

# *Content or Intent?*

Start with **WHY**

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**“Every student is a success story  
waiting to be told”**

# Positive By Design

“What is worth fighting for is not to let our schools be **negative by default**, but to make them **positive by design**.”

Michael Fullan & Cliff St. Germain

A large orange outline of an arrow pointing upwards, with the text 'Toward Beliefs' centered inside it.

**Toward Beliefs**

A large black outline of an arrow pointing downwards, with the text 'Away From Beliefs' centered inside it.

**Away From Beliefs**

**When you arrive to work,  
do you feel like you're a  
part of something larger  
than yourself?**

# COLLABORATION

“Heated debates arose on whether collaboration really was possible and a desirable way to achieve the stated goals of a school. Detractors vehemently defended the practice of teaching in isolation—not because of any research that supports it, but because it is easier than collaboration. It’s true: working together is a lot more challenging than working alone. Focusing on what we as teachers *can do* instead of on what we *don’t have* requires a collective commitment.”

Williams and Hierck

# **The** **Moral Imperative** **Our Goals, Our Work**

“The business of schools is to produce learning that is so compelling that students persist when they experience difficulties and that is so challenging that students have a sense of accomplishment, of satisfaction – indeed of delight, when they successfully accomplish the task assigned (learning).”

Phil Schlechty

in H Lynn Erickson's Concept-Based Curriculum and Instruction:  
Teaching Beyond the Facts



# **HEALTHY Cultures**

Healthy cultures have **an unwavering belief in the ability of each student to achieve success** and they pass that belief on to others in overt and covert ways. Educators create policies and procedures and adopt practices that support their belief in the ability of every student (Cromwell, 2002).

# **TOXIC Cultures**

Toxic cultures believe that student success is based solely upon a **students' level of concern, attentiveness, prior knowledge, and willingness to comply** with the demands of the school, and they articulate that belief in overt and covert ways. Educators create policies and procedures and adopt practices that support their belief in the impossibility of universal achievement (Cromwell, 2002).

# Resilience

Despite the widespread belief that individual grit, extraordinary self-reliance, or some in-born, heroic strength of character can triumph over calamity, science now tells us that it is the reliable presence of at least one supportive relationship and multiple opportunities for developing effective coping skills that are essential building blocks for the capacity to do well in the face of significant adversity.

# The DNA of Your Students...

# **Structure vs. Culture**

**“Structural** change that is not supported by **cultural** change will eventually be overwhelmed by the culture, for it is in the culture that the organization finds **meaning and stability”**

Schleety(1997, p. 136)

# Characteristics of Authentically Aligned Cultures...

- They work with passion and vigilance towards a common goal.
- They embrace a mindset of progress without excuses; they hold team members accountable.
- They contribute to collaborative efforts that engender learning and support for all.
- They create and maintain a united team of people who would rather work together than in isolation.
- They celebrate success and push, continuously, for more.

**“People don’t buy  
what you do, they buy  
why you do it.”**

**Simon Sinek**

# Authentic Alignment

## The WHY

*Explore core beliefs  
and develop your  
guiding mantra.*

## The EYE

*Envision and create  
a description of the  
school you seek to  
become.*

## The HOW

*Reconnect with the  
moral imperative of the  
PLC collective  
commitments.*

## The NOW

*Systematically integrate  
the mantra, vision, and  
commitments into existing  
structures.*



# Authentic **Alignment**

## **The WHY**

*Explore core beliefs  
and develop your  
**guiding mantra.***

# **Guiding Questions**

**1. Do we believe all students can learn at high levels?**

**2. Will we take collective responsibility to make this a reality?**

# **The Phenomena of Disconnect**

In our work with hundreds of schools, and thousands of educators, it is more the rule than the exception to walk in the front doors of a school, see a mission statement prominently displayed on a wall, and then observe practices seemingly misaligned with the school's mission.

Hierck and Williams 2015

In the absence of a clearly  
defined, collectively  
owned WHY, folks just  
comply - until they  
disagree, and the mission  
ceases to be.

The **WHY** *explores core beliefs and encapsulates the answers to questions like:*

- What do we believe?
- What do we want to achieve?
- Why do we go to work each day?
- Why does our school exist?

# What is a **MANTRA**?

- a 3-5 word statement that defines **who your school is**, and why you matter
- a powerful **energy infused chant** that everyone inside the organization can get their head around

## Mantra Examples

While your school's mantra is a unifying principle, it's critical that you make personal commitments to that end. Collective mobilization begins with individual responsibility. That's why we've included examples of I-messages below.

Mantra	Mantra in practice (I-message)
<b>We Work As A Village</b>	ALL of us are smarter than one of us. I commit to embrace a true collaborative culture. I will pull my weight as part of my interdependent team.
<b>We believe you can achieve!!</b>	I embrace accountability for our results, and I am constantly asking, <i>"Is there something else I can do?"</i>
<b>Every Child Is My Child</b>	I consider every child my child, and the failure of any one of them is not an option. I am humble enough to ask for help, and think abundantly enough to share resources and best practices.
<b>Tomorrow Depends upon TODAY</b>	I will spend time focusing on factors I can control, and hold my teammates accountable to do the same.
<b>Act as If</b>	I operate each day as if we are already the ideal school we described.

# Questions to Consider

1. What is our fundamental purpose?
2. Was our school built for teachers to come and teach, or was it built for students to come and learn?
3. How does our school respond when a student experiences difficulty learning?
4. What is our North Star?



**“THERE’S A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN  
INTEREST AND COMMITMENT.**

**WHEN YOU’RE INTERESTED IN DOING  
SOMETHING, YOU DO IT ONLY  
WHEN IT’S CONVENIENT.**

**WHEN YOU’RE COMMITTED TO  
SOMETHING, YOU ACCEPT NO  
EXCUSES; ONLY RESULTS.”**

**– KENNETH BLANCHARD**

# Authentic Alignment

## The EYE

*Envision* and create a description of the school you seek to become.

# Questions to Consider

1. Can you describe the school we are trying to create?
2. What would our school look like if it were a great place for students?
3. What would it look like if it were a great place for teachers?
4. It is three years from now, and we have achieved our vision as a school. In what ways are we different? Describe what is going on in terms of practices, procedures, relationships, results, and climate.

# Authentic **Alignment**

## **The HOW**

*Reconnect* with the **moral imperative** of the Five Essential Elements of a PLC.

# The **ESSENTIAL** work of PLC's

A Focus on Learning

**The Collaborative Culture**

Clearly Defining What Every Student Needs To Learn

**Constantly Measuring Effectiveness**

Systematic Response When Students Do/Don't Learn



# **TWO Fundamental Assumptions**

- 1. We believe ALL students can learn at HIGH levels.**
- 2. We take COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY to ensure they learn.**

# Authentic **Alignment**

## **The NOW**

*Systematically integrate  
the **mantra**, **vision**, and  
**commitments** into  
existing structures.*



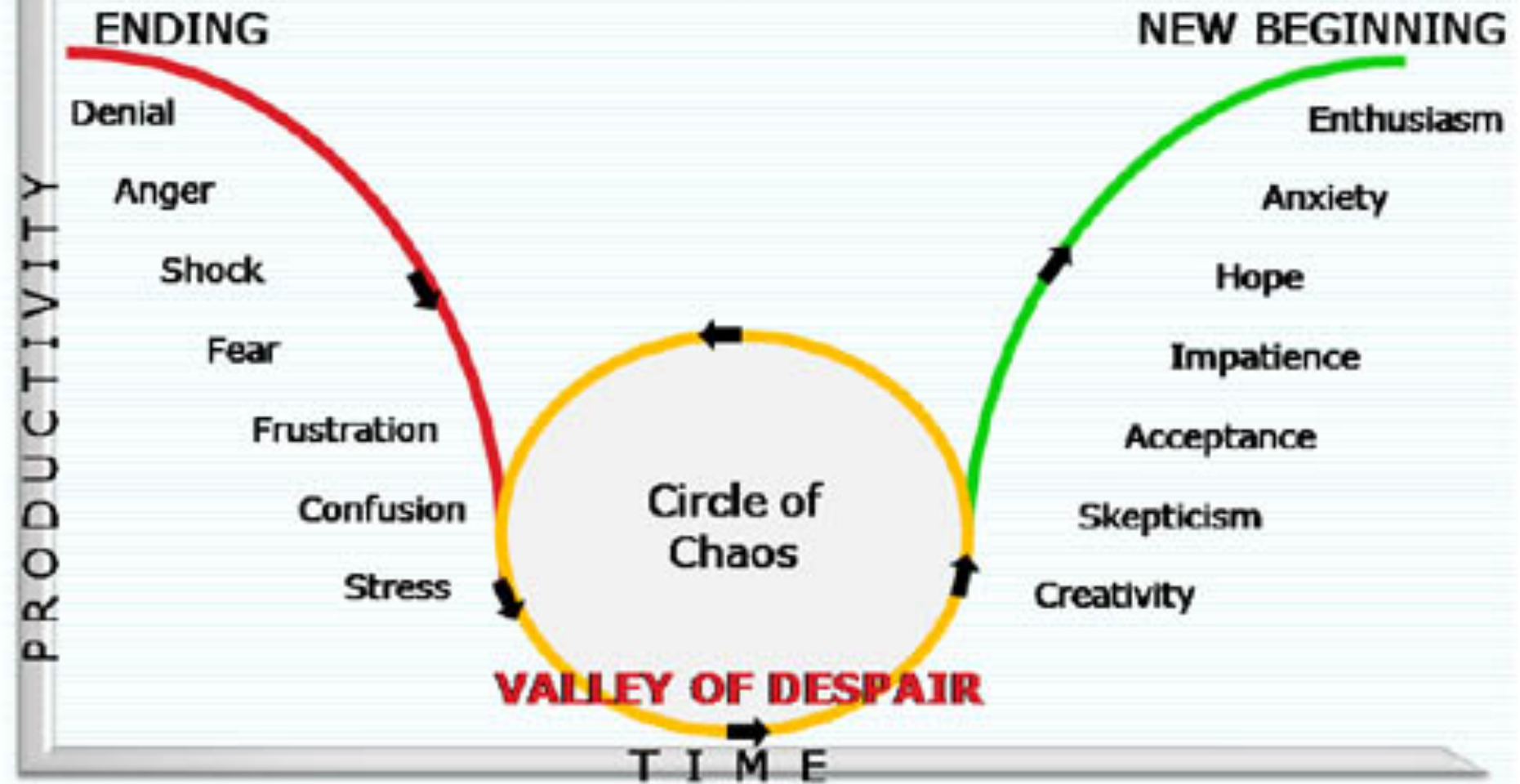
# The **NOW**

- Aligned **Feedback**
- Aligned **Storytelling**
- Aligned **Celebration**

# Reaction to Change



# Individual Response to Change



Integrating Change Management Communications Into a Technology Project - Martha J. Hudak, APR



THE FLAWED NOTION THAT PROGRESS HAPPENS IN LEAPS AND  
BOUNDS IS AN **ORGANIZATIONAL CURSE**. REAL PROGRESS  
STARTS AND ENDS WITH TEAMS COMMITTED TO TAKING  
**ONE STEP AT A TIME** TOGETHER.

# You can find me at...

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Heart of Education

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***Thanks for the gift of your time!***