



EVENT BRIEF

LEARNING POINT ASSOCIATES HOSTS A PANEL DISCUSSION ON *THE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TRIANGLE: FROM COMPLIANCE TO INNOVATION*

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Learning Point Associates hosted a panel discussion Tuesday focusing on the topics addressed in Paul Kimmelman's recently released book, *The School Leadership Triangle: From Compliance to Innovation*.

PANELISTS

- Gina Burkhardt, Chief Executive Officer, Learning Point Associates
- Paul Kimmelman, Ed.D., President and Chief Policy Advisor to the Chief Executive Officer, Learning Point Associates
- Robert Hughes, Ph.D, President and Chief Executive Officer, National Institute for School Leadership, Inc.
- Robert Atkinson, Ph.D., Founder and President, Information Technology and Innovation Foundation

SUMMARY

Paul Kimmelman focuses in his new book on a “three-point framework” that allows for improvements in the conditions of schools and of districts: 1) federally mandated policy compliance; 2) effective leadership; and 3) innovation. Kimmelman's book is unique, as he blends his own expertise gained from 30 years in K-12 education with insights into the legislative, policy-making side of the matter, through the inclusion of viewpoints from the authors of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. Kimmelman, along with the other panelists present, spoke at length about the crucial role that innovation must play to aid educators in overcoming the greatest challenges and obstacles. In terms of school compliance when it comes to requirements set by federal mandates, such as Title I grants and other programs, Kimmelman explained that, while there is a need for sanction-imposed law for all states, schools and their leaders also need to be provided with flexibility to implement their own models and programs.

Robert Hughes, Ph.D., President and Chief Executive Officer of the National Institute for School Leadership, Inc. spoke at the briefing, stressing the importance of innovative research and development, which he called a “pressing issue,” as our nation cannot continue in its leadership position without radical changes to our structures and systems. Hughes pointed to models for inclusion of groups such as English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities as a prime example of a necessary change that must be adopted by school systems in the U.S. “Innovation,” Hughes reminded the audience, “doesn’t just have to do with products and markets, but with structures and systems.” Hughes referred to past data related to innovative instructional models to show that “where there was leadership, there was growth,” supporting the claim that improved instruction leads to higher student achievement. Hughes called for “leadership by design” and explained that, in order to attain this, we must demand substantial change in our current system.

Robert Atkinson, Ph.D., Founder and President of Information Technology and Innovation Foundation, pointed to the lack of motivation and “demanding customers” in the education realm as a fundamental reason that the entire educational industry has been left out of the IT revolution. Atkinson also emphasized the difference between a “sustaining innovation” and a “disruptive innovation,” the latter of which he believes is necessary in order to spark true reform in school systems and leadership.

CONCLUSION

Panelists concurred that, just as Kimmelman has stressed throughout his new book, improvements in the structure of the U.S. school system is of fundamental importance and can be achieved through a combination of innovative efforts, effective leadership at the school and district levels, and compliance to federally mandated initiatives.

For information about Learning Point Associates, visit:

<http://www.learningpt.org/expertise/educatorquality/schoolLeadershipIdentification.php>

For information about Kimmelman’s book, visit:

<http://www.corwin.com/booksProdDesc.nav?prodId=Book232877>