



# Report

## Extending Our Reach

SAI officers and staff have worked this past year to determine how to expand services more broadly across the state. This vision culminated in hiring four SAI district consultants who will help SAI district officers with the planning and facilitation of district meetings, as well as provide consultation to SAI members in their respective regions.

The four district consultants are:

- Kathy Enslin (267, Keystone, Grant Wood districts) - 319-415-6268, waldogilbert@hotmail.com
- Dave Markward (Mississippi Bend district) - 309-798-9282, davemarkward@gmail.com
- Gary Richardson (Northwest and Prairie Lakes districts) - 712-395-1317, grichardson1681@gmail.com
- Dan Smith (Green Hills, Heartland, Great Prairie districts) - 515-326-5745, smithdaniel9152@gmail.com

### Professional Learning in Each SAI District

District consultants will attend the Sept. 14 Rep Council meeting to start working with district officers to schedule dates/times/places for fall district meetings. Last spring, Rep Council members approved an agenda template to use for these meetings. That structure will maximize learning during the meeting. Watch your email for a District Meeting invitation as well as further explanation of the professional learning that will be available.

### Consultation

We know the role of a school administrator can be isolating. With that in mind, we've enlisted the expertise of these four consultants who have years of experience in a variety of settings and can serve as a critical friend to you. They're available as an SAI membership benefit at no extra cost. You're encouraged to reach out to them if you have a dilemma you'd like assistance in working through or if you're in need of a sympathetic ear.

SAI will continue to explore ways to support members, thank you for supporting SAI!

## *Professional Learning Opportunities Designed with You in Mind*

### Leaders of Learning\*

#### Getting Focused: Leadership Moves that Yield Results – Oct. 25

As a leader of a school have you ever felt like you were playing a game of whack-a-mole? So many things compete for your attention, how can you stay focused on what matters most? Come learn how your school improvement plan can fuel your work and discover the leverage in identifying growth mindsets. Gain tools and processes that will help you prioritize and then stay the course.

Facilitator/Presenter: Dr. Ann Mausbach

#### Effective Facilitation for Productive Professional Learning and Meetings – Nov. 29

Whether leading a PLC team, engaging an entire staff in professional learning or facilitating a meeting, every leader needs tools to maximize group productivity. Come fill your toolbox with strategies for grouping, keeping the group on-task, encouraging full participation by all members, supporting small and whole group interaction, moving groups to consensus, engaging in productive debate and processing issues/ideas from multiple perspectives. Also explore planning and organizational tools.

Facilitator: Dana Schon, SAI

#### Actualizing Focus: Leadership Moves that Promote Momentum – Feb. 23

I have an improvement plan, now what? Myriad issues can

divert the attention of the most well-intentioned school administrator. Upholding commitments set at the beginning of the year around school improvement and professional learning can be difficult once the school year is in full swing. A lack of attention to these critical areas results in reduced teacher engagement and erodes school culture. Retain your focus during these winter months by identifying critical "have-to-dos" that help put plans in action. Experience specific processes to keep improving student outcomes at the center of the work. Revisit strategies for collecting and leveraging implementation data, using student work to reinforce learning and enhancing PLCs.

Facilitator: Dr. Ann Mausbach

#### Coaching and Engaging Staff Authentically – How to Genuinely Work to Move Teaching Practice Forward - March 30

An instructional leader's work of coaching staff is challenging both intra-personally and inter-personally. How do we coach staff in an authentic way, work past resistance, push a change in practice and support the growth of the adults in our schools? The work requires a keen sense of effective instruction and psychological savvy. This session provides tools and strategies for administrators around genuine coaching conversations for growth.

Facilitator: Jennifer Abrams

Hosted at the SAI office and simulcast to 2-3 remote locations TBD.

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## SAI Officers

### President

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### President-elect

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Wauke Community School District  
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### Vice President

Dan Cox, superintendent  
Charles City Community School District  
[dc Cox@charlescityschools.org](mailto:dc Cox@charlescityschools.org)

### Past President

Tim Kuehl, superintendent  
Clear Creek Amana Community School District  
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## National Representatives

### AASA Governing Board Members

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### NAESP State Rep.

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## Beginnings

By now, almost all of you have the first several days of the new school year in the rearview mirror. You have all of those unforeseen kinks worked out, and hopefully you are still living on the adrenaline rush that comes with the beginning of each new school year. All that this new year can become is still unknown and still before you, and you are experiencing the excitement of the potential without being dragged down by problems of the past or an overloaded present.

When I think about the greatest leaders I know, one of the things they do best is find a way to keep themselves and their staff in that “beginning of the year” sweet spot throughout the entire school year. With these leaders, I know I can walk into their buildings at the end of October or in the middle of March, and the “feel” of the people in the building is the same as it was on the first of September. Staff is energized and motivated, students are engaged and inspired, and problems are minimal and well-handled.

### How do those leaders keep the energy and enthusiasm going?

I believe there are three things common to the way they approach their work.

For one, they are sensitive to the natural ebb and flow of a typical school year, which allows them to be proactive instead of reactive when things start to slide. There may be a few things that happen to catch them off guard, but they are never surprised by the things they should have seen coming. They know when the “feel” of the building is going to be most challenged, and they are pre-emptive in their planning for those eventualities.

The second thing they do is expertly balance urgency and celebration. There is a certain recognition within these leaders that the right amount of challenge can bring out the best in others, and when that best shines through they find appropriate ways to call attention to it and celebrate it. This is tricky business, because too much challenge will be defeating, and too much celebration erodes excellence. So they are constantly checking with those they serve to make sure that difficult equilibrium is always there.

This ties in with the most important skill those great motivators have, which is the ability to listen carefully and ask the right questions. It seems to me that the people with the most experience and expertise to share are also the ones most reluctant to do so. I guess that's because they did not arrive where they are by doing what someone else told them to do – they got there through observation and action, trial and error. And they recognize that people seeking to learn from them will learn best if they go through the same process. So they counsel and question rather than pontificate and preach.

None of this is possible unless leaders are on top of their game when it comes to their own well-being. Many of you heard me speak at the SAI Conference last month challenging you to do three things this school year:

- take care of yourself,
- take care of each other, and
- let others take care of you.

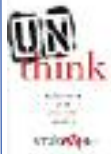
If you can make those three things a focus, you will be well positioned to do the things great leaders do to keep ‘beginnings’ going throughout the year.



# In Brief

## June SAI Executive Committee Highlights

- Continued discussion of future district meeting options;
- Received a legislative summary;
- Reviewed financials;
- Previewed Annual Conference, New Administrators Institutes and TLC Institute professional learning activities;
- Heard about recent improvements to the IPERS fund, district IPERS compliance responsibilities, and a Cost of Living Adjustment study;
- Set the association Annual Meeting for Sept. 14 at 11 a.m.;
- Approved the 2016-17 budget;
- Approved a template for future SAI District Meeting agendas;
- Engaged in a professional learning activity centered on the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders;
- Reviewed the CatchLife initiative and pilot program feedback to date.



### UNthink Book Study

Use the accompanying activities with your team as you read *UNthink*.

Additionally, there are protocols provided that you can use for other meeting facilitation needs. Start your learning today!

[www.sai-iowa.org/unthink-book-study.cfm](http://www.sai-iowa.org/unthink-book-study.cfm)

## #SAIreads

Let us know what you're reading (or just finished this summer)! Share the title and a brief summary here:

<https://goo.gl/forms/8gbqzvgMYEGDiNM2>.

We'll start things off with these titles from SAI conference speakers:

<http://bit.ly/saibooks>, and will follow up with suggestions in subsequent issues.

## In Memoriam

**John Currie**, retired superintendent, Columbus Community (4-28-16)

**Mary Delagardelle**, DE associate division administrator (8-25-16)

**Jerry Dockum**, retired hs principal, Des Moines (7-19-16)

**Pam Johnson**, retired program consultant, Mississippi Bend AEA (6-25-16)

**Wilma McManus**, retired elementary principal, Waukee (7-22-16)

**Bev Riess**, retired UNI student teaching coordinator (8-23-16)

## Legislative Notes



from Tom Narak  
SAI Government Relations Director

SAI's Legislative Committee held its first meeting during the Annual Conference. A number of issues were discussed by committee members. This fall's elections should provide more clarity and perspective on several important educational issues. The next meeting will be held Sept. 22.

Our legislative strategy includes collaborating with other groups when common ground and needs are identified. We know we are much stronger when working with others in our advocacy efforts. We need to reach out locally to parents and community members in addition to others across our state.

We have mentored and partnered with a group of Iowa students on some legislative issues. Some are members of The State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council. SIYAC's purpose is to "foster communication among a group of engaged youth and the governor, general assembly, and state and local policymakers regarding programs, policies, and practices affecting youth and families; and to advocate for youth on important issues affecting youth." They have addressed radon testing in schools and suicide prevention efforts, and they confront concerns related to health, education and human rights.

In addition to the SIYAC work, some students are building a statewide network of students and parents who want to learn more about the legislative process and advocate for priorities from students' perspective. This is not part of SIYAC, but it is being developed by student leaders with past legislative experience. Students involved will notify, educate and mobilize young people on key issues.

If you have a student(s) in your district who would be interested in this network, please reach out to them. They can sign up at:

<https://goo.gl/forms/hqvM75f3lP8RVoy53>

Contact Valley High School student T.J. Foley, [tjfoley@gmail.com](mailto:tjfoley@gmail.com), with questions. No experience is necessary to participate and training will be provided by students. They are also looking for parent groups that might be interested.

Thank you all very much for your great work in Iowa's schools and communities.

Have a great school year!

## Calendar of Events

### September

- 13 - Statewide Mentoring Meeting for Assistant and Associate Principals and Deans
- 15 - Statewide Mentoring Meeting for Superintendents
- 20 - Statewide Mentoring Meeting for Middle Level and Secondary Principals
- 22 - Statewide Mentoring Meeting for Elementary Principals

### October

- 13 & 14 - SAI Executive Leaders
- 25 - Getting Focused: Leadership Moves that Yield Results

Register online for events at [www.sai-iowa.org/events.cfm](http://www.sai-iowa.org/events.cfm)

## Iowa Dept. of Ed. Deadlines

Use this link to access critical due dates: <http://bit.ly/dedeaddlines>

### SAI REPORT

The *SAI Report* is published for association members and selected community and business leaders by School Administrators of Iowa. The views expressed in the *SAI Report* do not necessarily reflect SAI opinion nor does acceptance of advertising imply SAI endorsement.

Your comments and suggestions are welcomed.

Tracy J. Harms, editor



# Helping ALL Students Feel Safe and Welcome

Those of you who made it to my legal update at the SAI Conference got to see my inner artist as I created a piece of Chicago Cubs art that will surely hang in the Louvre centuries from now when the Carver period of art is fully appreciated. Shortly after conference, I received a number of requests to purchase the drawing, which featured a Chicago Cub about to devour a St. Louis Cardinal. One unnamed administrator has since made a snarky comment on Twitter that the Cub would likely choke on the Cardinal. I don't know why such an individual would think the Cubs might choke at the end of a baseball season. I mean, really?! In any case, I have decided to hold off auctioning this fine piece of art until after the World Series, as I anticipate the value will increase considerably at that time.

As we approach that time of the year when we discuss pennant races, and with the MLB playoffs just around the corner, it means we have reached another school year. One of the toughest issues many of you may wrestle with during the course of the year relates to how your district will serve all students, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, sexual identity, or a variety of other traits that are protected under Iowa's Civil Rights Code, Iowa Code Chapter 216. In particular, the nondiscriminatory provision of education is covered in [Iowa Code §216.9](#) and public accommodations are covered in [Iowa Code §216.7](#).

A component of the nondiscriminatory provision of accommodations and services recently receiving a great deal of attention in newspapers and newscasts around our state and country relates to transgender students.

"Gender identity" concerns the gender with which a person identifies, regardless of a person's assigned sex at birth. No doubt, this topic is a controversial and difficult one. As you do your best to comply with state and federal law, some students and community members will not agree with district decisions. Hopefully, administrators will be able to find a way to send a message that the privacy rights of ALL students are important, and you wish to work with all of them.

New case law very well may appear in coming months that will give additional guidance, and this is a fluid situation. While there may be new guidance in the near future, let's be clear that what is not fluid is that Iowa law does protect students based on their gender identity or sexual orientation, and it has for a number of years. Based on their religious or personal beliefs, I understand that some Iowans may not agree with those inclusions, but that is something for them to take up with their elected officials. Our job is to follow the law that is in place, and educators should always try to find a way for all students to feel safe and welcome in Iowa's school buildings.

There may be some attorneys out there who disagree with some of the recommendations or interpretations I will share in this column. PLEASE ERR ON THE SIDE OF THE GUIDANCE FROM YOUR SCHOOL DISTRICT'S LEGAL COUNSEL. I will not be in the courtroom or hearing with you, but rather am sharing my perspective and am hopeful that my comments will at least lead to additional solutions in your buildings.

**Q: Should we involve parents if a student comes forward and shares with a school official that s/he identifies with a sex other than the sex assigned at birth?**

A: It has been my experience that parents/guardians often are aware of how the student identifies and frequently are having parallel conversations with school officials on whatever the issues or requests may be. If that is not the case then please have a conversation with the student and ask if the student has already shared with a parent how s/he identifies. If the student has not shared, ask if it would help if a counselor, teacher, and/or administrator took part in that conversation. Consider the age of the student. The younger the student, the greater my inclination would be to reach out to the parent/guardian and have a conversation. With older students, if you find them to be in a good mental state, where they have good supports in place, and do not have any indication of depression or likelihood of the student harming him or herself, then you might respect the wish of the student to wait prior to notification. On this latter point, if there are indicators of depression or ideation of suicide or the student otherwise considering doing some harm to him/herself, I recommend communicating to the parent(s)/guardian(s) about that depression or those ideations. That certainly may be done without reference to discussions of gender identity.

**Q: Should we refer to the student by a requested name or pronoun that aligns with the student's gender identity?**

A: Yes. Regarding names, we have been doing this for years as thousands of students have gone by something other than their legal name. Why would we treat this situation any differently?

**Q: Does the administration have authority to require employees to identify students by the requested name or pronoun, even if the employee has a personal disagreement with such a practice?**

4 A: Yes. This is something that you may want to discuss with all employees at the beginning of the year.

**Q: What name or sex should be used on records?**

A: On internal documents or records that are used by the classroom teacher or the office staff, utilize the name or sex requested. On permanent or other legal records, still utilize the legal name and sex of the student until the student's name is legally changed or the student has made a medical transition to the sex with which s/he identifies. The legal name change is considerably easier through the state of Iowa, while the change of sex on official documents takes additional verification from medical officials.

**Q: Is it OK to offer a private restroom or shower for the student who identifies with a sex other than that assigned at birth?**

A: Yes, there is nothing wrong with making that offer. From talking with many administrators in recent years, I have heard numerous instances when that was what the student and family actually preferred.

**Q: May we require the student to only use the restroom or locker room that aligns with the sex assigned at birth?**

A: No. The student ultimately may use the restroom or locker room that aligns with how s/he identifies.

**Q: What about the privacy rights of students who may be uncomfortable using the same restroom or locker room as the transgender student?**

A: Educators obviously want to be considerate of the privacy rights of all students. I would consider offering those students the opportunity to use a private restroom or shower room to the extent one is available. School districts would also be wise to put up additional curtain or stall-like partitions in all locker rooms. I spoke with an administrator at the SAI Conference who shared that an Iowa district is building an addition, and that district has decided to use stalls entirely in both the male and female restrooms. I imagine that privacy partitions will become rather ubiquitous in future school architectural plans. There is a large grocery store that only put in multiple, single restrooms when they built a ginormous new store.

**Q: What about transgender adults and other adults using the same restrooms as students or going into the locker rooms at school?**

A: Keep in mind that you always have authority to restrict visitor access at school. It is perfectly appropriate to restrict adults from utilizing certain restrooms or locker rooms that your students use. You may restrict staff members from using those facilities as well. However, it would be reasonable to allow staff members to use those facilities, while preventing other adults. You have done background checks on those staff members and would have less reason to believe that the staff members would create a heightened safety risk.

**Q: How do we share, if at all, with students, staff or parents, if you have a transgender student or students in a building?**

A: Please respect the confidentiality rights of the transgender student. Ask the student if s/he wishes for the counselor or administrators to share with the student's teachers or other staff members. If s/he does not, then leave that up to the student to share with other students or staff members as that student is comfortable. Separately, I would encourage you to share with students and parents how these matters will be handled moving forward, regardless of whether you currently have a transgender student(s). It would provide a good opportunity to let students and parents know that you are concerned about the privacy rights of all students, and will show that you welcome them contacting you if a student wishes to have additional privacy in the restroom or locker room.

**Q: What if a transgender student wishes to participate in a sport other than for the sex assigned at birth?**

A: See the guidance shared by the [Iowa High School Athletic Association](#) and the [Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union](#) on their websites.

**Q: What about choir? We have historically had an all-male choir or all-female choir.**

A: The choir director may use the student's ability to hit certain notes or sing at certain octaves to make such decisions, but should not make the decision solely on the student's sex as assigned at birth.

**Q: So are you now saying that students may just walk into whatever restroom they choose?**

A: No, unfortunately, there is no clear guidance out there to determine when a student is being sincere or not. As such, use your common sense. I trust that you will have some idea as to whether a student is making a mockery of the situation to prove a point. If so, I would call that student's bluff. When I have received calls on this topic, nearly every time it has related to a student and/or parents who just want the best for that student, and the sincerity of the student is not in doubt. Talk to your supervisor and school district's attorney first, but if your gut is telling you that someone is just making a mockery, then take a stand. If they want to sue the district, I am confident that the courts will defer to your common-sense decision based on your observations.

Finally, I am aware of the United States Supreme Court's preliminary decision supporting a Virginia school district that would not permit a transgender student to use a male restroom. The Court has not decided whether it will hear the case during the coming year. I share this because I am confident some parents will raise this decision with you (or a recent Texas federal judge's ruling). Please know that Virginia's civil rights code, for example, does not include sexual orientation or gender identity. Iowa's does. As such, I see a legal distinction, and am sticking to the guidance I am giving in this column until the statutory code changes or the courts provide additional guidance.

You may find more information from the [U.S. Department of Education](#) and the [Iowa DE](#).

Until next time, Go Cubs Go!!! This IS the year. Expect my Cubs drawing to go up for auction after the World Series.

# The Latest in Learning

by Dana Schon, SAI professional learning director



## Make It Happen

In kicking off our 2016 Conference: Reimagine, Erik Wahl invited us to rethink how we envision teaching and learning. How might we cultivate creativity? Inspire innovation? Provoke problem-solving? Ignite passion? As the possibilities play out as previews on the movie screen in our mind, our enthusiasm grows, and we begin to engage others in the conversation. Together, we edit the scenes and develop the story. At the climax, all students and teachers are highly engaged in learning and teaching, and all students are achieving at high levels and owning the goals they're meeting. As the denouement draws near, we see students graduating prepared to accept whatever opportunities await them. The final scene, the epilogue—dated several years later—notes that these graduates have found success in the pursuits of their choice. As the credits roll, we see the names of the students themselves, of all school employees, of parents, of community members, of mentors, of all who contributed to the success. Although this process of reimagining excites and inspires us, it's not enough to make it happen. Moving to action necessitates a change model. How do we as educational leaders bring to life the movie and make it happen for our students?

In their best-seller *Influencer: The New Science of Leading Change*, authors Joseph Grenny and his colleagues describe a model for getting the results we want. They note, influencing “requires changing hearts, minds, and operations to create long-term, sustainable positive changes, as opposed to simply managing people through tasks or inspiring short-term, specific actions.” Their framework for change includes three steps:

- 1. Clarify measurable results.** This means starting with the end in mind, painting the picture, creating the film to crystallize what success looks like and to identify the qualitative and quantitative measures that will speak to and reinforce your success. (This is the reimagining part!)
- 2. Find vital behaviors.** The authors explain that certain behaviors serve to accelerate the change process. For example, where is your movie already being played? Do you want to create more internship options? Do you want to integrate a “genius hour” into your schedule? What about adding a J-term or a “skinny” at the end of the day? Connect with those leading these changes and ask them what behaviors were most important to their success.  
Find the bright spots in your own district or building and make them brighter. Is one of your teachers engaging students in project-based learning or a competency based approach? How can you discover, reinforce and celebrate the actions of these innovators? Beware of actions that sound great in theory, but yield little to nothing in practice. Identify critical moments where the right choice matters.
- 3. Use the six sources of influence (see chart below)**—be flexible and adaptable as a leader such that you can employ different and multiple strategies in any given context.

Six Sources of Influence		
	Motivation	Ability
Personal	<b>#1 Make the undesirable desirable</b> Connect new/expected behaviors to the person's value system. Help people to see the consequences of their behaviors – put names and faces to the actions.	<b>#2 Over-invest in skill building</b> Many resisters resist because they don't know how to do what you expect. Develop and sustain demanding and authentic learning and practice opportunities. How can you scaffold people into the new behavior? Think about how teacher leaders can support you in using this source of influence.
Social	<b>#3 Harness peer pressure</b> Identify influential staff members in your school or district who can model the behavior. (This may include teacher leaders as well as others to whom your staff look for leadership – either positive or negative). Consider your PLCs and how you might help them support each other. Train them, model for them so that they can do the same for others.	<b>#4 Find strength in numbers</b> Spend time with your teacher leaders and other informal leaders to help them crystallize the vision and identify their role in bringing it to life. Be clear about what needs to happen and how leadership in the building (i.e., social capital) can help you achieve it.
Structural	<b>#5 Design rewards and demand accountability</b> What will you celebrate and recognize as related to your vision? How will you hold people accountable?	<b>#6 Change the environment</b> Do the staff have the tools, space, schedule, information, policies, protocols, etc. to support the implementation of the behavior changes that will lead to the vision? What cues, reminders, and indicators in the environment will help keep people on track?

6 As you move your reimagined future into production, keep in mind that inherent in our formalized system of teacher leadership and our PLC/teaming structures are sources of influence waiting to be utilized! #Makeithappen!

## Embrace the 'beta'

article contributors: Lisa Remy, Laurene Lanich, Justin Miller and Sheila Hudson, West Des Moines CSD

The 2015-16 school year ushered in exciting changes at four schools in the West Des Moines Community School District. These schools joined the New Tech Network and began a Project-Based Learning approach. The shift from teacher-centered to student-centered learning environments has presented opportunities and challenges. The student outcomes and opportunities brought about by PBL has WDMCS excited about what the future holds for their New Tech learners and facilitators.

Our journey started by collecting and analyzing data. The district conducted a vision survey with students over several years. We found that as students progressed through our system, their level of engagement decreased. The superintendent looked for ways to directly address this issue. In addition, we began conversations with business and community leaders. Through these conversations, they shared a need in the workforce for independent thinkers with a growth mindset about themselves and others, and who are able to work collaboratively and problem solve in the work environment. After the data analysis and these conversations, exploratory groups from the district including parents, business and community leaders, teachers, board members, and district and building administrators went on several site visits to New Tech schools around the country. It became apparent that if we wanted to execute PBL in WDMCS, a partnership with NTN would help achieve this goal. Two elementary schools and a 7th grade team at each junior high joined the work of NTN and shifted into the PBL environment.

In a rebranding process, Clive Elementary became Clive Learning Academy and Crestview Elementary became Crestview School of Inquiry. At Indian Hills and Stilwell Junior Highs, we created a school within a school model with one team per grade level as a New Tech team. This school year we added 8th grade teams at both junior highs. We will expand the New Tech program by one grade level each subsequent year, keeping the school within a school model. Over time, we will have the New Tech PBL option available to learners in Kindergarten through 12th grade.

We realigned our resources to commit to PBL and student engagement. We looked at creative ways to align our limited resources to our priority areas including PBL. Administrators, district leaders and teachers took part in a multi-phased professional development program set by NTN. Training is critical to the success of PBL. The result of committing to ongoing professional learning for our teaching and administrative staff sent a message that WDMCS is invested in PBL not only in dollars, but through continued support and professional learning that focuses on collaboration, problem solving, creativity and student learning outcomes. The climate and culture necessary for the success of PBL began with clear and consistent communications from the superintendent, school board, and district and building administrators. We created an environment which made it safe for teachers, administrators, and students to take risks in their teaching and learning. PBL implementation is a journey, not an event. It takes a cultural shift and a team approach at all levels to make it work.

We invested in technology. Students in the New Tech program have 1:1 access to devices. We discovered this past year that students are no longer limited to the technology knowledge base of their teacher(s) and are now functioning in a beta state because we are no longer able to keep up with the array of authentic 21st century learning and the technology available to assist in that learning. Teachers have learned to jump in and embrace the "beta" while creating a framework of learning and focus. Professional learning, technology, and connections with businesses and community have supported a transformational educational shift that includes moving from teaching to facilitation, and the increased opportunities for students to own their learning in authentic ways.

Moving students through increasing levels of independence and self-direction while addressing critical knowledge, problem solving, creativity and skills development are our goals. Students from our schools reflect, "I feel like we've grown so much as students and people," said Joe Maxwell, a seventh-grader at Stilwell Junior High School. "It helps you find your talents and what you're good at and enjoy, and your group helps you find a way to make that successful."

Seventh-grader Levi Janssen said he retains information better through the New Tech program by applying what he has learned instead of memorizing facts for a test. He said it's effective because "students are tasked with finding the answers to a problem or situation themselves, instead of being told what works. Plus, it's fun, I feel the projects are something that would actually matter or change something and make a difference."

We will continue to accomplish our goals through authentic PBL. We are excited to continue our journey through New Tech Network and project-based learning.

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"I feel like we've grown so much as students and people..."

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## Tune in to Teacher Leadership

The start of the school year provides an opportunity to revisit or to clarify for the first time the roles and responsibilities of teacher leaders in your building and district and your vision for teacher leadership. This list of reflective questions (not meant to be an exhaustive list) — <http://bit.ly/2bmRWX1> — may help you in processing what needs to be clarified and communicated.

You might choose to create a video like this one <http://bit.ly/2bUZ7Fz>.

## Safety Video Contest for Iowa High Schools



The Iowa School Safety Alliance is sponsoring a video contest for Iowa high school students. The winner of the contest will receive \$1,000 for your school, second place will earn \$600 and third place \$400.

The theme should focus on the mission of the ISSA with emphasis on mitigation. The mission is to assist schools in preparing for, mitigating, responding to and recovering from natural and man-made threats and incidents.

Some examples may be

- Reporting threats and other illegal activities
- Community/student watch activities
- How students can help keep school facilities safe
- Practicing fire, tornado and lockdown drills
- How students should be prepared for an emergency at school
- How a student's attitude can impact safety and how that can be changed

Submission deadline is Sept 23. Find more information and contest rules at [www.iowaschoolsafety.org](http://www.iowaschoolsafety.org).



## Professional Learning Opportunities, cont. from page 1

### Keeping Focus: Leadership Moves that Keep First Things First – April 25

How do you keep the momentum and focus in place when teachers and students are counting down the days until school is out? What about planning for next year? Some key practices and processes can help you uphold your school improvement, professional learning and safe culture commitments while simultaneously supporting you in considering next steps for next year. Learn how to benchmark school improvement efforts, develop/revisit the school's infrastructure for professional learning, and conduct a summative analysis of school/district data while looking forward to next year. Facilitator: Dr. Ann Mausbach

### Focused Planning: Leadership Moves that Build Cohesion— June 20

Time to reflect, rejuvenate and refocus! Ensure you retain and sustain your focus by reviewing the leadership commitments, the level of implementation of your school improvement plan, and the conduciveness of your culture to high levels of learning for all. Leave with an action plan to ensure continuity of this work and an understanding of critical leadership moves to support it. Facilitator: Dr. Ann Mausbach

### 4th Annual Leveraging Teacher Leadership Institute for Administrators and Teacher Leaders - Summer 2017

Intended for all educators — teachers and administrators — interested in learning more about teacher leadership.

\*Workshops in this section can be bundled for a licensure renewal credit (3 workshops=1 credit).

## Legal Support \*\*

### Legal Labs – Nov. 8 & Apr. 11

Hands-on experiences using case studies and actual events.

Facilitator/Presenter: Matt Carver, SAI

### School Law Conference – Feb. 7

Content recommended by SAI members who serve on SAI's Law Conference Committee. Expect a variety of timely and relevant legal topics.

Facilitators/Presenters: Iowa's leading education law attorneys

\*\*Workshops in this legal section can be bundled for a licensure renewal credit (3 workshops=1 credit).

## District Meetings

A professional learning component will be available at each SAI District Meeting. Stay tuned for additional details in the months ahead!

## Mentoring & Induction

Assistant Principals Statewide Mentoring – Sept. 13/Jan. 17

Elementary Principals Statewide Mentoring – Sept. 22/Jan. 24

Secondary Principals Statewide Mentoring – Sept. 20/Jan. 26

Superintendents Statewide Mentoring – Sept. 15/Jan. 19

Practical strategies and supports to help mentees grow in confidence as leaders of learning.

Facilitators/Presenters: AEA, DE, LEA and SAI representatives