

THE PRINCIPAL STORY National Media Outreach Campaign

Station Activities: WNET / Buffalo, NY

WNET¹ conducted a local campaign for THE PRINCIPAL STORY that reached 44,000 people through a forum for administrators, promotion and local website content. The national documentary was aired on September 27, 2009.

Project Abstract: WNET was awarded an outreach grant, funded by The Wallace Foundation and managed by Outreach Extensions, from April to October 2009. Working with the Western New York Educational Service Council (WNYESC) and Buffalo Public Schools, the station hosted a forum to train school administrators. The documentary and outreach materials supported discussion of best practices, challenges and opportunities of school leadership and the importance of instructional leadership.

Project Outcomes

- 100 school leaders attended a half-day forum on strengthening school leadership. The audio file of the panel discussion is available on the websites of WNET and WNYESC.
- Three university partners, SUNY at Buffalo, Buffalo State College and University of Rochester, are using THE PRINCIPAL STORY resources in their education leadership training programs.
- An online web portal hosted by WNET and Buffalo Public Schools offers a range of resources for use in principal academies and leadership training programs.

Project Activities

Forum for School Leaders

Held on September 24, WNET's forum for new and emerging school leaders was entitled "The Principal Story: Perspectives on Strengthening School Leadership and Lifting Student Achievement." Partners WNYESC and Buffalo Public Schools both conduct a variety of leadership training activities. Since Buffalo² has a Leadership Academy program, with some features drawn from NYC Leadership Academy, the *NYC Leadership Academy* video vignette was utilized in the forum. Clips from the documentary focused on leadership techniques used by the two featured principals. *Leadership Matters* was also

¹ **Station Profile:** The Western New York Public Broadcasting Association (WNET), a community licensee, comprises television station WNET-TV; ThinkBright TV, a digital educational television service; and three public radio stations – news/information station WNET-AM 970, classical WNET-FM 94.5, and repeater station WNJA-FM 89.7. Combined, these broadcast services reach more than 3.1 million households each week. Audiences for WNET's services extend from Northwestern Pennsylvania northward through the metropolitan areas of Buffalo and Toronto. Public television stations in Rochester, Syracuse, Binghamton, Watertown, Plattsburgh and Albany carry a minimum of 12 hours of ThinkBright TV programming daily. WNET's mission is to enlighten, inspire, entertain, and educate the communities it serves.

² Buffalo Public Schools (BPS) participated in the NYC Leadership Academy for a number of years. Key school administrators have benefited from the experience and brought new thinking and strategies to the district. More recently, under the leadership of Dr. Mark Frazier and with support from a local foundation grant, BPS conducts a Leadership Enrichment program for staff interested in school administration.

viewed. Discussion questions were drawn from the *Field Guide*; table formats allowed panelists and leaders from the field to facilitate the conversations.

The afternoon panel offered ideas to support principals' success. WNYESC assembled a distinguished panel:

- Dr. Mark Frazier, lead community superintendent, Buffalo Public Schools (and Buffalo Leadership Academy director)
- Dr. Stephen J. Uebbing, associate professor, educational leadership, Warner Graduate School of Education and Human Development, University of Rochester (former New York State School Superintendent of the Year)
- Dr. Tom Rogers, executive director, New York State Council of School Superintendents, Albany
- Brian Gould, school board president, Cheektowaga Central Schools
- Jill Pellis, principal, Transit Middle School, Williamsville Central Schools
- Lawrence Wright, principal, PS 396, Bronx, New York (a graduate of NYC Leadership Academy)
- Robert Christmann, superintendent, Grand Island Central Schools (president-elect of the New York State School Superintendent Association)

The 1.25 hour panel discussion was taped; the audio file is available on WNET's ThinkBright website (www.thinkbright.org) on *The Principal Story* project as well as at www.wnyesc.org; links are provided to The Wallace Foundation's site.

A 16-page "Forum Program Guide" was distributed at the event along with *The Principal Story Video & Print Resources DVD* (outreach DVD).

Promotion/Reach

- Partners posted the Forum brochure on their websites and sent email blasts to their 2,500 constituents.
- A feature advertisement in *WNET Magazine* introduced THE PRINCIPAL STORY outreach campaign to 40,000 member households.

