

A mplification

for **Experienced** School Leaders



Transformative Learning



by

***Kasha Duff, SD36
Morgen MacDonald, SD83***

***Navshina Savory, SD38
Gwen Thornburn, SD35***

Dr. Andrea McComb, BCPVPA

Leadership in education demands constant reflection, adaptability, and a deep sense of purpose. For experienced school leaders, the Amplification for Experienced School Leaders program — I and II — provided the perfect setting to step away from daily pressures and engage in intentional self-discovery.

In this transformative leadership course, participants embark on a journey of self-discovery, reflection, and intentional growth. Amplification goes beyond traditional leadership training; it invites participants to connect deeply with their purpose as a school leader.

A Setting That Inspires Reflection

Located in Vernon, Sparkling Hill Resort & Spa offered the perfect balance of relaxation and introspection. The stunning environment, complemented by guided workshops and reflective activities, allowed participants to truly decompress and refocus. One participant described the retreat as "completely magical and relaxing," an opportunity to pause, reassess, and reconnect with their leadership vision.

Beyond structured discussions, the peaceful setting enabled participants to engage in personal reflection—whether by journaling, walking the scenic trails, reading a leadership book, or simply soaking in the quiet moments before and after sessions. For many, this space was essential in gaining clarity and renewing their leadership mindset at such a busy time of year.

Assessing the Balance of Our Lives

An impactful element of Amplification I, as guided by Dr. Andrea McComb, was the values exercise that was used to assess life's balance and priorities. When we hold up what we value the most and look through the lens of time and energy, we discover imbalances. Setting an intention to prioritize relationships and things that are important to us supported us in setting

our vision and commitments to return to our daily lives fueled by clarity.

For one participant, an unexpected takeaway was the nuanced difference between the values of inclusion and belonging. The distinction sparked deeper reflection on the intentionality behind leadership language and how the choice of words influences school culture.

Another attendee likened their leadership journey to "navigating a river with many tributaries." This metaphor powerfully illustrates the constant evolution of leadership, the diverse influences at play, and the need for adaptability when faced with uncertainty.

Rediscovering Purpose and Mission

One of the most compelling components of Amplification II was the guidance of Peter Johnston, who led participants through a reflective exercise in crafting personal mission statements. This was not just a professional realignment – many participants found that their personal and professional values were deeply intertwined, making the exercise both introspective and transformative.

A Vice-Principal noted that, "There seemed to be no way to separate the personal from the professional. Peter guided us with grace and empathy through these emotions to places of confidence, renewed energy, and pride." This deep introspection helped leaders solidify their core beliefs and leadership philosophy, setting the foundation for more intentional and authentic decision-making.

Meaningful Moments That Left a Lasting Impact

The Vision Board exercise was particularly transformative for participants, allowing them to visually map out their leadership aspirations. Though some had created vision boards in their personal lives, doing so in a professional context proved to be a powerful experience.

LAUGH

Hope

Heal

Communities



Support
System

“Don't make assumptions around the students. Doing well academically doesn't mean students are doing well overall, especially internally.”

Student quote from regional well-being engagement session.

Learning and the Brain

Disciplined courage is the ability to remain focused and unwavering in light of setbacks or failures. With disciplined courage, you stay true to your vision and the impact you want to make on the world, community, or self.



REAL IS RARE

In every school, the first trauma-informed step should be mapping out all the ways students, families, and even we, as educators, experience trauma at school.

—Paul Gorski, p. 14

people
aren't
our
greatest
asset
people
are
our
only
asset.

“All My Relations”



@gapingvoid



(Left to right) Kasha Duff, Gwen Thornburn, Jodie Perry, Erin Potts

One participant anchored their board with a Brené Brown quote:

"If we want greater clarity in our purpose or deeper and more meaningful spiritual lives, vulnerability is the path."

Using this quote as inspiration, they curated quotes, images, and powerful words that reflected their core values, professional goals, and leadership philosophy. Returning to school, many display their vision board in their office as a daily reminder to lead with authenticity and courage.

Other participants cherished the structured reflection time, followed by paired conversations, which allowed them to refine their thoughts and share meaningful insights with colleagues.

The balance of solitude and connection made their reflections even more impactful.

Carrying Intentions Forward

As participants transitioned back to their schools, they carried forward newfound clarity and concrete goals. One leader emphasized their intention to foster connections and networking, understanding that intentional collaboration strengthens leadership effectiveness.

Another participant committed to amplifying student voices within their school community. Following the Amplification experience, they launched a student-led Racial Equity Committee, creating opportunities for youth empowerment and systemic change. Their leadership goal was not just about advocacy, but about providing space for students to lead and influence their environment.

Additionally, leaders left the program with a renewed sense of balance, determined to prioritize their well-being while remaining focused on student success.

The Lasting Impact of Amplification

Ultimately, Amplification was far more than a professional retreat: it was a transformative journey of renewal, reflection, and connection. By stepping away from the immediate demands of their roles, participants found clarity in their leadership

purpose, strengthened their vision, and built lasting relationships with fellow leaders.

For those seeking inspiration, direction, and a deeper understanding of their leadership journey, Amplification will be offered again in the 2025-2026 school year, fueling leadership growth in profound ways.

