

INSTRUCTIONAL
LEADERSHIP
ASSOCIATION

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Episode #84

Professionalism in Excessively Demanding Times



Our Essential Question



How can a mindset of *professionalism* get us through our toughest times as educators, and how can leaders help teachers cultivate a mindset of professionalism?

What Is the Heroism Mindset?



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What Is the Heroism Mindset?

- I am the hero
- I will do whatever it takes
- There's no problem too big
- I will survive because I'm special

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What Is The Professionalism Mindset?

- I am a person with a specific set of skills
- I am a whole person who is more than my role
- I am part of a profession that extends beyond this job, this employer, and this situation
- My role is one of many in a larger ecosystem of professionals working in the same field
- My role is shaped by professional norms that transcend my current circumstances

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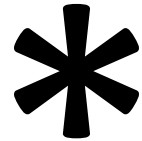
Professionals Have Responsibilities

- We are responsible for specific duties
- We are responsible for results*
- We are responsible for following professional norms*

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The Year of the *



One of our norms is doing “whatever it takes” to get results for students...and this year, that’s often impossible.

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Bridge The Gaps You Can



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Professionals Aren't Superheroes



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Professionals Have Boundaries

- Go home at the end of the day
- Control what you can control
- Ensure appropriate working conditions
- Work to professional standards, not “whatever it takes no matter what” which is often impossible

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Helping Teachers Shift from Heroism to Professionalism

- What professional norms are relevant to this situation?
- What limitations are we working within that may constrain our ability to produce results?
- What unrealistic expectations are teachers holding onto?
- What CAN we do? (Less but better)

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Domain 4—Now More Than Ever

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Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities

Component	Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
4a: Reflecting on Teaching	The teacher does not know whether a lesson was effective or achieved its instructional outcomes, or the teacher profoundly misjudges the success of a lesson. The teacher has no suggestions for how a lesson could be improved.	The teacher has a generally accurate impression of a lesson's effectiveness and the extent to which instructional outcomes were met. The teacher makes general suggestions about how a lesson could be improved.	The teacher makes an accurate assessment of a lesson's effectiveness and the extent to which it achieved its instructional outcomes and can cite general references to support the judgment. The teacher makes a few specific suggestions of what could be tried another time the lesson is taught.	The teacher makes a thoughtful and accurate assessment of a lesson's effectiveness and the extent to which it achieved its instructional outcomes, citing many specific examples from the lesson and weighing the relative strengths of each. Drawing on an extensive repertoire of skills, the teacher offers specific alternative actions, complete with the probable success of different courses of action.
4b: Maintaining Accurate Records	The teacher's system for maintaining information on student completion of assignments and student progress in learning is nonexistent or in disarray. The teacher's records for noninstructional activities are in disarray, the result being errors and confusion.	The teacher's system for maintaining information on student completion of assignments and student progress in learning is rudimentary and only partially effective. The teacher's records for noninstructional activities are adequate but inefficient and, unless given frequent oversight by the teacher, prone to errors.	The teacher's system for maintaining information on student completion of assignments, student progress in learning, and noninstructional records is fully effective.	The teacher's system for maintaining information on student completion of assignments, student progress in learning, and noninstructional records is fully effective. Students contribute information and participate in maintaining the records.
4c: Communicating with Families	The teacher provides little information about the instructional program to families; the teacher's communication about students' progress is minimal. The teacher does not respond, or responds insensitively, to parental concerns.	The teacher makes sporadic attempts to communicate with families about the instructional program and about the progress of individual students but does not attempt to engage families in the instructional program. Moreover, the communication that does take place may not be culturally sensitive to those families.	The teacher provides frequent and appropriate information to families about the instructional program and conveys information about individual student progress in a culturally sensitive manner. The teacher makes some attempts to engage families in the instructional program.	The teacher communicates frequently with families in a culturally sensitive manner, with students contributing to the communication. The teacher responds to family concerns with professional and cultural sensitivity. The teacher's efforts to engage families in the instructional program are frequent and successful.
4d: Participating in the Professional Community	The teacher's relationships with colleagues are negative or self-serving. The teacher avoids participation in a professional culture of inquiry, resisting opportunities to become involved. The teacher avoids becoming involved in school events or school and district projects.	The teacher maintains cordial relationships with colleagues to fulfill duties that the school or district requires. The teacher participates in the school's culture of professional inquiry when invited to do so. The teacher participates in school events and school and district projects when specifically asked.	The teacher's relationships with colleagues are characterized by mutual support and cooperation; the teacher actively participates in a culture of professional inquiry. The teacher volunteers to participate in school events and in school and district projects, making a substantial contribution.	The teacher's relationships with colleagues are characterized by mutual support and cooperation, with the teacher taking initiative in assuming leadership among the faculty. The teacher takes a leadership role in promoting a culture of professional inquiry. The teacher volunteers to participate in school events and district projects, making a substantial contribution and assuming a leadership role in at least one aspect of school or district life.
4e: Growing and Developing Professionally	The teacher engages in no professional development activities to enhance knowledge or skill. The teacher resists feedback on teaching performance from either supervisors or more experienced colleagues. The teacher makes no effort to share knowledge with others or to assume professional responsibilities.	The teacher participates to a limited extent in professional activities when they are convenient. The teacher engages in a limited way with colleagues and supervisors in professional conversation about practice, including some feedback on teaching performance. The teacher finds limited ways to assist other teachers and contribute to the profession.	The teacher seeks out opportunities for professional development to enhance content knowledge and pedagogical skill. The teacher actively engages with colleagues and supervisors in professional conversation about practice, including feedback about practice. The teacher participates actively in assisting other educators and looks for ways to contribute to the profession.	The teacher seeks out opportunities for professional development and makes a systematic effort to conduct action research. The teacher solicits feedback on practice from both supervisors and colleagues. The teacher initiates important activities to contribute to the profession.
4f Showing Professionalism	The teacher displays dishonesty in interactions with colleagues, students, and the public. The teacher is not alert to students' needs and contributes to school practices that result in some students' being ill served by the school. The teacher makes decisions and recommendations that are based on self-serving interests. The teacher does not comply with school and district regulations.	The teacher is honest in interactions with colleagues, students, and the public. The teacher's attempts to serve students are inconsistent, and unknowingly contributes to some students being ill served by the school. The teacher's decisions and recommendations are based on limited though genuinely professional considerations. The teacher must be reminded by supervisors about complying with school and district regulations.	The teacher displays high standards of honesty, integrity, and confidentiality in interactions with colleagues, students, and the public. The teacher is active in serving students, working to ensure that all students receive a fair opportunity to succeed. The teacher maintains an open mind in team or departmental decision making. The teacher complies fully with school and district regulations.	The teacher can be counted on to hold the highest standards of honesty, integrity, and confidentiality and takes a leadership role with colleagues. The teacher is highly proactive in serving students, seeking out resources when needed. The teacher makes a concerted effort to challenge negative attitudes or practices to ensure that all students, particularly those traditionally underserved, are honored in the school. The teacher takes a leadership role in team or departmental decision making and helps ensure that such decisions are based on the highest professional standards. The teacher complies fully with school and district regulations, taking a leadership role with colleagues.

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Two High-Risk Environments for Professionals

If you work in a *charter school* or *religious school*, norms may be in place that conflict with the professional mindset.

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Professionals Are Interchangeable

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Being a member of a profession means being—to some extent—interchangeable with other professionals.

You may feel indispensable, and your loss would be very disruptive—but we are ALL replaceable, and we WILL all be replaced at some point.

Impossible Situations & Toxic Organizations

Many educators are working in impossible situations and/or in toxic organizations.

You cannot fix these situations by working harder.

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A Goal for Professionalism: Sustainability

- Students benefit the most from a stable, professional workforce—not unsustainable heroics from the educators who happen to serve them at the moment
- Keeping professionals in the profession is more important than any short-term goal

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Text Me: 501-222-4415

How are you doing?

What does it look like for teachers
and leaders to be professionals
right now?

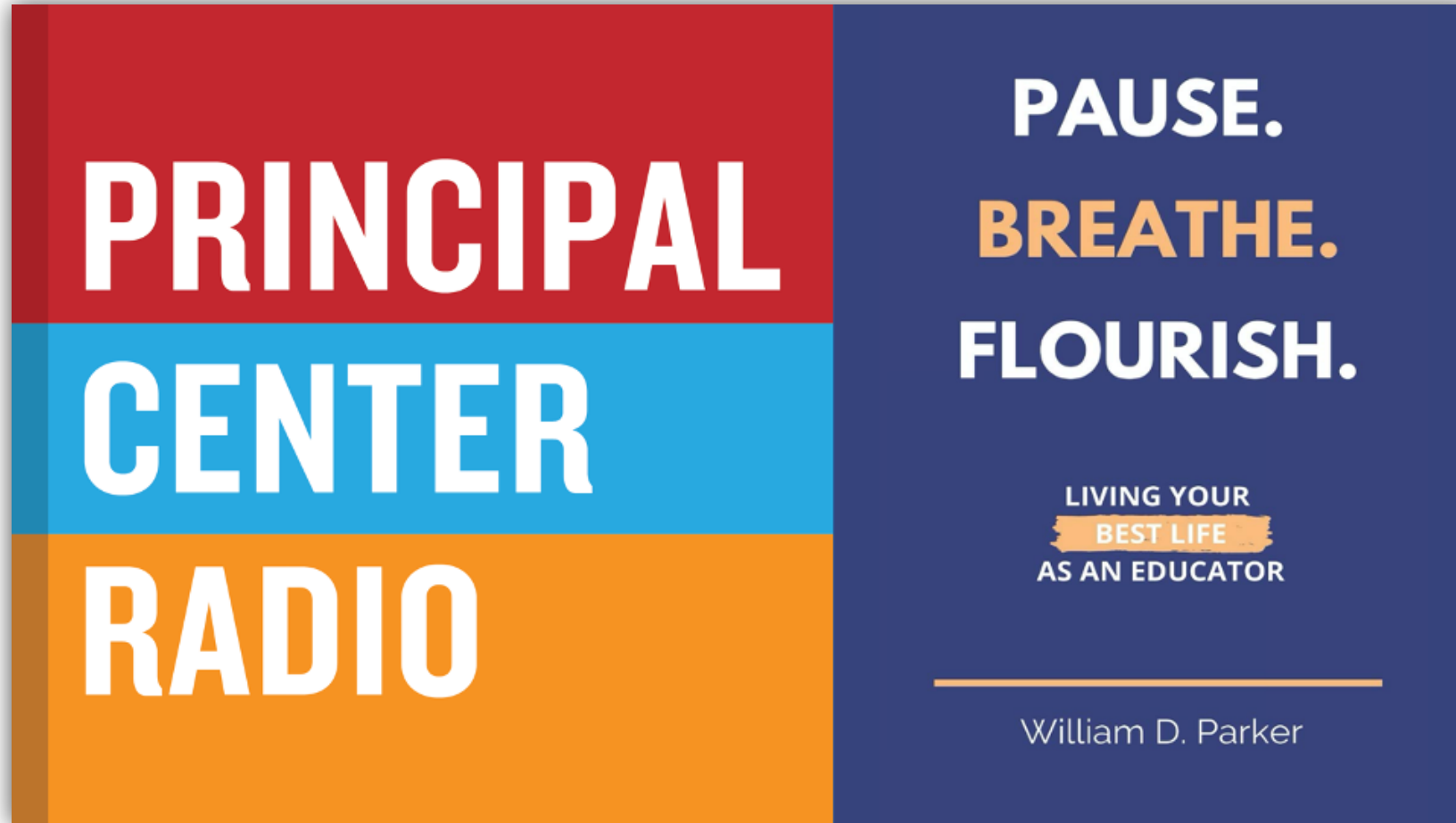
Text me at 501-222-4415
and let me know

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Interview with William D. Parker

PrincipalCenter.com/radio



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