also keeps us from saying things we later regret.
- **Read between the lines.** Sharpen your sense of situational and contextual awareness by paying attention to what is not said or heard. As a leader, you will find that people tell you what they think you want to hear.
- **Connect with words.** Never assume someone is ready to have a conversation with you just because you are ready to talk with him or her.

- **Use the rule of three.** Speech writers often rely on the rule of three to improve the cadence of a message and to emphasize key points a speaker is hoping to make. People can follow and remember three things.
- **Have a contingency plan.** A communicator-in-chief knows what to do when a message starts to go sideways. If clarity, sincerity, and expertise are not enough to keep your message upright, be ready to change on the fly.



Challenges, stress, and strains of leadership can lead to exhaustion and even burnout. The secret to sustaining leadership energy has as much to do with what we choose to replenish as it has to do with the amount of intensity of what we have to give. You can keep your leadership fresh by nurturing three elements:

First, nurture hope. Keep your focus high on the horizon, infuse your speech with optimism, and look for possibility and opportunity in the future.

Second, feed your compassion. Understanding and encouraging hopes, dreams, and goals of those around you add important energy and reinforcement as we encourage and enrich the lives of others.

Third, stay alert for new ideas and new learning. New ideas, insights and approaches, whether gained from other people or discovered within ourselves, can keep us fresh and flexible in our leadership.

KEY LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS DURING TOUGH TIMES

According to author Mark Hanna, leaders who are most effective during tough times have six routine behaviors in common:

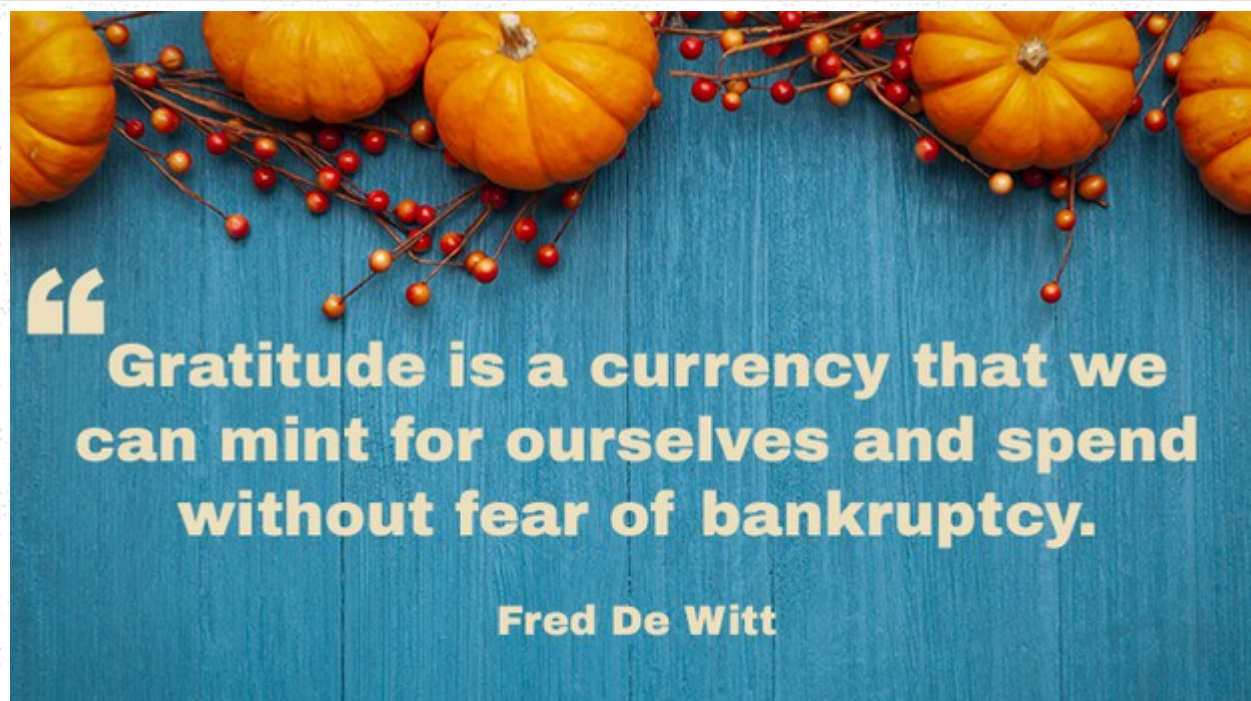


- They talk about organizational values and directions.
- They talk about the organization's performance.
- They spend informal time with employees.
- They support programs that help employees improve their skills.
- They mentor one or more employees.
- They recognize high performance.

According to Hanna, these so-called transformational leaders can lead organizations to high levels of motivation and performance despite stressful and challenging times for the organization and employees.

However, these leaders also need to take care of their own emotional health and attitude. Hanna notes that it is not stress that kills us, it is our reaction to it. We can choose to treat the situation as a challenge to overcome or adversity to be managed, or we can allow it to overwhelm and destroy us. The choice is ours.

CLICK HERE TO SEARCH JOB POSTINGS IN PARSS DISTRICTS!



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