A hundred years from now it will not matter what my bank account was, the sort of house I lived in, or the kind of car I drove... but, the world may be a better place because I was important in the life of a child.

~Dr. Forest E. Witcraft
Within My Power, Scouting, October 1950
Who Are We?

Barbara has thirty-six years in public education, with seventeen of those years in administration. During her eleven year tenure as principal of Scott Johnson Elementary in Huntsville, Texas, she brought national recognition to Scott Johnson by being on the cutting edge of school reform. Under her leadership, Scott Johnson became a mentor school for the Accelerated School Project, in association with Stanford University, and a recognized school by the Texas Education Association. Upon leaving the elementary school principalship, Barbara began teaching in the education department at Sam Houston State University, mentoring first-year teachers and principals in area schools, and supervising student teachers.

Susan has thirty years of experience in public education and is currently the principal of The Academy for Technology and the Classics in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Susan has also served as the principal of Santa Fe High School and El Dorado Elementary in Santa Fe, New Mexico and of Huntsville High School in Huntsville, Texas. Having prekindergarten through twelfth grade experience, she has vast knowledge in school organization and redesign. Under her leadership, Huntsville High School was a nationally recognized school in its work in restructuring and improvement and has been highlighted by the U.S. Department of Education, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.

Barbara and Susan are authors of THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL’S GUIDE TO A SUCCESSFUL OPENING AND CLOSING OF THE SCHOOL YEAR with the foreword written by Drs. Harry and Rosemary Wong. All of the documents included in this handout, plus many more, can be found in this book.

Visit us at our website, principalhelp.com, or contact us at our email address.

bskeeters@aol.com

slumley@sfps.info
Message from Barbara and Susan

We believe the principal sets the tone and creates the personality of the school.
We believe the success of a school depends on the leadership provided by the principal.
We believe successful principals have a vision, a passion, and a commitment to developing the whole child.
We believe successful principals base their leadership decisions on the individual needs of children to ensure academic success.
We believe successful principals promote an atmosphere of mutual respect and collaboration with students, parents, and teachers through building positive relationships and providing a warm and caring environment.
We believe in an appropriate sharing of responsibilities among all stakeholders to reduce confusion and ensure buy-in.
We believe successful principals value the need to be organized, display the ability to prioritize, and have an unfailing desire to accomplish all of their duties efficiently and effectively.
We believe in, and strive for, the essential characteristics needed in quality leadership: honesty, integrity, organizational skills, interpersonal skills, and an unfailing commitment to promoting academic achievement.
We believe the principal has an abundance of responsibilities to complete each day and that practical and easy-to-use resources are essential to the efficient and effective accomplishment of these tasks.

The education we want for our children must be the education we want for all children.
~Author Unknown
Time Management Systems

- Quick Audit

- Revisit Your Goals

- Prioritize

- Block Your Day and Your Time

- Delegate

- Weekly Planner
Opening of School
Principal’s Master Timeline and Checklists
FOUR WEEKS BEFORE THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

(Date started)

Planning, Preparation, and Collaboration

(Assignments may be delegated to principal (P), assistant principal (AP), counselors (C), team leaders/department chairs as appropriate (TL or DC), or teachers (T).)

_____ Write personal goals/vision for the school year.
_____ Complete staffing.
_____ Determine room assignments.
_____ Confirm important terms on School/District Terminology List.
_____ Meet with office staff.
_____ Meet with assistant principal(s) and make duty assignments for assistant principals and counselors for the month of August.
_____ Determine theme for the new school year.
_____ Organize Planning Retreat with team leaders/department chairs, administrative staff, and parent representatives.
_____ Study School Improvement Teams.
_____ Study School-Wide Discipline Management Plan to determine strengths and weaknesses.

_____ Study Teacher Learning Teams.

_____ Write and mail a Welcome Back letter to faculty and staff.

_____ Write and mail an invitation to team leaders/department chairs for the beginning of the year meeting/retreat.

_____ Write and mail a beginning of the year New Teacher Letter to new teachers.

_____ Write and mail a faculty/staff Introduction to the New Principal - Getting to Know You Survey (if principal is new to school).

_____ Determine New Teacher Coaches for new faculty. (See New Teacher Coach/Qualifications Checklist.)

_____ Write and mail a Letter to New Teacher Coaches.

_____ Organize staff development for new teachers. (May be specific to the campus and district.)

_____ Plan staff development for the beginning of the year and create agendas.

_____ Revise Teacher Handbook.

_____ Revise tri-fold Parent/Guardian Brochure.

_____ Organize a Welcome Back to School Party for the faculty and staff.

_____ Meet with head custodians for an update on progress of Custodial Summer List.
Determine date, time, and food served for the beginning of the year Parent Teacher Organization/Administrator Meeting.

Schedule student social activities for the school year and place on the Master Calendar.

Review field trip guidelines and field trip requests.

Organize and plan Meet and Greet and New to School Student/Parent/Guardian Orientation.

Determine classroom assignments for new students.

Complete Master Schedule.
Principal’s Master Checklist
by
Staff/Volunteer Responsibilities
(Principal, Assistant Principal, Counselor, Secretary, PTO)

_____________________________________
(Date started)

Principal Responsibilities

_____ Complete staffing.

_____ Meet with assistant principal(s), counselor(s), and office staff and make duty assignments.

_____ Organize a Beginning of the Year Planning Retreat.

_____ Plan staff development and give necessary materials and instructions to secretary.

_____ Confirm furniture is placed in appropriate rooms (not to be moved without principal approval).

_____ Create Team Leader/Department Chair agenda and packet.

_____ Create New Teacher Welcome Packet.

_____ Create Did You Know? bulletins stating informational news about district/school to be passed out first ten days of school. ( Recommend sharing one page per day or one email per day to avoid information overload.)

_____ Set Open House date and give to central office.

_____ Organize Meet and Greet for students and parents/guardians (to be held the day before school starts).

_____ Make lunch schedule for teachers. (Give copy to the cafeteria.)
**Weekly Bulletin Template**

(Organization)

Date

Let’s Celebrate Our Successes:

*HAPPY BIRTHDAY!*

Positive Thought:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Duty Schedule for the Week:

Friendly Reminders from the Principal:

Messages From:

Special Information/Articles
Let’s Celebrate Our Successes:
THANKS to Allison and Jan H. for taking the Art Club, Safety Patrol, and Student Council to the Ropes Course.
THANKS to Kristie and her class for being “community helpers” and picking up the trash around our campus.
THANKS to our Teacher Assistants for organizing our Big Books.
THANKS to our Advisory Council for a great meeting Wednesday night.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!
Jan D. (Oct. 1), Betsy (Oct. 3), Danielle (Oct. 3), and Carolyn (Oct. 6)

Positive Thought: One of the most difficult things to give away is kindness, for it is usually returned. ~Author Unknown

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MONDAY</th>
<th>TUESDAY</th>
<th>WEDNESDAY</th>
<th>THURSDAY</th>
<th>FRIDAY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3:30 Team Leader/Dept. Chair Mtg.</td>
<td>12:00 SOS Parent/Community/Mentor Orientation/Training</td>
<td>School Spirit Day – Wear PURPLE!</td>
<td>DRESS UP DAY – Picture Day</td>
<td>Counselor in classrooms all day sharing character educ. lessons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30 Student Intervention Mtg.</td>
<td>1:30 Fire Dept. visits Kindergarten</td>
<td>3:30 Faculty Mtg. Second Grade Team in charge of snacks.</td>
<td>3:30 New Teacher Mtg. in the library.</td>
<td>2:30 Fourth grade Math Teacher’s Mtg. in the Science Lab.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morning Cafeteria Duty this week: Patty B. and Carol G.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Last day to order school shirts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the Principal (Barbara):
- Please remember students and staff members need to wear their name badges all day, every day.
- Please remember to recognize your students daily for their kind deeds in the classroom.
• PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE only allow a child to change going home plans if:
  o You received a signed note from the parent/guardian that day.
  o You received a message from the office that day stating the parent/guardian called and changed going home plans.

If you have not received a note or a call, the student must go home by the way the parent originally stated. (Please do not let a student beg you into changing his or her plans.)

From the Assistant Principal (Angee): 3rd/4th teachers: Thank you for having your students write letters of appreciation to the book cover sponsors.

From the Counselor (Debbie): We are hosting a Strengthen One Student (SOS) parent/community mentor training on Tuesday from 12:00 until 1:00. Mentoring of an individual student will take place during the student’s lunchtime. Please invite your spouses, friends, etc. to join our mentoring program. There are flyers in my office. Thank you for supporting the SOS Mentoring Program. If you have questions, please see me.

From the Office: The last day to order and pay for purple school shirts is Friday. Please see Reba, Laura, or Michelle if you would like to order a school shirt.

From the Librarian (Karen): The Fire Prevention materials will be on a cart in the library for your use during the month of October. Please check out only two or three books/materials at a time and return them as soon as you are finished. Thanks!

From the Parent Organization (Sherry): We would like your input on how to spend the funds ($2,000) from our recent fundraiser. Please submit your ideas and prices to the Parent Organization box in the office. Thanks!

Theme for the Year ~ Random Acts of Kindness

Random Acts of Kindness are those little sweet or grand lovely things we do for no reason except that, momentarily, the best of our humanity has sprung, exquisitely, into full bloom.

~ Daphne Rose Kingma

Random Acts of Kindness

How can you practice random acts of kindness?

1. If you know someone who is having a bad day or going through a difficult time, make it better by doing something kind (even if it is very small) to show you care. Try keeping your kind deed a secret!

Planning Retreat Outline
*Steps Leading to School Improvement*  
*from Inception to Practice*

A planning retreat prior to the start of school is a valuable tool used to improve school climate and increase student achievement; however, the logistics necessary to plan a retreat may seem overwhelming. The process, from inception to practice, is outlined below to guide you through the steps necessary to execute the plan successfully. While the planning and implementation of these tasks/activities are time consuming, the end results are worth the effort.

**Steps to Planning a School Retreat**

- Determine funding source(s)
- Identify date, place, time, food, and supplies
- Identify participants and confirm participation
- Assign tasks to personnel
- Plan Agenda
  - Team Building Activity
  - Review the School Mission/Vision Statement
  - Build the School of Our Dreams
  - Groups create a school of their dreams and share.
  - Best Brains Activity
  - Each group member has the opportunity to be the *best brain* to develop the school vision statement.
  - List School Strengths
  - Members of the group lists strengths of their school based on their beliefs.
  - Record information on chart paper, tally, and share results.
  - Analyze School Data
  - Disaggregate data.
  - Determine strengths and weaknesses from data.
  - Define Academic Strengths, Challenges, and Needs
  - Members of the group list academic strengths determined from the data and challenges determined from the data. Record information on chart paper, tally, and share results.
  - Define and Prioritize Goals for the Coming Year
Members review data, narrow list of strengths and weaknesses, prioritize categories with note cards and chart paper, tally, and pick two or three challenging areas for improvement goals.

Prioritize Goals to be Researched by the School Improvement Team
Example 1: School-Wide Discipline Management Plan
Example 2: Teacher Learning Teams

**Steps after the Retreat**

- Teachers present results from the planning retreat to the faculty
- Stakeholders participate in School Improvement Teams
  - School Improvement Teams meet to establish goals designed by the faculty and staff for overall school improvement, write objectives, and create an action plan. They report to the Principal’s Leadership Team and present ideas to the entire faculty.
- School Improvement Teams Study
  - School-Wide Discipline Management Plan
    - School Improvement Team members evaluate current plan identifying strengths and weaknesses.
    - Administrative team selects three to five models based on success rates, training, and cost to the district and arranges site visits.
    - The School Improvement Team researches, studies, and shares information with the faculty.
    - Stakeholders come to consensus on which plan best fits their school.
    - Training and implementation follow.
  - Teacher Learning Teams
    - School Improvement Team studies the components to form Teacher Learning Teams based on information researched by the principal or team, visits school sites implementing successful Teacher Learning Teams, and shares information with faculty.
    - Stakeholders come to consensus, and training and implementation follow.
New Teacher Coach Qualifications
Checklist

Choosing the right coach for a new teacher is extremely important. Rather than asking for volunteers, assigning teachers because they are not involved, or assigning teachers without asking them, please consider looking for a teacher who meets specific criteria before making final coach decisions. The principal’s choice will make the difference in the success of the new teacher during his or her first year in your school.

The principal should consider the following when choosing new teacher coaches:

_____ Is the teacher willing to take on the added responsibility of being a coach?
_____ Is the teacher a professional?
_____ Is the teacher positive?
_____ Is the teacher a good role model?
_____ Is the teacher friendly?
_____ Is the teacher tactful?
_____ Is the teacher a good listener?
_____ Is the teacher organized?
_____ Is the teacher willing to share ideas?
_____ Is the teacher a solver of challenges and a creator of solutions?
_____ Does the teacher have knowledge of the specific subject matter needed by the new teacher?
_____ Is the teacher able to teach model lessons for the new teacher to observe?

_____ Does the teacher have good classroom management skills?

_____ Does the teacher have at least three years of experience?

_____ Will the teacher have the same conference period to assist in planning?

* Teachers possessing a majority of the key attributes listed above would make excellent coaches for new teachers.

** Some schools are able to pay a small stipend to faculty members chosen to be new teacher coaches.
New Teacher/Coach Checklist

Teacher___________________________

Coach____________________________

Please meet with your coach to discuss topics listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>I UNDERSTAND</th>
<th>I NEED MORE INFORMATION</th>
<th>DATE OF TRAINING DISCUSSION (Sign Off)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily Procedures</td>
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<tr>
<td>Handbook</td>
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<tr>
<td>Behavior Management Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preparing for a Substitute</td>
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<td>Playground Safety Rules</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade Book/Grading</td>
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<td>Language Arts</td>
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<td>Math</td>
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<td>Science</td>
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<td>Social Studies</td>
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<td>State Standards</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instructional Videos</td>
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<tr>
<td>*Classroom Observation</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Reading/Writing</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Math</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Peer coaching observation dates to be determined with teacher and coach.
New Teacher/Coach meeting dates
with the principal:

Bimonthly: __________  __________  __________  __________

Teacher Signature: _________________________________ Date________

Coach Signature: _________________________________ Date________
Visit us at our website, principalhelp.com, or contact us at our email address.

bskeeters@aol.com

slumley@sfps.info