

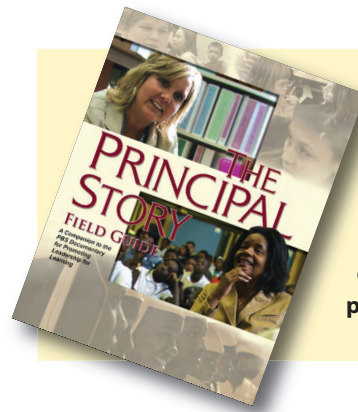


Kerry Purcell, Harvard Park Elementary, Springfield, Ill.



Tresa D. Dunbar, Henry H. Nash Elementary, Chicago, Ill.

TWO PRINCIPALS, TWO JOURNEYS



The Field Guide and the clip reel are available free online at www.nsd.org/news/principalstory/

THE PRINCIPAL STORY is a national broadcast film and media outreach project commissioned by The Wallace Foundation. Originally broadcast on PBS, the film follows the journey of two elementary school principals throughout a school year as they strive to improve student achievement and implement school reform.

Featured are novice principal Tresa D. Dunbar of the Henry H. Nash Elementary School in Chicago and veteran principal Kerry Purcell of Harvard Park Elementary School in Springfield, Ill.

Their stories unfold in an hour-long documentary that illustrates the struggles and successes these leaders encounter. Visit

www.wallacefoundation.org/principalstory for more information about the film.

A clip reel includes 23 minutes of scenes from THE PRINCIPAL STORY. Scenes are organized around four themes that are central to the role of principals in improving teaching and learning. The clip reel may be viewed in its entirety, without stopping, or on a start-and-stop basis to view sequentially.

NSDC was honored to contribute to this project and created THE PRINCIPAL STORY Field Guide to accompany the film and clip reel.

Included here are excerpts from the field guide — facilitator's tools and notes on using a portion of the film to discuss the principal's role in creating an effective learning environment.

Discussion prompts for pre-viewing

- **Creating** an instructional environment conducive to learning for all students and teachers should be a top priority for school leaders. What are the key characteristics of such an environment? What responsibilities — such as developing leadership teams, addressing discipline issues, and working with families — do principals have for creating and maintaining schools that are focused on learning?
- **How can** developing the leadership skills of staff help build sustainable learning environments?
- **To what degree** are principals in your district prepared to lead teachers in creating high-quality instructional environments so that all students succeed in school?
- **What actions** should central office administrators take to support principals' focus on teaching and learning? For example, how might districts help principals build the capacity of teachers, strengthen their own skills, and engage school communities?

In Clip 3, Tresa and Kerry grapple with balancing student discipline with the need to nurture children and give them the means to a successful future. The clip also emphasizes that parents are vital participants in the school learning community.

CREATING THE INSTRUCTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

CLIP 3: Tresa and Kerry grapple with balancing student discipline with the need to nurture children and give them the means to a successful future. The clip also emphasizes that parents are vital participants in the school learning community.

SAMPLE AGENDA

Film clip: Creating the Instructional Environment

(www.nsd.org/news/principalstory/Principal_Story_Clip_Reel.cfm)

Outcome: Examine how school leaders create the instructional environment

Setup: Table groups of 4 to 8 participants each

Time: 1 hour 15 minutes

TIME	TOPIC	ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS AND TOOLS
	Preparation	Post the title of the film clip and the session outcomes.	Name tags, agendas
15 min.	Meet and greet	Ask participants to greet each other by sharing one benefit of studying school leadership.	
15 min.	Pre-view activity	Ask participants to identify the greatest challenges in creating a quality instructional environment. Record their responses on chart paper and post.	Chart paper, markers, tape/tacks
5 min.	Film introduction	Inform viewers of the purpose of viewing this film clip, its length, and the plan to engage in discussion after viewing the clip. Ask participants to watch for examples of how principals create an instructional environment.	

TIME	TOPIC	ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS AND TOOLS
7 min.	View the film	Watch the film clip.	DVD player, film clip, speakers
15 min.	Table discussion	Review discussion guidelines with the group. Ask table groups to discuss strengths and weaknesses of how each principal developed an instructional environment.	Discussion guidelines (see p. 44 in the field guide)
10 min.	Group presentations	Invite participants to share one strength and one weakness of each principal that they heard in their group.	
5 min.	Reflection	Ask participants to answer in writing the question: What has become clearer to you about creating instructional environments?	Notepaper
5 min.	Closing	Ask participants to share one idea with the group.	
3 min.	Wrap-up	Tell participants how to access more resources related to THE PRINCIPAL STORY. Thank participants for attending.	

Discussion prompts for post-viewing

- **How did** Tresa and Kerry balance the demands of schools and districts with those of the larger community? How do public expectations of principals differ from the expectations of school staffs and district supervisors?
- **What specific** challenges do new principals like Tresa face in creating and maintaining instructional environments that support effective instruction?
- **How did** Tresa and Kerry use data to improve teaching and learning in their schools? How can principals engage teachers in using data?
- **Describe the ways** Tresa and Kerry interacted with families. How were the interactions of the veteran leader different from those of the novice principal? How do principals work effectively with parents and their communities to support student learning in their schools?
- **What do** principals and teachers need to know and do in order to create instructional environments that promote learning for students from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds? What evidence did you observe at Nash and Harvard Park that the schools offer equitable or inequitable experiences for their students?
- **What roles** do mentors, principal supervisors, and central office administrators play in developing school communities that are responsive to the learning needs of students from all backgrounds? What examples did you see at Nash and Harvard Park? What data or strategies might help principals or central office administrators assess the effectiveness of instructional environments in their schools?