



# RECONNECT

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INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP FOR TEACHER PRACTICE,  
STUDENT LEARNING, & SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

WITH JUSTIN BAEDER, PHD

 THE PRINCIPAL CENTER



# What We'll Cover

In this free webinar, you'll get an action plan for reconnecting your instructional leadership, in the midst of a year full of disconnection.

We'll explore:

- How to "get into classrooms" and stay connected with staff when you can't visit in person (and how to keep your momentum when things change)
- How to bring staff together around professional practice, even if the normal meetings and traditions have been disrupted
- How to zero in on student learning, whether students are learning remotely or in-person
- How to get teachers on the same page about key practices, so next school year is your strongest ever
- A completely different way of thinking about practice that respects teaching's complexity while giving teachers crystal-clear guidance about how to improve



It All Boils Down To This...



In a year of disconnection,  
How do we reconnect?





# How To Reconnect with Teachers

“Getting into classrooms” when you can’t get  
into classrooms

# Our Two Biggest Needs



As instructional leaders who want to help teachers **perform** at their best and **improve**, our two biggest needs are:

1. Relationships

2. Context

(not data)



# The Loss of Casual Interaction



Where do you normally have  
informal interactions with staff?



# The Loss of Casual Interaction

- Staff lounge
- Hallways
- Classroom visits
- “Got a minute?”
- Arrival/departure
- Passing period/recess
- Mail room
- Photocopier
- Parking lot
- Before/after meetings





# The Loss of Casual Interaction

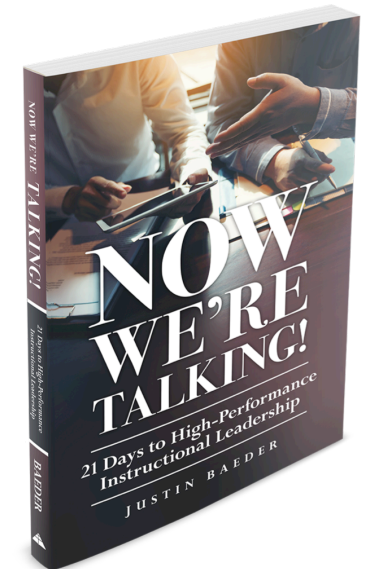
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*Scheduling a Zoom  
meeting just isn't  
the same.*



# When You Can Visit Classrooms

- 3 visits/day, 5-10 minutes each
- Every teacher every two weeks
- Be present and pleasant
- Chat briefly afterward
- Ramp up feedback over three cycles
- Share your notes





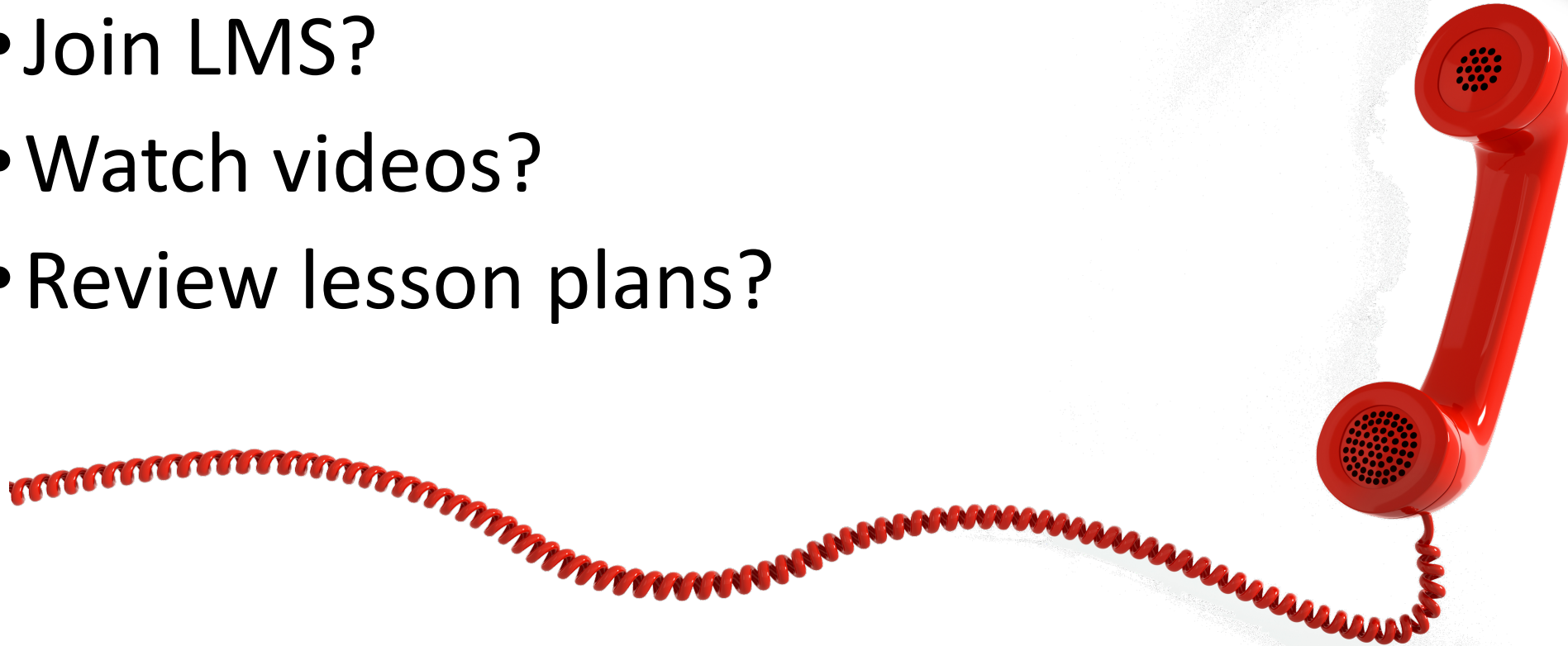
# When You Can't Get Into Classrooms In Person

- Join Zoom?
- Join LMS?
- Watch videos?
- Review lesson plans?



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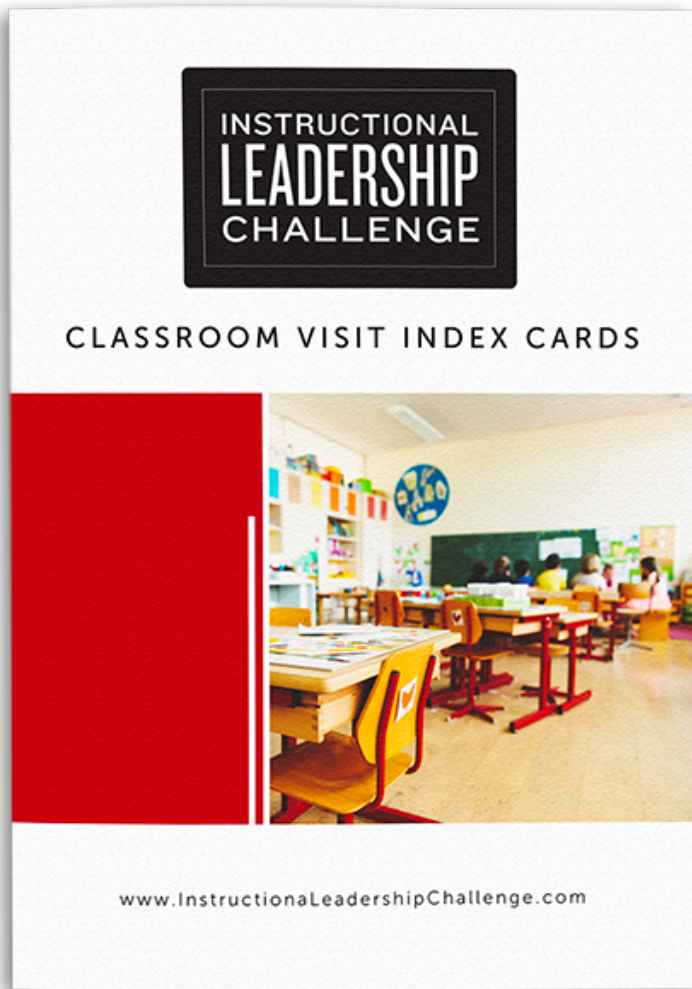


# Why Use The Phone?

- Less formal
- No video
- Less self-conscious
- More honest/authentic



# Keep Track to Stay On Track



Name		Room	Lunch		Prep
Period/Subject	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date

[PrincipalCenter.com/notecards-pdf](http://PrincipalCenter.com/notecards-pdf)



# Cycles & Agendas for Calls



## 4 Questions To Ask Yourself

- What is the purpose of the conversation?
- What is the goal of the conversation?
- What is the best way to convey the message?
- What is the best way to gather feedback?
- What is the best way to connect with the audience?

Agendas for 1:1 Conversations

## Purpose Possibilities: 1<sup>st</sup> Cycle

- Break the ice
- Build rapport
- Get over the initial awkwardness
- Send the message that you are listening/visiting/interested
- Tip: Keep it light
- \*Caution: Don't overdo it

Agendas for 1:1 Conversations

## Purpose Possibilities: 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle & Beyond

- Get a sense of teachers' well-being
- Get a sense of teachers' needs
- Get a sense of teachers' challenges
- Get a sense of teachers' successes
- Provide support
- Generate ideas

Agendas for 1:1 Conversations

## 3 Types of Questions to Ask in 1:1 Conversations

- **Connection**—questions to maintain relationships
- **Reaction**—questions to get feedback on how things are going
- **Input**—questions to get input for upcoming decisions

Agendas for 1:1 Conversations

Agendas for 1:1 Cycles of Conversations with Teachers



# Shift Gears As Needed

- Visit in person when you can
- Make phone calls when you can't



# Imagine...

- Knowing what & how teachers are teaching
- Knowing how students are experiencing their learning
- Knowing how staff are doing & what they need
- Replacing the lost relational & contextual value of informal interactions
- Reconnecting




# Can You Do This?



Is connecting with staff on a regular basis something you can do?

Download:  
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# Aligning Around Practice

Getting people on the same page  
(without being in the same room)

# Getting “On The Same Page”



## What does it mean to be on the same page with your colleagues?

# Getting “On The Same Page”

- Common sense of shared mission:  
“We’re all in this together.”
- Common vision for practice:  
“This is how we do things.”
- Common language for practice:  
“This is our framework.”



# Instructional Frameworks

- An instructional framework is a set of shared expectations serving as the basis for conversations about professional practice.
- A good framework creates a **roadmap** for improving practice by articulating clear levels of performance in specific areas.
- At a minimum, an instructional framework provides shared **vocabulary** for talking about practice.





# Make Your Vision Specific

- Buzzword
- Checklist
- Frequency rubric
- True framework



High Expectations for Student Learning

Component	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Standard				Expectations are tightly aligned to standards and
Milestones	Students are given a test at the end of the unit, or a	The teacher identifies milestones and achievements	The teacher breaks large assignments and units into	The teacher communicates clear milestones, with exemplars of work in
Communication				
Inclusivity	High expectations are intended to challenge only the highest-achieving students, while remaining out of reach for the majority. To meet high expectations, students must have prior knowledge /skills that the majority of students do not have, and that are not taught by the teacher. Students with IEPs, who speak English as a second language, or who experience other learning difficulties are presumed to be incapable of meeting high expectations regardless of their effort.	High expectations are intended to challenge everyone to do their best, but the teacher presumes that many students—especially students who experience learning difficulties—will be unable to meet them. Both extraordinary effort and prior knowledge/skills are necessary for meeting high expectations, placing them out of reach for the majority of students. The teacher sees it as someone else's job to provide support for students who need it.	High expectations are intended to challenge all students, and the teacher presumes that all students will be able to meet them with appropriate support. The teacher identifies and teaches the knowledge/ skills necessary for meeting high expectations, and collaborates with other professionals to ensure that students with IEPs, who speak English as a second language, or who have other learning needs are fully supported. The teacher takes responsibility for ensuring that every student has appropriate support in reaching high expectations.	High expectations are intended to challenge all students, and the teacher takes responsibility for collaborating with students and other professionals to design the specific supports students will need to meet high expectations. The teacher works with students and colleagues to identify the knowledge/ skills students will need, and assesses and teaches these skills so all students can receive the support they need to meet high expectations. Students and teacher take joint responsibility for ensuring that everyone has appropriate support in reaching high expectations.
Scaffolding				
Rigor	The teacher views rigor as difficulty, and sees students' struggles in meeting expectations as evidence of rigor. Difficulty reflects teachers' arbitrary personal preferences rather than standards.	The teacher views rigor as high expectations that many, but not all, students can meet. Difficulty is inherent in the standards, rather than a reflection of arbitrary personal preferences. The teacher does not expect that all students can achieve the most rigorous standards, and does not bother to plan how to support them.	The teacher views rigor as high expectations for all students, and supports students in meeting these expectations. Expectations are free of unnecessary difficulty, and difficulty is inherent to and closely aligned with standards. The teacher anticipates the specific supports students will need to achieve the most rigorous expectations.	The teacher assesses students' readiness for various levels of challenge within the scope of the unit, and differentiates support and tasks to ensure that each student meets standard while also being challenged at an appropriate level. Students are involved in choosing the challenges and supports they receive, and assess their progress toward achieving the standards.

# Solo First Draft



# What To Think Through



In your Solo First Draft framework, identify:

- A problem to solve or opportunity for improvement
- A specific practice
- Key components of that practice
- 4 levels of performance

# Key Components: High Expectations (Solo First Draft)



Component	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Standard				
Communication				
Inclusivity				
Rigor				
Milestones				
Scaffolding				



# High Expectations Rubric



High Expectations for Student Learning				
Component	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Standard	Expectations are tightly aligned to standards and			
	Component	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
	Milestones	Students are given a test at the end of the unit, or a	The teacher identifies	The teacher breaks large assignments and units into
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First Solo Draft 2021-01-21 © Justin Baeder, 2021

PrincipalCenter.com/high-expectations-pdf

Imagine...

- Having a detailed, shared vision for a specific instructional practice
- Having a clear roadmap for growth for teachers at every level
- Having a common vocabulary for talking about practice—not just shared buzzwords, but shared *meaning*



# Can You Do This?



Is drafting a simple instructional framework something you can do?

Download:  
[PrincipalCenter.com/high-expectations-pdf](https://PrincipalCenter.com/high-expectations-pdf)



# Zeroing In On Student Learning

Whether students are learning  
remotely, in person, or hybrid



# How Can We “See” Learning?



In virtual, hybrid, & socially distanced learning,  
student thinking is less visible.

# “Virtual” Observations Aren’t A True Substitute



Why?  
What's  
different?

# Evidence of Student Thinking: Discussing Student Work

Collaboratively examining  
**student work**

is one of the most overlooked improvement  
practices in our profession





# Types of Student Work To Consider



- Solved practice problems (with work shown)
- Drafts of writing assignments
- Explanatory models
- Written explanations
- Exit tickets

*Where is most of this work currently stored?*







**VIRTUAL**

INSTRUCTIONAL  
**LEADERSHIP**  
CHALLENGE

# EVIDENCE-DRIVEN ARTIFACT PROTOCOLS

# Imagine...

- Discussing student work with PLCs
- Using the shared language of your instructional framework
- Identifying specific strategies to close instructional gaps



# Can You Do This?



Is examining student work  
with teachers something you can do?

Even if you can't meet in person?





# The Instructional Leadership Imperative

Now more than ever...



# We Have A Choice

- Stay disconnected
- Leave people alone
- Let them figure it out
- Don't take up their time

- Reconnect
- Get into the work
- Figure out what's working
- Figure out what's not



# This Is A Year When...

- Everyone feels overwhelmed
- No one feels like they have a spare moment
- Growth feels like “one more thing”

...but professional growth is *precisely* what will get us through our greatest challenges.





# Do We Believe Improvement Matters?





# Improvement By Subtraction





# Improvement By Subtraction

Strong instructional leaders in  
2021 do not push people to do  
**more.**

They lead people in doing  
**“less but better.”**



# The Virtual Instructional Leadership Challenge





# History of the Challenge

2013: Live Challenge 1.0  
2014: 21-Day Challenge 2.0

## Recent:

- *Now We're Talking! 21 Days to High-Performance Instructional Leadership*
- High-Performance Instructional Leadership Certification Program
- NEW Instructional Leadership Challenge
- Virtual Instructional Leadership Challenge



## Welcome & Overview

**VIRTUAL**  
INSTRUCTIONAL  
LEADERSHIP  
CHALLENGE





# Virtual Instructional Leadership Challenge

6 core VILC modules:

1. How Instructional Leaders Drive Improvement
2. Evidence-Driven Instructional Leadership
3. Leading Learning through Professional Conversation
4. Developing Instructional Frameworks
5. Creating Bandwidth for Instructional Leadership
6. Aligning Teacher Practice Organization-Wide

Bonus: Evidence-Driven Artifact Protocols

Bonus: Reducing Anxiety by Framing Uncertainty

Bonus: Preventing Teacher Burnout

Cost: \$1495





Imagine...



What if I could take you through the Virtual Instructional Leadership Challenge—and even watch the videos for you, and give you my “director’s commentary”?

# Reconnect

A 6-Week PLN Experience



# Reconnect PLN

- Feb 4–Mar 11
- Weekly PLN
- Bite-sized content
- Director's Commentary

Cost: \$1495



[PrincipalCenter.com/pln](https://PrincipalCenter.com/pln)

# Reconnect PLN Popup Group


- 6-week cohort, Feb 4–Mar 11
- Live + On-Demand Access
- Pop-up group in our Community
- In-depth instructional leadership PD
- Minimal, flexible time commitment
- Daily encouragement, accountability, Q&A






# Reconnect PLN

- Bite-sized content
- Video + Captions
- Director's Commentary
- Transcript
- Discussion
- Q&A

 Reconnect PLN

## 1.1 Welcome & Overview



16:42 2. Overview

**Director's Commentary:**

- This year has turned out to include more delays in reopening in certain parts of the country—the planning to remain virtual was not wasted!
- Goal: maximize our impact as instructional leaders, even if this year looks very different
- Leadership is more critical than ever—we can't take the year off as instructional leaders, but neither can we act like everything's normal
- How can we continue to be high-impact instructional leaders under rapidly changing circumstances?

**Transcript:**



# Weekly PLN



# Weekly PLN Office Hours

- Support in planning your first three cycles of classroom visits/phone calls to teachers
- Support in developing instructional frameworks for specific practices
- Pruning back to the essentials—80/20 optimization
- Problem-solving, coaching, & consulting



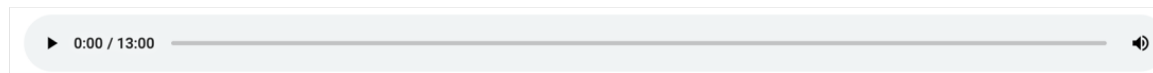


# Reflective Journal





# Audio for “AFK” Listening



# Preview, Review, & Search



# Reconnect PLN

\$1495 Virtual Instructional Leadership Challenge

\$1495 Reconnect PLN (Feb 4–Mar 11)

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\$2,990 Value



[PrincipalCenter.com/pln](https://PrincipalCenter.com/pln)



# Would it be worth \$3K to...

- Reconnect with staff
- Reconnect with student learning
- Help teachers figure out what to stop doing
- Find your most urgent opportunities for improvement
- Prevent a teacher from burning out
- Prevent yourself from burning out
- Help everyone come back stronger

[PrincipalCenter.com/pln](https://PrincipalCenter.com/pln)



# Reconnect PLN



- \$995 individual
- \$1750 team of two
- \$2395 school team of 3+
- District: request quote

[PrincipalCenter.com/pln](https://PrincipalCenter.com/pln)

Bonus



Lifetime Membership  
\$2,256 value

# Reconnect PLN

\$1495 Virtual Instructional Leadership Challenge

\$1495 Reconnect PLN (Feb 4–Mar 11)

\$2256 Lifetime ILA Membership

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\$5,246 Value



[PrincipalCenter.com/pln](http://PrincipalCenter.com/pln)



Bonus



# EVIDENCE DRIVEN

Free Upgrade (Fall 2021)

\$1495 value



# Reconnect PLN

\$1495 Virtual Instructional Leadership Challenge

\$1495 Reconnect PLN (Feb 4–Mar 11)

\$2256 Lifetime ILA Membership

\$1495 Evidence-Driven Leadership Certification (Fall 2021)

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\$6,741 Value

[PrincipalCenter.com/pln](https://PrincipalCenter.com/pln)



# Reconnect PLN



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[PrincipalCenter.com/pln](https://PrincipalCenter.com/pln)



# Guarantee

## PrincipalCenter.com/pln



### 100% "This Changes Everything" Guarantee

I'm so confident that the Virtual Instructional Leadership Challenge will be a game-changer for you that I'm backing it with an unconditional, no-questions-asked 100% money-back guarantee. Give it a try—you can go through the whole program, or just skim the transcripts. It either changes everything for you, or you can simply ask for a refund within 30 days—no hard feelings, and no hassles—just email our customer service team or leave us a voicemail at 1-800-861-5172, and we'll take care of it immediately.

Justin Baeder, PhD.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Justin Baeder".

Director, The Principal Center



# Questions



[PrincipalCenter.com/pln](http://PrincipalCenter.com/pln)