

Colleague Roundtable: Fostering Teacher Partnership and Engagement

WHAT IS THIS RESOURCE FOR? This one-pager provides an overview of the key-takeaways from our conversation with Superintendents and our Friends at RALLY communications on fostering teacher partnership and engagement. Hear what fellow Superintendents have to say about the current state of teacher engagement, how communication can influence teacher engagement, and how to keep the things sacred that come from you as a superintendent. **RALLY communications is offering biweekly office hours to district and system leadership teams in the Leading Now community. Email mrivera@wearerally.com to schedule office hours today!**

1. How would you characterize the current state of teacher engagement in your district right now? How do you know, and how do you stay close to evidence?

- Having teachers on the instructional level at each school. **Teachers teaching teachers** is where I see the best results.
- Two-fold approach: professional learning, we hear teachers say they want professional development that's meaningful to what they are doing. They also want to be **incentivized**. Earn tickets to opt-out day of work. The stricter we are on what to teach, we receive push back from teachers. **Teacher autonomy**.
- Teachers are thrown into the political fire. Our feedback shows teachers are worn down by the political rhetoric, so their engagement is low. **Shield teachers from the political environment**. Message to teachers to not be distracted.

2. How are you thinking about how your own communication can influence teacher engagement at this moment?

- Since COVID, my habit is to read the daily teacher absence report. I often reach out by phone or drop by their classroom to check on those who are out for more than a day to see if we can support or assist.
- Give the question back to them: "How do you see my role in that?" This shows appreciation that you are willing to listen.
- Being more visible. Ask teachers for feedback. Frequent communication.

3. How do you keep sacred the things that need to come from you? Are there things you hold close that only YOU need to activate when it comes to teacher engagement?

- I took back being the primary lead at all my schools. Two days a week I am at schools **walking the halls and being in the classroom**.
- Speaking to paraprofessionals gives them something to look forward to.
- **Providing access** makes a difference.
- I am **present at committee meetings**, which has made a difference.
- **Weekly newsletter**, from me, helps communicate major issues in my voice.
- Being out there is essential. Leadership by walking around. **Teachers are more genuine with their feedback when you stop by**. It creates spontaneity and authentic feedback.