



LEADERSHIP BRIEF

VOLUME 1 | ISSUE 1

FEATURED THIS MONTH

1

Build Relationships

People support leaders they know and trust.

2

Build the Year

Lead with a calendar, not a reaction.

3

Know Your Data

Use evidence before students arrive.

4

Set Expectations

Clarity and consistency from day one.

HO

Hiring & Onboarding

Build your team with intention and purpose.

FP

Family Partnership

Communicate early. Build trust.

LC

July Leadership Calendar

Daily focus. Weekly priorities. Monthly

JULY 2026

THE LAUNCH ISSUE

Building Culture Before Students Arrive

A month-by-month guide to help principals build strong foundations, lead with clarity, and create schools where students and staff thrive.

**VOCABULARY**

BLT = Building Leadership Team. R/Y/G = red/yellow/green readiness

*Strong Leadership. Clear Systems.**Better Schools.*

*Lead Intentionally.
Build the Engine.*

BUILD THE ENGINE

Practical tools | Proven strategies | Monthly focus | Lasting impact

BUILD THE ENGINE. LEAD WITH PURPOSE. CREATE EXCELLENCE.

Author's Note

A note from Dr. Hunt before you take this issue into July planning.

Why this issue matters

July can look quiet from the outside, but principals know it is one of the most important leadership months of the year. The decisions made now become the adult habits students experience in August.

This newsletter was built for the principal who wants more than inspiration. You need a monthly leadership read that also gives you tools to decide, assign, rehearse, inspect, and follow through.

Use it with your cabinet, BLT prospects, mentors, office team, operations lead, and teacher leaders. Do not try to carry every page alone. The strength of a launch is not how much the principal can hold. The strength of a launch is how clearly the right adults can carry the right work together.

If you are new to the chair, let these pages slow the work down enough for you to see it. If you are seasoned, let them sharpen what experience can sometimes make too familiar. Either way, the goal is the same: clear culture, consistent adults, and a school that feels ready before students walk in.

How to use this month

- ☐ Read the feature first, then print the dashboard and use it every Friday.
- ☐ Choose one tool per leadership meeting instead of reviewing every page at once.
- ☐ Write owners and dates directly into the templates.

Dr. Hunt

VOCABULARY

BLT = Building Leadership Team; non-negotiable = a shared expectation adults agree to teach and protect.

Inside This Issue

The Launch Issue reads like a monthly leadership brief and works like a principal's July operating file.

This Month's Engine

Relationships

Know people before expectations.

The Year

Calendar priorities before reactions.

Data

Read the story before students arrive.

Expectations

Set clarity from day one.

Launch Strong

Rehearse, inspect, and reset.

One month. One focus. Practical moves leaders can actually carry.

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FEATURED ARTICLE

Four Things to Build

Relationships. Calendar. Data. Expectations.



Subscriber note

The templates in this issue are meant to support the thinking in the articles. Read for clarity, then use the tools to turn the work into owners, dates, evidence, and next moves.

VOCABULARY

BLT = Building Leadership Team; data lens = the evidence leaders use to choose the next adult move.

Leadership Truth

July is not a waiting room. It is the month principals use to build trust, map the year, study the evidence, and set the tone adults will carry into August.

THE JULY ESSAY

The opening of school does not begin when students arrive. It begins when adults decide how they will know people, organize time, read evidence, and protect expectations.

First, build relationships before you build expectations. Staff, families, and partners are more likely to support a standard when they know the leader is listening, learning the school's history, and honoring what already works.

Second, build the year before the year builds you. Successful principals do not wait for urgency to create the calendar. They schedule leadership meetings, coaching cycles, family engagement, walkthroughs, and instructional planning before August starts making demands.

Third, know your data before you meet your students. Data tells the story of where the school has been and where leadership attention must go next. Use it to choose priorities, not to overwhelm the team.

Finally, establish leadership expectations from day one. Culture grows through consistency, clarity, and accountability. The standard set in July becomes the culture adults lead in September.

Coach's Perspective

Trust is a leadership strategy. Listen first, then set the expectation with clarity.

Why This Matters

If it is not on the calendar, it rarely becomes a priority once the year begins.

Build the Engine Move

Meet people, map the year, study the evidence, and define what excellence looks like before the first staff meeting.

Data Lens

Signal	Target	What to ask
Relationships	100%	Who still needs a first conversation?
Calendar	Mapped	What must be protected now?
Data	Reviewed	What story needs leadership action?

VOCABULARY Non-negotiable = a schoolwide expectation adults teach, model, and protect consistently.

Four Before August

This month's leadership strategy is simple: build the relationships, calendar, data story, and expectations before the school year starts building pressure around you.

1

Build Relationships Before You Build Expectations

People support leaders they know and trust.

JULY MOVES

Meet individually with staff. Connect with returning families and community partners. Learn the strengths of your leadership team.

2

Build the Year Before the Year Builds You

Successful principals lead with a calendar, not a reaction.

JULY MOVES

Map leadership priorities, coaching cycles, family engagement, walkthroughs, and major deadlines before school begins.

3

Know Your Data Before You Meet Students

Data tells the story of where your school has been and where it needs to go.

JULY MOVES

Review assessment, attendance, behavior, enrollment, and family contact patterns. Choose 2-3 schoolwide priorities.

4

Establish Expectations From Day One

Culture is built through consistency, clarity, and accountability.

JULY MOVES

Define leadership norms, decision routines, communication expectations, and the behaviors adults will model all year.

Leadership reminder

Trust is your first leadership strategy. The calendar protects your priorities. Evidence keeps the team honest. Clear expectations become the culture adults lead.

VOCABULARY BLT = Building Leadership Team; evidence check = how leaders know whether a system is working.

July Monthly Dashboard

Use this one-page dashboard every Friday. The aim is consistency, not perfection.

Week	Priority	Evidence before moving on	Status	Next move
Week 1	Name non-negotiables and audit systems.	Drafted list; red/yellow/green marked.	R / Y / G	
Week 2	Assign owners for supervision, communication, behavior, readiness.	Owner list and first checkpoint dates.	R / Y / G	
Week 3	Prepare messages, BLT prospects, onboarding, walkthrough look-fors.	Drafts ready for leader review.	R / Y / G	
Week 4	Rehearse first week and close building gaps.	Launch calendar and open-loop list.	R / Y / G	

Opening culture indicators

Indicator	2025 baseline	2026 target	Current evidence	Leader response
Average daily attendance	92%	94%		
Classes start on time	71%	86%		
Positive family contacts	40	62		
Behavior-response plan	Draft	Calibrated		
Common response language	Draft	Calibrated		

Friday reflection: What got clearer this week? What still needs an owner?

VOCABULARY

R/Y/G = red/yellow/green readiness status; behavior-response plan = agreed adult response steps.

Weekly Consistency

Each week protects one leadership priority from the Four Before August strategy. Read the guidance like a newsletter, then use the template space to assign the work.

Tools in this section

- Build relationships
- Build the year
- Know your data
- Establish expectations

Weekly Guidance: Week 1 - Build Relationships

Build relationships before you build expectations. People support leaders they know and trust.

Principal moves

- ☐ Meet individually with every staff member you can reach.
- ☐ Connect with returning families and community partners.
- ☐ Learn the strengths of your leadership team.
- ☐ Ask more questions than you answer.

Evidence to collect

- ☐ Staff conversation notes.
- ☐ Family/community contact list.
- ☐ Leadership strength map.
- ☐ Patterns you heard more than once.

Leader type	Best first move	Watch for	Who helps	Done by
New principal	Listen for school history first.	Moving too quickly to fixes.	Mentor/AP	
Seasoned principal	Reconnect beyond the usual voices.	Assuming trust is still current.	BLT	
All leaders	Name what people value and fear.	Skipping listening.	Cabinet	

Notes, decisions, and open loops

VOCABULARY Calibration = leaders agreeing what consistent adult practice looks and sounds like.

Weekly Guidance: Week 2 - Build the Year

Build the year before the year builds you. Successful principals lead with a calendar, not a reaction.

Principal moves

- ☐ Build your annual leadership calendar.
- ☐ Schedule recurring dean, cabinet, and coaching meetings.
- ☐ Protect instructional walkthrough time.
- ☐ Identify major milestones and deadlines.

Evidence to collect

- ☐ Leadership calendar draft.
- ☐ Recurring meeting list.
- ☐ Walkthrough blocks protected.
- ☐ Milestone and deadline map.

Leader type	Best first move	Watch for	Who helps	Done by
New principal	Start with non-negotiable dates.	Letting urgency own the calendar.	Office manager/AP	
Seasoned principal	Audit what stole time last year.	Repeating an old calendar blindly.	Operations lead	
All leaders	Put priorities on the calendar now.	No protected time.	Cabinet	

Notes, decisions, and open loops

VOCABULARY

Owner = the adult responsible for follow-through; backup = the person who covers if the owner is unavailable.

Weekly Guidance: Week 3 - Know Your Data

Know your data before you meet your students. Evidence tells the story of where your school has been and where it needs to go.

Principal moves

- ☐ Analyze state and local assessment results.
- ☐ Identify priority student groups.
- ☐ Review attendance and behavior-response trends.
- ☐ Develop 2-3 schoolwide instructional priorities.

Evidence to collect

- ☐ Assessment trend notes.
- ☐ Priority group list.
- ☐ Attendance and response patterns.
- ☐ Draft instructional priorities.

Leader type	Best first move	Watch for	Who helps	Done by
New principal	Ask what the data means locally.	Reading numbers without context.	Data lead	
Seasoned principal	Look for changed patterns.	Defending last year's story.	Teacher leaders	
All leaders	Choose the next adult move.	Drowning in data.	BLT	

Notes, decisions, and open loops

VOCABULARY
BLT = Building Leadership Team; mentor = the go-to support person for a new staff member.

Weekly Guidance: Week 4 - Set Expectations

Establish leadership expectations from day one. Culture is built through consistency, clarity, and accountability.

Principal moves

- ☐ Set clear leadership norms.
- ☐ Create dean or team development goals.
- ☐ Clarify communication and decision-making routines.
- ☐ Celebrate early wins while holding high expectations.

Evidence to collect

- ☐ Leadership norms draft.
- ☐ Development goal list.
- ☐ Communication and decision routine.
- ☐ First-week celebration plan.

Leader type	Best first move	Watch for	Who helps	Done by
New principal	Model the standard in small moments.	Being vague to stay liked.	AP/dean	
Seasoned principal	Name what will be tighter this year.	Letting old drift return.	BLT	
All leaders	Practice expectations out loud.	Written clarity without rehearsal.	Cabinet	

Notes, decisions, and open loops

VOCABULARY

Walkthrough = a short, focused visit to look for agreed culture or instruction evidence.

Real Talk

The launch will not rise to the level of your hopes. It will settle into the systems adults can actually carry.

The honest part

A beautiful opening message will not fix unclear routines. A theme will not fix inconsistent adult responses. A spreadsheet will not fix a system no one owns.

If this is true	Do not pretend	Make this next move
Adults are unclear.	Do not add more words to the plan.	Model the routine and rehearse it with leaders.
A system has no owner.	Do not hope someone handles it.	Name one owner, one backup, one date, and one evidence check.
Data looks messy.	Do not wait for perfect numbers.	Use the pattern you have and decide the next adult move.
Staff are tired.	Do not call everything urgent.	Protect the few non-negotiables and remove noise where you can.
You are carrying too much.	Do not make exhaustion the leadership model.	Delegate visible work and keep the principal reset commitment.

My real talk commitment for this launch

VOCABULARY Adult move = the specific action adults will take to improve a student-facing pattern.

A NOTE FOR THE PRINCIPAL

August culture is built in July.

When leaders wait until staff return to define culture, the year starts with mixed messages. July gives the principal time to decide what will be tight, what will be taught, and what will be monitored from day one.

The goal is not to create a long list of rules. The goal is to name the few non-negotiables that protect learning, safety, belonging, and adult consistency.

Ask your leadership team: What must every adult do the same way so students experience one school, not a collection of separate classrooms?

LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE

What is a Building Leadership Team?

A Building Leadership Team, or BLT, is a small group of teacher leaders who help the principal read the pulse of the building. They model school priorities, surface staff questions early, support communication, and help leaders understand how decisions are landing with teachers.

A strong BLT is not a complaint committee and not another meeting for announcements. It is a leadership structure that helps culture and systems move through the building with teacher voice and shared ownership.

Coming soon

How to identify, engage, and create a solid BLT that supports culture, communication, and school-wide systems.

Area	Example non-negotiable	Why it matters
Arrival	Adults greet, scan, and redirect.	Students enter with belonging and safety.
Class start	Task begins within the first minutes.	Learning time is protected.
Response	Adults use common first language.	Students hear one consistent standard.

VOCABULARY BLT = Building Leadership Team; non-negotiable = a schoolwide expectation adults protect.

BUILDING READINESS

The building teaches before the meeting starts.

Teachers need to return to a place that feels neat, clean, prepared, and cared for. The physical environment tells staff whether leadership is paying attention to the details that shape culture.

A readiness walk is not about decoration. It is about the message adults receive when they enter the building: this place is organized, welcoming, and ready for serious work.

Walk the entryway, office, hallways, staff spaces, and operations areas with one question in mind: what does this space teach people before I say a word?

SCHOOL THEME SPARK

Use the theme to create coherence.

A theme should connect to the work, not just decorate the walls. It gives staff, students, and families shared language for the year.

Strong themes point people toward a leadership priority. Every Minute Matters can connect attendance, routines, and learning time. Stronger Together can connect teams, families, and shared ownership.

The best hallway idea is not more visuals. It is one main message near the entrance that connects grade-level or department boards to the same purpose.

Hallway idea

Create one main visual message near the entrance. Then connect grade-level or department boards to the same theme.

Week	Priority	Evidence before moving on
Week 1	Name culture non-negotiables and audit systems.	Non-negotiables drafted; dashboard marked R/Y/G.
Week 2	Assign owners for supervision, communication, response, and readiness.	Owner list and checkpoint dates.
Week 3	Prepare staff messages, theme visuals, BLT prospects, and walkthrough look-fors.	Drafts, visual plan, BLT list, walkthrough tool.
Week 4	Rehearse the first week and close readiness gaps.	Final launch calendar and unresolved questions list.

VOCABULARY Readiness walk = a leadership review of spaces, systems, safety, and welcome before launch.

PEOPLE STRATEGY

Engage new hires before they start guessing.

New staff should feel expected, supported, and connected before the first staff meeting. A new hire who has a mentor, calendar access, routines, and a short principal check-in walks into August with more confidence.

Onboarding is culture work. When a new staff member knows whom to call, what routines matter, and how the school communicates, the principal has protected both the person and the students they will serve.

Ask one simple question for each new hire: What does this person need to feel prepared, connected, and confident before August?

New hire question

What does this person need to feel prepared, connected, and confident before August?

RETURNING TEACHERS

Returning does not always mean ready.

Returning teachers need clarity, voice, and respect for what they already know. Re-engage them in the culture work without making every year feel like a restart.

Ask what to keep, stop, and tighten. Invite strong teachers to model routines. Explain what is changing and why. Protect time for teams to prepare.

Use returning teachers to help shape BLT membership. Their perspective helps leaders hear the pulse of the building before confusion becomes resistance.

Returning teacher question

Where can I give teachers voice while still protecting the school-wide non-negotiables?

Possible BLT member	Strength they bring	Pulse they help us hear	Invite date

VOCABULARY

Onboarding = the support process that helps a new hire feel prepared, connected, and clear.

WALKTHROUGH WATCH

Look for culture before you chase everything.

In the first weeks, walkthroughs should help leaders see whether adults are teaching and protecting the school-wide non-negotiables.

Look for class starts, taught routines, consistent redirection, student belonging, and instructional urgency. These signals tell leaders whether the culture plan is becoming the student experience.

If leaders look for everything, teachers receive scattered feedback. Start with the culture moves that must be consistent.

FAST FEEDBACK

Use language that reinforces the non-negotiable.

Fast feedback is short, specific, and connected to the adult move the school has already named. The goal is not to critique everything; the goal is to reinforce what must become common.

Useful feedback sounds like: I noticed students entered and began the task within the first minutes. The routine was clear when you modeled it. To tighten consistency, try the redirect language tomorrow.

Feedback should help teachers know exactly what to keep doing, what to tighten, and why the move matters for students.

Walkthrough reminder

If leaders look for everything, teachers receive scattered feedback. Start with the culture moves that must be consistent.

Look-for	Evidence
Class starts on time	Students have a task and know what to do.
Routine is taught	Teacher models, practices, and narrates expectation.
Redirection is consistent	Adult uses agreed language and next step.
Student belonging	Students are greeted, noticed, and supported.

Feedback stem	Complete the phrase
I noticed...	
The routine was clear when...	
To tighten consistency...	

VOCABULARY Look-for = the specific adult or student evidence leaders inspect during a walkthrough.

FAMILY CONNECTION

Families should know the culture before concerns begin.

Use July to prepare simple messages that explain the school-wide expectations and invite partnership. Families should not first hear from the school when something has gone wrong.

Starter language can name the focus clearly: this year, our school is focused on clear routines, strong attendance, respectful communication, and every student knowing what success looks like.

The message checklist is simple: welcome, attendance, culture expectations, celebrations, and concern response.

PRINCIPAL RESET

A break protects the leader and the launch.

Work-life balance matters in July. The principal should not enter August depleted. Protecting recovery time is a leadership move.

Close open loops on paper. Delegate urgent contact points. Set an away message. Decide what can wait. Block a return reset.

The school needs a prepared leader, not an exhausted leader. Rest is not a reward after the work is done; it is part of the work that makes the launch sustainable.

Reset belief

The school needs a prepared leader, not an exhausted leader.

Question	Decision	Owner
What family message must go first?		
Which open loop must be delegated?		
When will the principal reset happen?		

VOCABULARY Family partnership = early, clear communication that builds trust before concerns begin.

Subscriber Tools

Use these print-and-use templates after reading the issue. They help turn the monthly leadership strategy into owners, dates, evidence, and next moves.

Tools in this section

- Culture non-negotiables
- Systems dashboard
- Hiring and onboarding
- BLT and readiness
- Walkthroughs, feedback, data, and families

Culture Non-Negotiables Builder

Choose the few adult and student expectations that must be consistent school-wide. If everything is a priority, adults cannot carry it.

Area	Non-negotiable	Teach/practice question	Owner	Evidence
Arrival	Every adult greets, scans, and redirects before students enter classrooms.	Where will adults stand? What will they say?		
Transitions	Hallway movement is taught, practiced, monitored, and corrected.	What does silent/quiet/efficient movement look like?		
Class start	Learning begins with a visible task within the first 3 minutes.	What must be on the board or ready at the door?		
Behavior response	Adults use the same first response language and escalation path.	What words do we all use first?		
Family contact	Families hear positive and concern-based communication early.	Which families must hear from us before Labor Day?		

Our 3-5 final culture non-negotiables

VOCABULARY Non-negotiable = a shared expectation every adult teaches, models, and protects.

School-Wide Systems Readiness Dashboard

Mark each system red, yellow, or green. A yellow system needs practice. A red system needs an owner today.

System	Ready looks like	Status	Owner	Next checkpoint
Culture routines	Arrival, dismissal, transitions, class start, and response are written and teachable.	R / Y / G		
Supervision	Duty posts, hallway zones, lunch, recess, and dismissal have owners and backups.	R / Y / G		
Communication	Staff, families, and new hires know dates, priorities, and where information lives.	R / Y / G		
Walkthroughs	Leaders know the opening culture and instruction look-fors.	R / Y / G		
Building readiness	Spaces are clean, labeled, welcoming, and connected to the school theme.	R / Y / G		
Teacher leadership	BLT prospects, mentors, and returning teacher leaders are identified.	R / Y / G		
Data meetings	Opening indicators, agenda, norms, and evidence sources are ready.	R / Y / G		

One-move decision

If the team can only tighten one system this week, choose the system that will most affect student safety, belonging, or instructional time.

VOCABULARY R/Y/G = red/yellow/green readiness status; checkpoint = the date leaders review progress.

Hiring and Vacancy Tracker

Hiring is a culture strategy. Track vacancies, urgency, interview evidence, and onboarding needs in one place.

Role	Candidate	Urgency	Evidence from interview	Offer/onboard next step	Owner
		High / Med / Low			
		High / Med / Low			
		High / Med / Low			
		High / Med / Low			
		High / Med / Low			

Interview evidence bank

Competency	Question	Strong evidence sounds like	Follow-up
Student belonging	Tell us about a student who was hard to reach.	Specific action, reflection, and relationship repair.	
Instructional urgency	How do you start class so learning begins quickly?	Clear routine, task, and monitoring plan.	
Team fit	How do you respond when a team expectation changes?	Flexibility plus honest communication.	

VOCABULARY Hiring evidence = what leaders learn from interviews, references, and follow-up tasks.

New Hire Onboarding Template

New staff should feel expected, supported, and connected before the first staff meeting.

- ☐ Send welcome message within 24 hours of hire.
- ☐ Assign a mentor or team contact before orientation.
- ☐ Share calendar, curriculum access, arrival/dismissal routines, and school-wide non-negotiables.
- ☐ Schedule a 15-minute principal or dean check-in.
- ☐ Give the new hire one person to call for operations, one for instruction, and one for culture questions.

When	Connection	What they receive	Owner	Notes
Before day 1	Welcome + mentor	Calendar, contacts, norms		
First week	Check-in	Routines, systems, questions		
30 days	Instruction/culture review	Feedback and next support		
60 days	Team integration	Evidence of confidence/gaps		
90 days	Retention conversation	Successes and needs		

New hire confidence signals we will watch

VOCABULARY New hire onboarding = communication, mentoring, and support before and after the first staff day.

Returning Staff and BLT Starter

Returning does not always mean ready. Re-engage teachers with clarity, voice, and respect for what they already know.

Returning teacher pulse

Ask: What should we keep, stop, and tighten from last year's launch? Where can teacher voice improve the plan without weakening school-wide consistency?

Possible BLT member	Strength they bring	Staff pulse they hear	Role in launch	Invite date

BLT meeting	Decision needed	Teacher voice needed	Evidence to bring
First conversation	What are the launch priorities?	Questions staff will ask.	
Calibration	What does consistent look like?	Where routines may break.	
After launch	What pattern needs action?	What staff need next.	

VOCABULARY BLT = Building Leadership Team; staff pulse = what teacher leaders are hearing across the building.

Building Readiness Walk

The building teaches before the meeting starts. Use this walk to make the school feel clean, intentional, and cared for.

Area	Ready looks like	Status	Owner	Fix by
Entry/main office	Clean, current, welcoming, family-facing materials updated.	R / Y / G		
Hallways	Uncluttered, boards intentional, theme visible.	R / Y / G		
Classrooms	Furniture ready, labels/signage clear, basic supplies in place.	R / Y / G		
Staff spaces	Respectful adult spaces with supplies, signage, and welcome touch.	R / Y / G		
Operations	Work orders named, dated, and prioritized.	R / Y / G		
Safety	Doors, radios, maps, visitor process, and supervision zones checked.	R / Y / G		

Theme message and hallway idea

VOCABULARY

Readiness walk = a leadership review of spaces, systems, safety, and welcome before launch.

Opening Walkthrough Tool

Look for culture before chasing everything. Early walkthroughs should inspect the adult moves that must be consistent.

Look-for	Evidence	Rating	Pattern	Response
Class start	Task visible; students know what to do within 3 minutes.	Yes / Almost / No		
Routine taught	Teacher models, practices, and narrates the expectation.	Yes / Almost / No		
Redirection	Adult uses agreed language and next step.	Yes / Almost / No		
Belonging	Students are greeted, noticed, affirmed, or supported.	Yes / Almost / No		
Instructional urgency	Learning time is protected and transitions are tight.	Yes / Almost / No		

Date	Culture look-for	Pattern noticed	Leadership response

VOCABULARY Walkthrough = a short, focused visit to look for agreed culture or instruction evidence.

Fast Feedback Bank

Use language that reinforces the non-negotiable and keeps feedback specific enough to act on tomorrow.

Affirm

I noticed students entered and began the task within ____ minutes because you ____.

Tighten

To strengthen consistency tomorrow, try ____ during the first ____ minutes.

Calibrate

The redirect aligned to our school-wide language when you said ____.

Belonging

Students experienced belonging when you ____ before the task began.

Follow-up

I will come back on ____ to look for ____ evidence.

Feedback language I want leaders to practice

Handwriting practice lines for feedback language. The page contains eight horizontal lines for writing. A large, faint watermark of the 'BUILD THE ENGINE' logo is visible across the middle of the page.

VOCABULARY Fast feedback = short, specific coaching language tied to the agreed non-negotiable.

Data Meeting Protocol

Use data meetings to decide the next adult move. Do not let the meeting become a tour of numbers.

Step	Leader question	Evidence	Decision
1. Name	Which opening indicator matters most this week?	Attendance, class start, response language, contacts, walkthroughs.	
2. Notice	What pattern is showing up across rooms, teams, or times?	Trends, not one-off stories.	
3. Narrow	Which adult move would change the pattern fastest?	Practice, script, schedule, feedback, or resource.	
4. Assign	Who owns the move and when will we check it?	Owner, date, evidence.	
5. Follow up	What changed by Friday?	Before/after evidence.	

Indicator	Current	Pattern	Adult move	Friday evidence
Attendance				
Class starts				
Response language				
Family contacts				

VOCABULARY
Data meeting = a short meeting where leaders use evidence to choose the next adult move.

Family Communication Toolkit

Families should know the culture before concerns begin. Prepare simple messages that explain expectations and invite partnership.

Starter language

This year, our school is focused on clear routines, strong attendance, respectful communication, and every student knowing what success looks like. You will hear from us early and often because family partnership matters.

Message	Purpose	Audience	Send date	Owner
Welcome	Build belonging and clarity.	All families		
Attendance	Explain why every day matters.	All families		
Culture expectations	Name routines and response language.	All families		
Celebrations	Log positive contact early.	Priority families		
Concern response	Set response time and escalation path.	As needed		

Date	Student/family	Reason	Method	Follow-up

VOCABULARY Family partnership = early, clear communication that builds trust before concerns begin.

Final July Action Board

Close July with clarity. Every open loop should be completed, assigned, or intentionally postponed.

Question	Decision	Owner	By when
What are our 3-5 culture non-negotiables?			
Which school-wide system needs the most attention before August?			
Who needs to be part of the first BLT conversation?			
What building/theme readiness work must be completed?			
Which data indicators will we review every Friday?			
What will I delegate so I can protect reset time?			

Principal reset commitment

VOCABULARY Open loop = a task, question, or decision that must be closed, assigned, or postponed.

Day-by-Day Principal Focus

Adjust dates to match your district calendar, but keep the order: clarify culture, assign ownership, prepare people, ready the building, and protect energy.

Jun 29 Preview month; list unfinished decisions.	Jun 30 Gather calendars, staffing updates, opening dates.	Jul 1 Name 3-5 culture non-negotiables.	Jul 2 Define look-like/sound-like and monitors.	Jul 3 Protect rest; close urgent loops.
Jul 6 Audit arrival, transitions, dismissal, response.	Jul 7 Assign supervision owners and backups.	Jul 8 Draft staff message and why.	Jul 9 Identify teachers who model routines.	Jul 10 Walk building for clean, welcoming spaces.
Jul 13 Build first BLT prospect list.	Jul 14 Prepare new hire welcome and mentors.	Jul 15 Choose walkthrough look-fors.	Jul 16 Draft family message.	Jul 17 Choose/refine school theme.
Jul 20 Confirm owners, dates, evidence checks.	Jul 21 Prepare first staff meeting flow.	Jul 22 Review readiness with operations team.	Jul 23 Rehearse first week systems.	Jul 24 Schedule principal reset time.
Jul 27 Finalize staff return materials.	Jul 28 Confirm BLT invitation language.	Jul 29 Check walkthrough tracker and feedback language.	Jul 30 Close or assign every open loop.	Jul 31 Pause, reset, enter August with clarity.

Principal reminder

The goal is not to complete every task alone. The goal is to make the right work clear, owned, and ready enough for adults to carry consistently.

VOCABULARY Launch calendar = daily leadership focus for preparing people, systems, culture, and communication.

Printable Notes and Team Commitments

Use this page during BLT meetings, cabinet check-ins, data meetings, or personal planning.

VOCABULARY Team commitment = the written next move an owner agrees to complete by a specific date.