

5 WAYS PRINCIPAL CAN SUPPORT TEACHERS AND LEARNERS DURING COVID 19

by:

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To say the least, the 2020-2021 school year has been a roller coaster ride. In order to remain open for in-person learning, schools across the country must follow strict guidelines and safety protocols. The tone and culture of this new educational experience are set by principals.

Here are five ways principals can help their students and staff weather the COVID19 storm while also ensuring the quality of an in-person or remote education program:

Model proper safety protocols

Most schools that allow in-person learning require students to wear masks. Principals must set a good example by always wearing their masks properly. It's also a good idea to keep paper masks on hand in case students or teachers forget their masks or need to change them throughout the day.

Greet students at the door

For many of our younger students, wearing a mask to school can be intimidating and off-putting. Having a friendly "masked" face welcome them back to school will be a source of comfort for students during these trying times. Being visible will also reassure parents that their children are safe at school.

Attend remote teaching sessions

Principals devote a significant amount of time to assisting teachers in traditional classrooms by conducting walk-throughs and observations. Administrators should maintain this practice during remote learning. Principals can join remote sessions, participate in discussions, or facilitate a guest lesson. It is critical that students and teachers "see" their principal in action during remote learning.

Get creative with school communication

In this new reality, parents are more stressed than ever, having to balance remote working, leaving their children at home with a caregiver to supervise remote learning, or dropping them off at school, all while possibly dealing with financial constraints and potential job losses. Principals must communicate frequently with parents to ensure that their children are safe and receiving the best education possible. Some creative communication ideas are as follows:

Social media sharing of school photos and videos

Teachers are highlighted on a weekly or monthly parent video call.

Coffee with the principal over the internet

Virtually sharing student work

Setting expectations for remote teacher work hours

Teachers who work remotely face a number of unique challenges. It is not uncommon for teachers to work late into the night, emailing parents, creating lessons, and planning for the next day. In our quarantine reality, it is all too easy for teachers to fall into the trap of overworking and overstressing. Principals must be supportive in terms of setting realistic work expectations and reminding teachers to unplug and recharge so that they can be ready for the next day.

References:

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