

Conversations

Chat talk discussion tête-à-tête
dialogue exchange banter natter

Courageous

Brave daring
bold gutsy
spirited
plucky
audacious

Start this conversation – 1 – School Accountability

1. Have we as a school set our own benchmarks for student achievement?
 - What benchmarks do we have (or should we have) for:
 - the least we will settle for, for our students? (our bottom line)?
 - the most we can possibly hope for? (our aspirations)?
 - the 'sweet spot' where we expect most of our students to be?
 - What information do/should boards get about:
 - how well our students are achieving over all?
 - how well we are keeping our students engaged in their learning?
 - which students need extra support?
 - which programmes / year levels / curriculum areas in our school are really helping our students achieve?
 - which programmes / year levels / curriculum areas in our school need to become more effective to help our students achieve?
2. How well do our board, our staff and our wider school community work together to help our students achieve their best?
 - How do we keep the momentum going when things are working well?
 - What do we need to do better, and how can we do that?

Start this conversation – 2 - Reporting

3. How effectively do we as a school account to our community for what their children achieve while they are at our school?
 - Are we confident that every family knows what they want to know, and what they need to know, about their child(ren)'s progress?
 - How honest are we in communicating bad news / poor achievement?
 - Can we honestly say to every family that we are providing their child(ren) with the support and resources they need to achieve their best?
4. How effective are we at helping families to understand and accept responsibility for supporting our efforts to help their child(ren) achieve?

Start this conversation – 3 - Success criteria

5. What is our long-term / overall strategy for raising student achievement?
 - What do our school's governing documents (Charter, Strategic Plan, Mission or Vision, school policies) say about it?
 - Do we have clear "milestones" to show us how close we are to meeting our strategic goals?
 - How is this reflected in our school culture and the learning environment we create for our students to work in?
 - Does everybody know what the strategy is and what their part is in making it work?
6. What of all this might we need to change or improve on to meet the goals and the requirements of the government's new national standards reporting initiative?

Start this conversation – 5 – School attendance

7. What information do/should you get about attendance / truancy in your school?
 - Do you know about the attendance of risk groups?
 - What information do/should boards get about
 - how well we are keeping our students engaged in their learning?
 - which students need extra support?
8. How well do our board, our staff and our wider school community work together to help our students keep attending school
 - What do we need to do better, and how can we do that?

Start this conversation – 7 – Your mission

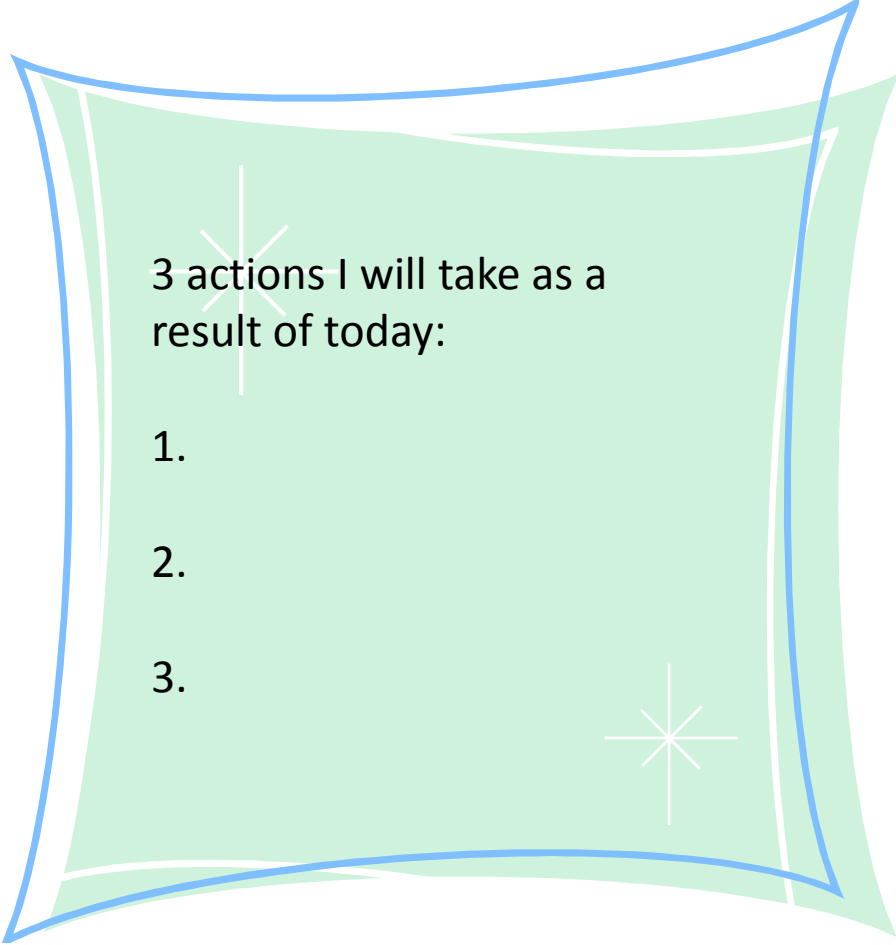
12. How well as a board do we answer the questions:
 - If we expect students to learn, what is it we expect them to learn?
 - How will they go about learning it?
 - What will we do when they don't?
 - How will we engage students in their own learning?
13. What are your ideas for addressing the issues

Start this conversation – 6 – Parental partnership

9. What role do we want parents to play in their students academic success?
 - Do our practices reflect this?
 - What evidence do we have of this?
10. What could we do to enhance student achievement through parental engagement?
11. How would we know we were successful?

Start this conversation – 8 - Other

- In Failure is not an Option, Alan M. Blankstein offers six guiding principles for creating and sustaining high-performing schools:. Three of which are:
- a. Collaborative teaming for teaching and learning
 - b. Data driven decision making and continuous improvement
 - c. Active engagement from family and community
14. As a board why would we engage in a conversation about these areas. What do we know, what do we need to know and what needs to be the focus of our conversation?



3 actions I will take as a
result of today:

1.

2.

3.

Keep a Beginner's Mind

Of Beginner's Mind, Suzuki says
"Once we decide we know
everything, we shut down
opportunities to learn."

Face life like a small child.

Open
Accepting of change
Moving forward