

National College for School Leadership Seizing Success 2008 Conference

Highlights from day three – video transcript

Conference chair, Tony MacKay:

Welcome to day three of the 2008 NCSL Annual Leadership Conference. Christine Gilbert.

Christine Gilbert, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector, Ofsted:

About ten years ago for example, the Ofsted evidence base tells us that leadership and management was good or very good in about half the schools we inspected. Last year it was outstanding or good in two-thirds of the schools we inspected. And the effectiveness of so much that goes on in a school, depends on the quality of leadership and management in school. Our inspection evidence shows that CPD is most effective in schools where the senior managers really understand its potential for raising standards and are committed to using it as a really key driver for school improvement. The new proposals will retain many of the features of the current arrangements. The main focus of the inspection will remain the overall effectiveness of the school, but more attention will be placed on the capacity of the school to improve. To set recommendations at the end of the inspection which will be specifically related to what a school needs to do to move from one grade to the next. I will say to you today that we will listen to what's being said. It isn't a paper exercise where we've made up our minds before. So please respond by on August 11th. So I wish you well for the rest of the day and hope you enjoy the rest of the conference. Thanks very much indeed.

Conference chair, Tony MacKay:

Can we welcome very warmly indeed Richard Olivier.

Richard Olivier, Director, Olivier Mythodrama Associates:

So I'm going to try and share some of the work we've been doing over the last nine years now with this fantastic political play of 'Julius Caesar'. Looking at power, looking at influence, and looking at the positive aspect of politics. "Set honour in one eye and death in the other and I will look on both indifferently. So let the gods so speed me, I love the name of honour more than I fear death." Some people are so ambitious that when they get to the top, they don't look back down and help others up, but they just keep looking onwards and upwards for their glory, for their own position. The conspirators standing around arguably the greatest figure of the entire ancient world. Hands covered in blood. And you can almost hear the silent thoughts running in their heads, "What the hell do we do now?" If you have tears, prepare to shed them now.

Great Caesar fell. “Oh what a fool was there my countrymen. Then you, and I, and all of us fell down while bloody treason flourished over us.” Thank you.

Conference chair, Tony MacKay:

Colleagues, Emeritus Professor, David Booth.

David Booth, Professor Emeritus, Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto:

I’m going to talk about literacy. And you’d think we have enough literacy talk because that’s what every single issue in education seems to focus around, with a little bit of math. So I’m wondering what are you, as literacy citizens, what do your staff and students and parents think you are as a literate human. The only skill you need for technology is literacy and you really need it. I know Gate’s own kids, he relegates their television screen time to three hours a night, no more. Because he knows the only hope for success in literacy is success in different modes, different text forms. There is no one text form that wins. Make sure the classrooms you look after are full of talk. We need to have kids doing things as they read, not just after they read. We need to have kids with mind maps and charts and organisers and yellow stickies, to note where the puzzles are and the problems are. Isn’t literacy an amazing event. We’ve changed what it means. It means I am one of you. I can read the things I need to, the things I want to, the things I have to. We’ve changed it in my lifetime. Wow. Thank you.

Conference chair, Tony MacKay:

What he does is he leads teams in extraordinary environments, under incredible pressure. What better description of school leadership, Monty Halls.

Monty Halls, explorer, author, film-maker and presenter:

You cannot control what happens around you. The only thing you can control is your own attitude to those changes, how you take those changes on. More people were killed by Coke machines falling on them in the US, than were killed by sharks around the world. A key message of this conference is nurture and develop leaders. And the Marines are brilliant at that, they spot leadership very early on and they furiously nurture it. It’s one of the most precious things to them. And I think qualities like leadership are going to be so vital for the generation of people you’re dealing with. There’s an alchemy in getting the right group of people together and you become absolutely unstoppable. I think if you can inspire belief, belief in someone’s performance, belief in someone’s potential, belief in the project, belief within yourself, then you’re doing well. Thanks.