

**COURSE TITLE:** THE EFFECTIVE PRINCIPAL'S FIELDBOOK

**WA CLOCK HRS:** 50

**NO. OF CREDITS:** 5 QUARTER CREDITS  
[semester equivalent = 3.33 credits]

**OREGON PDUs:** 50

**PENNSYLVANIA ACT 48:** 50

**INSTRUCTOR:** Mary Ann Johnson  
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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Every principal, whether new to administration, to a district, or to a school, needs to examine the issues that are central to his/her success. The text for this course is *The New Principal's Fieldbook: Strategies for Success* written by Pam Robbins and Harvey Alvy. In this very readable field book, the authors present practical insights to help principals become inspirational leaders in their own school communities.

You will find topics from informal school communication networks, building lasting relationships, improving faculty meetings, promoting professional learning communities, conducting staff evaluations, keeping up with state mandates, time management, to dealing with surprise as a routine part of your work. From their own experiences, and those of other education leaders, the authors present practical information and insights, research-based techniques and fascinating stories to help principals provide successful leadership in their schools.

At the end of each chapter the authors provide you with the opportunity to reflect on how you would apply the new information to potential scenarios in your school. These topics, each presented in a compelling context, are covered in chapters 1-6 in the book.

(Chapters 7-15 of *The New Principal's Fieldbook: Strategies for Success* are covered in the companion course, "*The Principal's Fieldbook: Best Practices*")

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:** Upon completion of this course, participants will have:

1. Read the school culture and become socialized in a new school environment.
2. Worked effectively with teachers, conduct assessments and faculty meetings.
3. Kept up with state mandates.
4. Developed an excellent team relationship with his/her secretary and practice good time management.
5. Dealt effectively with surprise as a routine part of your work.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

Completion of all specified assignments is required for issuance of hours or credit. The Heritage Institute does not award partial credit.

The use of artificial intelligence is not permitted. Assignment responses found to be generated by AI will not be accepted.

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**HOURS EARNED:**

Completing the basic assignments (Section A. Information Acquisition) for this course automatically earns participants their choice of CEUs (Continuing Education Units), Washington State Clock Hours, Oregon PDUs, or Pennsylvania ACT 48 Hours. The Heritage Institute offers CEUs and is an approved provider of Washington State Clock Hours, Oregon PDUs, and Pennsylvania ACT 48 Hours.

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**UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT INFORMATION**

**REQUIREMENTS FOR UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT**

Continuing Education Quarter credits are awarded by Antioch University Seattle (AUS). AUS requires 75% or better for credit at the 400 level and 85% or better to issue credit at the 500 level. These criteria refer both to the amount and quality of work submitted.

1. Completion of Information Acquisition assignments 30%
2. Completion of Learning Application assignments 40%

3. Completion of Integration Paper assignment 30%

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**CREDIT/NO CREDIT (No Letter Grades or Numeric Equivalents on Transcripts)**

Antioch University Seattle (AUS) Continuing Education Quarter credit is offered on a Credit/No Credit basis; neither letter grades nor numeric equivalents are on a transcript. 400 level credit is equal to a "C" or better, 500 level credit is equal to a "B" or better. This information is on the back of the transcript.

AUS Continuing Education quarter credits may or may not be accepted into degree programs. Prior to registering, determine with your district personnel, department head, or state education office the acceptability of these credits for your purpose.

**ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION**

**REQUIRED TEXT**

Chapters 7-15 of The New Principal's Fieldbook: Strategies for Success are covered in the companion course, "The Principal's Fieldbook: Best Practices")

- ***The New Principal's Fieldbook: Strategies for Success***  
ISBN# 087120858X  
by Robbins, Pamela, Alvy, Harvey B.  
ASCD

[Buy from Amazon](#)

**MATERIALS FEE**

None.

**ASSIGNMENTS REQUIRED FOR HOURS OR UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT**

**A. INFORMATION ACQUISITION**

Assignments done in a course forum will show responses from all educators who have or are taking the course independently. Feel free to read and respond to others' comments.

Group participants can only view and respond to their group members in the Forum.

**Assignment #1: Read the Preface.**

**Read "Preface: A Moment Remembered"**

Write a 250-500 word response to the following:

1. Briefly introduce yourself and tell why you chose this course.
2. Why do the authors stress that the first year of principalship is critical for the success of either a beginning principal or one who is new to a school?

**Assignment #2: Your Career Path.**

In a 250-500 words answer one (1) of the following questions:

Explain the 3 phases any newcomer goes through when joining an organization.

From the list of nine themes developed in the book, which do you see as the most meaningful for your career path? Explain.

**Assignment #3: Vision as the Compass.**

**From Chapter 1: "Vision as the Compass"**

Select two (2) of the three choices and write two or more paragraphs in response to questions 1-3:

1. What personal insights did you discover from the questions about personal beliefs?
- 2.

Which of the two strategies for crafting a shared vision, Consensus or Post-It, would you choose to use with a school staff? Explain.

3. Of all the information given in the chapter, which do you consider as the key ideas? Why?
4. Answer the Review Questions.

#### **Assignment #4: Hidden History.**

##### **From Chapter 2: "Navigating in 'Hidden History'"**

In 250 – 500 words answer the following questions:

1. What makes a school strong?
2. From the 12 norms of a culturally healthy school, the 3 with the highest correlations between changing school environment and improving student achievement are collegiality experimentation and reaching out to the knowledge base. Why do you think that is the case. What are the implications for a new principal?

#### **Assignment #5: Organizational Cultures.**

Answer the following questions in 250-500 words:

- 1) There are two (2) kinds of negative organizational cultures. Explain each of them, discuss which is more difficult for a leader to change and explain why.
- 2) Of the eight (8) essential understandings in shaping a culture, which ones are most important for effective leadership? Why?

#### **Assignment #6: Concerning Challenges.**

##### **From Chapter 3: "Lessons Learned from Previous Explorers"**

In 250- 500 words explain the three (3) stages of "organizational socialization." Which of those three do you consider the most powerful for long-lasting success in a principalship? Why? AND

The challenges facing a new principal were divided into 17 categories. Given your background and experience, which of those are already firmly in your command, and which are of the greatest concern to you?

Answer the Review Questions.

#### **Assignment #7: Professional Learning Communities.**

##### **From Chapter 4: "Developing Professional Learning Communities for a Productive Journey"**

In 500-750 words respond to the following:

- 1) What are the sequential steps described in the development of Prestwood School's learning community? What were the key insights the principal shared as he reflected on developing such a community?
- 2) Rank the four (4) essential understandings a leader must acknowledge in order to create learning communities, in the order you think are most important. Explain your reasons for that order.
- 3) The authors shared a scenario of a faculty meeting to illustrate a way to get teachers to work collaboratively. What is another important topic that could be introduced in a faculty meeting and how would you structure your introduction to get teachers to buy into it?
- 4) Discuss your reaction to the explanation of how a former Vermont district superintendent used collaboration to radically improve student achievement.

#### **Assignment #8: Leadership in Action.**

##### **From Chapter 5: "Instructional, Curricular, and Assessment Leadership: The Helmsman in Action"**

In 500-750 words respond to the following:

After reviewing the shifts in instruction, curriculum and assessment, which do you consider the most critical for authentic change and which would be difficult to implement? Why?

Are the suggestions for changes in teacher assessment realistic, given the constraints of time and the many demands faced by both teachers and administrators? Which of the suggestions do you find most valuable for continual instructional improvement? Explain. What other key insights did you find in this chapter? Explain.

#### **Assignment #9: The Observation Process.**

##### **From Chapter 6: "Improving Student Learning Through Supervision and Professional Development"**

In 500-750 words respond to the following AND complete the Review Questions:

From reading about the 3 phases of the scheduled observation, what information did you find most useful? What drawbacks does this format present to an administrator who is new to a building?

LLBWA is an alternative approach to the highly-structured formal observation process. What do the letters stand for and why is it the preferred means of observation for many principals? Of the five strategies given, which do you think would best serve your needs?

Answer the Review Questions.

**Assignment #10: COURSE FORUM.  
COURSE FORUM**

From what you learned in this course, if you were teaching a graduate level course for principals, what would you be sure to add to the curriculum?

If others have already entered ideas, please respond to the one(s) that catch your interest.

**ADDITIONAL ASSIGNMENTS REQUIRED FOR UNIVERSITY QUARTER CREDIT**

**B. LEARNING APPLICATION**

In this section, you will apply your learning to your professional situation. This course assumes that most participants are classroom teachers who have access to students. If you do not have a classroom available to you, please contact the instructor for course modifications. Assignments done in a course forum will show responses from all educators who have or are taking the course independently. ?Feel free to read and respond to others' comments. Group participants can only view and respond to their group members in the Forum.

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**Assignment #11: 2 Assignment Options.**

Choose **one (1)** of the following assignments options:

In 500-750 words respond to the following:

Reflect on your own first year experience in a new school, new district, or new placement. What would you now recommend are the best opening moves you could or did make to get your new position off to a good start?

**OR**

Analyze what reservations you think a teacher, administrator, parent and/or student might have about using a strategy or issue advocated in this book. Describe why you think there are reservations. Create a response which acknowledges the reservation and presents information you have found in this book or in additional reading you have done on this subject. (If you also have reservations, describe both sides of the issue.)

**Assignment #12: Lesson Development.**

**Assignment #12: (Required for 400 and 500 Level)**

**Assignment #12-A:**

- Adapt a lesson reflecting what you've learned in this course.
- Implement your lesson with students.
- Write a 250-500 word commentary on what worked well and what could be improved.
- Include any student feedback on your lesson.
- Share what you've learned with other teachers taking our courses by adding your Lesson to The Heritage Institute Lesson Library [here](#).
- For a sample lesson plan template click [here](#).
- Submit your modified lesson to your instructor via the online response box or file upload.

**OR**

**Assignment #12-B:**

- Develop a lesson reflecting what you've learned in this course. (Do not implement it.)
- Share your learning with other teachers by contributing your Lesson to The Heritage Institute Lesson Library [here](#).
- For a sample lesson plan template click [here](#).
- Write a 500+ word article about a noteworthy teaching success you've had with one or more students.
- Please refer to the guidelines on our blog [What Works: Teaching at its Best](#) prior to writing your article.
- When you submit your article to your instructor, please also email a copy to [Renee Leon](#) THI blog curator and media specialist.
- Indicate whether or not you are OK with having your article considered for publishing on our website.
- Submit your lesson to your instructor via the response box or file upload.

**Assignment #13: (500 Level ONLY)**

In addition to the 400 level assignments, complete **one (1)** of the following assignment options:

**Option A)**

Create a presentation that could be given for a group of colleagues, based on your reading. It can be in the form of a Power Point, or a “presentation plan.” The presentation should include a copy of any handout(s) you will use.

OR

**Option B)**

Compare and contrast the material in this book with information you find in another book or online research of articles. For online research, quote any important URL, write a 500 – 750 word summary of information you found, and then compare/contrast with information in the book for this course.

OR

**Option C)**

Create an Annotated Bibliography of five or more books or articles related to the subject of this course. The annotation should. Add your opinion of the value or your criticism of the contents of each book or article, and rate the importance of the material in contrast to the subject of your course.

**C. INTEGRATION PAPER**

Assignment #14: (Required for 400 and 500 Level)

**SELF REFLECTION & INTEGRATION PAPER**

**(Please do not write this paper until you've completed all of your other assignments)**

Write a 400-500 word Integration Paper answering these 5 questions:

1. What did you learn vs. what you expected to learn from this course?
  2. What aspects of the course were most helpful and why?
  3. What further knowledge and skills in this general area do you feel you need?
  4. How, when and where will you use what you have learned?
  5. How and with what other school or community members might you share what you learned?
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**INSTRUCTOR COMMENTS ON YOUR WORK:**

Instructors will comment on each assignment. If you do not hear from the instructor within a few days of posting your assignment, please get in touch with them immediately.

**QUALIFICATIONS FOR TEACHING THIS COURSE:**

**Mary Ann Johnson, M.Ed Adm.** has worked with students of all levels, from alternative high school to gifted classes. She has also been a junior high vice principal and is now working with teachers for continuing education in classes, distance learning and building leadership groups. She is a teacher emeritus who has led seminars for educators which focus on developing a quality learner environment for students and for teachers. Her courses are research-based and resonate with user-friendly and energizing content.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

**THE EFFECTIVE PRINCIPAL'S FIELDBOOK**

**Alvy, Harvey and Robbins, Pam**, *Learning from Lincoln, Leadership Practices for School Success*, 2010, ASCD, ISBN for ASCD pb, 978-1-4166-102306, 192 pages. In a fascinating focus on ten qualities of Abraham Lincoln that would grace any leader, but especially a leader of a public service vocation, Alvy and Robbins bring anchor stories of Lincoln's key moments and decisions that inform and inspire anyone working to lead and improve the quality of life for others in his/her domain. Primary source examples of Lincoln's personal trials and his compassion lead to personal reflections for the reader to consider in their own Leadership Story. This is a powerful review of American history that leads to a personal exploration of one's own leadership style.

**Bosher, William C. Jr, Kaminski, Kate R., Vacca, Richard S**, *The School Law Handbook, What Every Leader Needs to Know*, 2004, ASCD, ISBN for ASCD pb, 978-0-87120-841-5, 216 pages. In this era of increasing legal challenges, both administrators and teachers need to know guidelines in situations involving legal issues. Scenarios involving crisis management, health-related issues, religion in schools, student organizations, student records and internet use—these are just some of the important focuses updated in this highly readable book.

**Kohm, Barbara and Nance, Beverly**, *Principals Who Learn, Asking the Right Questions, Seeking the Best Solutions*, 2007, ASCD, ISBN 978-1-4166-0540-9 for pb, 288 pages, (also available as an eBook.) The greatest impact of this book is the wisdom of contrasting former norms for principals with new ways of understanding both leadership and how to become a change agent in their own schools. Both authors have had successful principalships and are now engaged in bringing the best leadership models for dynamic principals. Their book addresses four major focuses: 1) listening to all voices—and why; 2) seeing possibilities and communicating them effectively; 3) asking questions that lead to new thinking; and 4) creating collaborative cultures.

**Kouzes, James M, and Posner, Barry Z**, *Learning Leadership: The Five Fundamentals of Becoming an Exemplary Leader*, 2016, Wiley, pb, 978-1119144281, 272 pages. The authors of this book are renowned, and in their latest work they include self-coaching guidelines to personalize the information in the research, which comes from studies in more than 70 countries. Their focus is on the

ongoing learning required of the best leaders, including self-awareness. The leader is encouraged to examine some of the false prescriptions about power in leadership, and to keep focused on the values and actions that help stay centered and effective in stressful times.

**Lambert, Linda**, *Building Leadership Capacity in Schools*, 1998, ASCD, pb,0-87120-307-3, pb 136 pages. This book has become a cornerstone of leadership theory, based on the idea that the best outcome for a school leader is the development of leadership within the entire organization. The practical strategies for this outcome include processes to raise the involvement and skill of all involved, and should result in the higher achievement of students as well as a learning culture for everyone. You will see how to make this happen in three levels of schools, elementary, middle school, and high school in the narrative of this important guide. This book includes appendices with surveys for a self-assessment by individual staff members as well as a survey that can be administered within a whole school.

**Marzano, Robert J, McNulty, Brian A, and Waters, Timothy**, *School Leadership That Works, From Research to Results*, 2005, McRel and ASCD, ISBN for ASCD pb: 1-4166-0227-5, 192 pages, (also available as an eBook.) As is the case with other books by Marzano and his team, the research for this book is based on a meta-analysis of many relevant research studies, so important insights are the result of refining the gold in 69 important other studies. This book looks at the most important characteristics of principals who successfully create a vital school culture with results that show up in statistics of student achievement. It is very readable and will provide a direct link between your personal priorities and the likelihood that your students will thrive.