

*The PassKey* is a monthly Initiative newsletter that delivers news on improving student achievement and building teacher capacity through the PAHSCI instructional coaching model.

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# THE PASSKEY

HELPING TEACHERS HELP STUDENTS

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## HOW LEADERSHIP SUPPORTS COACHING & PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

By Deborah Jackson, Superintendent, Burgettstown Area School District

In the Burgettstown Area School District, a Culture of Learning exists that includes the administration, faculty, and students. Professional development for administrators through the University of Pittsburgh's Principal Academy, the Educational Leadership Institute, and the Pennsylvania High School Coaching Institute (PAHSCI), train principals to learn and practice leadership skills which influence these daily practices.

Prior to being named a PAHSCI participant, principals used walkthroughs as a means of encouraging positive instructional practices. The use of this evaluation model built a trust between administrators and faculty. Since being included in PAHSCI, the principals have attended PLN and PLN2 training in Lancaster and at regional workshops. Immersion into the learner practices has enabled principals and other administrators to establish credibility with the faculty and to work alongside the literacy and math coaches to update teaching practices.

Recent changes to the collective bargaining agreement have encouraged the faculty to take ownership of their own professional growth. A three-tiered evaluation model that includes clinical observations, walkthroughs,

and personal growth allow administrators and teachers to focus on instructional strengths and improve upon areas that need to be addressed. The personal growth record complements the need for study groups and permits teachers to observe one another informally in a classroom setting. With teachers sharing within the walkthrough or personal growth model of evaluation, principals have more time to work with new faculty as they enter a most demanding profession. The addition of these thirty-five minute time periods allows principals, coaches, and teachers increased professional development time weekly.

This attention to professional growth has emerged from the shared understanding that a Culture of Learning exists through collaborative leadership that addresses the aggregate needs of students, faculty, and administrators.

Please visit the *Learning Institute for School Reform's Tools for School Improvement Planning on Leadership*. This web page provides resources for school leaders on evaluating leadership needs, skills, and effectiveness:  
<http://www.learninginstitute.org/tools/Tools/index.php?tabid=3>

## POINTS TO PONDER: THE LEADERSHIP EFFECT

The 100-question *Research for Education and Learning (REBEL)* examined the effect of superintendent leadership on student achievement in a research study using quantitative methods. The study's findings show a statistically significant relationship between district leadership and student achievement (a positive correlation of .24); effective superintendents derive their efforts on creating goal-oriented districts; and length of superintendency tenure is a district positively correlates to student achievement. (Waters, J. T., & Harrison, R. J. (2006). *School District Leadership and Works: The Effect of Superintendent Leadership on Student Achievement*. NERF, 3)

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

MAY 20, 31 Statewide Networking Meeting  
JUNE 25, 26, 27 Annual Centralized Course

Check our website for PLN course dates at [www.paschooling.org](http://www.paschooling.org)

November / December 2008