

# Principals' Center

Connecticut Association of Schools

*Dedicated to Developing and Sustaining Educational Leadership*

VOL. 1 • No. 2

Fall 2001

## IN THIS ISSUE

- The Principals' Center ..... 1
- Career Principals' Retreat ... 2-3
- Principals' Center Workshops... 4

### The Connecticut Principals' Center

Michael H. Savage,  
CAS Executive Director  
Tom Galvin,  
Principals' Center Director  
Kathleen A. Butler,  
Newsletter Editor

#### Advisory Board

Allen Fossbender, Chair  
Paul Cavaliere  
Mike Galluzzo  
Irvin Guidicelli  
Kathleen Higgins  
Eugene Horrigan  
Richard Huelsmann  
Abigail Hughes  
John H. Voss

#### Consultants

William Breck  
Kathleen Butler  
Richard Carmelich  
David Cressy  
George Goens  
Ed Iwanicki  
Vincent Mustaro  
Lynne Pierson  
John Onofrio  
Jim Ritchie  
Tony Rigazio-Digilio  
Segun Soqunro  
John Sullivan  
Rolfe Wenner

## The Mission

The Connecticut Principals' Center was founded in 1999 by the Connecticut Association of Schools in collaboration with the Connecticut State Department of Education to meet the needs of practicing principals and support the development of aspiring principals.

### From the Director

The death of the founding director of the Connecticut Principals' Center last spring, our beloved Tim Doyle, has left an indelible mark both on the Center and on our Association. As sad as this is for all of us involved in CAS, we take comfort in Tim's accomplishments in setting the roots of the Principals' Center in such a positive and promising manner. As Tim would have been the first to say, he didn't do this alone; the contributions and dedication of the Center's committees and board chairs, members, and consultants made the initial growth of the Center both possible and deep rooted.

As the new director of the Center, it is my intention to nurture its growth by taking as full advantage as possible of the collaborative and cooperative efforts of the many professionals working for the success of the Center. The potential of the Center to help the principals meet the ever increasing demands of the position is exciting. The principal needs and deserves a system of support to help meet the growing leadership expectations for school improvement our changing educational climate requires.

I believe the Connecticut Principals' Center will be a significant influence both in school improvement and in support of the building principal. I am humbled and energized to have this opportunity to contribute to this influence and am pleased to have a role in the ongoing progress of the Connecticut Principals' Center.

## New Technology Strand at the Principals' Center Needs Volunteers

The Connecticut Principals' Center has created a new, fifth strand to address issues and programs related to the integration of technology into school leadership and its specific use in advancing teaching and learning.

Principals from all levels and consultants from other educational agencies are needed to volunteer for the committee and to choose a chairperson. Please contact Tom Galvin at the Principals' Center.

### Connecticut Principals' Center Strands

Aspirants ♦ Career Principals ♦ Critical Issues ♦ Mentor/Mentees ♦ Technology



## FROM THE EXPERTS

An expert panel that included former Commissioners Gerald Tirozzi and Vince Ferrandino, and legal advisor for the Connecticut State Department of Education, Mark Stapleton, addressed participants at last summer's Career Principals' Retreat. Each shared personal reflections on the principalship and offered views in response to participants questions. Some of their comments...

VF: We've got to have a national conversation redefining the role of the principalship. We must identify models for the principalship based on principals' strengths. A differentiated principalship allows principals to use their strengths and have others to back up their weaker areas. Those who already have support like this in their buildings and in their communities, and who understand teaching and learning well, make a real difference for kids.

GT: We must promote an American Board for Leadership in Education (ABLE). We need a national model for voluntary certification geared toward the principal as the instructional leader.

MS: Research on effective models and requests for funding from the legislature go hand-in-hand toward a powerful solution.

GT: The voice of the principal has been absent in setting national and state educational policy. We cannot let complacency and a "feel-good" attitude about our successes shape the future. We have not been as visible as we should be and we have allowed legislators, policy gurus, and the corporate community to drive issues, such as testing. You must become active participants in the policy debate.

VF: Policy makers do not understand the day-to-day issues. Testing in and of itself will not bring about better student achievement. We need to think of testing as our thermometer, not as our cure. You cannot do assessment testing without putting all the foundation pieces in place.

MS: Connecticut is already doing what is called for with testing. We have aligned our tests with standards and we are ahead of most of the country. We look at trends and use tests diagnostically rather than for high stakes. It is not a good use of time or funds for us to over test.

## The Three-Day Retreat for Career Principals: A Reflection

The Retreat was held July 17-19 at the Heritage, Southbury. The guest speaker, Steven Hock, discussed organizational issues.

*How do you provide for an institution to organize itself?* This is the question the VISA Corporation confronted when it began to build its complex financial network that now does business in excess of one and a half trillion dollars per year. The credit card industry found itself in chaos by the sixties as it tried to manage a system that was beyond management by traditional organizational principles. Dee Hock, the founder of VISA, developed a set of

"To be precise, one cannot speak of leaders who cause organizations to achieve superlative performance, for no one can cause it to happen. Leaders can only recognize and modify conditions which prevent it; perceive and articulate a sense of community, a vision of the future, a body of principles to which people can become passionately committed, then encourage and enable them to discover and bring forth the extraordinary capabilities that lie trapped in everyone struggling to get out." —Dee Hock

principles and labeled them with a new word combining the concepts of chaos and order into the word **chaord**.

These **chaordic principles** include:

- **Power and function must be distributive** to the maximum degree. There is no traditional organizational diagram.
- **The organization must be self-organizing.** No group will see the whole picture, but each group knows its part.
- Governance must be distributive. **Shared leadership and responsibility are the norms.**
- It must **blend competition with cooperation.** We need to do our best within the culture of a shared value structure.
- It must be **infinitely malleable, yet extremely durable.** Flexibility is the key, permanency the result.

With less than 500 employees, VISA developed a hugely successful chaordic organization. How does this concept transfer to schools? The participants spent the rest of the retreat reflecting on this.

Steven Hock, Dee Hock's son, gave the opening address to the 63 participants at the retreat. In his remarks, he outlined a management framework for leaders that is imperative for success but not at the forefront of our consciousness.



## CAREER PRINCIPALS

- New Planning-Committee Members Welcome to Join
- Next Reflective Leadership Conference, Mid-July, 2002
- 2001 Career Principals' Conference Participants' Meeting at 3 PM on November 15 at CAS.  
(Includes planning for a late winter "Retreat".)

### These management principles include:

- Manage yourself (50% of your time). Take care of yourself. Refresh yourself. Think in terms of what you can do about what you can control and distribute the rest to others.
- Manage your superiors (25% of the time)
- Manage your peers (20% of the time). Find the blend between competition and cooperation.
- Manage your workers (5% of the time). Hire good people and distribute power to them.

These four criteria became the organizing framework for the rest of the retreat. One of the most interesting discussion groups occurred in the afternoon of the first day when we did a text-based seminar centering on a jazz combo and concentrated on how chaotic principles help to define such a group that mixes musical discipline with improvisation. The leader knows what must be accomplished and explains the vision, but he or she must rely on the expertise of the individual players who will improvise within an understood discipline that frames a jazz piece. The leader sets them loose, but keeps them focused on the vision. Together, they achieve the end, a beautiful piece of music.

Day 2 found the participants with a panel of two former commissioners,

Gerald Tirozzi and Vince Ferrandino along with the legal expert for CSDE, Mark Stapleton who represented Ted Sergi. Having ex-commissioners talk about managing themselves was fascinating and uplifting. In the afternoon, Ed Higgins from Branford High school led a lively panel of K-12 principals in a discussion applying the comments of the morning into the management framework laid out above.

The participants capped off the retreat with a real treat. George Goens, former superintendent and professor at the University of Hartford, gave a vibrant, informative, humorous, and touching presentation on what chaotic management means for the superintendent and other educational leaders. It was a perfect final act to our three-day retreat. To paraphrase one of George's many insights, if you are authentic, people will cut you a lot of slack.

Based on the evaluations, people left refreshed and enthusiastic about returning to the trenches for another year. This charter group was truly participatory, as they generated questions for our panels, gave very important daily feedback to the retreat facilitators, and generated great suggestions for the follow-up to the retreat.

—Jay Voss, Chairperson  
Career Principals Strand

## CAREER PRINCIPALS COMMENTS

*The retreat was a confirmation that leadership involves the head, heart, and spirit.*

—Mark Benigni  
Berlin High School

*I am thoroughly renewed in my commitment to reflective leadership, and I am leaving with specific tools, information, and personal contacts to sustain me in the fray.*

—Donna Denniston  
Samuel Staples School  
Easton

*Excellent—more valuable than any workshop or course, a great way to rejuvenate.*

—Felicia D'Angelo  
North Center School  
Southington

*Great opportunity to reflect, relax, reconnect, and recharge.*

—Ed Higgins  
Branford High School

## Autumn Aspirant Conference

The Center's Aspiring Principals' Strand will present a program for aspiring principals on November 1 and 2, 2001 at The Heritage Conference Center in Southbury. Superintendents recommended a remarkable 260 aspirants for 100 seats.

Presentations include:

### **School Culture**

Matt King,

Superintendent, Wellesley  
MA Public Schools

### **Style and Leadership**

Dr. Kathleen Butler,  
Saint Joseph College

### **Experienced Principals' Panel**

**A Day in the Life of a Principal**, Genie Slone,  
Brookfield, CT

### **Professional Programs**

Dr. Tony Rigazio-Digilio,  
CCSU

### **Seeking an Administrative Position? What to Do.**

Charles Sweetman,  
Superintendent Region 12

### **A Live Interview**

Gene Horrigan and Dave Telesca, administrators,  
Shepaug High School

### **Commissioner's Address**

Dr. Theodore Sergi



## Mentor/Mentee Presents Year- Long Program

Two hundred administrators volunteered to mentor new administrators this year for the 68 mentees who requested a mentor. Dr. Theodore Sergi, Commissioner of Education, opened the first session on October 17 at the Hawthorne Inn. The day's sessions emphasized ways to build strong mentor/mentee relationships. Paul Cavaliere, Committee Chair, notes that this is the first of several programs for the group this year.

### Connecticut Principals' Center 2001 Fall Programs

Each program is limited in enrollment with closing dates.

- **MENTOR/MENTEE WORKSHOP**,  
November 29 at the Hawthorne Inn, Berlin.
- **THE BALANCING ACT: INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP AND THE PRINCIPAL**, Joe Hoff  
October 24 & 25, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at CAS.
- **TEACHER EVALUATION SERIES FOR ADMINISTRATORS**  
*Differentiated Supervision*, Kathleen A. Butler, Saint Joseph College, Nov. 29 and Dec. 5 at CAS.  
*Legal Implications: Understanding the Do's and Don'ts of Writing Teacher Evaluations*, Tom Mooney, Shipman and Goodwin, Dec. 12 and 19 at CAS.  
*Evaluate to Improve Student Learning*, Ed Iwaniki, University of Connecticut, Jan. 8 at CAS.

### Reading Suggestions on Website

Have you read an inspiring or thought-provoking book that helped you be more closely in touch with your leader-self? Participants in the 2001 Career Principals' Retreat ended their conference by suggesting an intriguing list. You can find it at the Principals' Center link for the CAS website, [www.casciac.org](http://www.casciac.org).

**FYI**



The Connecticut  
**PRINCIPALS' CENTER**  
Tom Galvin, Director  
30 Realty Drive  
Cheshire, CT 06410  
(203) 250-1111  
(203) 250-1345 fax  
[www.casciac.org](http://www.casciac.org)

Serving the Needs of

- Aspiring Principals
  - New Principals
  - Career Principals
- with

~ Professional Development  
Conferences, Symposia, Workshops  
~ On-site Programs  
~ Mentoring  
~ Consulting  
~ Discussions of Critical Issues

CONNECTICUT

# Principals' Center Newsletter

C.A.S.  
30 Realty Drive  
Cheshire, CT 06410