

Our Path to First Choice No. 17

Everyone,

Here is Path Note No. 17. I apologize for the challenging topics, but these are good when understanding how we can improve. The topics will change over time, and will be a little easier and thought provoking. Be patient!

Our Path Topic

As we come closer to the end of the criteria used in the framework to guide us to First Choice, one of the final two is Operations. This one will also be divided into two weeks. How we operate is one of the biggest determinations of our success. It is the mechanics of our organization. It is what we do throughout our school system, and it addresses all areas. We need to know how we design, manage, improve, and innovate our educational programs and services and the work processes and how we improve operational effectiveness to deliver value to our students and other stakeholders and to achieve ongoing organizational success that leads us to "First Choice".

So, how do we design, manage, and improve our key educational programs and services and our work processes? First of all, we need to determine key educational program and service and work process requirements. Do we know what our key work processes are in the District? Teaching and Learning is certainly one, but there are more. This is where great school districts get separated from the average ones. Knowing that we do more than developing curriculum and instructional materials is part of it. Yes, it is our most important service, but we do have student support services as food service, transportation, customer relationships, and so much more that we do. Do we have clear processes within those key areas? Do we know the key requirements for those work processes?

The design of our educational programs and services and work processes to meet requirements also needs to be understood. Do we know how we incorporate new technology (not just computer-related), organizational knowledge, program and service excellence, customer value, and the potential need for agility into these programs, services, and processes? Remember, agility is the ability to be able to adjust to change due to external demands beyond our control. If PDE changes a direction or puts in place a new mandate that we are not expecting, or a completely different population of students enroll in our schools over a period of time that we are not prepared for typically, do we have processes and systems in place to be able to handle such change without diminishing the quality of excellence we provide?

Process is key to a quality and high functioning organization. As silly as it may sound, WASD needs to understand how our day-to-day operation of work processes ensure that we meet our key process requirements. In other words, do we measure or have indicators and in-process measures that control and improve our work processes? Do we measure the success of the things we do every day towards achieving success in areas like teaching and learning, custodial services, technology services, food services, etc.? Interestingly, PDE sets standards and creates measures as PSSAs and Keystones to see if we accomplished achievement of students. But, they do not typically require us to measure the processes we use to get to that point. Yes, they require teachers to go through the evaluation process, but there are processes within that process. They are still only looking at "post-mortem" results, and not process results.

WASD also has to realize what its key support processes are in the organization. We need to know who the day-to-day operation of these processes ensure that they meet key organizational support requirements. One of our key work processes would be creating a safe environment. Sub-processes would include conducting risk assessments, preparing for emergencies, managing student behavior, responding to and recovering from emergencies, controlling access of buildings, and managing clearances. These are just a few examples of knowing the processes within our major or key work processes.

Another area that separates the great from the good is knowing what process or ongoing system we have to improve our work processes to increase student learning, improve educational programs and services and performance, enhance our core competencies, and reduce variability. Such tools as ADLI (Approach/Deployment/Learning/Integration) or PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) are tools to use for improvement. However, who meets to review the processes, when and how often do they meet, and what data is being used to review the success of our processes and achievement of what we do? I tell administrators all the time that, yes, you now have a process, but you need to review it every six months, a year, maybe more or less depending on the process. Using ADLI is a great way to evaluate the process's effectiveness.

Finally, how do we manage for innovation? This is a unique concept in the public education world these days. However, it is becoming more and more a topic of need for success. Pursuing the strategic opportunities that you determine are intelligent risks indeed important. Usually, organizations will use the strategic planning process for managing for innovation. Once a direction is set, then action plans are devised. During the construction of the action plan, innovative ideas can be shared. This doesn't mean that it is the only place for innovation, but it is a way to manage for innovation. Strategic planning, action planning, and improvement teams are a few ways to discontinue pursuing opportunities (or ideas that are not as effective anymore) at the appropriate time to enhance support for higher-priority opportunities. When it comes to financing and use of resources with innovation, again, strategically planning is key to using resources effectively to innovate. However, grants, donations, and other additional funding opportunities add to our ability to innovate.

Many organizations use such the Lean Enterprise System, Six Sigma methodology, ISO quality or other process improvement tools. Although we are using what has been the topics in the updates this year, any tool will help an organization with performance quality.

Next week, we will finish up with our look at Operations by looking at how we ensure effective management of our operations. This is good organizational theory for ongoing improvement, but it is also a good organic way to fall asleep at night if you seem to be struggling with that!! It will make more sense over time, but, for now, it is a challenging concept.

Board Meeting

The next school board meeting is January 9th.

Review for You

- What are the Systemic Challenges listed in the WASD Comprehensive Plan?

Events

- The High School Choral Concert is Sunday, December 17th at 2 PM in the Oyer Auditorium.
- The Middle School Winter Concert is Tuesday, December 19th, at 7 PM also in the Oyer Auditorium at the High School.
- Rotary held the annual Financial Literacy program at the high school last week. A program where business class students were able to apply their knowledge to real-life situations. A big thank you to the community members of Rotary that led the events.

WASD Pride!

A big kudos to Caroline Tassone and her students.

2017 FBLA Region 26 Winners

The following students competed at the Region Leadership Conference on December 11 and qualified for the State Competition.

- 1st place: Cameron Burkholder & Nathan Lochstampfor (team event) Banking & Financial System
1st place: Alexis Rosenberry Health Care Administration
- 1st place: Colin Donatto Introduction to FBLA
- 1st place: Josh McCleaf Introduction to Parliamentary Procedure
- 1st place: Kayla Cheshier Client Service
- 1st place: Tiffany Day Hospitality Management
- 2nd place: Ashlyn Beck Agribusiness
- 2nd place: Hannah Ito Cyber Security
- 2nd place: Caleb McCleaf Introduction to Business
- 2nd place: Nicole Jones Introduction to Financial Math
- 2nd place: Sydnee Christian Introduction to Parliamentary Procedure
- 3rd place: Mia Harris Advertising
- 3rd place: Audrey Foreman Economics
- 3rd place: Kassidy Heise Introcudtion to Business Procedures

Please be aware that six students entered events that there is not a pre-qualification at the region level. The top ten entries at the state level get to advance to the next level of competition. These students will be advised Jan. 19 as to whether they advance.

Piece of the Puzzle

- This week's Piece of the Puzzle is Denise McCleaf. Denise is without a doubt a big part of what holds the office together at WASHS. She is a wonderful team player, who does the best that she can no matter what she is doing. Denise is flexible and willing to adjust and accommodate whenever she can. She comes in early, stays late, is willing to learn new things, and is the smiling face that greets the office with a "hi! how can I help you!" She is instrumental every year with Kindergarten registration and the senior night football game. She volunteers her time to serve as the advisor for the Junior Civitan Club at WASHS, which under her leadership, has made great strides since it has been in existence. Before working at WASHS Denise was also a huge part

of the Waynesboro Community and member of Hooverville's PTO. Denise is an amazing asset to the WASD team, which is why she was nominated to be the WASD Piece of the Puzzle.

Review Answers

- WASD's Systemic Challenges are:
 - Technology for Achievement
 - Focused Professional Development with fidelity.
 - System to assure effective instructional practices.
 - Assure use of standard-aligned PA Standards Assessments.

Final Thoughts

- *Life is meant to be a challenge, because they make you grow.*—Manny Paquiao
- *The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.*—Martin Luther King, Jr.
- *I like to set myself a new adventure challenge at least once or twice a year, because I love that side of my life. I love getting fit and training for it.*—Richard Branson
- *Life comes with many challenges. The ones that should not scare us are the ones we can take on and take control of.*—Angelina Jolie
- *How you handle the challenges of your life will define your life.*—Billy Cox
- *We don't grow when things are easy. We grow when we face challenges.*—Picture Quotes.
- *Don't limit your challenges. Challenge your limits.*—Anonymous

Have a great rest of the week. There will be another update before the winter break. We have a full week to go. Enjoy your holiday season!

Tod