

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESOURCE CENTER (PDRC)

THE LONG ISLAND PDRC | AUGUST 2020

Free Webinar Series for School Leaders and Educators!

Check out our highly engaging webinar series: **Impact from a Distance!**
Topics include:

- **Social Emotional Learning:** Incorporating Best Practices During Times of Change
- **Behavior Support to Engage All Learners:** Learn tools and strategies for maximizing engagement and improving social behavior in a classroom or virtual learning environment.
- **Mitigating Learning Loss During the Coronavirus:** Learn what you can do right now, over the Summer, and to plan for the Fall!
- **Making an Impact with Zoom!** This suite of videos can help you improve your Zoom skills including utilizing all the tools available, Topics include: You can Zoom!, Zoom Tricks and Tips, Planning Virtual Lesson, Utilizing Zoom Polls, Leveraging Zoom's Collaborative Tools and more! School leaders and educators are invited to view our free webinars at: www.catapultlearning.com/nyspdrc/

You are encouraged to share this newsletter with staff members so that educators can explore available professional learning opportunities.



A LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

Greetings from the LI PDRC Team! Summer is flying by! We hope you found time to relax and regenerate. As we near September, school leaders are busy preparing for the realities of reopening and planning for a variety of reopening plans. On July 27, NYSED released the [New York State Reopening Guidance for Religious and Independent Schools](#). This comprehensive document offers direct guidance to support health and safety concerns, facilities guidance, potential scheduling, attendance, and more for reopening of religious and independent schools.

More information can be found on the NYSED Non-Public School page: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/nonpub/reopening.html>

LEADERSHIP CORNER:

LEADING AND THRIVING IN UNCERTAIN TIMES BY MITCH CENTER

In our last leadership column, I discussed the need to pause, honor, and celebrate what you all went through during the spring in bringing your schools through an unprecedented season. I hope that everyone has found some time to mark the end of the year appropriately and that you have fortified yourself in new ways to prepare for what is coming. Maybe you have developed or continued an exercise practice, re-established healthy eating habits, or reconnected with some friends and family for a bit. These healthy habits and personal relationships are much needed, because let's face it, what's coming is a year that will challenge us all in new and unknown ways. You will have to change and adjust strategy and plans as landscapes shift, and you will have to grow and adapt in your roles as you bring your organization along with you. To sort through the complexity of these times, one place to turn to for support is Ronald Heifetz's research and writing on Adaptive Leadership.

Adaptive leadership is, as described in Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky's [The Practice of Adaptive Leadership: Tools and Tactics for Changing your Organization and the World](#), "the practice of mobilizing people to tackle tough challenges and thrive." I love this definition and world view because it is not just about "getting through" or "staying afloat" in tough times, but about actively *tackling* and ultimately *thriving*. As school leaders, isn't that what we all want for our students and staff?

In the coming days, weeks, and months you will face a myriad of issues, what Heifetz would sort into two categories: technical problems and adaptive challenges. **Technical problems** can be complex, but they have known solutions and with some hard work and careful planning can be solved. Some current technical challenges many of you will face include the development of new safety protocols, like how masks will be distributed and used, and how socially-distanced kids on buses will all get to school on time. These problems can be tricky and time-consuming, for sure, but they are also solvable with the right attention and care.

Adaptive challenges, on the other hand, are more complex and require mindset and behavioral change, and constant revisiting. For example, take the issue of how we will address learning loss in the coming year. Treated as a technical problem, we might simply assess kids and remediate them. But be careful! A common leadership pitfall is treating a complex adaptive challenge as if it were a simpler technical problem. To *tackle* learning loss and *thrive*, we need to see that we are interdependent on one another, that our behavior and mindsets need to shift, and that we may have to make sacrifices (one of the biggest obstacles to change, the adaptive leadership literature teaches us, is that we are averse to loss). This adaptive challenge will require teachers to work across grades in new ways (the fourth-grade teachers, for example, might need to teach last year's third-graders multiplication because they missed that unit in the spring), we will need to vertically align instruction and create new opportunities for teachers to work together. We will have to let go of "the usual ways of doing things," and possibly even forgo some favorite pet-projects or units.

As new challenges rear their heads, consider which are technical and can be ticked off with a checklist and a carefully monitored project plan, and which are complex and will require folks to rethink their roles, how they interact with each other, and what the definition of success is. When you return, we'll be here to welcome and support you. Reach out to us and to each other to help you sort through your complex, adaptive challenges.

Mitch Center provides leadership professional development and coaching for Catapult Learning and is a monthly contributor to our Leadership Corner Conversation.

Spotlight Series: Becoming a Digital Expert!

This month's topic: Digital Organization

An important part of a successful school year is staying organized. This can be especially challenging as we navigate digital spaces and keep assignments, communications, and to-do lists organized. If you are looking to upgrade your organization, there are three strategies to add to your tool belt. The first is using Google Keep. With Google Keep you can keep to-do lists and notes on your computer and sync it with a mobile app. You can even set reminders! The second is using canned responses. A canned response is the type of email response you use frequently. If you find yourself sending the same email to answer questions multiple times, save it in a document so you can copy and paste it later. The third way to upgrade your organization routine is to color-code your folders. Using a color-coding system can help your documents end up in the right place. Find more tips for digital organization in [Episode 70 of the Easy EdTech Podcast](#).

--Monica Burns, Ed.D, author of [Tasks Before Apps](#)

Catapult Learning is proud to provide professional development to religious and independent schools on Long Island through our partnership with New York State Education Department and the Professional Development Resource Centers. The purpose of this monthly newsletter is to share PD updates as well as relevant educational updates issued by NYSED. If you would like this newsletter emailed directly to additional staff members, please let us know by going to our website and complete the 'Contact Us' form: www.catapultlearning.com/nyspdrc/.

This newsletter is presented by Catapult Learning in partnership with the New York State Department of Education.



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Catapult Learning, LLC 32 Broadway, Suite 1502, New York, NY 10004

For comments, questions, or inquiries, please email rita.stavrou@catapultlearning.com

Or visit the Long Island PDRC website: www.catapultlearning.com/nyspdrc/