

National College for School Leadership Seizing Success 2008 Conference

Highlights from day two – video transcript

Conference chair, Tony MacKay:

Welcome to day two of the NCSL's Annual Leadership Conference. My colleague Steve Munby.

Steve Munby, Chief Executive, NCSL:

Now according to Ofsted, the quality of school leadership has improved again this year. And I think the children and young people that we all are here to serve, are fortunate to have such good school leadership in so many of our schools. The future colleagues, is not about super-heads. The future is about super-teams. The main expertise for improving schools is in schools. The assumption in the future should not be more of the same. We should be looking towards new models of leadership, and they should become the norm, not the exception. Think back to a moment in your leadership when you were superb, when you were energised, when you were focused, when you were compelling, when you were selfless, when you were courageous, when you were intuitive, when you were stunningly good. Our system will crumble unless we are prepared to develop leaders, irrespective of which school they end up leading. Colleagues, no person will every be a great leader who doesn't take genuine and heartfelt joy in the success of those around them.

Conference chair, Tony MacKay:

Ed Balls. Thank you very much.

Rt Hon Ed Balls MP, Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families:

Thank you very much indeed for having me today. It's great to be here in Birmingham and to welcome all of you and also to the people who are watching on the internet as well. It's that moral imperative that very child matters and that every child should be happy and healthy, but also have the chance to do their best and sometimes a second chance. And first and foremost a good school needs to have strong leadership, a strong head, but also a strong leadership team. That is the most important thing for turning round the life chances of children in our society. These 638 schools, whatever the reporting, or should I say the mis-reporting, these are not failing schools. We can, through national challenge, and do a whole school improvement effort. We can give support with teaching, with one-to-one tuition with the masters. We can encourage schools to work together for the future of our country and our children on a daily basis,

is in your hands. And we will do everything we can to support you to give every child the chance that they deserve. Thank you.

Conference chair, Tony MacKay:

Stephen MR Covey, Welcome.

Stephen M R Covey, Co-founder and CEO of CoveyLink Worldwide:

Trust is a topic that is misunderstood. It's underestimated, we assume it, we take it for granted, until we lose it. And then we become painfully aware of trust and its importance, but sometimes too late. When the trust goes out in any relationship, on the team, in the department, with the group, when the trust goes out, the energy goes out, including engagement, as does satisfaction and joy. It's one of the key behaviours that's so vital, especially for educators, is the behaviour of extending trust, giving trust. You lead with trust, you give it. Why? Because people reciprocate, they rise to the occasion. When we extend trust to another person, we rekindle the inner spirit, both theirs and ours. And I thank you so much my friends, it's wonderful to be with you.

Conference chair, Tony MacKay:

The question is, what are the relative roles and responsibilities of the state, the school and the leadership of schools, and the public, in achieving that success and sustainability in high quality learning for all. You know Michael, you know Andy, we are delighted that you're here together. Michael can you open the case?

Sir Michael Barber, Expert Partner in the Global Public Sector Practice, McKinsey And Company:

So that's what I mean by world-class. All our young people, knowledgeable, thoughtful and confident, and no compromise.

Professor Andy Hargreaves, Thomas More Brennan Chair of Education at Boston College:

Not all change begins with government. Not all change can be traced to government. The job of government is not to dream up changes for other people to do and drive them through the system, but to create cultures, systems, societies, that can develop, maintain coherent forms of high quality sustainable change for themselves within this government and the next government and the government after that.

And this is about not giving services to communities, but empowering communities so that they're increasingly able to take decisions for themselves. And providing resources and capacity to do that, knowing that one of the consequences will sometimes be that

they will make job and work difficult for local government and for national government if they are truly empowered.

Sir Michael Barber, Expert Partner in the Global Public Sector Practice, McKinsey And Company:

You don't have to have a target in organisations. What you do have to have an idea of is what would success look like if we succeed. If we succeeded, could we describe it. You have to know where you're going. So if you can then describe success and you have to know it sufficiently well so that you can see if, at any given moment, you're making progress towards it. If you haven't got that vision of success and you can't describe it in words and then check whether you're making progress towards it, you're not going to succeed.

Conference chair, Tony MacKay:

Ishmael Beah, thank you very much.

Ishmael Beah, former child soldier, human rights activist and best selling author:

Between the ages of 12 I had run from this war constantly and have seen a lot of people killed. My culture had changed tremendously. A place where it was children would not raise their voice to adults, became a place where those children were now forced to shoot and kill. And I was fortunate enough to be removed from this war. I actually didn't want to go because this group had become my family and I didn't know who these UNICEF people were. I began to know that there was something more about me that I'd forgotten, which is that I still had this trust for learning and that there was still an intelligence within me, that I hadn't used for a while, I had used to survive. And I think that a space needs to be provided for that in all educational systems for people to use their innate intelligence to question, argue with things. When you have had the privilege to have a education, that comes with it responsibility, whether you like it or not. But if we forget about those children that live and other people that live in other places that don't have those opportunities, we're still going to have a world that's imbalanced. Thank you.