

Ep #341: Intentional PD Planning



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Angela Kelly

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Hello empowered principals. Welcome to episode 341.

Welcome to *The Empowered Principal® Podcast*, a not so typical educational resource that will teach you how to gain control of your career and get emotionally fit to lead your school and your life with joy by refining your most powerful tool, your mind. Here's your host certified life coach Angela Kelly Robeck.

Well hello, my Empowered Leaders. Happy Tuesday and welcome to July. So you were probably off last week. I hope you were out having fun, celebrating Independence Day. Maybe you were traveling or maybe you were working. I hope you were out having fun. That's the name of the game. Have a little bit of fun, get some rest, rejuvenation, relaxation in over your summer.

I hope you are playing in the Summer of Fun Challenge with us in the Facebook group. People are winning prizes. They're winning spots in the EPC program for 90% off of the regular price. The regular price is \$1,997. You can pay in full, or you can do 10 monthly installments of \$199.70, and you can get 12 full months of coaching. So come on in. We're having a blast and I hope you are enjoying your summer.

Now, this topic is going to help you plan your professional development days that are coming up, whether they're in the end of July or into August or maybe even September. But I want you thinking about this now.

I actually coached a client on this topic back in May. She was doing an end of the year professional development training. It was basically like a training that the district had created, and she was given an agenda. She was given a PowerPoint, and she was told here are the things you have to talk about. This is what you have to teach.

So it made me think of all of you. When you get an agenda for professional development handed down from the district, you may or may not feel exactly aligned with that agenda or with the content or with the time. Like in

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this case, she was told 90 minutes on this, 45 minutes for that, an hour for this and whatever. So she felt a little off with that, and we had to coach on it.

So I want to talk about this because as you're coming back to school for the new year and you're planning, you're planning your professional development. Many of you are going to be expected to facilitate professional development days for your teachers. You want them to be effective. You want them to be efficient, and you want them to have a desired outcome.

You want them to be productive, to create a result, to create an outcome, whether that's a plan, whether that's actual work that gets hammered out during that day, whether it's information and content that teachers need to know. You want to be able to facilitate and administer a professional development that you believe in, that aligns for you. It can feel like you're being told what to do and how to do it. That can feel a little bit stressful.

So with this time of season right here, you are doing a lot of planning. You're planning out your vision for the school year, your site plan for the year, the goals you want to have, the topics you're going to focus on. So I think this is a really good time to have this conversation.

Now, when it comes to professional development, you need to keep in mind, at the end of the day, you're investing time and energy. You are also being given the currency of your teacher's undivided attention, right? This is a gift. You're getting their time, their attention, their energy. We want to leverage professional development days as opportunities to inspire people into progressive action. We want to empower them, to motivate them, to inspire them, to ignite them in a way that provides long-lasting outcomes for that investment of time and energy and attention.

If you have professional development agendas being handed down to you, you can find a way, I call it the land of and, where you can find a way to take that agenda and make it your own. So the first thing you're going to

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want to ask yourself is okay, what are my thoughts and opinions around this agenda item?

This is typically what happens. We are told the agenda, we're given the agenda, we're given the PowerPoint, and we're like ugh. This is so dry. This is so boring, or this isn't what I want to talk about, or I don't like the way they did this or said this, or I don't think it's going to take me that long. Or wait, this is going to take me a lot longer than that. We have our own reaction to the professional development content and materials that we've been given.

Check in with yourself on that. Don't just be disgruntled and then go into your PD day. Because if you're not happy with the PD, it is not going to land with your teachers. It's going to fall flat. You're not going to be happy. They're not going to enjoy it. It will not be productive. You will have wasted an opportunity. They're giving you their time and attention and energy. You want it to be productive for you, for them, for the greater good. Okay?

So when you think about the district giving you this content, sit with yourself for a minute and ask yourself what is the intention behind this PD? What does the district want as an outcome for this professional development day? What's the intended outcome here from their perspective? Then ask yourself from your perspective, what's the outcome for the teachers? Ultimately, what is the outcome for students? So think about the outcome of the professional development day from the lens of the district and yourself and your teachers and students. Okay?

What comes up for you when you're thinking about the professional development. When you're looking at it from all these lenses, you're going to start to see there are commonalities. We do actually want the same thing. Believe it or not, we are all on the same team. Teachers want to have a great year. They want their students to have a great year. They want there to be progress. They want to feel good about themselves as teachers.

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You want them to feel good as teachers because when they feel good about themselves, they teach better. When they teach better, students learn better. When kids feel good about themselves as students, they learn. When teachers feel good about themselves as teachers, they teach. When you feel good about yourself as a leader, you're a better leader.

It matters how people feel about themselves, about the work they do, and about the people they're working with. That's the belief triad. You have to believe in yourself, believe in others, and believe in the work, in the process. Okay?

So the intention behind the outcomes matter. You want to understand what is the intended outcome here? What am I trying to do? What am I trying to communicate? What should people know or understand or be able to do? What work, what productivity or actual tangible outcomes are we creating here? Or is it more of a mindset, or is it more information sharing? Is it an understanding that we're trying to communicate? What is the goal? Okay?

Think about what's coming up for you and how you would deliver this content. What is a way that you can use this agenda but deliver it in a way that feels most aligned for you, most productive for you, and kind of curate it to the needs of your site, of your staff. You know your staff. You know what they need. You know what they don't need. You know how to communicate with them. You know what lands for them and what doesn't. You know the style that they prefer.

You can, and you actually have so much more agency to create the professional development experience because that's what this is. You're providing an experience for your teachers with an intended outcome, and you do have more agency than you realize. You can decide here's the energy I want in this room.

Here's the style I want to facilitate this meeting in. I want teachers engaged and active and working and co-facilitating and discussing and time for thinking, time for planning, time for dreaming, time for imagining how good

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things can be this year. Talking about what is working just as often as we're complaining about what's not. Taking one problem and digging in deep versus trying to cover 10 miles wide worth of problems that we're not going to be able to get to all of them.

But this has to be customized and individualized for you so that the PD makes a difference, has an impact, and you want to take into consideration your teachers.

So I have seen this on, I think I've talked about this before on the podcast, but it's relevant to this topic. I see so many people on Facebook saying, "Hey, I have to fill a PD day. What should I do? What do you guys do? Who do you hire? What book should we read?"

I want to offer this. There is a difference between asking other people who don't know your school and don't know your staff and don't know what the needs are and don't know where you need to grow or what discussions need to be had where we need to expand ourselves, where we need to push ourselves, where we excel. Nobody out on the internet knows your school and your needs better than you.

I invite you before you go out and ask 2,000 people's opinion or 10,000 people's opinion or bazillion people's opinion about what your staff should do. I would invite you to ask yourself, what do I believe my staff needs? What do I believe I need? What do I believe my school needs? What's the one next thing that we need?

I've also noticed this. When I was a principal, it was here, read this book. Here's a great article. Here's a resource. Okay, thanks. I would read it, and I would be inspired for five minutes, 10 minutes a day. Or I'd read the book, and it would land for me. But I didn't oftentimes take that book and truly integrate it into my identity as a leader.

The same is true for professional development. It's like here's some information. Here's a one-day course. They hear it. They feel inspired. They're excited. They get some work done, or there's great

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conversation, or maybe we problem solve a little bit. But there isn't an integration unless the integration into the identity of the teachers is intentional, is a part of the process.

So any kind of professional development you have, whether it's a book or a resource or a program or a curriculum, there's a new math curriculum, and we're going to cover that. The reason those PDs tend to fall flat is because one, it's just a one-way street where you're like, here we're walking through the book and here's that, and there's some questions. But until teachers get into the curriculum, they can't integrate their expertise as a teacher of that curriculum until they've done it, until they get their hands into it.

If you have initiatives that are rolling out from top down, which tends to happen. The district says this is what we're going to do. This is what we're going to focus on. You've got to go tell your people all the things. This is how we're going to do teacher observations. This is how we're going to do data assessments or data conversations or PLCs. You're held accountable to rolling that out. You want to ensure that you're not just talking at them as a one-way street.

How can we make this integrative? How do they integrate the understanding of the purpose of teacher observations or the purpose of the PLCs or what's in it for them when it comes to PLCs? How do we integrate PLCs into a teacher's identity? I am a teacher who understands, who understands PLCs, understands the process, understands the value of them, the significance of them.

I get value from them. I contribute, and I receive. I find PLCs valuable. It's an integral part of my identity as a teacher. That is different than giving them a handout on what PLCs are or read this book about PLCs or here's an article on PLCs and here's why they're important.

Do you see the difference? So as you're planning this summer, and I know why we don't do this. We don't do this because it requires our brain to grind a little bit. We have to go dig deep. We have to think deeper. When we're

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thinking about intention, the intention means the benefit, the short-term benefits, the long-term benefits. But what we're trying to do is change the identity of our staff. We're trying to evolve their identity, to expand them, to inspire them, to transform them, to enhance their identity as a teacher.

So they feel more capable, more confident, more certain, more assured, more skilled in themselves. They trust themselves. They believe in themselves. They can identify as a teacher who knows what they're doing, who knows what to do when they get stuck, who knows where to go to get help when they get stuck, who feels confident in handling anything that comes their way and knows where to go when they don't know how to handle what comes their way. That's what we want.

So as you're planning PD, number one, I'm going to be hosting some planning sessions in August. You want to join EPC to be able to be a part of those bonus planning sessions. I'm going to be holding them in August because I want you to be able to either plan professional development that is productive and successful with intention, or you can map out your vision for the year and your top priorities. We're going to be doing both of those kinds of workshops.

So come on into EPC so that you can learn how to plan effective PD. You can map out your staff meetings. You can map out your vision for the year. You can map out your top priorities and get in alignment with where your district is.

I teach a process on how to align to your district's initiatives so they feel good for you and how to present them to your teachers and help your teachers get in alignment so that we can see all on the same team. We actually do want the same things. We want to feel good about ourselves. We want to feel good about our students and the work that they're doing. We want to feel good about the process and the approach that we're taking with our school. Okay?

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So if this resonates with you, if it feels like something you want to participate in, please join EPC. The link to join is in the notes. You can either pay in full. I'll put a link for pay in full. Or if you prefer, you can do the monthly payment plan. They work out to the exact same dollar amount. So there's no penalty for paying monthly. You pay in 10 months, \$199.70, and get you the \$1,997 for the 12 months of coaching.

So come on in. We're getting started in August. I can't wait to see you there. Have a wonderful week. Have fun planning, have fun celebrating, enjoy your summer, and come on into the Summer of Fun Challenge. We'll see you guys soon. Take good care. Bye.

Thanks for listening to this episode of *The Empowered Principal® Podcast*. If you enjoyed this episode and want to learn more, please visit angelakellycoaching.com where you can sign up for weekly updates and learn more about the tools that will help you become an emotionally fit school leader.