

LEADING VERMONT SCHOOLS
Understanding the Principalship

For New and Experienced School Principals

Instructor/Facilitator: Jay Nichols, Executive Director VPA; CEO Nichols Education & Leadership Consulting (NELC)

Course Title: Leading Vermont Schools: Understanding the Principalship

Target Audience: School Principals and Assistant Principals

Instructor/Facilitator: Jay Nichols

Phone: 802-229-0547(Office), 802-782-4629 (c)

Email: jnichols@vpaonline.org

Twitter: @jaynicholsvpa

Mailing Address: 2393 West Berkshire Road, Enosburg Falls, VT 05450

Location: Champlain Valley Educator Development Center

Dates for Cohort 11: September 14th, other dates subject to change upon approval of class members at Sept. 14 meeting:

Tentative Dates: Oct. 18, Nov. 15, and Dec. 7, 2023, Jan. 11, Feb. 14, March 21, April 16, May 16 and June 5, 2024

Dates for Cohort 12: September 13th, other dates subject to change upon approval of class members at Sept. 13 meeting:

Tentative Dates: Oct. 17, Nov. 16, and Dec. 6, 2023, Jan. 10, Feb. 15, March 20, April 18, May 23 and June 4, 2024

Times: 9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Credits: 4 Graduate Credits from Saint Michael's College

DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE:

This course will provide a detailed understanding of the role of the principal in Vermont public schools. Next to the classroom teacher, no position within the public school has more impact on student learning. Effective principals have a myriad of roles and responsibilities they must assume in order to ensure student success. This course will focus on these various roles within the context of the practical day-to-day issues that principals' face. Participants will receive training and professional learning led by Vermont experts in the most important facets of the principalship, including but not limited to, systems assessment, supervision and evaluation of teachers and support staff, legal issues, fiscal management and budget development, student management, instructional leadership, effective procedural development, community involvement, student voice, planning, communication, curriculum and assessment, and school safety.

Course Learning Objectives:

After completion of this course, participants will be able to:

- Remain part of a principal cohort group that will provide them networking support for the remainder of their careers as Vermont School Principals
- Develop a Personal Leadership Plan
- Understand basic systems thinking components.
- Understand basic tenets of effective evaluation and supervision of professional and non-professional staff.
- Support teachers in communicating learning goals, tracking student progress continuously, implementing the Common Core Curriculum and providing authentic feedback.
- Make sure students are engaged in a manner that maximizes instructional time.
- Manage student behavior proactively so that energy and time is spent on learning.
- Understand how to develop and maintain effective relationships with students, staff, parents, and community.

- Effectively communicate high expectations for student learning and adult performance to improve student achievement.
- Develop and utilize budgetary resources in a prioritized manner.
- Develop procedures and guidelines to foster a smooth running school.
- Understand fundamental education laws that Vermont Principals must adhere to.
- Understand the basics of Collective Bargaining and implementation of Master Agreements.

Required Readings and Materials:

1. The Principal: Three Keys to Maximizing Impact by Michael Fullan
2. Leaders of Learning, by Rick DuFour and Robert Marzano.
3. The instructor(s) will provide a variety of short readings, vignettes, video clips, and other media.

Instructor Teaching Methodology:

- Topic specific experts will provide professional learning in their areas of expertise/knowledge
- Group Discussion
- Podcasts and video examples of best practices
- Cooperative learning protocols
- Role Play
- Fishbowl and other learning protocols
- Mini Lectures
- Written Shared Google.Docs course journal reflections

Course Calendar/Schedule of Topics

- One or more of the learning objectives will be addressed in each course. When topics will be discussed will be determined based on A) experts availability and B) Needs of cohort group of students. At the September meeting,

participants will identify most pressing needs and topics will be planned accordingly

Grading Criteria:

- Participation and Attendance (25%)
- Written Reflection Papers after each session prior to the next session (50%)
- Participants Principal Toolbag Development (25%)