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ENGINE™

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BUILDING **LEADERS.** • BUILDING **SYSTEMS.** • TRANSFORMING **SCHOOLS.**

Build the Engine™ Leadership Playbook

Volume I

The First Six Weeks Leadership Blueprint™

Leadership Milestone 1

Teacher Work Week

Leadership Focus: Build the Foundation

Primary Goal

Create alignment and readiness before students arrive.

Systems to Build

- Vision, mission & culture
- Staff relationships & communication
- Operational systems & compliance
- Classroom readiness & instructional expectations

Leadership Priorities

- **Welcome** staff and communicate the vision and non-negotiables.
- **Build** trust, review curriculum expectations, and prepare family communication.
- **Ensure** classrooms are ready and walkthroughs are complete.

- **Practice** arrival, dismissal, lunch, recess, and emergency procedures.
- **Review** attendance, legal compliance, and safety procedures.
- **Finalize** intervention schedules and supports.

Professional Development

- **Vision**, culture & school-wide expectations
- **Curriculum**, instruction & lesson planning
- **Classroom** management & technology
- **Safety**, compliance & IEP overview
- **New** teacher support and culture-ready planning

Leadership Walkthrough

Look for:

- Ready, neat, organized classrooms
- Posted expectations and lesson plans
- Classroom materials and libraries
- Technology functioning
- Staff engagement and hallway expectations

Deliverables

✓ Classroom Ready	✓ Staff Ready	✓ Family Communication Sent	✓ Systems Ready	✓ Leadership Team Ready
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Leadership Milestone 2

Week One

Leadership Focus: Presence Before Process

Primary Goal

Build relationships before making changes.

Principal Priorities

- **Be** visible from arrival through dismissal and visit every classroom daily.
- **Learn** student and family names.
- **Celebrate** staff and support teachers.

- **Observe** routines and document trends.

Leadership Walkthrough

Observe:

- Arrival and breakfast
- Hallways and classroom routines
- Dismissal

Data Review

- Attendance and enrollment
- Transportation and staffing
- Behavior trends

Deliverables

✓ Positive climate	✓ Consistent routines	✓ Strong visibility	✓ Staff support provided
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Leadership Milestone 3

Week Two

Leadership Focus: Consistency

Primary Goal

Ensure every classroom reflects the school's expectations.

Principal Priorities

- **Begin** coaching teachers and conduct grade-level meetings.
- **Monitor** behavior systems and hallway expectations.
- **Review** attendance daily and verify family communication.
- **Ensure** lesson plans align to curriculum.

Walkthrough Focus

Look for:

- Bell-to-bell instruction and student engagement
- Consistent classroom expectations

- Positive behavior systems
- Teacher clarity

Deliverables

✓ Coaching cycle begins	✓ Classroom expectations consistent	✓ Attendance procedures accurate
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Leadership Milestone 4

Week Three

Leadership Focus: Instruction

Primary Goal

Shift from opening school to improving instruction.

Principal Priorities

- **Instructional** walkthroughs and intervention planning
- **Small-group** instruction and student discourse
- **Lesson** rigor and checks for understanding

Data Review

- Attendance and behavior trends
- Classroom walkthrough trends
- Student engagement

Deliverables

✓ Instructional coaching underway	✓ PLCs functioning	✓ Intervention plans established
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Leadership Milestone 5

Week Four

Leadership Focus: Accountability

Primary Goal

Strengthen systems through coaching and accountability.

Principal Priorities

- **Formal** coaching conversations and leadership team accountability
- **Data** meetings and PLC observations
- **Family** communication and behavior review

Deliverables

✓ Leadership systems functioning	✓ Staff accountability established	✓ Data meetings completed
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Leadership Milestone 6

Week Five

Leadership Focus: Benchmark Readiness

Primary Goal

Prepare teachers and students before assessments.

Principal Priorities

- **Finalize** the assessment schedule and benchmark logistics.
- **Verify** technology and accommodations.
- **Teach** student testing expectations.
- **Send** parent communication.

Walkthrough Focus

Look for:

- Standards-based instruction
- Student stamina and assessment vocabulary
- Classroom routines
- Technology readiness

Deliverables

✓ Benchmark systems ready	✓ Students prepared	✓ Teachers confident
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Leadership Milestone 7

Week Six

Leadership Focus: Reflection & Refinement

Primary Goal

Evaluate the effectiveness of every leadership system established during the opening of school.

Principal Priorities

- **Review** benchmark results, attendance, and behavior.
- **Evaluate** instruction with the leadership team.
- **Celebrate** progress and identify October priorities.

Reflection Questions

What systems are working?

What systems require reteaching?

Who needs coaching?

What should we stop?

What should we continue?

Deliverables

✓ 90-Day Reflection Complete	✓ October Action Plan	✓ Coaching Priorities Established	✓ Leadership Team Goals Updated
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Six-Week Leadership Journey at a Glance

Week	Focus	Key Outcome
Teacher Work Week	Build the Foundation	Classroom & Staff Ready
Week One	Presence Before Process	Relationships Established
Week Two	Consistency	Expectations Aligned
Week Three	Instruction	Coaching Begins
Week Four	Accountability	Systems Strengthened
Week Five	Benchmark Readiness	Assessment Prepared
Week Six	Reflection & Refinement	90-Day Plan Complete

The Result: A school culture built on strong systems, consistent instruction, and accountable leadership—ready to drive student achievement all year long.

Leadership Blueprint™

Building Leaders. Building Systems. Transforming Schools.

Dr. Charlena Hunt

Founder

BuildTheEngineLeadership.com