

"CALIBRATING"

WASHINGTON



ACADEMY

Mr. David Burden

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BACKGROUND TO INQUIRY

Context

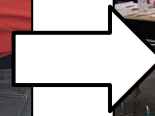
- This is my second year as an administrator, but my first year at Washington.
- I have been a teacher, instructional coach, and now principal all at this same building.
- All the first year growth and lessons learned, I have the opportunity to do try out again.

Dilemma

Holding myself to the same standard of expectations that I present to staff knowing that this first year will calibrate the building.

PURPOSE

I am a familiar face to my staff as a peer. Now as the principal, I am in a role that impacts the existing relationships. As I step in as the building leader, I am calibrating the staff to my expectations, cultural shifts and norms, and excellence in how we serve.



MY WONDERING

With my purpose, I wondered how to model and promote for my staff common expectations of prioritizing, protecting, and time management while holding myself to the same standard - as a principal, husband/father, and community member?

My PCM Base is a Thinker, and my Phase is a Harmonizer. For me, this means I am driven by logic decision-making as I create strategic plans to meet goals and objectives. However, to achieve this style of leadership, a collective efficacy is important for me to be at my best. This environment includes equal aspects of both home and school.

MY ACTIONS

I became curious about...

- 1) How to be intentional?
- 2) How to be protective of time and focus?
- 3) Why be an active participant?

My actions allowed for me to gain insight on the impact I have on my staff while focusing on my own behavior.

MY ACTIONS

- As I have a unique opportunity to have a first year again in my second year, I reflected with my wife on how I can conduct myself as a principal for impact with a long term plan.
- My AR cycle was focused on creating a healthy structure for myself that leads to a healthy framework for staff to operate within.
- Feedback from staff helps me gauge how effective I am at accomplishing a subjective goal through surveys, informal and formal conversations.
- The strategy takes time to implement as a habit and establishing new beliefs in staff will have to be measured throughout the year - September through April.

DATA COLLECTION

1) Staff Survey - Feedback on My Leadership

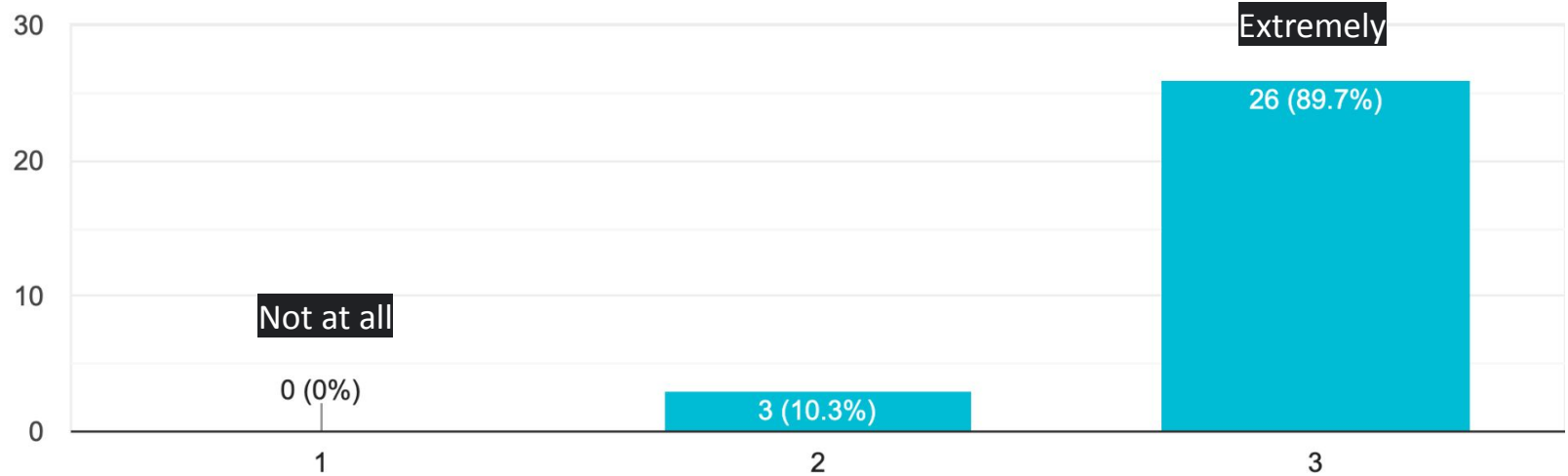
2) “Pulse” of Building - Reflections

- Walkthroughs
- Short & Long Observations
- Post-Evaluation Chats

DATA - SURVEY FEEDBACK

1a. How satisfied are you being at Washington?

29 responses



“I really appreciate the caring and welcoming community here at Washington. I also appreciate that I am respected as a professional, even as someone who is only in my second year of teaching. :)”

“It's been a hard adjustment...I mean that in the kindest way possible.”

“Love it! Wouldn't want to be in any other place.”

DATA - SURVEY FEEDBACK

2) How can I better serve you?

"I feel like you already do."

"Just be open with me if there is a problem I am doing wrong. Don't wait."

"No idea. All I really want from you you're doing, so I guess continue to be honest, be direct, follow through with kids and adults, and die on the Best-For-Kids Hill."

"You're doing a great job, David. I appreciate your support and encouragement."

"Continuing to check in and walk through."

"Just continue being you!"

"I feel that everything is good."

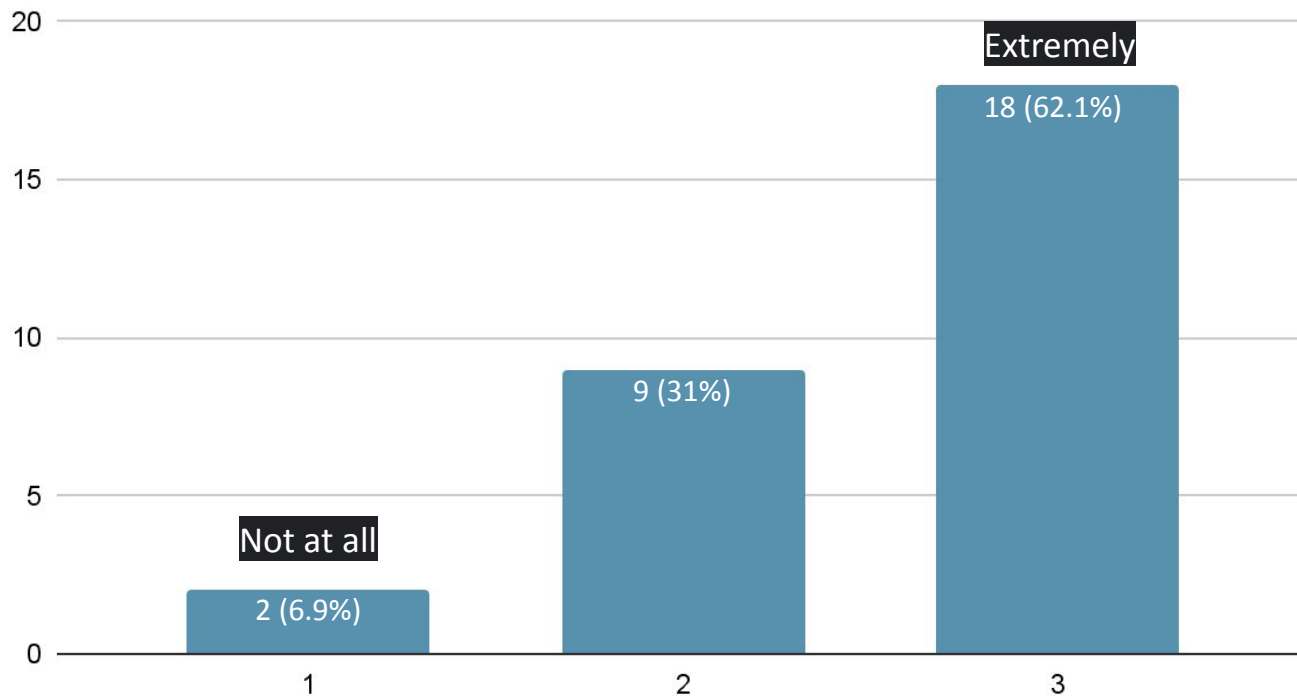
"You listen when I do need to ask you something."

"You are leading by a servant heart. I appreciate how you model and support daily."

"N/A"

DATA - SURVEY FEEDBACK

3a. Do you feel like you are balancing home and work well?



"I'm not there yet, but it helps that you encourage us to care for ourselves just as much as our focus is on kids."

"Small things you've done like weekly emails and how you lead staff meetings mean a lot. I notice the small moves you've made :)."

"No, but it is great to see you practice what you preach."

DATA – “PULSE” OF BUILDING

Walkthrough Notices

- Teachers spending time together both in PLC and in community.
- Support staff leaning in with students and teachers, and performing responsibilities.
- Student learning, behavior, and involvement have shown improvement from staff feedback on support and accountability.
- Routines, procedures, and systems are guaranteed and expected with clarity.

DATA – “PULSE” OF BUILDING

Short & Long Observations

- Teachers following through with instructional practices as expected.
- Students on task, learning is focused, and students understand what they are learning.
- Engagement between teacher and students that create a positive learning environment.
- Using data to drive planning, lessons, differentiated instruction, and groupings.

DATA – “PULSE” OF BUILDING

Post-Evaluation Chats

- Participating in professional development.
- Providing feedback for school improvement.
- Engaging students and families through positive communication and collaboration.
- On-time for meetings, duties, transitions.
- Following contractual hours - emails, time at school, and meeting work expectations.
- Take sick days, personal time, lunch breaks, and participate in building-wide community time together.

MY DISCOVERIES

Learning Statement One:

Over time, my words and actions will change behaviors of staff as their beliefs about the expectations of caring for life outside of work.

Learning Statement Two:

As I prioritize, protect and manage my time appropriately between home and school, I will have a better experience at work that will positively impact students and staff.



MY DISCOVERIES

Learning Statement One:

- *89.7% teachers are satisfied being at Washington.*
 - Staff survey data showcases that staff are responding to my behavior/leadership.
 - Teacher retention can be indirectly assured.
- *Statements like, “You listen when I do need to ask you something.” & “You are leading by a servant heart. I appreciate how you model and support daily.”*
 - Direct and open feedback has allowed for me to gain insight on how I can care and support staff more effectively that improves the working environment.
- *Staff taking sick days, using all personal days, and participating in school-wide community together.*
 - The impromptu conversations and intentional chats have shown that staff have a desire for boundaries between home and work.
 - Staff have expressed that they have not been given “permission” or had purposeful leadership model these expectations.

MY DISCOVERIES

Learning Statement Two:

- *62.1% of teachers expressed feeling that they are balancing home and school well.*
 - If I create clear boundaries by modeling and practicing expectations of balance, staff will be empowered to do the same.
 - There is still work to do as I continue to calibrate the building to a cultural shift that is sustainable.
- *Statements like, “Small things you’ve done like weekly emails and how you lead staff meetings mean a lot.” & “...it is great to see you practice what you preach.”*
 - Meeting my own standard is being recognized by staff.
 - Many small moves have made a big difference.
- *Post-evaluation chats showcase staff meeting Domain 3 & 4.*
 - Staff are showing up and being professional.
 - Engaging students and families appropriately.
 - Caring for themselves and feel “permission” to do so.

WHAT'S NEXT?

General Reflection:

- I've learned that my school is positioned to respond to new leadership.
- I've learned that my teachers desire an approach that models a healthy, sustainable balance of home and school.
- The implications of what I've learned is that my staff are watching me and as I make moves, the building will follow.
- My PCM strengths empower me with leadership that taps into making decisive decisions that are intentional and strategic.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Direction for the Future:

- Changes I've made and will continue are the transparent communication, clear expectations, and consistency going forward.
- My new wonderings are the long-term impacts on student learning experience, school-wide behavior, quality of instruction, and teacher retention. Will my practices and focus this year have a positive trajectory?
- For me to create a sustainable framework around the role of a principal and my family, leaning into relationships and nurture the environment around me.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ashcraft, Mike & Olsen, Rachel (2012). *My One Word*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.
- Whitaker, Todd (2013). *What Great Principals Do Differently: 18 Things That Matter Most*. New York, NY: Eye on Education.



“Calibrating”

Principal Name: Mr. David Burden

School Name: Washington STEM Academy

Principal’s Email Contact: dburden@warsawschools.org

Background Leading to My Inquiry (Slide 2)

This is my second year as an administrator, but my first year at Washington STEM Academy. I have spent 8 years as a teacher, 4 years as an instructional coach, and now 2 years as a principal. Eight of my years in education have been at Washington. All the first year growth and lessons learned at my first building, I’ve had the opportunity to do over again this year.

My dilemma is considering how to hold myself to the same standard of expectations that I present to staff. I say the right things to staff about self care, family first, and prioritizing time with balance between home and school. However, I need to practice the same as what I preach. This being my first year as the principal in the building where I’m a familiar face, is a critical time of calibrating the building to myself.

The Purpose of My Inquiry (Slide 3)

Therefore, the purpose of my action inquiry was to dive deeper into striking a healthy balance leading with words that match actions. To many in the building, they’ve known me as a peer. Now as the principal, I am in a role that impacts the existing relationships I have. As I step in as the building leader, I am calibrating the staff to my expectations, cultural shifts and norms, and excellence in how we serve students.

My Wondering (Slide 4)

With this purpose, I wondered how to model and promote for my staff common expectations of prioritizing, protecting, and time management while holding myself to the same standard. Not only as a principal, but also as a husband, father, and community member.

My Process Communication Model results showcased that I am a Base: Thinker and my Phase: Harmonizer. For me, this means I am driven by logic as I create strategic plans to meet goals and objectives. However, to achieve this style of leadership, a collective efficacy is important for me to be at my best. This environment includes equal aspects of both home and school.

My Actions (Slide 5-6)

I became curious about the following: “How can I be intentional with others?”, “How can I be protective of my time and focus?”, and finally, “Why should I promote a behavior of active

participation?” My curious questions led me to take actions that allowed for me to gain insight on the impact I have directly on my staff while focusing on my own behavior.

I am in a unique position to have a first year experience again. I have reflected with my wife on how I can conduct myself as a principal for impact with a long term strategic plan. My Action Research cycle was specifically focused on creating a healthy structure for myself that leads to a healthy framework that I can promote with all staff to operate within. Feedback I received from staff helps me gauge my effectiveness at accomplishing a subjective goal through surveys, informal and formal conversations. This strategy takes time to implement and guarantee as a habit as I look to establish new beliefs in my staff. Throughout this current school year I have been measuring from the months of September through April.

Data Collection (Slide 7)

I gathered data through two formats in an attempt to understand both qualitative and quantitative results of my Action Research project.

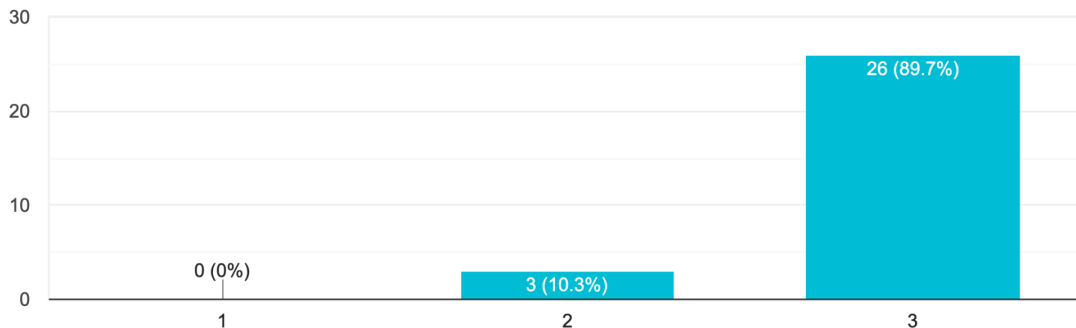
- 1) Staff Survey - Feedback on my leadership
- 2) “Pulse” of the building - Reflections
 - a) Walkthroughs
 - b) Short & Long Observations
 - c) Post Evaluation Chats

My Data (Slides 8-13)

SURVEY DATA

1a. How satisfied are you being at Washington?

29 responses



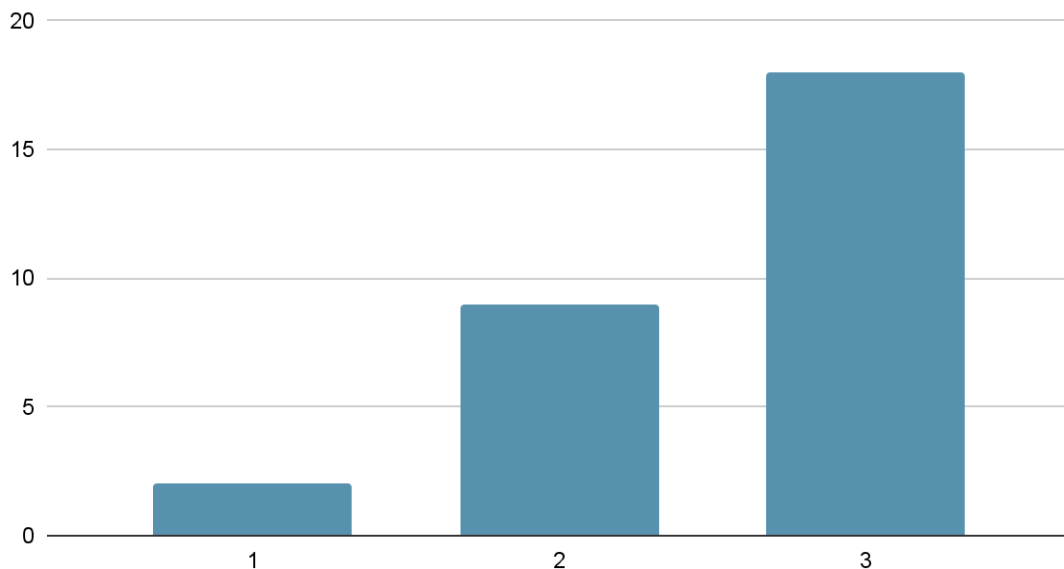
- “I really appreciate the caring and welcoming community here at Washington. I also appreciate that I am respected as a professional, even as someone who is only in my second year of teaching :)”

- “It’s been a hard adjustment... I mean that in the kindest way possible.”
- “Love it! Wouldn’t want to be in any other place.”

2. *How can I better serve you?*

- “I feel like you already do.”
- “Just be open with me if there is a problem I am doing wrong. Don’t wait.”
- “You’re doing a great job, David. I appreciate your support and encouragement.”
- “I feel that everything is good.”
- “You are leading by a servant heart. I appreciate how you model and support daily.”
- “Continuing to check in and walk through.”
- “No idea. All I really want from you you’re doing, so I guess continue to be honest, be direct, follow through with kids and adults, and die on the Best-For-Kids Hill.”
- “Just continue being you!”
- “N/A”
- “You listen when I do need to ask you something.”

3a. Do you feel like you are balancing home and work well?



- “I’m not there yet, but it helps that you encourage us to care for ourselves just as much as our focus is on kids.”
- “Small things you’ve done like weekly emails and how you lead staff meetings mean a lot. I notice the small moves you’ve made :).”
- “No, but it is great to see you practice what you preach.”

WALKTHROUGHS

- Teachers spending time together both in PLC and in community.
- Support staff leaning in with students and teachers, performing responsibilities.

- Student learning, behavior, and involvement have shown improvement from staff feedback on support and accountability.
- Routines, procedures, and systems are guaranteed and expected with clarity.

SHORT AND LONG OBSERVATIONS

- Teachers following through with instructional practices as expected.
- Students on task, learning is focused, and students understand what they are learning.
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- Using data to drive planning, lessons, differentiated instruction, and groupings.

POST EVALUATION CHATS

- Participating in professional development.
- Providing feedback for school improvement.
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- Following contractual hours - emails, time at school, and meeting work expectations.
- Taking sick days, personal time, lunch breaks, and participating in building-wide community time together.

My Discoveries (Slide 14-16)

Learning Statement One:

Over time, my words and actions will change the behaviors of staff as their beliefs about the expectations of caring for life outside of school.

- *89.7% teachers are satisfied being at Washington.*
 - Staff survey data showcases that staff are responding to my behavior/leadership.
 - Teacher retention can be indirectly assured.
- *Statements like, “You listen when I do need to ask you something.” & “You are leading by a servant heart. I appreciate how you model and support daily.”*
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Learning Statement Two:

As I prioritize protecting and managing my time appropriately between home and school, I will have a better experience at work that will positively impact students and staff.

- *62.1% of teachers expressed feeling that they are balancing home and school well.*
 - If I create clear boundaries by modeling and practicing expectations of balance, staff will be empowered to do the same.

- There is still work to do as I continue to calibrate the building to a cultural shift that is sustainable.
- *Statements like, “Small things you’ve done like weekly emails and how you lead staff meetings mean a lot.” & “...it is great to see you practice what you preach.”*
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- *Post-evaluation chats showcase staff meeting Domain 3 & 4.*
 - Staff are showing up and being professional.
 - Engaging students and families appropriately.
 - Caring for themselves and feel “permission” to do so.

Where I Am Heading Next (Slide 17-18)

General Reflection:

- I’ve learned that my school is positioned to respond to new leadership.
- I’ve learned that my teachers desire an approach that models a healthy, sustainable balance of home and school.
- The implications of what I’ve learned is that my staff are watching me and as I make moves, the building will follow.
- My PCM strengths empower me with leadership that taps into making decisive decisions that are intentional and strategic.

Direction for the Future:

- Changes I’ve made and will continue are the transparent communication, clear expectations, and consistency going forward.
- My new wonderings are the long-term impacts on student learning experience, school-wide behavior, quality of instruction, and teacher retention. Will my practices and focus this year have a positive trajectory?
- For me to create a sustainable framework around the role of a principal and my family, leaning into relationships and nurture the environment around me.

Bibliography (Slide 19)

- Ashcraft, Mike & Olsen, Rachel (2012). *My One Word*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.
- Whitaker, Todd (2013). *What Great Principals Do Differently: 18 Things That Matter Most*. New York, NY: Eye on Education.