The Budget–Vision Relationship and the National Standards

1

> *Empowering those around you to be heard and valued makes the difference between a leader who simply instructs and one who inspires.*
>
> —Adena Friedman,
> President and Chief Executive Officer, Nasdaq
> (Nasdaq, 2020)

School Leadership: Inspirational, Empowering, and Visionary

School leaders face the challenge of improving student academic achievement in a time of inadequate, inequitable, and unequal funding as well as contracting resources. They also confront a host of other challenges, including

- maximizing scarce resources,

- making budget adjustments without adversely impacting student achievement,

- fiscal equity, equality, and efficiency, and—far too often—the lack thereof (an issue specifically associated with vouchers and school privatization),

- stretching human capital (recruitment, retention, and empowerment),

- retirements, resignations, and replacements,

- political polarization (LGBTQ+ issues, critical race theory, book bans, and opt-out students from instruction),

- threats against educators,

- serving an increasingly poor and diverse student population,

- providing individual instruction more quickly and prudently,

- using funding as a lever to spur innovation,

3

- aligning instructional goals and strategies with funding,

- providing teachers what they need, how they need it, and when they need it,

- meeting the high expectations held by top-performing nations in reading and mathematics, and

- increasing parental involvement (Douglas, 2022; Jochim et al., 2023; Sorenson, 2022; Sorenson, 2024)

Inspirational and empowering leadership, as noted in the opening quote by Adena Friedman, the president and chief executive officer of Nasdaq, combined with visionary approaches enables school leaders to not only arouse and motivate teams but also to overcome the numerous school-related challenges when developing, maintaining, and assessing a school budget.

School Budgeting, School Vision

Budgetary and visionary leadership: these are two issues school leaders must confront on a daily basis. The relationship between school budgeting and vision is as intertwined as is love with marriage. In both cases, you can't have one without the other. These two forces, budget and vision, come with their own accountability systems. The former is fiscal; the latter is academic. Technology gives rise to greater and more complicated accounting procedures. Leaders can become overwhelmed when trying to make sense of a sea of data being spewed from a variety of sources. With all of these and other demands, what is a school leader to do? A different approach to the situation is required. Lead by being inspirational, visionary, and by always empowering others.

> It is the integration of vision within the school budgeting process that transforms school budgeting from merely number crunching to purpose-driven expenditures supporting academic success for all students.

School budgeting is certainly about spreadsheets, reports, tracking the expenditure of funds, and the completing of a myriad of accounting forms (see Chapters 6 and 9). It is easy to get caught up in the accounting dimension of budgeting and neglect its companion: vision. It is the integration of vision within the school budgeting process that transforms school budgeting from merely number crunching to purpose-driven expenditures supporting academic success for all students. An articulated and shared vision creates the environment necessary for planning for academic success and for all students to flourish.

Principals must rethink their approach to school budgeting. School budgeting must not be thought of as merely an accounting responsibility. Leaders must leave the primary accounting responsibility to certified public accountants (CPAs) and the business office. These individuals must be allowed to provide the technical expertise and support necessary

to meet the regulatory requirements associated with state and federal fiscal accountability standards. Principal leadership skills must carry the school budgeting process to the next level. This is achieved by integrating the school vision with the budgeting and academic processes for the purpose of achieving academic success for all students.

Imagine a train heading down a track. The track is time; the train is the school. The locomotive represents the school leader. This individual leads the local motivation to create a shared vision for the school. The remaining cars are the school's vision and budget and planning process. The movement of the train down the track is the school year. Like the locomotive, the leader is key to moving the school "down the track." Bringing along the cars of vision, budget, and planning is essential—so essential, in fact, they are recognized and supported in the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL).

The Professional Standards for Educational Leaders

The PSEL provide a logical place to commence a discussion of the relationship between leaders and school budgeting and planning. Sometimes in the school budgeting and planning process, the PSEL can appear distant to leaders and stakeholders. That should not be the case. Rather, these standards provide leaders with a firm foundation for exploring and growing leadership development and practice.

A brief examination of the PSEL provides an overview of the authors' assertion that all standards address budget issues and do indeed speak loudly to leaders and other stakeholders engaged in the budgeting process. The lofty goals of these national standards *are* connected to the reality of leading schools. These standards are crucial in making a difference in student success as well as in student well-being and learning (Sorenson, 2022).

Future-oriented standards provide guidance in the fast-changing global arena where educational leaders reside. The PSEL demand active, not passive, leadership. These standards promote leaders that are collaborative, inspiring, empowering, inspirational, and inclusive in leading their schools. However, leadership is stronger and more effective when other stakeholders are involved, such as teachers, counselors, and paraprofessionals. Such collaborative and empowering leadership demands cultivating and improving the leadership growth and development in all stakeholders. The PSEL "reflect the importance of cultivating leadership capacity in others" (National Policy Board for Educational Administration [NPBEA], 2015, p. 4).

> The PSEL demand active, not passive, leadership. These standards promote leaders that are collaborative, inspiring, empowering, inspirational, and inclusive in leading their schools.

The PSEL provide a clarion call for collaboration between all stakeholders within the school and its community. The standards are "a compass that

guides the direction of practice directly as well as indirectly through the work of policy makers, professional associations, and supporting institutions" (NPBEA, 2015, p. 4).

Covey (2020), in his classic book, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People,* encouraged leaders to begin with the end in mind. In essence, this is exactly what the PSEL call on school leaders to do, as every standard promotes *each* student's academic success and well-being. *Each* means all students, 100 percent. *Each* also implies individual attention to all students. Can school leaders walk down their school's hallways and look at students and determine which ones they do not want to meet with success? What moral choice do school leaders have but to "promote *each* student's academic success and well-being"? This "*each* student" dimension of the PSEL demands a train trip for planning big and promoting success. It requires another visit to two longtime friends—school budgeting and vision—and an examination of their often-overlooked relationship in the planning process.

The PSEL are examined through a school budgeting lens in an effort to explore how the national leadership standards address the school budgeting process. This examination provides school leaders with guiding principles for school budgeting.

Initially, a leader might be criticized for taking such a utopian train trip. Critics will accuse the leader of not living in the real world. School leaders will suffer through the criticism and cynicism of these sarcastic and skeptical voices because they understand every student meeting with success is, by its very nature, a utopian goal. Visiting utopia provides us with a perfect vision for our schools. It is imperative to begin with this perfect vision. To begin planning for academic success for each student with a vision that is less than ideal dooms a leader and team in their quest for academic success for each student.

The PSEL define the practice for educational leaders. They offer guidance for professional practice as well as inform how educational leaders are "prepared, hired, developed, supervised and evaluated" (NPBEA, 2015, p. 2). The PSEL provide greater emphasis on student learning and provide strong guidance to guarantee each student is prepared for success in the 21st century. The PSEL clarify and offer greater specificity for educational leaders.

While in utopia devising a plan for academic success for each student, give primary consideration to the interrelationship between school budgeting and vision. While neither of these concepts is new, it could be argued school leaders have not given due consideration to the significance of the symbiotic relationship they have on the academic success of students and schools. It is essential to consider budgeting and vision simultaneously in the planning process in order to increase our understanding of their influence on each other and the fulfillment of the national standard's clarion call for "academic success and well-being

for *each* student." It is imperative the discussion of school budgeting and vision begin with an introductory overview of each PSEL. It is also essential the overview of the standards be accomplished through a school budgeting and vision lens.

An Introduction of the PSEL Through a Budget–Vision Lens

A macro-view of the PSEL provides an appropriate introduction to these standards and their elements. The PSEL influence how leaders perceive the manifestation of campus leadership behavior.

PSEL 1: Mission, Vision, and Core Values

> Effective educational leaders develop, advocate, and enact a shared mission, vision, and core values of high-quality education and academic success and well-being of *each* student.

PSEL 1: Mission, Vision, and Core Values, like all of the standards, includes the phrase "success and well-being of each student." This phrase requires leaders to approach budgeting and vision with the expectation *each* student will meet with success, not only those students who come to school prepared and nurtured by their families but also those who come with little nurturing and minimal preparation. Leaders might do well to stop and reread the previous statement and allow the significance of it to sink in. "Success and well-being of *each* student" does not allow leaders or other stakeholders to rationalize or explain away their responsibility to have each student meet with success. The focus is no longer on organizational effectiveness; rather, it seeks success for each student.

Kouzes and Posner (2023) identified five practices of strong leaders. One of those practices is inspiring a shared vision that guides all of the organization's stakeholders. Leaders are those who have the obligation to help stakeholders visualize goals and outcomes. Likewise, leaders must help those they lead by providing a positive example. This requires leaders to keep their word on commitments they make with others. Doing so moves the organization forward.

Budgeting, visioning, empowering, and academic success are intertwined with each other in the planning process. They are not isolated variables operating independently in a school's culture. When leaders accept this coupling of budgeting and vision and understand their combined effect on academic achievement, budgeting expands from a fiscal responsibility to a fiscal visioning opportunity that in turn drives planning for the academic success of each student.

PSEL 1: Mission, Vision, and Core Values is at the very heart of this book's purpose in that it calls for the melding of mission, vision, and

core values within the budgeting process. Not only must a school leader facilitate the development, articulation, and implementation of a school vision, the leader must also be a steward of that vision. Stewardship is the administration and management of the financial affairs of another. A school leader ensures the school's resources are allocated in a manner that supports the school's vision. The school's budget does not belong to the principal or any other leader. It belongs to all the school's stakeholders. It belongs to the public who sacrifice through the payment of taxes, thus providing the budget revenues.

Principals once focused attention on the school facilities and ensured the school was managed in an orderly fashion, with students sitting quietly at desks. Principals spent little time or energy on instructional practices or encouraging a culture of continuous improvement or a student-centered education. The vision and mission were ignored or, at best, posted somewhere in the building, never to be reviewed or discussed.

Principals, today must focus on student learning and achievement. Principals delegate managerial and other routine duties to supplementary individuals. Principals tout the vision and mission statements frequently so all stakeholders know and understand the vision, mission, and core values.

PSEL 2: Ethics and Professional Norms

Effective educational leaders act ethically and according to professional norms to promote *each* student's academic success and well-being.

PSEL 2: Ethics and Professional Norms is essential in growing the integrated budget–vision–planning process. It is noteworthy that this standard immediately follows *PSEL 1: Mission, Vision, and Core Values*, which established the importance of having a school vision. Core values and ethics must be melded in order to be an ethical and moral professional leader.

The *Ethics and Professional Norms* standard is a reminder that character does in fact matter. Principals must examine personal motives and their treatment of others as well as how they carry out their personal and professional missions and lives. Leaders must decide what they are not willing to do in order to achieve personal and school goals.

Integrity, fairness, and ethical behavior are a trio of concepts school leaders often struggle to define. Former United States Supreme Court justice Potter Stewart, commenting in the *Jacobellis v. Ohio* case concerning the issue of pornography, stated he could not attempt to define pornography yet acknowledged, "But I know it when I see it" (Linder, n.d.). Like Stewart, educators know integrity, fairness, and ethical behavior when observed but struggle to define this trio of terms.

This trio can be analyzed utilizing the works of Plato, John Locke, Immanuel Kant, Niccolo Machiavelli, and others, but that might seem detached from the day-to-day challenges school leaders face. Leaders must depend on their personal judgment and experiences in determining how to react to given situations (see the fraud and embezzlement issues discussed in Chapter 7, along with "Case Study #2: Fiscal Issues and the New Principal" in Chapter 4 and "Case Study: Sex, Money, and a Tangled Web Woven" in Chapter 7).

Readers must take time from their busy schedules to consider integrity, fairness, and ethical behavior. After all, the in-the-face demands of academic accountability, student discipline, per-pupil expenditure, and a host of others provide a variety of excuses for bypassing an examination of these terms. Cooper (2012) suggests school leaders often make administrative decisions using rationality and systematic reflection in a piecemeal fashion. Cooper asserts leaders are ad hoc problem solvers, not comprehensive moral philosophers who only resort to the next level of generality and abstraction when a repertoire of practical moral rules fails to assist in reaching a decision. Sound familiar?

Examining Three Key Terms—The Trio

It is important to examine *PSEL 2: Ethics and Professional Norms* in the light of budgeting and vision and to pay close attention to the three key terms found in this standard: *integrity, fairness,* and *ethics* (see Table 1.1).

TABLE 1.1   Key Terms in PSEL 2: Ethics and Professional Norms

Integrity	Soundness of and adherence to moral principle and character
Fairness	Free from bias, dishonesty, or injustice
Ethics	A system of *moral* principles

Source: Stein (1967).

Integrity.   Integrity, the first of the trio of ethical terms, is an important dimension of leadership. Leaders who value integrity are not only interested in results but are also interested in relationships. This is easily illustrated in the world of high-stakes student assessment. Each year, educators are under increasing pressure to meet a mandated level of academic performance for their students. The consequences for not achieving these defined goals are increasing. The temptation from a variety of schemes for school leaders to manipulate these data is also increasing.

Principals must not only consider integrity within the sphere of academic goals. To be successful, they must also consider the integrity of their relationships with all of the school's stakeholders. For integrity to exist, leaders must show genuine concern for others and their personal goals. When concern and integrity exist, trust flourishes and further empowers the leader to lead the school toward fulfilling its shared vision.

Stories abound in which school leaders succumb to temptation and misrepresent themselves, inappropriately use school funds, or manipulate data (see Chapter 7). When this is discovered, these leaders lose their reputation and effectiveness along with their dignity. It takes a lifetime to build a good reputation and only a minute to lose it.

High-stakes testing is a prime area for leaders to be tempted to cheat by manipulating data. Variables such as test security, student exemptions, and test preparation become factors. In one highly publicized case, systematic cheating was uncovered in Atlanta's public school system. Forty-four schools and at least 178 educators, including the superintendent, were involved in this alleged cheating incident (Blinder, 2015; Severson, 2011). Cizek (1999) compiled a list of euphemisms that have been used by educators in attempts to soften the term *cheating*. Sadly, two of the more creative euphemisms were *falsely reporting success* and *achievement similarities not attributable to chance*.

Samuel Johnson, one of the most quoted moralist from the 18th century, said, "Integrity without knowledge is weak and useless, and knowledge without integrity is dangerous and dreadful" (Brainy Quote, 2001–2023). Integrity alone will not allow a school leader to meet with success. Principals must understand every facet of a school and its students. Principals must have a command of the school's vision and its budget. If a leader lacks integrity, the school is at risk; doubt and fear will replace integrity. People will revert to the selfish nature of man, and the common good of the learning community will be forgotten.

Fairness. Once again, school leaders risk their effectiveness when they separate vision from the budget, especially when it comes to fairness. It is essential to consider both budget and vision as integral parts of the planning process to completely understand the complex nature of fairness.

Fairness, the second of the trio of key terms, does not mean ensuring everyone gets the same amount of something or the same treatment. Fairness is when everyone receives what is needed in order to successfully accomplish his or her goals. Some students will need one cup of patience while others will require two, three, or even four cups of patience to reach their goals. Still others will need different resources dedicated to them to ensure their academic success, thus the continued clarion call for Title 1 funds for disadvantaged students in high-poverty schools. Another example is students with learning disabilities (often ignored in school privatization programs) who might need greater

special education resources in order to reach their instructional goals than those without disabilities.

When principals accept the fact that vision is what drives the budget and shared vision is designed to help all students achieve their potential, then they begin to understand fairness requires resources to be allocated on the basis of need in order to achieve academic goals. Fairness is not dividing the financial pie into equal pieces. Common Ground (2022) reported the 2023 New Jersey per-pupil expenditure for students in special education was $32,674, compared to $19,519 for general education. The financial pie was not divided into equal pieces. Instead, it was apportioned based on meeting the individual needs of students.

Schools perish when a lack of vision exists. When money is thrown at problems, human nature takes over to demand "Give me my fair share." This usually translates into "I'll get all I can get." In the absence of an understanding of the budget–vision relationship in the planning process, greed takes control and the good of the learning community is abandoned.

Unfortunately, fairness does not become a part of a school's social fabric overnight. It cannot be ordered or microwaved into existence. Instead, the leader must keep the budget–vision relationship in front of the team and make inroads relative to fairness, especially as opportunities arise. Through persistence, fairness will become valued as part of the school's culture and will manifest itself in strong ethical and moral behaviors.

Ethics. Ethical and moral behaviors are an essential part of the school leader's persona. Fairness, integrity, and equity are employed to best conduct the school's business. School leaders must act in an ethical manner when handling discipline problems, implementing state-mandated accountability testing, managing school budgets, consulting with parents, supervising faculty and staff, and in a host of other situations.

Principals must ensure both ethical and moral behaviors are strong personal attributes, both regularly exhibited and frequently observed. Principals with strong moral character are honest, trustworthy, diligent, reliable, respect all aspects of the law (education code/school board policies, for example) and exhibit—as previously noted—integrity, candor, discretion, observance of fiduciary duty, respect for others, absence of hatred and discrimination, fiscal (budgetary) responsibility, and mental and emotional maturity.

Principle of Benefit Maximization

A continued examination of the national standards with regard to their implication on budgeting and vision reveals how appropriate it is to consider the principle of benefit maximization. This principle requires

THE BUDGET–VISION RELATIONSHIP

principals to make choices that provide the greatest good for the most people. When developing a school vision, the process must be one of inclusiveness. Shared vision is about meaningfully involving everyone in the vision development process, not only those with the greatest political clout or the loudest voices. The principal must help craft and share a school vision that not only provides each student with the opportunity to meet with success but also is truly shared by all stakeholders. The PSEL's mantra to "promote *each* student's academic success and well-being" reminds us *each* means all students (and not just some) will meet with success.

The principle of benefit maximization also applies to the budgeting process. Budgets must provide the greatest good for the most students. This requires tough decisions be made. Granted, tough decisions are not always popular decisions. But tough decisions made with integrity and fairness and in an ethical manner will propel schools toward the fulfillment of their vision. It is essential the school budget be considered in tandem with the school vision.

The budget is an essential tool in turning the vision into reality. When the budget process is divorced from the vision process, the likelihood of the vision being fulfilled dramatically decreases. Bracey (2002) provides a vivid illustration of what can happen when the budget process and the academic vision process are divorced. In his now-classic read, *The War Against America's Public Schools*, Bracey detailed the 21st-century attack on public school, notably privatization (see Chapters 4 and 5 of this book). He also wrote about a group of superintendents enthusiastically embracing a new efficiency model that changed them from scholars into managers. Bracey concluded his chiding of this particular efficiency model by writing, "Of course, one might wonder why, instead of studying ways to save money on toilet paper, superintendents didn't investigate why their charges dipped it in water and slung it at the walls" (p. 37).

Considering the toilet paper problem from a purely accounting perspective, the focus is only on the financial cost associated with providing the toilet paper for student use and neglects the possible academic issues at play in the misuse of the toilet paper. By only considering the financial issue associated with the use or misuse of the toilet paper, leaders wipe out the opportunity to get to the academic bottom of the toilet paper problem in terms of its cost to the school's vision to have all students meet with academic success.

By including the academic perspective in conjunction with the budget perspective, thus addressing the budget–vision connection, the toilet paper problem is then also considered as a potential indication of an academic failure to meet the needs of all students. Bottom line: Budgeting and vision must be considered simultaneously if schools are to reach their goal of 100 percent student success.

The Golden Rule Principle

A second principle to consider in the examination of ethics is the Golden Rule. Many might mistakenly limit the Golden Rule to the teachings of Jesus; however, there is some version of the Golden Rule in five of the world's major religions. The universal truth found in the Golden Rule is important to consider in our ethical treatment of others. It requires principals to treat all people with equal value. People are entitled to equal opportunity. Principals must value all people and respect their educational goals. People must not be considered as merely assets to be used to achieve the school vision.

Finally, leaders must respect individuals' rights to make their own choices. When including the Golden Rule as part of the code of ethics, principals are more apt to integrate the budget process with the vision. The end result: Leaders are less likely to see people as objects to be manipulated to achieve selfish purposes.

PSEL 3: Equity and Cultural Responsiveness

Effective educational leaders strive for equality of educational opportunity and culturally responsive practices to promote *each* student's academic success and well-being.

Culturally responsive behavior is essential for today's campus leaders. Leadership is no longer limited to teaching; it requires the entire school environment to be responsive to the instructional needs of all students in general and minoritized students specially (Khalifa et al., 2016; Munna, 2023). A large body of literature focuses on culturally responsive academic instruction. Campus leaders and other stakeholders must assist in equity, equality, and cultural responsiveness by increasing their cultural knowledge, enhancing staff members' cultural self-awareness, validating others' cultures, increasing cultural relevance, establishing cultural validity, and emphasizing cultural equity (Banks & Obiakor, 2015; Sorenson, 2022).

Striving for equity of educational opportunity and cultural responsiveness requires strong campus leadership. This necessitates principals prioritize and budget time and resources to support academic achievement and moreover serve as advocates for societal change.

Striving for equity of educational opportunity and cultural responsiveness requires strong campus leadership. This necessitates principals prioritize and budget time and resources to support academic achievement and moreover serve as advocates for societal change.

PSEL 4: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

Effective educational leaders develop and support intellectually rigorous and coherent systems of curriculum, instruction, and assessment to promote *each* student's academic success and well-being.

The authors, as former principals, observed many instructional improvement programs come and go. School stakeholders frequently became jaded and skeptical of the next new curriculum plan. Regardless of how many instructional programs are adopted, they often fail because they are frequently uncoordinated, short lived, or limited in scope. Therefore, it is essential all stakeholders possess ownership of the school's action or improvement plan and recognize the importance of allocating instructional resources to achieve the desired academic results (the biggest bang for the buck) that are in line with the school's vision and mission. The learning community is literally investing its resources in its students and is thus expecting a return on its investment in the form of educated, enlightened, and productive individuals.

When schools fail to produce this product, the community resources must be reallocated to address this failure in the form of welfare, juvenile detention, and adult prison programs. The failure of schools to meet student needs creates a domino effect that is felt throughout the community. Failure to meet the campus goals for students creates an intensely competitive environment as other public institutions vying for the same limited public resources must meet the shortcomings of school programs.

An example of added costs to the public that occur when education is not successful can be found in the prison system. New findings have revealed 30 percent of prisoners in U.S. state and federal prisons have their high school diploma or an equivalent. This compares to 86 percent of the general population. This survey, the most comprehensive assessment of the educational backgrounds of prisoners in the last decade, also reported overall prison inmates with GED/high school equivalency certificates had higher literacy scores than those with high school diplomas (Ositelu, 2019).

Keeping a person in prison costs more than two and a half times the amount it takes to educate a child. The average per-pupil expenditure for students in U.S. public elementary and secondary schools in 2021–2022 was $13,701 (Hanson, 2022). Utah, at $7,591, spent the least per pupil in educating children. New York spent $24,881 per pupil, making it the largest spender per pupil (Hanson, 2022). The average cost to taxpayers to keep a prisoner incarcerated was $35,347. On average, the cost of keeping an individual in prison is $21,646 more per year than the average per-pupil cost for students in public schools (Prison Bureau in Federal Register, 2021).

The cost to the public due to unsuccessful schools is also reflected in the median earning of adults based on educational attainment. The more educated a person, the greater the person's income is likely to be. Conversely, the earlier a person drops out of school, the lower the person's income is likely to be (Ositelu, 2019).

The relationship between educational attainment and income is significant. The cost to society for students not meeting with academic

success is staggering. Assuming a forty-year work career and not adjusting for inflation, the worker with a bachelor's degree will earn $1,396,480 more in a work career than the individual who left school with less than a high school education.

When school leaders and teams, and even state and federal legislative bodies, fail to achieve the PSEL's call for academic success for each student, then schools can expect other systems to compete with them for public resources. It is imperative for students to meet with academic success not only to become greater producers for society but also to lessen the need for prisons and thus increase the availability of funds to enrich the services provided by public education. It is essential, if not critical, principals and teams focus on curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Consider where you and the other school stakeholders are relative to implementing innovative and student-centered curriculum, instruction, and assessment at your school.

PSEL 5: Community of Care and Support for Students

> Effective educational leaders cultivate an inclusive, caring, and supportive school community that promotes the academic success and well-being of *each* student.

A school must have a strong community to support the students under its care. This does not happen unless leaders intentionally guide and promote the stakeholders within the school and its broader community. Gordon and Louis (2009), more than a decade ago, affirmed the importance of the democratic assumptions that underpin public education in the United States and the significance of involving as many stakeholders as possible to impact student achievement in a positive manner. Hence, openness and sharing increases the potential to solve problems in learning communities.

Trust between parents and school is important in growing a healthy school community. Trust requires ongoing and frequent interactions with all stakeholders within and across the school community. Strong social interactions provide the environment for developing trust (Sorenson, 2024). If the various school stakeholders fail to have frequent and meaningful interaction with each other, they cannot expect to grow the trust needed for a healthy environment.

Campus leaders must invest time and energy in developing the conditions necessary to produce a healthy community of care and support for the students and their parents. A note of caution: Schools that are doing well academically may not feel the need or urgency to recruit community members and parents, since their campus is functioning well. Such thinking is a mistake! Principals and other campus stakeholders must always focus on community care and support for all students and families. Examine where you and the other school stakeholders are regarding the establishment of a community of care and support for the students and their families.

PSEL 6: Professional Capacity of School Personnel

> Effective educational leaders develop the professional capacity
> and practice of school personnel to promote *each* student's
> academic success and well-being.

Educators are operating in a new era of teacher evaluation. It is important for school leaders to address the professional capacity of all school personnel. Growing professional capacity is a deliberate endeavor; it must not be a haphazard endeavor. Principals working as instructional leaders are at the very core of solid teacher practice. Principals who effectively use a sound teacher evaluation system promote a professional learning community that fosters effective teaching and learning (Childress, 2014; Toch & Rothman, 2023). This requires principals to provide human capital, social capital, cultural capital, and financial capital as well as informational resources, each as means of building capacity (Hattie, 2012; Lai, 2014; Lemov, 2021; Sorenson, 2022).

Development of professional capacity of educators remains an ongoing challenge. Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (1995), almost three decades ago, addressed professional development concerns that remain relevant today. Three professional development designs were suggested: (1) opportunities for teacher inquiry and collaboration, (2) strategies to reflect teachers' questions and concerns, and (3) access to successful models of (new) practice.

Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (1995) also offered ideas related to both learners and teachers. Three suggestions were provided: (1) engage teachers in partial tasks and provide opportunities to observe, assess, and reflect on the new practices, (2) be participant driven and grounded in inquiry, reflection, and experimentation, and (3) provide support through modeling, coaching, and the collective solving of problems.

Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin's (1995) suggestions for policies that support professional development continue to remain strong today, identifying needs many leaders still experience on their campuses three decades later. PSEL 6 remains an ongoing challenge not only for the campus instructional leader but for all campus stakeholders. Principals and team members must always focus on the professional capacity of school personnel. Think about where you and the other school stakeholders are growing the professional capacity of your school's personnel.

PSEL 7: Professional Community for Teachers and Staff

> Effective educational leaders foster a professional community
> of teachers and other professional staff to promote *each*
> student's academic success and well-being.

Growing a professional community must be a thoughtful undertaking. It is essential for principals to promote a professional learning

community that fosters effective teaching and learning. This empowers PSEL 7's charge to "foster a professional community of teachers and other professional staff to promote *each* student's academic success and well-being" and thus helps leaders achieve envisioned outcomes. *Foster* is a well-selected word for this PSEL. *Foster* encourages. *Foster* supports. *Foster* stimulates. *Foster* cultivates and nurtures. *Foster* strengthens and enriches.

It is the responsibility of the school leader to nurture and develop the school's learning culture, be it the faculty, staff, or student body (Hoy & Miskel, 2012; Sorenson, 2024). This is a responsibility that cannot and must not be delegated. It is within the school's culture that the traditions, values, and beliefs of the various stakeholders are manifested (Deal & Peterson, 2016; Mungal & Sorenson, 2020). School leaders must seize the opportunity to define and shape the professional learning community. Leaders must be certain not to lead with reckless behavior. It is important to get teachers and other professional staff on board. If principals, teachers, and staff see the importance of a professional learning community, it will thrive.

What leaders, through time and labor, value will be inculcated in the school's culture. If principals value the importance of a professional learning community for teachers and staff, it will become part of the school's culture. Principals are likely to hear someone say, "At this school, we put our money where our mouth is when it comes to growing our professional learning community."

Resources (fiscal, human, and material) must be aligned with the school's vision during the planning process if the school's culture and instructional program are to be conducive to student learning and staff development. Anything less than aligning the budget with the vision bastardizes the process.

One final point about professional community: Some long-term faculty and staff have acquired substantial institutional memory. Some of these individuals are burned out and have stayed past their time of effectiveness for various reasons. Others have lots of institutional knowledge they keep to themselves. Most of us have experienced interactions with long-term employees, be they faculty or staff. Long-term school employees—administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals, custodians, or others—often know where the bodies are buried. Interestingly, the 1941 classic Hollywood film *Citizen Kane* is credited with being the first known source of the phrase "knows where all the bodies are buried" (YARN, 2005–2023).

A long-term employee who holds a position of trust in a school acquires knowledge of many secrets, secrets that powerful employees would rather stay buried. Thus, a long-term employee knowledgeable of secrets can and will use those secrets to secure something of value. This behavior

> Resources (fiscal, human, and material) must be aligned with the school's vision during the planning process if the school's culture and instructional program are to be conducive to student learning and staff development.

reminds us that one must always be waiting for the other shoe to drop; something will happen, and it is usually bad. Principals and faculty must always focus on the professional growth of the learning community. Always determine where you and team are when it comes to professional growth and development.

PSEL 8: Meaningful Engagement of Families and Community

> Effective educational leaders cultivate and engage families and the community in meaningful, reciprocal, and mutually beneficial ways to promote *each* student's academic success and well-being.

Almost four decades ago, *Beyond the Bake Sale: An Educators Guide to Working With Parents* (Henderson et al., 1986) was published. At that time, the authors' superintendent made the book a required study for all administrators. The superintendent recognized the importance of involving families and the community in a meaningful way. Through the superintendent's stewardship, campus leaders increased their engagement with their communities and families.

In the text, Henderson and her co-authors identified five family and community roles in schools, all of which remain relevant today:

1. **Partners:** Parents performing basic obligations for their child's education and social development.

2. **Collaborators and problem solvers:** Parents reinforcing the school's efforts with their child and helping to solve problems.

3. **Audience:** Parents attending and appreciating the school's (and their child's) performances and productions.

4. **Supporters:** Parents providing volunteer assistance to teachers, the parent organization, and other parents.

5. **Advisors and/or co-decision makers:** Parents providing input on school policy and programs through membership in ad hoc or permanent governance bodies (p. 3).

Henderson et al. even included self-assessment checklists for (1) key characteristics of your school, (2) key characteristics of families in your school, (3) assessing the family–school relationship, and (4) assessing the parent–teacher relationship.

Twenty-three years later, the method detailed in Warren et al. (2009) "Beyond the Bake Sale: A Community-Based Relational Approach to Parent Engagement in Schools" was significantly different from that of Henderson et al. Moreover, Ishimaru (2020) took further steps by identifying an absolute need to build equitable collaborations with families and communities. These later researchers went beyond the campus to include

a community-based relational approach to fostering parent engagement in schools. A comparison between the "bake sales" of 1986, 2009, and 2020 illustrates the significant differences between the traditional school community–centered model, the community-based model, and the equitable collaborative model.

Principals and campus stakeholders must focus on meaningful engagement of families and community. Contemplate where you and the campus stakeholders are relative to growing and supporting such meaningful engagement as well as in transitioning from the traditional school community–centered model to the community-based model to the equitable collaborative model.

PSEL 9: Operations and Management

Effective educational leaders manage school operations and resources to promote *each* student's academic success and well-being.

A casual glance at this PSEL standard could be deceptive. Reading the words *operations and management* might conjure a mental model of cleaning the building, sending notes to and from the classroom and the office, and assigning faculty load based on teacher preference. This mental model for operations and management is likely to have a weak connection to teaching and learning at best, and no connection at all at worst. This is no longer the case; PSEL 9 is much more than an old mental model of operations and management typically assigned to noninstructional items. In fact, this standard speaks directly to the premise of this book. Element D reads that "[effective leaders] are responsible, ethical, and accountable stewards of the school's monetary and non-monetary resources, engaging in effective budgeting and accounting practices" (NPBEA, 2015, p. 23) and embodies the Sorenson-Goldsmith Integrated Budget Model as detailed in Chapter 3. This standard readily relates to school leaders serving as accountable stewards when it comes to budgetary management. School leaders must engage in effective, efficient, and essential budgetary processes and practices (see Chapter 6 and the scenario titled "Budgeted Dollars and School Safety").

PSEL 9: Operations and Management also addresses the importance of developing and managing the relationships with feeder schools in enrollment, curricular, instructional, and budgetary matters. A wide range of strategies can be developed and implemented to strengthen the ties with feeder schools. These strategies include collaborating with each feeder school to receive permission to provide recruitment information such as an introductory letter or developing a section on the school's website targeting feeder school families (Independent School Management [ISM], 2017). Recognize it is essential for principals and team members to focus not only on instruction (which is critical) but also on operations and management as well. Reflect upon where you and the other stakeholders are

THE BUDGET-VISION RELATIONSHIP

in developing and implementing effective, efficient, and essential campus operations and management.

PSEL 10: School Improvement

Effective educational leaders act as agents of continuous improvement to promote *each* student's academic success and well-being.

For the last three decades, there has been a clarion call for continuous improvement in areas such as instruction, technology, communication, and data analysis. Continuous improvement depends heavily on the interactions between teachers as well as interactions with the principal. Time is an important factor in school improvement (see Sorenson et al., 2016). The more time school leaders invest in instructional leadership, the greater the increase in instruction. The more time teachers are engaged with the principal in the instructional leadership role, the more improvements will occur in the instructional practice for those teachers.

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching published a decade ago what continues to be a most relevant white paper titled "Continuous Improvement in Education" (Park et al., 2013). Seven overarching themes were identified. A direct public school connection has been added to each of these themes.

1. **Leadership and strategy.** Leaders of continuous improvement schools bring a strategic mindset to their work. The very best campus leaders do not believe in some magical concept as a strategy for school improvement. Rather, they focus on establishing disciplined processes for developing, testing, evaluating, and improving the school's core work streams and programs in order to build the capacity to engage in instructional leadership.

2. **Communication and engagement.** Effective communications and strategies are essential for engaging all stakeholders in the school. Many schools employ systems thinking that brings about greater collaboration between the school's stakeholders. This, in turn, allows the faculty and staff to identify and address root causes to the problems their school faces.

3. **Organizational infrastructure.** Principals must employ continuous improvement of instruction. This requires the development of structures across core processes and specific goals. Schools must identify a central organization that coordinates the work of the various groups.

4. **Systems thinking.** Using systems thinking, principals employing continuous improvement can establish structures

around specific goals or processes that encourage interactions across their campuses.

5. **Methodology.** Methodology is a must in continuous improvement. Factors such as purpose, focus on inquiry, and improvement must be targeted. Some school leaders and teams use the inquiry process for strategic planning purposes; others use an improvement process. Both processes must be constructed around student data to improve instruction.

6. **Data collection and analysis.** Tracking campus data informs stakeholders on the progress they are making toward campus goals. Data monitoring is essential. It is critical principals and teams collect outcome data while tracking student performance using local- and state-level assessments. A challenge for many, if not most, principals and teams is to develop a solid, efficient data-collection process.

7. **Capacity building.** Campus leaders must invest in faculty and staff training. This must become part of the school's culture. Not doing so is likely to impede continuous improvement. Focusing on school improvement is an imperative aspect of principal leadership. Contemplate where you and your team members are relative to implementing school improvement initiatives.

Final Thoughts

School budgeting and vision must be considered simultaneously in the planning process in order for principals and teams to increase their likelihood of achieving the PSEL's utopian goal of promoting *each* student's academic success and well-being.

The trick for school leaders is to incorporate the generalities of the national standards into practical steps to achieve the ideal of academic success for all students. This chapter at times might appear to be "Pollyannaish." Some of the examples and metaphors could illicit a "That's pie in the sky" reaction from you, the reader. However, it is essential to begin the integrated budget planning process with a "pie in the sky" perspective. To do otherwise would immediately lower expectations to less than 100 percent of the students obtaining academic success. Achieving 99.9 percent is not good enough. If 99.9 percent were good enough, then twelve babies would be given to the wrong parents each day, two planes departing daily from Chicago's O'Hare International Airport would be unsafe, and 291 pacemaker operations would be performed incorrectly every day (Snopes, 2017). The introduction of the PSEL sets the stage for further exploration as to how they impact academic and leadership performance as well as campus budgeting matters.

Discussion Questions

1. Which three PSEL influence the budget–vision relationship the most in your employment situation? Defend your choices.

2. Do you agree or disagree with the authors' contention we "must visit utopia" in creating a vision for our schools, or is this just fluff? Support your response.

3. What are your initial thoughts regarding the contention that budgeting and vision must be integrated into the planning process in order to promote the "academic success and well-being of *each* student" insisted upon in every PSEL?

Case Study
Belle Plain Middle School

The application of a case study or studies is presented at the conclusion of each chapter to provide applicable and relevant workplace scenarios so the reader can apply, in a practical manner, the knowledge acquired through textual readings.

Belle Plain Middle School (BPMS) is composed of approximately one thousand students in Grades 6 through 8. The school is 40 percent Anglo, 25 percent Hispanic, 25 percent African American, 5 percent Asian American, and 5 percent Other. Of these students, 60 percent qualify for free or reduced lunch. Twelve percent of the students are identified as limited English proficient, and the campus mobility rate is 30 percent.

The facility is twenty-five years old and is in an average state of repair. The neighborhood around the school is composed of modest homes of a similar age to the school. Many homes are in good repair and pride in ownership is evidenced. Most of the nearby businesses are independently owned small businesses with the typical scattering of franchised fast-food restaurants.

The majority of parents of the students at BPMS are employed in blue-collar jobs. A recently constructed subdivision of upper-middle-class homes in the attendance zone has created the potential of changing the campus demographics. The supermajority of students who

reside in the new subdivision are either being homeschooled or are enrolled in a private school thirty-five minutes away because of parent concerns about the academic integrity of BPMS. The parents from this subdivision who have enrolled their children in the school want to meet with the principal about becoming more involved in the school and in their children's education.

The BPMS faculty is divided into two groups. The Old Pros are those teachers who have an average experience of more than fifteen years at the school. The Greenhorns are faculty and staff that have less than five years of experience at the school. The latter group has a high turnover rate. There is tension between the two faculty groups as well as a certain amount of distrust. The Old Pros perceive the Greenhorns as short on experience and long on idealism. The Greenhorns perceive the Old Pros as jaded and insensitive to the needs of the students. They also accuse the Old Pros of being unwilling to attempt innovative strategies to meet student needs because of professional bias.

A total of 65 percent of all students passed the state reading test. The passing rate for Hispanics and African Americans was 52 percent; limited English proficient students had a 47 percent passing rate. Seventy-one percent of all students passed the state mathematics test: 59 percent of the Hispanic students, 61 percent of the African American students, and 53 percent of the limited English proficient students. The percentage of students identified as needing special education services is 17 percent above the state average. The percentage of Hispanic students in special education is 53 percent higher than the Anglo rate.

You are the new principal to the campus. You are the third principal in five years. The selection process for hiring you was substantially different from that employed with previous principals. The superintendent secured a search committee comprised of parents, teachers, staff, and community members. A successful effort was made to involve individuals of all ethnic and socioeconomic groups. The superintendent screened the initial applicant list and submitted the names of five individuals for the committee to interview and then make a recommendation to her. The two male and three female finalists were ethnically diverse. Like you, all of the finalists were from outside the school district.

The superintendent and board have set a priority of turning BPMS around. You have been promised a 12 percent increase in your campus

(Continued)

(Continued)

budget for the next three years. The campus has also been allotted two additional faculty positions to be determined by you in a collaborative effort with the faculty and staff.

The previous two principals gave lip service to involving teachers, staff, and parents in making academic plans for the students. A campus academic improvement plan was developed each year but was never referred to during the school year. The previous principals usually made some modifications to the previous year's plan and ran it by the faculty for a quick "rubber stamp" vote before sending it to the superintendent.

Teachers have little or no knowledge about the campus budget. They are not aware of what financial resources are available to the campus. Currently, the primary way of securing financial resources is to ask the principal and wait until a response is received.

Three years ago, the parent–teacher organization was abandoned for lack of attendance. The superintendent has informed you the two Hispanic board members and one Black board member receive frequent complaints that Black and Hispanic parents do not feel welcome or valued on the campus. A recent parent survey compiled by the central administration indicates, among other things, many of the Old Pros believe their students are not performing well because the children do not try hard enough and the parents do not care.

Case Study Application

Use the BPMS Case Study Application Worksheet to log your responses to the case study. The worksheet provides a graphic organizer for your responses. The first column identifies a PSEL. The second column, "Action to Address a BPMS Need," is where you will insert the need(s) you identify in the case study. Should you not be able to identify an action to address a BPMS need, use the third column, "Additional Information Needed to Strengthen or Make a Recommendation." Share your responses in class.

BELLE PLAIN MIDDLE SCHOOL CASE STUDY APPLICATION WORKSHEET		
PSEL	**ACTION TO ADDRESS A BPMS NEED**	**IDENTIFY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION NEEDED TO STRENGTHEN OR MAKE A RECOMMENDATION**
1: Mission, Vision, and Core Values		
2: Ethics and Professional Norms		
3: Equity and Cultural Responsiveness		
4: Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment		

(Continued)

(Continued)

BELLE PLAIN MIDDLE SCHOOL CASE STUDY APPLICATION WORKSHEET		
PSEL	ACTION TO ADDRESS A BPMS NEED	IDENTIFY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION NEEDED TO STRENGTHEN OR MAKE A RECOMMENDATION
5: Community of Care and Support for Students		
6: Professional Capacity of School Personnel		
7: Professional Community for Teachers and Staff		
8: Meaningful Encouragement of Families and Community		
9: Operations and Management		
10: School Improvement		