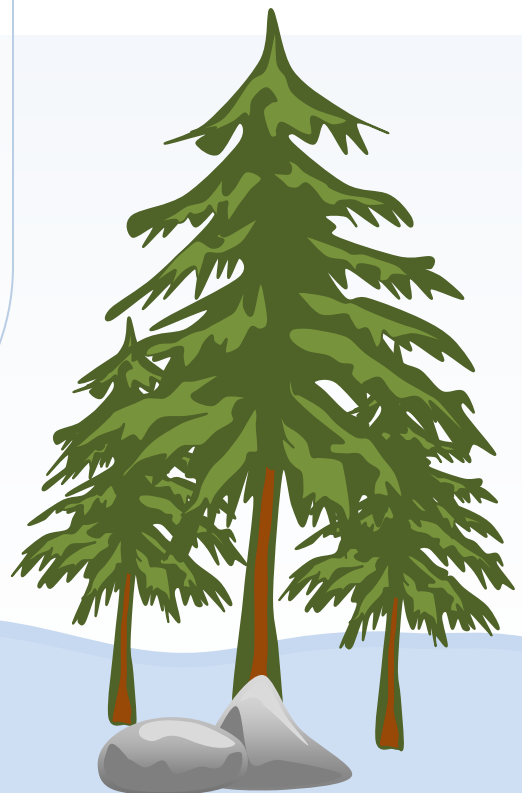


October is National Principal Month

Each October, NASSP, NAESP, and AFSA take the time to honor the hard work and dedication of principals and administrators who are positively impacting their schools and striving for student success. National Principals Month is a time for schools, students, and communities to show appreciation for their school leaders and their role in fostering safe, inclusive school environments. Take part in a number of planned activities including sending an e-card or submitting a video about why your students love their principal. Use this opportunity to say "thank you" for your principal's leadership and commitment to education.

**THANK YOUR PRINCIPAL FOR ALL THEY
DO TO SUPPORT OUR COUNCILS!!!!**

Welcome back to another school year! Sorry this letter is a little late! Training 2 new Paras in the Library, then throw in Homecoming and time got away from me! Hopefully all of you are into the swing of things by now, and getting things settled down. Don't forget all the Regional Workshop coming up next month and hoping your council can attend one! We have a great board this year and they are going to do great things for all of us!!!



10 Things Great Principals Do Well



As we get ready to welcome students back to school, it seems like there is never enough time to get everything done. When I'm running around nonstop, sometimes it helps to have a quick checklist to help guide me through the day. Here are some of the key things I always try to remember as I strive to be the best principal I can be:



1. Great principals recognize the value of every person in the building, and they **praise their staff members as often as possible**.
2. Great principals **support their teachers at every turn**—whether they are facing challenges with students, parents, or colleagues. They trust their teachers, have their backs, and always try to give them the benefit of the doubt.

3. Great principals **don't spend much time in their offices**. They are in the halls, in the classroom, at the bus stop, at the carpool, in the lunchroom, or wherever the action is. They engage with those around them.
4. Great principals do not try to do it alone. They **involve others** in the decision-making process whenever possible.
5. Great principals pay attention to student achievement, and they **spend a lot of time in classrooms**. They promote strategic instruction and meaningful assessments. And, they ensure that data from those assessments inform teachers' practice as they work to meet the academic needs of their students.
6. Great principals intentionally **foster a culture of collaboration** in their school. They recognize that their teachers are stronger when they work together, so they create the conditions in the building that facilitate this process.
7. Great principals are **never content with the status quo**. They have high expectations for themselves and everyone around them, articulating a bold vision for their school and inspiring others to strive for more.
8. Great principals understand the **importance of staff morale** and are intentional about creating good working conditions for their faculty.
9. Great principals **bring positive energy to work every day**. They realize that positivity is a nonnegotiable quality when creating a school culture where students enjoy learning and adults enjoy working.
10. Great principals always **make it about the kids**. They work to build relationships with their students, and they ensure that the best interest of students drives every decision in the school.

As you get ready for a new school year, make it a habit to check this list at least once a day and ask yourself, **"Which of these 10 tips will I make a priority today?"**

Danny Steele serves as the principal of Thompson Sixth Grade Center in Alabaster, AL, where his passion is building a school culture that values connections with kids, fosters collaboration among teachers, and focuses on raising student achievement. In 2005 Steele was recognized as Alabama's Assistant Principal of the Year, and in 2016 he was named Alabama's Secondary Principal of the Year. He is currently writing a book with Todd Whitaker. Follow him on Twitter @SteeleThoughts and check out his blog [Steele Thoughts](#).

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October is **National Principals Month!** It's an opportunity to say "thank you" to principals everywhere and honor their hard work and dedication. After school professionals should mark this special month to recognize and show appreciation for the support principals provide in helping to assure their programs are aligned with the school's curricula in order to provide seamless, high-quality learning experiences for children and youth. But how can you acknowledge their work in a way that would be meaningful and memorable for a principal?

Dr. Paul Young, author of *Principal Matters* and *Lead the Way!* (and a past president of the **National Association of Elementary School Principals**) suggests these five strategies:

1. **Plan a celebratory program or assembly.** Principals often plan events for others, but rarely does anyone plan one for them. To make it special, allow the kids themselves (with your supervision and guidance) to plan, organize and play key roles in expressing their appreciation for their principal. Effective principals are kid-focused, and seeing and hearing what their students feel about them and their support of the after school program will be certain to touch their hearts. Together with your students, don't limit your imagination. Good planning and execution will make this program unique, remarkable and unforgettable!
2. **Give them flowers.** Anyone can buy flowers from a florist. Instead, allow your students and staff to make their own flowers as a special art project. These will likely receive a more prominent display in the principal's office and generate more conversation than anything you might purchase. And the special thought will last much longer.
3. **Give them candy.** But wait, candy might not fit your program's healthy eating guidelines. Be creative and make "candy" into a healthy snack or celebratory food that can be made, served and shared with the principal by the students in your program.
4. **Sing their praises.** Music touches the soul. What you can't easily say about your principal in words, do with music. Create your own song, jingle or rap, or cover a recognizable song or tune that the kids can easily perform.
5. **Share the celebration.** Encourage students to create special invitations to the program for the principal and invited guests. Encourage kids to make their own awards and certificates of appreciation. Then, don't fail to capture the special celebratory moments on video to archive and share in a variety of ways through social media and other outlets.

Survival Guide for New Advisers

By Jason Little

Educators are often asked—and sometimes even volunteer—to be the adviser of a co-curricular activity. It's not an easy job and you won't get rich doing it, but it can be one of the most rewarding and enjoyable parts of your job.

When I became a club adviser, I took over a successful club that was run by an organized person, so I figured it would be an easy transition. It wasn't. All the hard work the previous adviser had put into it was gone and I was left to start from scratch, wondering if there wasn't an easier way.

Having been a club adviser for three years now, I have learned many things to help make my club successful and keep my own stress level down. In the interest of making it easier for someone else just starting out, here are a few tips to being a successful adviser:

- **The students should be doing the bulk of the work.** One of the main purposes of cocurricular activities is to allow students to take on leadership roles and gain leadership experience. It is your duty as an adviser to help this along whenever possible. Club officers should be organizing the group's activities, keeping records, writing letters, making phone calls, and doing the work of the club. The adviser is there to guide the students and ensure that all decisions are appropriate and for the good of the school. There are a few jobs the adviser should have more of a hand in—accounting paperwork and discipline of nonparticipating members, for example—but the majority of the work can be done by students, depending on their level of experience.
- **Communicate your expectations.** Be specific when communicating expectations to your group's officers and members and give precise directions on how you want things to be done. Give students feedback on how well they are doing and give praise for jobs well done.
- **Be consistent from day one.** Start from the first meeting enforcing the rules and making members follow procedures. If the club bylaws say a member can not miss a meeting or they will be removed from the club, then when the first member misses a meeting you must remove them. An inch now will be a mile later.
- **Plan officer meetings.** Meet with the officers prior to the meetings to discuss an agenda. The officers should be well informed so they can lead the club. The officer meeting is where the adviser needs to do more talking to help prepare the officers to lead the general meeting.
- **Create lists for the officers.** Write up the tasks to be completed and when they need to be completed. The president can delegate jobs to the various officers and members.
- **Create a plan for projects.** If you have been the adviser of the same club for several years or if you have been an adviser in the past, you already know of some of the jobs that will need to be completed for an upcoming project. Go ahead and create a plan for the project. Create a list of questions to be answered and jobs that will need to be completed and give these to your officers. Do not plan everything out for them though. If the upcoming project is a dance, you would not want to choose the theme or the decorations, for example. You would, however, give them a deadline for when the decision has to be made. The students usually do not think about making tickets, hiring security, buying refreshments, making signs, and creating a ticket sales schedule for lunch periods. They would eventually get to them, but giving them a list at the outset will speed up the process.
- **Students should speak for the club.** From assemblies to discussing fundraiser ideas with the principal, have the students do the talking, but go over details with them beforehand so they are well prepared.
- **Use forms to keep yourself and the members organized.** I have a form for almost every task that is to be completed, from meeting notes and financial reports to subcommittees and discipline of members. If you teach your officers to do the paperwork from day one the way you want it and check them as they go, they do most of the work and it gets done correctly. You might also give officers a binder in which to keep their club information.

Club advising can be stressful, especially that first year, as you are picking up where someone else left off and trying to put your own personal spin on the club. Keep these tips in mind and you'll not only survive, you'll thrive as a club adviser.

Jason Little, former student senate adviser at Clermont Northeastern HS in Batavia, OH.