



## Getting it To-Done

Imagine most of you have experienced some fairly extensive to do lists over the years. If you ever start feeling sorry for yourself, imagine the list the Chicago Cubs general manager has prior to each season. Then again, that one would be fairly easy to remember.

Chicago Cubs To-Do List (Year – 19\_\_, 20\_\_, 21\_\_, hopefully we win a World Series by the 23rd century) –

1. Sign relief pitchers who are able to close games.
2. Sign players who will score more runs for ace, starting pitchers.
3. Sign players who are still in their prime.
4. Do not trade players who will go on to make the MLB Hall of Fame with other teams.
5. Sign relief pitchers who are able to close games.
6. Sign players who will score more runs for ace, starting pitchers.
7. Sign relief pitchers who are able to close games.

Really, how difficult can it be?! Ten games out by April 29. Brutal.

Thank you for permitting me this brief session of therapy. Now, hopefully I have developed a more doable list for you to conquer over the summer. Here we go:

1. Attendance policies – Few things perplex me more than the fact that we still have a good number of attendance policies out there that do not empower school officials with the final say on determining excused and unexcused absences. Take a look at your attendance policy and see if revisions are needed to ensure school officials, and not parents, are given the authority to determine excused absences. While you are at it, ensure that your policy does not impose any discipline for a student's excused absences. Excessive excused absences may result in a student falling behind in class, or call for you to have a meeting with parents/guardians, but they should not contribute to disciplinary matters or the school automatically dropping a student from a class.

2. School safety – We have a tendency to wait until there is a tragedy in another district or state to update safety policies and practices. While there are some tremendous resources out there, I will put in a plug for the Iowa School Safety Coalition's website - [www.iowaschoolsafety.org](http://www.iowaschoolsafety.org), which has many helpful bulletins, contacts and links to other sites. For starters, reach out to emergency responders in your area to learn what helpful tips or comments they have. As someone who has had the advantage of participating in many tabletop exercises during more than 20 years in the military, I would encourage you to have more such exercises in your building/district. While full exercises are ideal, tabletop exercises allow educators and first responders to cover a variety of scenarios in a condensed period of time and with fewer logistical hurdles.

3. Take time to meet with individuals of influence – There are undoubtedly individuals of influence in your district as well as your community. Take some time to foster a good working relationship with those individuals. In some instances your meeting may include a school-specific purpose. In other situations, it may just be an opportunity for those individuals of influence to get to know you better. In either case, the commitment of such time is likely to reap dividends at some point in the future. Consider the value of strong allies in your district and community.

4. Mentors and Mentees – Communicate with at least one mentor and one mentee in your life over the summer. On this topic, SAI greatly appreciates the time and effort of mentors who make our mentoring program a success. Having stated that, even if you are not currently part of a formal mentoring program, reach out to administrators with more battle scars than you and see what they have to offer. Likewise, ask a junior administrator how things went during the past school year. It is not as if you need to say: "Excuse me, would you mind if I serve as your mentor?"

5. Review and update technology policies and topics relating to ever-evolving issues – While it is not a bad idea to review all of your policies or rules every year, at the very least, attempt to review policies regarding topics that are constantly evolving. If you wait five years to update your technology use policies for students, staff members and visitors, you will be in the stone age before the next revision is made. Other issues come up that we would not have anticipated a couple of years ago. Take, for example, e-cigarettes. I wrote more about them here, beginning on page 4: [www.sai-iowa.org/114Report.pdf](http://www.sai-iowa.org/114Report.pdf). However, both houses of Iowa's Legislature passed a bill that will make it illegal to sell e-cigarettes to minors or for minors to possess e-cigarettes. I anticipate the governor will sign this bill. Bottom line, attempt to keep your policies and rules current.

6. Anti-bullying efforts – While we want to make anti-bullying efforts part of everyday life in our schools, make a concerted attempt to have training for staff members and students at least once per year. This may not be required by law, but it is the right thing to do. Make sure that staff training includes all employees, from the custodian to the lunchroom worker, so they all understand they are empowered to step in if students are doing or saying the wrong thing. As far as students are concerned, renowned speakers on the bullying are undoubtedly great, but don't allow your lack of funds for such speakers to prevent you from doing anything. With the right guidance from adults, students might put together videos or assemblies which touch the heart of the issue better than administrators or other staff members would be able to do on your own.

7. Take some time to relax – I considered putting this first, but decided that it was best to emphasize this point at the end. It is easy to get frazzled by April or May. Enjoy the warm weather, and appreciate friends and family. The work, as noble as it is, will always be there tomorrow. I don't imagine many of you have heard family and friends complain that you need to spend more time at school. While such dedication is admirable, you will do a better job next school year if you purposefully recharge over the summer.

*This article is intended only as a reference in regard to the subject matter covered. It is furnished with the understanding that SAI is not engaged in rendering legal advice. If a legal opinion is desired, private legal counsel should be consulted.*

I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at SAI in August. Until then, Go Cubs! (Maybe they will surprise us the remainder of the season.)

## 2013-14 Administrator Salary Information (FTE)

(Based on raw data provided by the Iowa Department of Education)

Position	Count	Avg. Salary	Totals
Superintendent	305	128,512	39,196,167
Asst. Superintendent	29	130,531	3,785,397
Curriculum Director	91	79,390	7,224,534
High School Principal	327	94,710	30,970,240
Asst. High School Principal	178	89,281	15,892,100
Junior High Principal	61	92,401	5,636,487
Asst. Junior High Principal	19	93,504	1,776,570
Middle School Principal	224	92,845	20,797,276
Asst. Middle School Principal	92	85,845	7,897,768
Elementary Principal	651	91,621	59,645,000
Asst. Elementary Principal	35	77,388	2,708,571
Other Principal	21	99,855	2,096,956
Asst. Other Principal	6	87,998	527,988
AEA Chief Administrator	9	196,677	1,770,090
AEA Zone/Regional Coordinator	65	113,170	7,356,065
AEA Directors	10	140,817	1,408,165
Totals	2123		208,689,374
Avg. Admin. Salary (FTE)		98,299	
SAI dues for '14-'15 = .005 x 98,299		491	

Additional staff salary information is available on the DE website at:  
[https://www.educateiowa.gov/education-statistics#Staff\\_Data](https://www.educateiowa.gov/education-statistics#Staff_Data)

## (((Capturing))) Student Voices

SAI's 2014 Annual Conference theme is **Empower!** Students are encouraged to celebrate and share via video with SAI members ways in which they feel empowered by school projects, extracurricular activities or leadership opportunities.

Submissions will premier in a video montage preceding the August 6 Annual Conference Opening General Session.

### Details:

- Length of video - 45 second maximum.
- Means of expression - live action, stills, animation. Be creative!
- Timeline: Videos must be received by June 15.
- Submission guidelines – Provide a link or file to [tharms@sai-iowa.org](mailto:tharms@sai-iowa.org).
- Students grant SAI the right to use, reproduce, reprint, distribute, and/or display the video without further compensation or notification to the student.

Encourage your students to participate!