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This is a day late, but I thought this excerpt from a writing by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was worth a read. It is as if Dr. King was able to see ahead to what our schools and their standardized tests would become...

“As I engage in the so-called “bull sessions” around and about the school, I too often find that most college men have a misconception of the purpose of education. Most of the “brethren” think that education should equip them with the proper instruments of exploitation so that they can forever trample over the masses. Still others think that education should furnish them with noble ends rather than means to an end.

It seems to me that education has a two-fold function to perform in the life of man and in society: the one is utility and the other is culture. Education must enable a man to become more efficient, to achieve with increasing facility the legitimate goals of his life.

Education must also train one for quick, resolute and effective thinking. To think incisively and to think for one’s self is very difficult. We are prone to let our mental life become invaded by legions of half truths, prejudices, and propaganda. At this point, I often wonder whether or not education is fulfilling its purpose. A great majority of the so-called educated people do not think logically and scientifically. Even the press, the classroom, the platform, and the pulpit in many instances do not give us objective and unbiased truths. To save man from the morass of propaganda, in my opinion, is one of the chief aims of education. Education must enable one to sift and weigh evidence, to discern the true from the false, the real from the unreal, and the facts from the fiction.

The function of education, therefore, is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. *But education which stops with efficiency may prove the greatest menace to society.* The most dangerous criminal may be the man gifted with reason, but with no morals...

...We must remember that intelligence is not enough. Intelligence plus character—that is the goal of true education. The complete education gives one not only power of concentration, but worthy objectives upon which to concentrate. The broad education will, therefore, transmit to one not only the accumulated knowledge of the race but also the accumulated experience of social living.”

Crisis Communications

Certainly the topic of crisis training has come up in your district in the past month. CERT plan revisions are probably underway, and drills are scheduled. From your seat in the PR office, however, spend some time creating worse case scenarios with your district’s communication tools. We can never know what

type of crisis we might face in our districts, but we can plan for what might happen if we lose a communication tool we often depend on.

If your website is down, how else can you send messages? If there is no power at the district office? If the district has power and a website but most of your family's don't and can't receive your message? Traditional phone lines can go out and cell towers can get overburdened or be damaged. Perhaps mobile phone access to a district Facebook or Twitter account is your only option. Do you have access to a local AM radio station, and do your families know to tune into the radio for information? How about community access TV? Some districts may even have access to a localized radio network that runs between buses and school buildings. Having access to multiple communication tools is very important during a crisis.

Aside from reviewing all your communication tools, be sure that your CERT plan includes reviewing access to all the tools at least on a yearly basis. If you can use the community access TV station, but can't find the login or the phone number you need for the station during a crisis, that's a problem. You should have an updated list with all pertinent phone numbers and access information for all the communication tools you may need during a crisis. Make sure the list includes phone numbers for all other district personnel and community members you may need to speak to in a crisis. The list should be duplicated in your office, home and your mobile phone if possible.

Finally, think about who can be of assistance to you if you are away from the district during a crisis. Think of someone whose job will not also have them caught up in the crisis. The Superintendent or Asst. Superintendent will already be quite busy. My back-up person was actually a friend from the Accounting office. She knew enough to get things started for me and could be boots on the ground until I arrived.

The modern crisis moves at a blazing pace. Before you can even be updated on the situation, your phone is ringing with calls from parents or the media. A few simple organizational steps will ensure that you can remain calm with all the information you need at your fingertips, wherever you may be when the crisis starts.

Library

It is freezing cold everywhere, and a good time to curl up with a book. PenSPRA has a library you can borrow from by contacting Jason Davidek at . Here's a list of available books. Also available is the newly purchased NSPRA Crisis Communications Manual.

School Board Candidate Workshops Offered Regionally by the EPLC

EPLC is offering workshops for school board candidates, which might be of use to candidates running in your area.

<http://www.eplc.org/leadership-programs/school-board-candidate-workshops/school-board-candidate-workshop-registration/>

Symposium

The Symposium planners have been very busy this month, and we all now have a great day to look forward to on April 16th. Online registration for the symposium will be available soon. This year we are excited to host the Symposium in a fantastic location, which is centrally located for all members, at the Omni Bedford Spring Hotel and Resort in Bedford Springs.

Take a peek at the hotel here:

<http://www.omnihotels.com/FindAHotel/BedfordSprings/AboutUs.aspx>

You can go ahead and reserve a room at the Omni with our special rate of \$169 here. (The rate is available until March 15th):

<http://www.omnihotels.com/FindAHotel/BedfordSprings/MeetingFacilities/PASchoolPRAssociationMtg4.aspx>

And here is our agenda for the day!

9-9:15 a.m - Welcome

9:15 - 10:45 a.m. - Alternative Revenue Success Stories. PENSPRA Colleagues from around the State Share Successes.

10:45-11:15 a.m. - Alternative Revenue Round Robin.* Vendors specializing in Alternative Revenue concepts will be introduced and each will have a table in the presentation room's VENDOR SHOWCASE for the day.

11:15-12:15 p.m.- A Strategic Look at Long Term Development/Capital Campaigns

12:15-1:30 p.m. Lunch (Sponsored by eSchoolview. **Vendor Showcase** (Sponsored by Alternative Revenue Sponsors)

1:30-3:30 p.m. Why Social Media Matters. Fairfax County, VA Authors **Kitty Porterfield and Meg Carnes.** (Keynote Speakers and Books Sponsored by SchoolMessenger)

3:30 – 3:45 p.m. Closing Remarks

3:45 p.m. Adjournment

Thanks to our Symposium sponsors SchoolMessenger and eSchoolview!

News From Around the State and Nation

This is a detailed look at Corbett's plan for pension reform

http://www.pennlive.com/midstate/index.ssf/2013/01/corbett_to_make_pension_reform.html#incart_flyout_news

A Report by the Auditor General Says Correcting PA's Charter School Formula Can Save Taxpayers \$365 Million a Year (or better yet, return funding to brick and mortar schools!)

<http://www.auditor.gen.state.pa.us/department/press/wagnersaysfixingpa%E2%80%99scharterschoolformula.html>

This Letter to Ed Secretary Ron Tomalis Deals Specifically with the Pension Double Dip Aspect of Charter School Funding

http://www.pasbo.org/15Jun2012_Tomalis_Corbett_final.pdf

How Testing Interrupts Learning

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/wp/2013/01/18/whos-next/>

An Interesting Blog Post on How Narrowcasting is Impacting the Debate on Education

<http://educationnext.org/tweet-thine-enemy/>