

CAPEA Luncheon Speech

By Tom DeLapp, President
Communication Resources for Schools
March 4, 2011

Times are a changing!

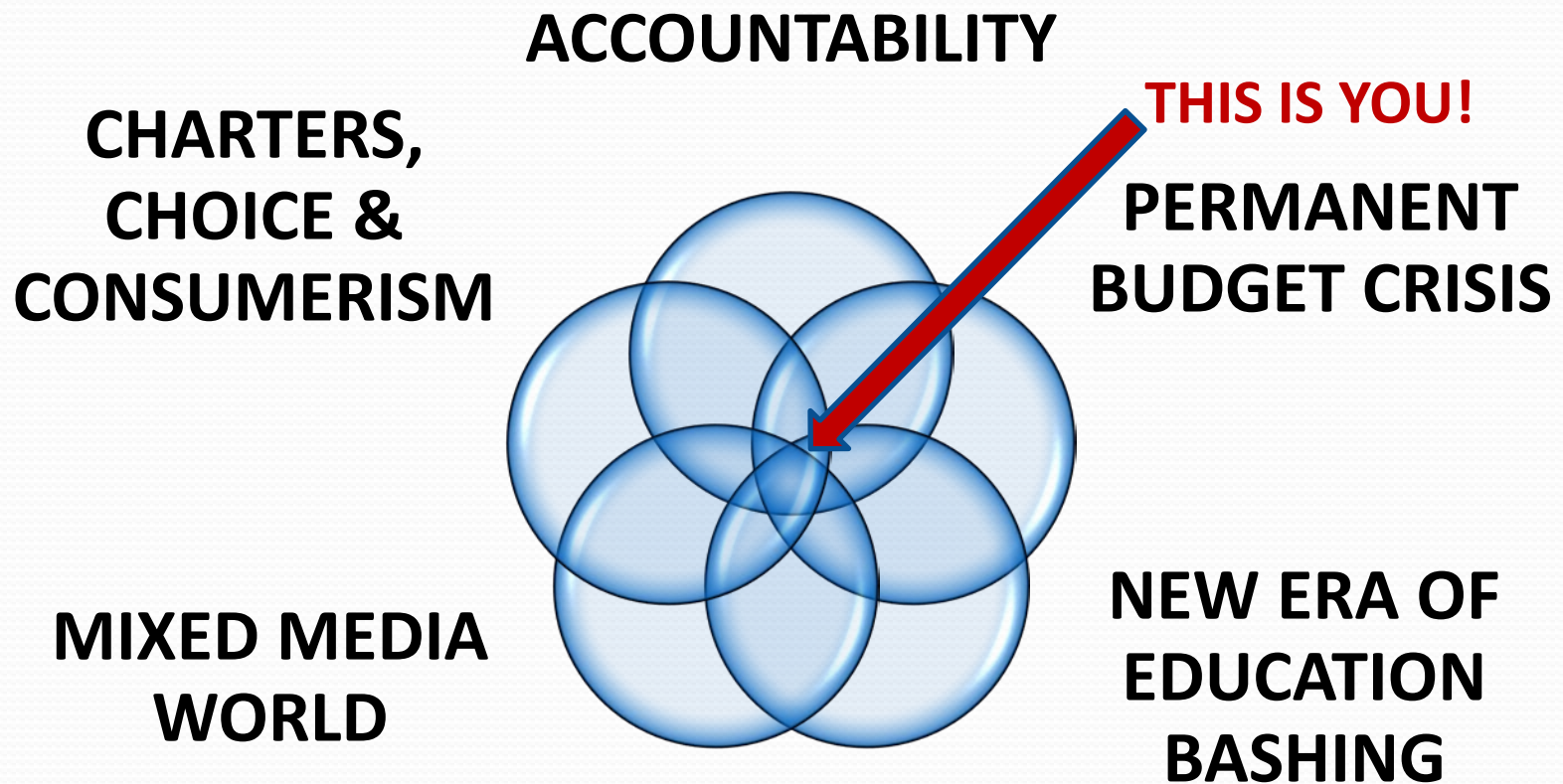
Educators can be “change” averse

~~CHANGE~~

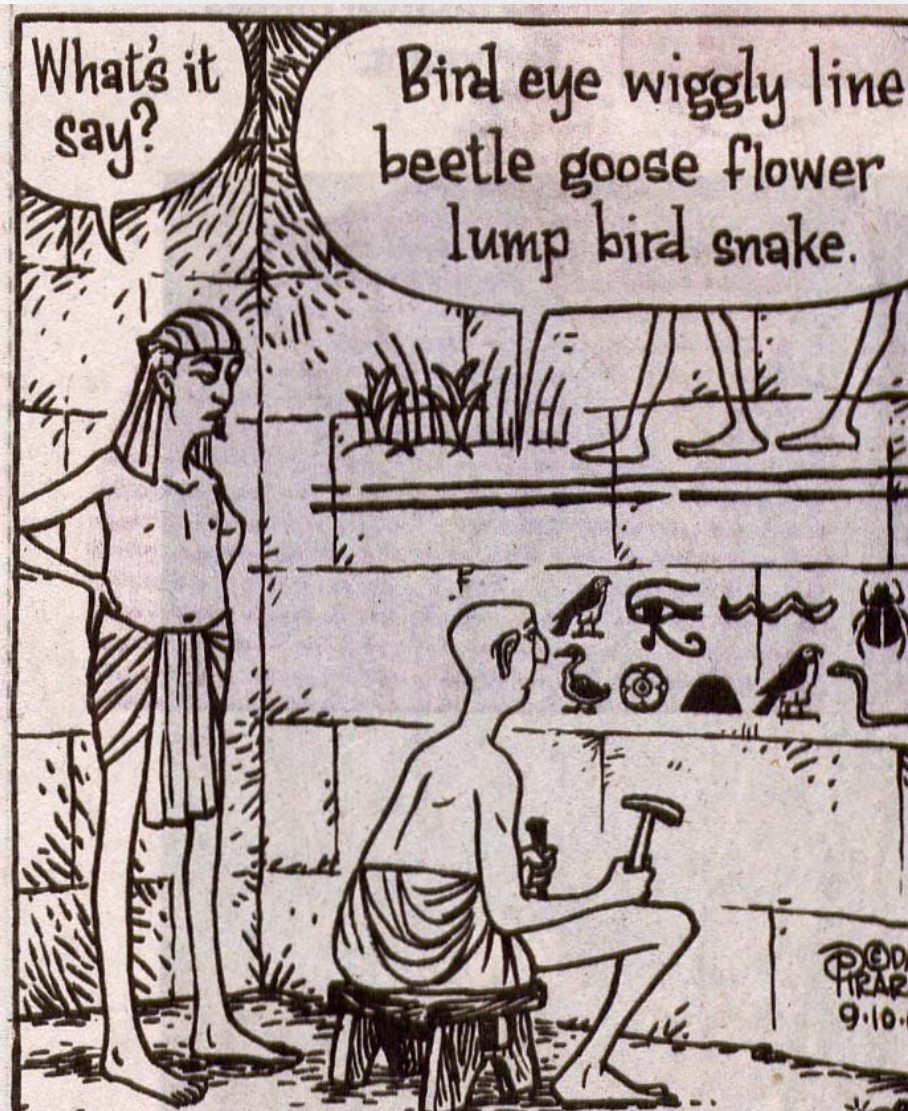
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GROWTH

Riding Out the Perfect Storm



**Did we lose
them with our
jargon they
can't decipher?**



Getting Past the Jargon

The Washington Post's Mensa Invitational once again invited readers to take any word from the dictionary, alter it by adding, subtracting, or changing one letter, and supplying a new definition. Here are the winners:

Cashtration (n.): The act of buying a house, which renders the subject financially impotent for an indefinite period of time.

Ignoranus : A person who's both stupid and an a*#hole.

Intaxication : Euphoria at getting a tax refund, which lasts until you realize it was your money to start with.

Reintarnation : Coming back to life as a hillbilly.

Getting Past the Jargon *(continued)*

Bozone (n.): The substance surrounding stupid people that stops bright ideas from penetrating. The bozone layer, unfortunately, shows little sign of breaking down in the near future.

Foreploy : Any misrepresentation about yourself for the purpose of getting laid.

Giraffiti : Vandalism spray-painted very, very high

Sarchasm : The gulf between the author of sarcastic wit and the person who doesn't get it.

Getting Past the Jargon *(continued)*

Inoculatte : To take coffee intravenously when you are running late.

Osteopornosis : A degenerate disease. *(This one got extra credit.)*

Karmageddon : It's like, when everybody is sending off all these really bad vibes, right? And then, like, the Earth explodes and it's like, a serious bummer

Decafalon (n.): The grueling event of getting through the day consuming only things that are good for you.

Glibido : All talk and no action.

Getting Past the Jargon *(continued)*

Dopeler Effect : The tendency of stupid ideas to seem smarter when they come at you rapidly.

Arachnoleptic Fit (n.): The frantic dance performed just after you've accidentally walked through a spider web.

Beelzebug (n.): Satan in the form of a mosquito, that gets into your bedroom at three in the morning and cannot be cast out.

Caterpallor (n.): The color you turn after finding half a worm in the fruit you're eating.

Era of Account • Ability

- **Question #1: Accountable to whom?**
- **Question #2: Accountable by what measure?**

• **ACCOUNT**

- How do you measure success?
- If you don't then I will!

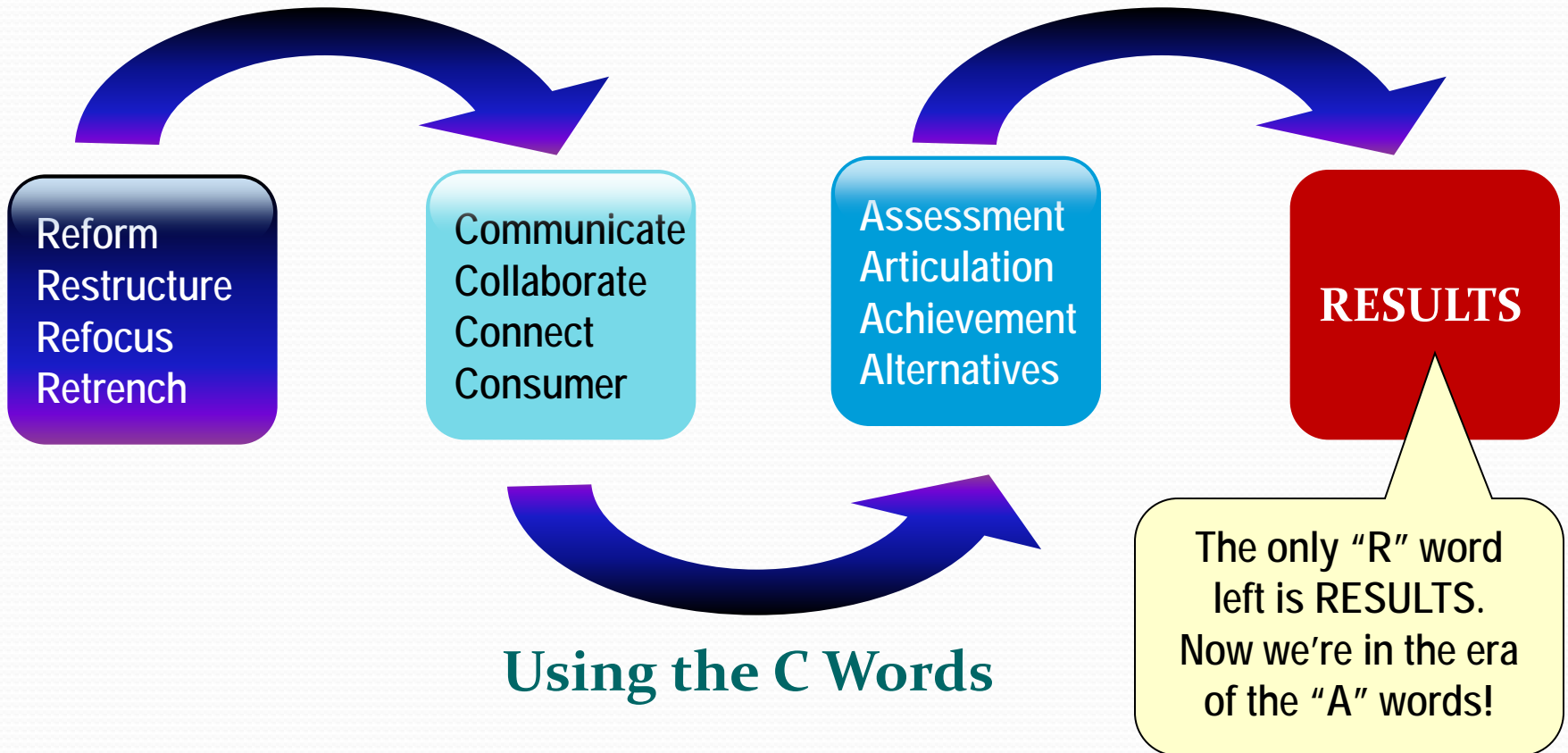
• **ABILITY**

- Am I confident that you can deliver what you promise?

The Era of Accountability

Era of the R Words

Era of the A Words



The Rollercoaster Budget

- Is this a cycle or a permanent downsizing?
- Downsizing funding without downsizing expectations
- When push comes to shove: Baby Boomers Win!
 - Kids don't have a vote or voice. Eldercare over child care
 - Social Security & National Security are trump cards
 - US spent 2.4 trillion dollars on two wars. We need a bailout!
- NFL Lock Out: The Battle of the Billionaires!
 - We pay \$75 a seat but won't spend \$75 a year on taxes

Getting Past Survival Mode

- We downsized budgets, but have we downsized expectations? NO!
- If we had to change the way we do business under fiscal stress, should we go back to business as usual when funding improves?
- Morale and enthusiasm need to be cultivated and renewed!
 - I don't have a morale problem unless you ask!
- Marketing change is hard work!



Will the next few years be a fork in the road or a U-Turn for your schools?

Public Ed Under Assault



Waiting for Superman
to show up with
THE ANSWER

- Education is emerging as a priority concern, but not a priority action
- 21st Century education bashing (ala vouchers in 1990s)
- External, not internal reform movements
- Replacement rather than repair attitude
- Positions staff as contributors to the problem
- Filled public schools with Kryptonite

Evolution of Education Bashing

- A Nation at Risk (1980s)
- Voucheristas & Privateers (1980s)
- Standards Movement (1990s)
- Charter Schools & Hostile Takeovers (2000s)
- Anti-Union (2010s)
 - Performance pay, evaluations, trigger laws

A Demanding Environment

Public school consumer base is anxious, uncertain and impatient

PUBLIC SCHOOL PIÑATA



Beat us up until the goodies fall out!

EDUCATIONAL ATM



They dial in their PIN, set their own credit limit, and expect the benefits to come out!

PUNCHING BAG



Repeatedly hit us and expect us to bounce right back!

They want us to spend time on their needs and priorities

Mass Personalized Info

- We don't communicate to a place anymore; we communicate with people wherever they are
- People can now define how they want to receive information through whatever filter they choose
- People can get on-demand or intrusive updates on issues, products, programs and interests
- People are not just information recipients anymore, most can and do create content

Information Age Challenges

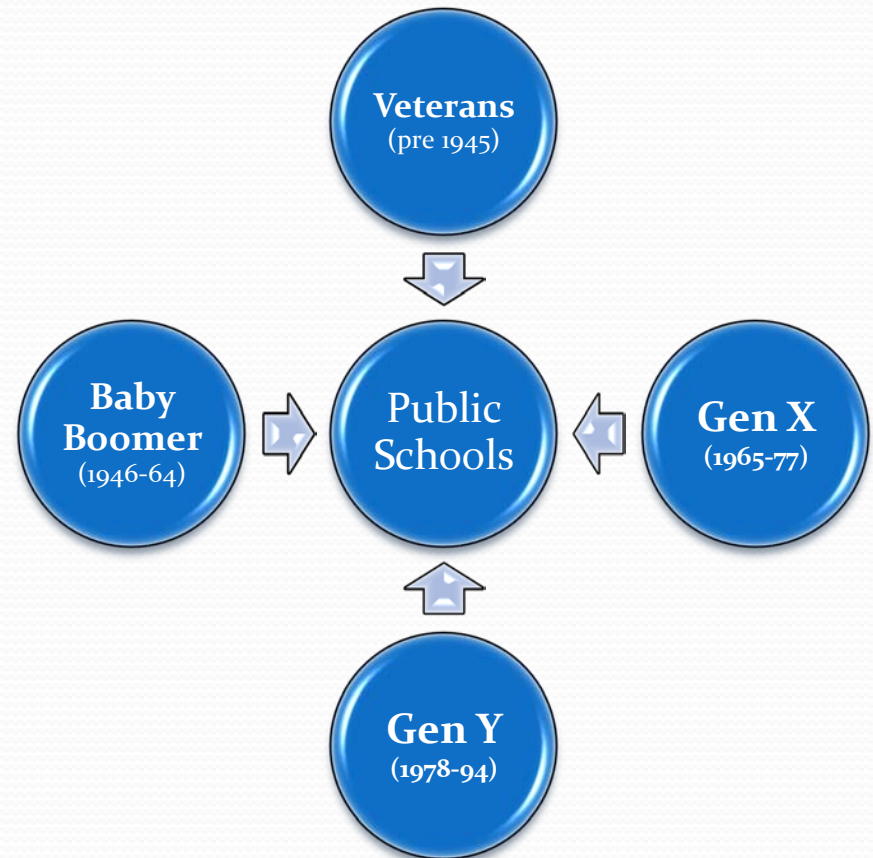
- Shrinking Distances
 - Your story or message goes global within minutes
- Increasing Volume
 - Harder to wade through the clutter for credible info
- Compressing Time
 - Instantaneous reaction and expectations
- Multiple Messages
 - Others overlap, amplify, extend and critique
- Compounding contacts
 - Multiplying effect, wiki-news

Informational Anarchy

- Egalitarian
 - No absolute monopolies, but big conglomerates
- Sectarian
 - Point of view sources, information with bias
- Explosive
 - Hard to keep pace with what's "in the mix"
- Unregulated
 - We license airwaves, but not the Internet
 - No quality control, or checks and balances except to fight back

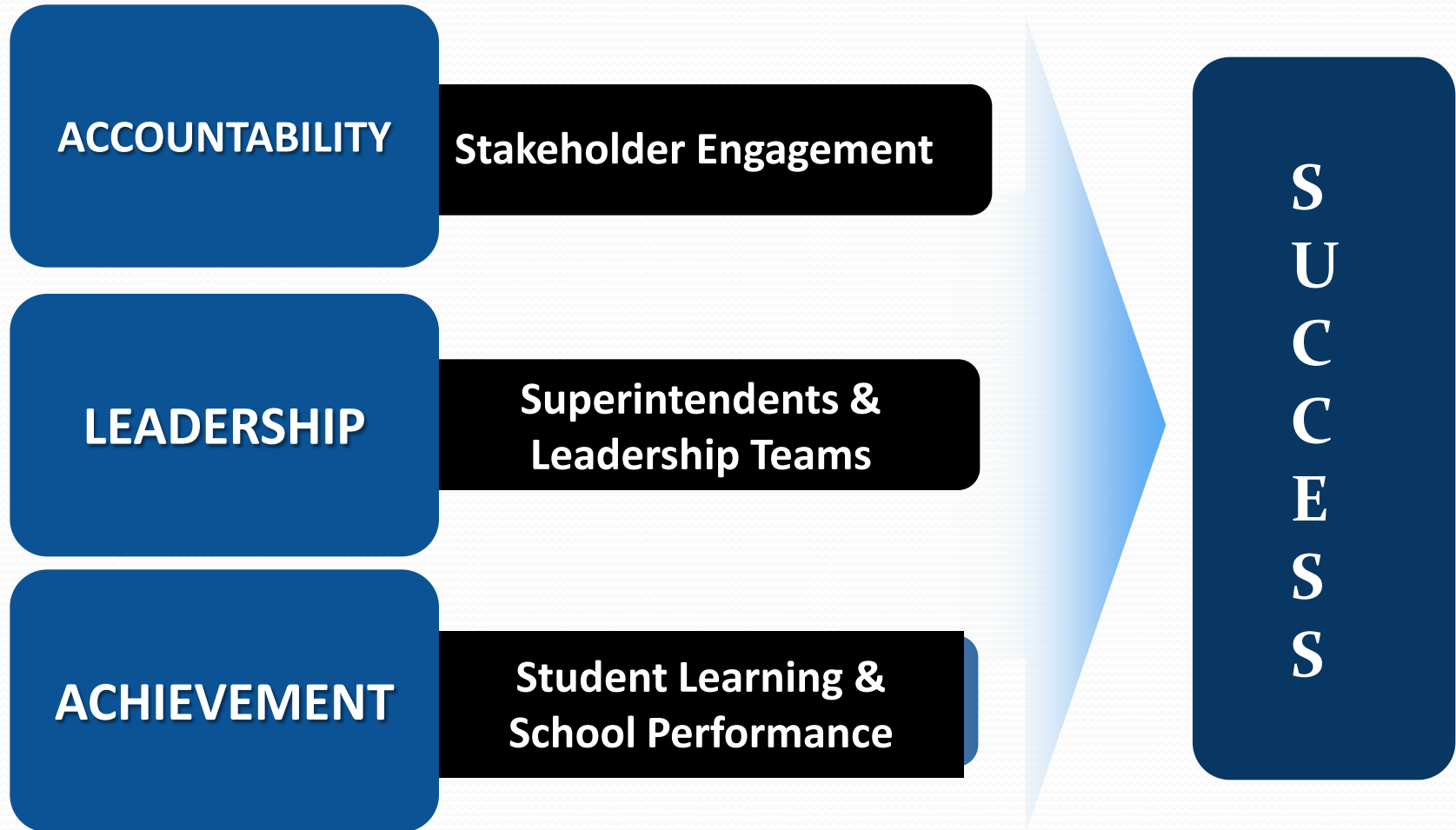
Diverse Generational Stakeholders

- **Senior Citizens** (over 60 yrs)
 - High proclivity voters
 - Traditional newsies
- **Baby Boomers** (40-60 yrs)
 - Emerging grandparents
 - Anxious pre-retirees
- **Generation X** (30-40 yrs)
 - Secondary school parents
 - Hitting career stride
- **Generation Y** (20-30 yrs)
 - Preschool/elementary parents
 - Very tech savvy/impatient



Your school employees can span all three generations

Communication is the key to —



Communication: The X Factor

- **NSPRA's Communication Accountability Project (CAP) validated two essential "truths" in public education:**

**Communication is the
key to leadership**

**Communication promotes student
achievement**

Communicating Leadership

- **Communication is the most sought after trait according to a national phone survey of superintendent search firms**
 - Good communication helps superintendents get, keep, and go after the next job
 - More than even instructional, managerial, or financial leadership trustees look for excellent communication skills in their top leader
 - Harder to recruit superintendents so good communicators have an edge!

Communicating Leadership

- **Communication (systemic and personal) is the single biggest reason superintendents succeed or fail on the job**
 - **Superintendent turnover can be directly traced to poor communication with School Boards, management teams, employees, news media, and/or civic leaders**
- **Communication enables superintendents to do the rest of their job successfully**

Communicating Achievement

Elements that shape positive student outcomes:

- ▶ Engaged, effective parents and care givers
- ▶ Collaborating, high-quality teachers in every classroom
- ▶ Rigorous, articulated instruction delivered to high standards
- ▶ Data-driven decisions that focus on leaving no child behind
- ▶ Continuous organizational improvement and innovation
- ▶ Involved, supportive communities and partnerships

We make these things happen through communication!

Communicating Achievement

Communication enables education to work better:

- ▶ Community partnerships and volunteerism
- ▶ Foundations, grants, patrons and donations
- ▶ Strategic listening and community engagement
- ▶ Parcel taxes, mill levies, facilities bonds
- ▶ Informed decision-making and advisory systems
- ▶ Issues management and quality control contributes to continuous improvement

We make these things happen through communication!

**Leadership
Effectiveness**

**Organizational
Effectiveness**

**Student
Performance**

**Are you producing
communicating
leaders?**

Communicate
Collaborate
Compete

**Stakeholder
Engagement**

For further information

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