

## Melodi Jordan, Assistant Head- Participant of PTC Assessment and Instructional Supervision 2019



“Okay. So I have held the role of assistant principal for only two years. And I think it's really a great time for me to reflect on some of my little learnings from the last two years. And I'm going to share those with you. Nothing prepares you for the learning curve when you become a principal. Nothing you think, you know, there are so many meetings. All of a sudden I became incredibly and possibly overly familiar with the HR partner, a finance director, the child protection officer, the health and safety officer, the PowerSchool technicians and the project managers. What I found was it was so easy to be buried, buried by the enormous amount of paperwork prior to Rose school, varied by the amount of tasks that were set by other people on me, varied by the demands and expectations of the board, the high school principals, the staff, parents, students. So after a few months of this, I was coming home every night, exhausted, overwhelmed, and I started to doubt the choice I'd made. Is this why I took the job that I took? Did I go into this whole thing thinking I really want to manage my staff health and safety training?

And the answer of course is no. That's not why I got into this profession or into this role. Um, I became an assistant principal because I wanted to positively impact teacher and student learning. I wanted to think creatively, strategically to solve problems. I wanted to coach my staff and my students to take risks and to grow exponentially. I wanted to lead powerful, transformative change in my school, but somehow without me knowing it, I had become a manager and every day, was filled with deadlines or tasks that seem urgent but didn't seem to have any correlation to student learning. Problem was, I didn't know how to change this, but I knew I had to change. If I wanted to lead powerful change, I had to be different.

How was I going to get all this stuff done to get standard? I wanted to do my job. Those things were part of my job, but I still want it to be a transformative leader. What I realized was I needed someone to sort through my thinking, someone that can help me to think through how to balance all the components of my work that keep learning at the center. What I needed was for someone to help me set small, manageable goals to look objective at my behavior, to guide me to think through my new changes that would make the most lasting



# Principals' Training Center

*quality training for international educators*

impact. As administrators, we talked so much about coaching our teachers, but it struck me, we don't often talk about coaching our leaders.

Why not? So I found myself a leadership coach, an objective professional ticket. Help me make this change and boy did it change everything. With my coach, I was able to set goals for myself and focus on things that matter to me. She held me accountable for the action steps that I agreed to take. She was not part of my organization, so she was able to help me gain perspective. She helped me to realize and question what was really urgent. What really wasn't the greatest gift that she gave to me was that she helped to make, to start to reflect on my practice by myself.

Ultimately, she set me up towards a path to becoming the leader I wanted to be. I look at all the inspirational leaders in this room around me, and I wonder, do you have someone that regularly, purposefully coaches you? So my pearl today is this. We are so fortunate to be part of a network of professionals that know what it means to be an international leader. I encourage you to seek out those inspiring leaders that you trust, that are willing to ask the hard questions of you, and I challenge you to take the risk of asking them to actively, purposefully coach you, work together to identify those obstacles that are impeding your growth and plan those small steps that will make all the difference. Utilize their expertise in order to transform and to reach your greatest potential."