



The
HEAD
Foundation



UNMASKED: EDUCATIONAL LEADERS IN A CRISIS

A Handbook for Educators



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A Handbook for Educators

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OPENING MESSAGE

COVID-19 has changed the world and severely impacted lives and economies. The World Bank estimates that learning losses due to pandemic-induced school closures could add up to USD10 trillion in lost lifetime labour earnings. School closures have also highlighted the vast and deep inequalities, between and within countries.

There will probably be an acceleration of some trends; in education, online teaching and learning will become increasingly dominant. However, it is not simply a matter of providing technological fixes. Established patterns of schooling will need to respond to (1) changing student needs, especially mental health issues; (2) teacher capacity given the increasing importance of e-pedagogies; and (3) redirecting curriculum, pedagogy and assessment to focus on student learning, rather than examination results.

A new kind of leader is needed to bring schools out of the crisis. The post-COVID-19 principal needs to be transformational. Given uncertainty, they need to develop plans with flexibility while keeping in mind key imperatives. In these trying times, it is important to build support with key stakeholders as we all move forward and out of this crisis.

I hope the stories and tips in this handbook serve as an inspiration and an idea board as you lead your team in tackling the challenges posed by COVID-19. While using this handbook, take some time to quietly reflect on the initiatives you have implemented, and explore all the other possibilities you could achieve as we emerge from this crisis stronger.

S. Gopinathan

Academic Advisor
The HEAD Foundation

MODERATOR'S MESSAGE

The 2020 COVID-19 pandemic has caused unprecedented chaos. Education systems worldwide have been forced to endure seemingly interminable closures. In a 2020 statement, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) warned about the adverse impacts of school closures. UNESCO has warned that the bleak impact of extended closures will worsen the situation for marginalised and vulnerable populations.

Forced closure of schools and places of learning worldwide has exposed three debilitating weaknesses of global education: (1) the need to re-visit education not merely as a school-driven effort but as a family, community and a whole-of-society project; (2) the woeful inadequacy of a “one-size-fits-all” education model to cope with variability in education system characteristics worldwide; and (3) the exacerbation of educational inequality, where some learners benefit from continued education while those in challenging circumstances suffer severe deprivation, all made more visible during the pandemic.

This handbook captures the insightful practice-focused conversations from the three-part webinar series, *Educational Leadership in a Crisis*, organised earlier this year. We had the privilege of welcoming back alumni from The HEAD Foundation and the University of Queensland's Certificate of Educational Studies in Leadership programmes in Indonesia and the Philippines, who shared how they had successfully led school and system-wide responses to school closures. They were joined by eminent educational leadership scholars who interrogated the abovementioned weaknesses.

I trust the takeaways from the webinars and this handbook will prove useful to you, not just as a resource guide of ideas showing how our peers are coping with very similar challenges, but also as a testament of faith – that if we all come together to share our knowledge, experiences and wisdom, we will be able to get through this crisis, if only one step at a time.

Vicente Chua Reyes Jr.

Associate Professor
University of Nottingham

PANELLIST BIOGRAPHIES



SOFIANDI EFFENDI is Principal of Budi Luhur Senior High School in Indonesia. In 2017, he was named Best Principal for Elementary Level in the Tangerang Selatan region of Indonesia. He also spoke on G-Suite for Education at Global Educational Supplies and Solution Indonesia 2018.



DIANY VENCY HERUATMADJA is School Director of Kairos Gracia Christian School in Indonesia. She was recruited as a school coordinator in 2000 when Kairos Gracia was established, and went on to serve as a member of the school management team for 15 years before becoming the school director.



DOMINGO LOZANDE is Principal of Lingunan National High School in the Philippines. He is also a National Trainer in Chemistry under the Department of Education, Philippines and a faculty member at Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Valenzuela University.



JAIDA MALONZO is Principal of Batino Elementary School in the Philippines. She previously served as school principal at two other elementary schools, and was a teacher and master teacher for 15 years. She is also a writer for Grades 3 and 4 Social Studies books under Bookman Publishing.



RONALDO A. POZON is Schools Division Superintendent of the Department of Education of Tarlac Province in the Philippines. He oversees 428 Elementary Schools, 74 Junior High Schools and 69 Senior High Schools, and more than 10,000 teaching and non-teaching staff.



CAROLINE WIDJANARKO is Secondary School Principal at Tzu Chi School in Indonesia. Her view of education philosophy is to educate a learner holistically and to ensure they grow into well-rounded individuals who bring positive contribution to society.



DAVID NG is Associate Professor and Associate Dean, Academic Quality at the National Institute of Education, Singapore. David's expertise is in complexity leadership learning. His work in designing and implementing complexity theory in leadership learning has helped to establish Singapore's Leaders in Education Programme as one of the most cutting-edge principal preparation programmes in the world.



HAIRON SALLEH is Associate Professor and Assistant Dean Higher Degrees (by Coursework) with the National Institute of Education, Singapore. He teaches undergraduate, postgraduate and in-service courses relating to teacher and leadership education and preparation. His research interests and publications centre on school leadership and collective teacher learning.



ALLAN WALKER is Chair Professor of International Education Leadership and Co-Director of the Asia Pacific Centre for Leadership and Change at The Education University of Hong Kong. He was Dean of the Faculty of Education and Human Development until June 2020. His research and writing focuses on school leadership in East and Southeast Asia.



VICENTE REYES is Associate Professor in Educational Leadership and Management, at the University of Nottingham. Vicente has been Programme Director of The HEAD Foundation's Transformational Educational Leadership in 21st Century Contexts (TransformLEAD@21) in Indonesia (2018) and the Philippines (2019). He is also the moderator for The HEAD Foundation's Webinar Series: Educational Leadership in a Crisis, which this handbook accompanies.

PREFACE

LEADING LEARNING THROUGH CRISIS

Working successfully through any crisis depends on real leadership. As unpredictability flows, school leaders are severely tested. This has been no more apparent than throughout the coronavirus emergency. The work done during this difficult time from outstanding school leaders featured in this handbook holds powerful messages for the shape of leadership to come.

$$\iint \sqrt{x+\sqrt{y}} \, dx \, dy$$

integrate[1/(x^2+6x+2), {x, 0, infinity}]

$$\frac{8}{105} (x+\sqrt{y})^{5/2} (-2x+5\sqrt{y})$$

$$\frac{1}{56} \left(7 + \sqrt{7(-5+4\sqrt{2})} \right) \pi$$

$$f(x) = \frac{a_0}{2} + \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} (a_n \cos nx + b_n \sin nx)$$

$$\sum_{i=1}^n x_{i2} y_i$$
$$\beta_{yx} = r_{yx} \frac{s_y}{s_x}$$



All of them showed that, in the absence of previously tested traditions, the most successful are not those who believe they hold complete answers, but those who see their leadership as treading uncertainly through tensions. As was evident in their stories, tension is a situation which has no clear resolution, no absolute answers, but instead presents multiple, often contradictory, pathways which pull in different directions.

Those who managed the tensions intentionally yet flexibly seemed to be able to walk their communities through the crisis in positive ways. These educators supported the claim that leaders are forged in crisis. Crisis tells people who they really are as leaders. Through grappling with the tensions accompanying the crisis, the educators grew as leaders while carrying their communities as smoothly as possible through massive disruption. Leading through the continuity of disruption is not about balance, it's not even a matter of evenness – it is about having the right values to work iteratively through the mire of uncertainty – it is here where they forged and were forged.

Experience tells us that the leaders who best manage crisis are pragmatic visionaries. Leaders who maintain both a short-termed and future-pointed purpose become the stability platform upon which others' work and lives rest, care and stay relationally connected. They do not just look at the period of the crisis – they look beyond that, through their systems and their structures and their collaborative ways. As leaders, they have built a values-based stability platform within their organisation on which teachers could learn, experiment, fail, feel better, and build relationships.

They are also humble about what they can do, maintain their energy, have and provide hope, and are mentally tough. As they continue to transform their schools through the crisis, these leaders featured in this handbook exemplify these characteristics perfectly and, as a result, both they and their schools grow stronger.

The ideas presented here draw on: Walker, A. & Bryant, D. (2020). Leading in Crisis: The Tensions that Forge. In Al-Fadala, A., Kirby, J., Zaki, O., Baghddi, A., & Regester, D. (Eds), *Education Disrupted, Education Reimagined*. WISE, Salzburg Global Seminar & Diplomatic Courier, Qatar.

Allan Walker

Chair Professor of International Education Leadership
The Education University of Hong Kong



1

ACTIVATING PARENTS

The abrupt shift to remote learning thrust parents into an unfamiliar role as home educators. With little preparation or know-how, they were suddenly expected to guide their children through remote learning – be it fiddling with technology for online lessons or supervising their children as they completed their printed homework packs – all the while juggling their own jobs and other responsibilities.

Parents can no longer have afternoon conversations with their children's teachers or attend parent-teacher days. This can be greatly frustrating to some parents. It is important to keep communication channels open: leaders and teachers can help guide parents through this bewildering phase and tap on active parents to provide additional support. Knowing your students' parents and understanding your community can go a long way in creating and maintaining a talent pool of parents, not just in crisis, but also in various school projects during normal times.

Maintaining a personal touch: Principal Sofiandi Effendi shares tips on engaging parents

SCHOOL PROFILE

Budi Luhur Senior High School



Jakarta, Indonesia



Private school



279 students



62 staff

A firm believer in open and personal communication, Sofiandi shares some tips on how to build and maintain a good relationship with parents:



1. Be open to feedback from parents

- Send online forms to parents to better understand each family's situation.
- Questions can range from personal matters and issues encountered during online learning, to collecting feedback on the school's plans.
- Have regular online meetings and chat sessions with parents to receive feedback for continuous improvement.

2. Have open communication

- If necessary, share your work mobile number and e-mail address with parents and students to facilitate open communication.
- Have at least one parent-facilitator in each class who can mobilise other parents or facilitate logistical and administrative matters as needed.



Tip

- * Use a work mobile and set boundaries. While it is important to remain contactable, it is also necessary to set aside some time for yourself to prevent burnout.

3. Update parents regularly

- Organise online forums (e.g. YouTube live broadcast, Instagram live) to inform parents about the school's initiatives and plans for the next year.
- Reassure parents that their children's education, safety and well-being are the school's top concerns.

**“ We can't do this on our own.
We need to collaborate and share everything
with the stakeholders. Because what we do is in
the common interest of our students.**

- Sofiandi Effendi, Principal, Budi Luhur Senior High School

Activating parents as co-educators: **How Principal Domingo Lozande engaged his students' parents**

SCHOOL PROFILE

Lingunan National High School



Valenzuela City,
Philippines



Public school



1,762 students



68 staff

This forced isolation due to COVID-19 might be the longest stretch of time parents have spent with their children without a break. As parents assume the role of co-educators, they are bound to struggle with their newfound responsibilities. Domingo shares how his district and school support parents in their re-discovery of family and parenting life.

Teacher Parenting Camp

Even before the crisis, the Department of Education in Valenzuela partnered with the City Government to organise yearly Teacher Parenting Camps. During the one-day camp, parents learned about parenting, positive disciplinary methods, facilitating an encouraging learning environment at home, and about the role of parents and families in society. Parent leaders from different schools were also trained as facilitators.

The role of parents as co-educators cannot be understated, and it is important to coach them and partner with them even in normal times.

Activating Parent Leaders

Domingo was able to rally parent leaders – elected parent officers and parent volunteers – to assist his school in administrative matters. He assigned parent leaders based on their home address, who

would oversee parts of their neighbourhood. These parent leaders served as information officers for families, especially those without internet access, or where parents were unresponsive. Families who had difficulty engaging in remote learning would contact these parent leaders, who would then coordinate home visits with the teachers and school management.

“ Leadership can include community leaders and parent leaders. These non-typical leaders play a highly significant role in strengthening the tenor of the direction and mobilisation of resources in response to crises – forming a tight net of leadership activities.

- Hairon Salleh, Associate Professor, National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

Collaborative Reflection Journal

The students of Lingunan National High School were encouraged to engage in daily reflection, and parents and teachers played a collaborative role to guide the children with these exercises:



STUDENTS: write about the activities they completed during the day and reflect on what they have learnt.



PARENTS: read through the journal and discuss the day's events with the student.



TEACHERS: regularly discuss with parents and adjust learning activities and homework based on family situation and student progress. Tap on parent leaders to provide support as needed.

A GUIDE

Engaging families to support distance learning during COVID-19 school closures



1. Strengthen relationships

- Establish more personalised, two-way communication between schools and families.
 - Build mutual trust and provide families with an authentic sense of engagement in their children's learning.
-



2. Build capacity

- Help families expand their knowledge base and explain the “why” behind the various distance learning assignments.
 - Develop families to become thought partners; encourage parents to ask open-ended questions even if they do not know the answers. This opens up opportunities for families to learn something new together.
-



3. Focus on learning

- Re-assure and help families understand that meaningful learning can still happen without devices or access to the Internet.
 - Emphasise that meaningful learning occurs during everyday activities such as cooking, drawing and reading together, and encourage families to engage in them.
-



4. Connect communities

- Always remember to check if the family has any current critical needs that need to be met before their child can effectively engage in remote learning, eg. food, electricity.
- Build on community strengths and resources to help students and families meet their basic needs during this time.

Adapted from "Engaging families to support distance learning during COVID-19 school closures" by Oklahoma State Department of Education.

Try it out! Briefly describe two ways you could establish two-way communication to build trust and support for families:

1. _____

2. _____



2

SUPPORTING OUR TEACHERS

Classrooms have been vacated, the faculty room that was once a place for productive discussions among teachers is now locked and only dust occupies once vibrant rooms. No one could foresee that in a short span of time, everything would change. During this hasty shift to remote teaching, teachers are bound to struggle with:

- preparing appropriate materials for remote learning;
- engaging with students; and
- adjusting and adapting to the use of technology.

While much of the focus has rightly been on ensuring our students' continued learning, how can we also support our teachers who have had to work with instructional technology, a new medium that many are encountering for the first time? If we are able to strengthen the morale and capacity of teachers, instructional quality will improve, teachers will be empowered, and this will result in enhanced learning outcomes.

Springing into action: Principal Domingo Lozande's technology training plan

SCHOOL PROFILE

Lingunan National High School



Valenzuela City,
Philippines



Public school



1,762 students



68 staff

Leaders must help people manage the disruption to their lives and work, and ensure their students and communities do not freeze up, and can react in sensible, positive ways.

Moving lessons online has shone a spotlight on issues of competency, commitment, collaboration, and coping mechanisms. Domingo hence implemented a five-step professional development plan for his teachers.

1. Needs Analysis

Conduct informal meetings and chats on social media to assess the current technological skills of the teachers.

2. Training

Conduct a series of webinars and virtual Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions to train teachers in the use of the various technology-based applications and platforms, to increase their instructional performance. Schools can partner with the Information Communication Technology (ICT) unit of their Department of Education or Division, or private individuals and experts to provide these trainings.

In the Philippines, Learning Action Cells are communities of practice – each Cell is a group of teachers who engage in collaborative learning sessions to solve shared challenges encountered in the school, facilitated by the school head or a designated LAC Leader.



3. Consultation

Separately, each department can conduct virtual discussions, as a whole or in smaller groups, to provide tailored **technical, emotional, and social** assistance for teachers.

4. Assessment

Conduct regular informal virtual chats or online messaging to assess teachers' progress.

5. Peer Support

Assign a peer and critical friend to teachers who have concerns about remote instruction. The critical friend's role will be to provide technical guidance and emotional support.

Tip



- * Instead of conducting formal interviews over e-mails, engage teachers through informal chats. Informal chat sessions are a great way to assess your teachers without putting too much pressure on them.

Building an emergency support system: **How School Director Diany Vency Heruatmadja restructured her team**

SCHOOL PROFILE

Kairos Gracia Christian School



Jakarta, Indonesia



Private school



979 students



91 staff

Vency realised that her teachers' skills in technology were limited. Her teachers were not only worried about their own technological skills, but also about how best to respond to students' and parents' needs and requests.

Transforming non-teaching staff

As her non-teaching staff had a lighter workload during remote learning, Vency assigned them to be points of contact with parents. They assisted parents and students who had technical difficulties with remote learning, for instance, helping to arrange virtual meet-the-parents sessions, and responding to queries from the parents and students. This significantly lessened the teachers' workload and allowed them more time to focus on improving their technological skills and e-pedagogy.

Activating master teachers

Vency also quickly appointed teachers with stronger technological skills to be master teachers. These teachers had previously attended technology courses and were able to share their tacit knowledge, as well as tips and tricks on teaching using technology. These master teachers conducted one-on-one mentoring sessions, sometimes late into the night. They also provided technical support for teachers who were unfamiliar with technology.



Empowering human capital

Some teachers, such as those teaching physical education, were not able to teach online during school shutdowns. Vency worked with these teachers to identify their alternate subject expertise and appointed them to teach in the lower grades. During the school break, these teachers built on their content knowledge and prepared teaching materials for the new academic year.

“ One thing to remember when nurturing our staff is that there is no perfect formula for it. Each school has a unique culture and unique systems, and different potentials to be unlocked. It is in the hands of the leaders to figure out the methods that work best for them.

- Diany Vency Heruatmadja, School Director, Kairos Gracia Christian School

Try it out! Briefly describe two ways you could divert resources from less critical functions to support your teachers:

1. _____

2. _____

A GUIDE

Developing future leaders

In this scramble to switch to remote learning, it is easy to get overwhelmed with the mountain of tasks to complete. As school leaders, it is important to trust your teachers and allow them to conceive and implement projects. An effective leader has a ripple effect of nurturing new leaders. Here are some tips from experienced school leaders:

- Build trust with your teachers. Where trust exists, responsibilities are more easily accepted.
- Develop all your teachers and empower them to be leaders. Once these teachers feel involved, they will be motivated and nurture other teachers, who will go on to nurture others.
- Refrain from dictating to your middle leaders what to do. Instead, focus on mentoring them and guiding them to make their own decisions.
- Regularly follow up with teachers and have open communication. Constantly share your ideas and thoughts with them.
- Constantly encourage and motivate them so that they can be leaders in their own right.

Distributed Leadership

Within schools, one of the manifestations of effective leadership is when it is distributed amongst a team of individuals with different skillsets and experiences but a shared mission to ensure that education goes on for all your students.

Tip



* Shake off the mindset that you are the leader and the teachers are your subordinates who are only there to take orders. You need to fully engage them and allow them to be part of the decision-making process as well.





3

CARING FOR OUR TEACHERS

COVID-19 saw traditional and conventional teaching models thrown out the window. As frontline workers in the education sector, it fell on teachers to quickly adapt their pedagogy to provide quality education during remote learning. Teachers saw their workload double and their work-life balance disrupted. Already overwhelmed with the new technologies that they were encountering for the first time, teachers also had to struggle to deliver education to those without access to technology. The toll that this is taking on teachers' well-being cannot be underestimated.

The pressure is on for all teachers and everyone in the education field to turn crisis into opportunity. As school leaders, it is important to be understanding and compassionate in this new climate and to pay attention to the well-being and psychological needs of all staff.

Being understanding and accommodating in difficult times: Principal Caroline Widjanarko's approach

SCHOOL PROFILE

Tzu Chi Secondary School



Jakarta, Indonesia



Private school



2,700 students



300 staff

In our scramble to adapt to the new normal, it is no longer efficient to hold on to old and obsolete rules; it is more important to be flexible and accommodating as we face the unknown, separately yet together. Here are some ways Caroline gave more breathing room to her staff during the remote learning sessions:

Being flexible

The school implemented rotational work from school for teachers as not all teachers have strong internet connections at home. Teachers used the classrooms instead of the staff room to minimise interactions with one another. In general, teachers report to school once a week but they can come in more often when they want. Exceptions were made allowing pregnant teachers to work fully from home.

Building resilience

For teachers to teach their students about resilience, they must first be resilient themselves. Caroline incorporated well-being elements into their school-based professional development training. In addition to brushing up on their skills in teaching, curriculum, and planning, the teachers at Tzu Chi Secondary School also engaged in daily well-being journaling, to build positivity and a sense of gratitude. For three weeks in July and August, teachers were encouraged to write about positive acts, helpful or useful advice that they encountered during the day, and a person they were grateful for. They then shared their thoughts in a WhatsApp group chat.

Try it out! List down three things or people whom you are grateful for, and why.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

“ Teachers are also learners. And for teachers to learn, they need to set aside a time to read, think through and reflect – this time has to be guarded by the teacher.

*- David Ng, Associate Professor, National Institute of Education,
Nanyang Technological University, Singapore*

Building a sense of belonging: School Director Diany Vency Heruatmadja's tight-knit community

SCHOOL PROFILE

Kairos Gracia Christian School



Jakarta, Indonesia



Private school



979 students



91 staff

Building a sense of belonging among her colleagues was something that Vency had been working on and putting her energy towards even before the pandemic. When the pandemic struck, even though everyone may have been caught unprepared, there was already a strong support network amongst the teachers and staff. Vency was able to build upon this strong foundation to spur teachers on and keep the staff morale high.

Building a sense of normalcy

Regular and open communication was the cornerstone of Vency's teacher engagement strategy. Her management team organised one-on-one and small group casual chat sessions with teachers, and talked about everyday topics such as their daily lives, their families, in fact, anything they wished. This created a sense of normalcy and helped teachers ease into their remote working schedules. If a teacher had a specific problem, she would arrange a one-on-one discussion or counselling session for them.

Tips

- * It is important to balance the welfare of your teachers and the survivability of your institution.
- * Teacher competence and teacher well-being are interlinked: you can't have one without the other.

**Tip**

* Surprises should be adjusted to the needs, cultures and budgets of the school.

Showing your appreciation

To boost staff morale, Vency also prepared ‘surprises’ for her teachers. These ranged from socially-distanced home visits to small gifts and bonuses. Vency also reassured everyone that the school was trying hard not to retrench any staff, in order to minimise the anxiety and stress staff were experiencing during an unpredictable time. This strong camaraderie and trust that she forged within her team also helped reinforce to the staff that they were valued and being cared for by the school.

Supporting and motivating teachers: Principal Domingo Lozande’s Day-Off Challenge

SCHOOL PROFILE

Lingunan National High School



Valenzuela City,
Philippines



Public school



1,762 students

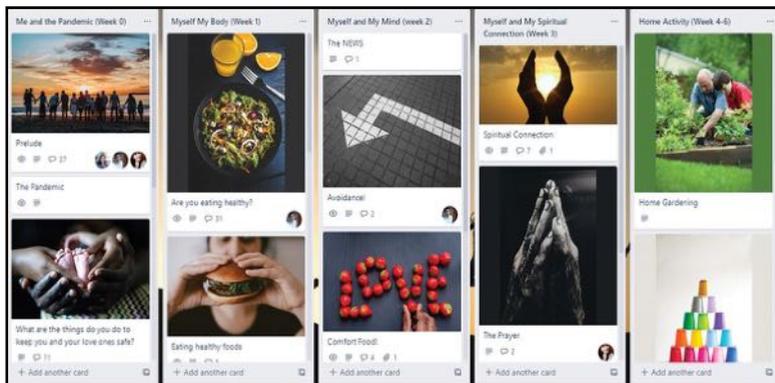


68 staff

Knowing that his teachers were feeling stressed and socially isolated, Domingo created a series of “Day-Off Challenges” to generate excitement and give a boost of motivation to his staff:

- Once a week, articles on various topics such as such-care, family support and the importance of helping others were published, along with tips and guiding questions that would aid staff in their self-reflection.
- Staff could freely reflect or chat with their colleagues on the topic of the week.
- At the end of the week, a challenge would be posted for teachers to complete. Teachers and their families could participate in these challenges, which provided an avenue for them to have fun and bond.

Sample from Domingo's Day-off Challenge using Trello Application



For example, the theme for week 1 was **“Myself My Body”**.



A video on cooking healthy food was uploaded.

Staff were encouraged to answer the following guiding questions:

“Are you preparing or eating food that can help boost your immune system?”

“What are some of the healthy foods that you have prepared or eaten?”

“Could you share one recipe with your colleague?”

The Challenge:

- Prepare a healthy meal with your family.
- Take photos of you and your family during the cooking process, and a photo of your meal.
- Share them on your Facebook and include the health benefits of your meal.
- Challenge your Facebook friends to do the same!



* Choose a new platform which teachers can use to share ideas and chat with each other. Separating social and support platforms from work can help conversations flow better.



A GUIDE

Teacher well-being during COVID-19

Educational leaders – both school leaders and immediate supervisors – play a powerful role in supporting teachers. Research has shown that autonomy-supportive leadership behaviours can help support teachers' experiences of social support and adaptability, and improve their capacity to effectively navigate common challenges at work.

Here are some tips to implement autonomy-supportive leadership:



Listen to teachers' needs, such as in relation to the requirements for delivery of online learning.



Acknowledge and attempt to understand issues from teachers' perspectives, such as providing teachers opportunities to voice the difficulties and the opportunities that arise when teaching remotely during COVID-19.



Seek teachers' input in decision-making at the school-level, such as asking teachers how best to approach different events and tasks scheduled during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Provide rationales for the tasks required by teachers, such as explaining how and why various tasks may still be important to do remotely.



4

ACTIVATING LEARNERS AS LEARNING RESOURCES

Learning is primarily a social activity (Dewey, 1963). Placing learners who are more mature with younger learners could provide the vital ‘buddy’ support needed to overcome isolation in both the contexts of in-person and online learning. This strategy is useful for teachers to ensure that learners are supported, and that effective, interactive learning can still occur even in an e-learning environment.

A strong focus on learner well-being could also incorporate strategies of life-wide learning into formal learning. Life-wide learning is any kind of informal arrangement allowing learners to learn content, while simultaneously developing their identity. Learning happens everywhere, not just in the classroom. Learners’ current experiences could be incorporated in formal teaching in the e-classroom, and this creates opportunities for learners to have their feelings shared and discussed.

Incorporating life-wide learning, particularly the sharing of experiences during this pandemic, holds the promise for a more authentic, complete, and holistic form of learning in which learners combine and integrate their learning – both formal and informal – with their personal and academic development.

“ Pairing students, or other kinds of informal arrangements, can allow learners to know that they are not alone, and feel a sense of belonging in a community of learners in the school.

- David Ng, Associate Professor, National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

SCHOOL PROFILE

Batino Elementary School



Quezon City, Philippines



Public school



650 students



41 staff

Widening and activating support networks: Principal Jaida Malonzo's approach for her special education school

Batino Elementary School is the first Special Education Centre in Quezon City, Philippines; nearly 30 per cent of their students have special needs. What motivated Jaida to start a sign language programme in her school was the personal struggles she faced as a school head in helping her learners with hearing impairment.



Tip

* It is important to build a strong culture of sharing and collaboration, both amongst teachers and pupils. This should be a priority for all school leaders.

Building a strong foundation

Even before COVID-19 struck, Jaida was using social media and technology to train her staff, learners, and their parents on Basic Sign Language. A first step was sharing recorded video clips of lessons on Facebook group chats for parents who were unable to make it for the in-person classes.

When the pandemic forced schools to close, Jaida continued the weekly uploading of video lessons onto Facebook. Class advisors who were overseeing hearing-impaired learners created chat groups for each class, where they posted notes, reminders, encouragement, and video lessons. These preparations made before COVID-19 helped cushion the school's transition fully to online training.

Activating learning resources

Jaida activated several groups of individuals to serve as learning resources for her online training programme. Firstly, she requested parents and siblings of hearing-impaired learners who had undergone training to share their knowledge and upload sign language videos onto their Facebook chat. Secondly, she tapped on alumni who had previously benefited from the programme to teach their juniors.

**“ As leaders, we should be risk takers.
Make your faith larger than your fears and
your dreams bigger than your doubts.**

- Jaida Malonzo, Principal, Batino Elementary School

Creating safe spaces for learners: **How Principal Caroline Widjanarko incorporated life- wide learning in her school**

SCHOOL PROFILE

Tzu Chi Secondary School



Jakarta, Indonesia



Private school



2,700 students



300 staff

Developmentally, teenagers are at the stage where they need to interact with their friends, yet the pandemic has kept them in isolation for months. This sudden loss of their social groups can result in students feeling lonely and unsupported. School leaders need to acknowledge the stress that these students are facing and do what we can to provide this support.

Creating chat rooms

Understanding the importance of social interaction during this difficult time, Caroline set up virtual chat rooms for students to chat among themselves. With no boundaries and expectations of discussing schoolwork, students were able to interact with their friends freely. This provided a refreshing change from the daily online learning they had been undergoing for months. It is important that learners not only have a critical friend in the context of work, but also a supportive friend for peer support in their daily lives.

The Unexpected Benefits of Virtual Education

According to the World Economic Forum, collaborating online might well help to equip high school students with the kind of organisational acumen, emotional intelligence, and self-discipline needed for modern careers.

**Tip**

* Due to the amount of planning involved, it is best to plan such activities for the end of the school term or during holidays, when teachers have fewer administrative matters to focus on.

Organising an e-race

Caroline's team initiated an online school-wide event during the last week of Term 1 in 2020. Dubbed the Resilience Race, students were split into groups and had to complete nine tasks, submitting their answers on Google Forms. It was a welcome distraction from the uncertainty of the pandemic and the monotony of going online daily for lessons.

The race also provided an opportunity for her learners to develop their 21st century skills. They had to collaborate with their peers and think creatively and critically to solve problems.

Try it out! Briefly describe two ways you could connect families and students with their peers to create interactive, collaborative learning communities:

1.

2.

A GUIDE

Incorporating social learning in our curriculum: Some sample learning objectives

Teachers are always driven by learning objectives and plan their lessons with these in mind. Learning objectives can come in various forms: cognitive, affective, psychomotor and content expertise.

Here are some examples of learning objectives that capture social learning:



The learner contributes their own personal experience to the discussion of a specific subject matter.



The learner shows the ability to be reflective.



The learner takes ownership of their learning.



The learner is able to articulate their ideas and viewpoints, and is able to appreciate constructive feedback.



The learner works well in teams.



The learner demonstrates empathy and shows initiative to help their peers who are lagging behind.



5

CARING FOR OUR STUDENTS

While children might be kept physically healthy, the COVID-19 pandemic can take a toll on their mental health. Schools are not merely educational institutions; for students, they serve as a space to play and interact with their friends, a place where they learn social and behavioural cues, and for some, a haven where they have their stomachs filled.

Children are social by nature, and the separation from their friends and disruptions to their daily routines can trigger loneliness and anxiety; this is true for even the most resilient of them. To make matters worse, the counselling support that children usually get in schools and clinics is not as accessible as before as the world goes into lockdown. The traditional education system stresses teaching, content mastery, and high stakes examinations. However, the disruption, stress, and isolation that learners are going through during this pandemic will have a very real and major impact on their social-emotional well-being. While it is important that students keep learning during the pandemic, it is equally important that school leaders pay attention to students' well-being and social-emotional development.

Nurturing Students: Principal Caroline Widjanarko's two-pronged approach

SCHOOL PROFILE

Tzu Chi Secondary School



Jakarta, Indonesia



Private school



2,700 students



300 staff

School leaders need to acknowledge the stress that our learners are facing right now, and focus on what we can do to support them.

No one is sure when things will return to normal, and what this new normal will look like. However, we need to develop and nurture our students to not just survive, but thrive, in this COVID and post-COVID world. Caroline recognises that the future is still precarious and uncertain; she has adopted a two-pronged approach, focusing on building the mental strength of her students, and supporting parents in caring for their children.

1. Guiding students

BUILDING STUDENTS' RESILIENCE AND CREATING POSITIVITY

Caroline's team designed a series of programmes and lessons around the theme of "being resilient". The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on life and education will be enduring, and the team at Tzu Chi believes that resilience is an important attribute that their students should possess in order to continue moving forward in the face of adversity.

School counsellors at Tzu Chi Secondary School conducted lessons on managing stress, building resilience, and cultivating a growth mindset. Students also engaged in gratitude journaling, during which they learnt to be positive, to be thankful for what they had and to think about something they could do, instead of being anxious about something that they were unable to control.

PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN CURE

Caroline believes that counselling should be more of a preventive measure, rather than a form of treatment. During this bewildering period, it is all the more important to strengthen the relationship between teachers and students. Teachers interact with students on a near-daily basis and are usually the first to pick up on familial abuse or mental health declines. Scheduling regular check-ins with students helps the students understand that they will always have someone to talk to when they encounter any problem.

Myth debunked



- * There is a misconception that it is harder to communicate virtually. However, even though teachers may not be physically with the students, they are still able to pick up on body language and other signs, for example, observe if students are fidgety, have their shoulders slumped, or if there are any changes in the way they talk or look. Do not dismiss the importance and value of virtual video communication.

**“ It is no longer a sprint; it is a marathon.
It is a long-term journey.**

- Caroline Widjanarko, Principal, Tzu Chi Secondary School

MANAGING THE EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS

The change in students' learning environments and the uncertainty in the outside world will take a toll on their mental health and resilience. On top of that, students may worry about their academic performance in school tests and national or university entrance examinations. To alleviate students' and parents' anxiety, Caroline's team changed the way they measured students' learning; students were asked to undertake projects and assignments instead of sitting for examinations. School hours were also reduced while ensuring that the syllabus was covered.

2. Building a strong support system at home

Home is the strongest support system that a student has. It is a difficult time for everyone, but especially so for parents who face the threat of losing their jobs or taking a pay cut. Led by Caroline, Tzu Chi Secondary School conducted well-being seminars for parents to learn how to manage their stress levels, as well as help their children navigate this disruption. The school also organised parent-children activities to strengthen bonds between parents and children.

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YATASAN BUDDHA TZU CHI INDONESIA

TZU CHI TALKS

SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S WELL-BEING IN TIMES OF DISTRESS

Sabtu, 12 September 2020
Pk. 16.00 - 17.30 WIB

Dr. Haryo Suparmun S.E, CPA
Opening Remarks

Caroline Widjanarko, S.Psi., M.Ed
Principal Tzu Chi Secondary School
Newcomer

Andry S.H, MM, CLA
Moderator

LIVE
@tzuchiindonesia
<https://youtu.be/hBICSOxhjvJmQ>
ZOOM: 445 445 4000

Being youthful and trendy: How Principal Sofiandi Effendi used Instagram to engage his students

SCHOOL PROFILE

Budi Luhur Senior High School



Jakarta, Indonesia



Private school



279 students



62 staff

Now more than ever, Instagram can help teens stay connected with their friends. However, it is also an important source of news and information in a time when visual content is more appealing than lengthy news articles. Social media can be used as a positive force for change, and creating an open dialogue on social media can help schools connect with students better.

Tip



- * While it may be enticing to follow new trends, it is also important to focus on the tools and apps that you are already familiar with. Budi Luhur Senior High School had been using Instagram and Google Suite for Education even before the pandemic, and thus decided to continue using these tools instead of exploring Zoom webinars or Microsoft Teams. This helped to direct energy and effort to implementing programmes beneficial to the students, instead of spending additional time learning a new platform when existing platforms could serve the same purpose.

INSTAGRAM ACTIVITIES



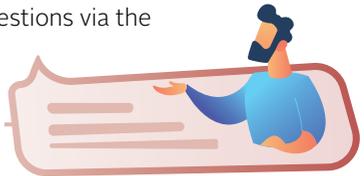
#BLMONDAYMOTIVATION

Every Monday, Budi Luhur Senior High School would post a motivational quote to start the week on a bright note.



INSTAGRAM LIVE CHIT CHAT

Every week, a teacher would spend an hour discussing a topic with a student. The event would be broadcasted live on Instagram Story and students and staff can view the live story and interact by sending emojis and asking questions via the comments section.



RAINY CAMP

A webinar for grades 11 and 12 students; invited guests speak on positive character traits, digital literacy, mental health and time management during the pandemic.



SCHOOL AMBASSADORS

Budi Luhur Senior High School ran an online campaign to recruit three ambassadors: a Reading Ambassador, a Language Ambassador, and an *Adiwiyata* Ambassador. These ambassadors would be the face of reading, language, and environmental conservation, and develop programmes to promote these areas.

Adiwiyata is a programme of the Ministry of Environment co-working with the Ministry of Education and Culture. Its goal is to promote knowledge and awareness of environmental conservation efforts amongst the student community and cultivate a culture of environmental awareness in schools across Indonesia.



- Candidates first had to submit a 700-word essay and be interviewed by Sofiandi and his vice-principals.
- Short-listed candidates had to post a campaign poster and a one-minute video message on their personal Instagram and tag the school.
- A live campaign rally was also organised on the school's Instagram page. It was considered an official school event.
- Each student had to vote for their preferred ambassadors via Google Forms.
- The ambassadors were chosen based on a combination of their performance in their essays, interviews, video campaigns and election results.

Three things you can do to support your students' mental health



1. Encourage them to share their feelings

- Find time to check in with your students. It can be as simple as asking how their day has been, what have they been doing.
 - A few simple words of encouragement can help them feel comfortable sharing their feelings with you.
 - Acknowledge their emotions and feelings when they open up to you. Responses such as “I understand”, “It sounds like a difficult situation”, or “That makes sense” can help validate your students' feelings.
-



2. Encourage self-care

- Work together on setting up new routines and achievable daily goals. Encourage students to take breaks from schoolwork for self-care, and to do things that they enjoy.
 - Introduce positive coping strategies such as:
 - talking with friends
 - reflecting
 - making to-do lists
 - maintaining routines and structures
 - engaging in hobbies.
-



3. Communicate

- Be honest and transparent with your students: you can let them know that you are experiencing extra stress as well. Showing them how you deal with your own difficult feelings can help them know their feelings are okay.



6

LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY, OLD AND NEW

The COVID-19 pandemic has literally pushed many, if not all, educators to the forefront of using and embracing technological tools to deliver teaching in ways that do not compromise student learning but enhance it. In such a context, leaders are not only required to provide clarity in the use of appropriate technologies to support teaching and learning, but also compelled to be 'expert' users of and role models in the use of such technologies. This current crisis has compelled school leaders to become 'technological leaders' – cognisant, conversant, and competent in technologies supporting effective teaching and learning.

However, there seems to be a deeper and more essential ingredient that is exposed in the use of technology to support effective teaching and learning: innovation, or the spirit of innovation. The capacity of leaders to innovate – to think of new ideas, and new ways of thinking and doing – would make a huge impact on how education can be best delivered to the students who need it, and who need it most.

Covering all bases: Superintendent Dr. Ronaldo Pozon's trimodal learning modality

PROVINCE PROFILE

Tarlac Province



Central Luzon,
Philippines



Elementary schools: 436
Junior high schools: 74
Senior high schools: 69



244,600 students



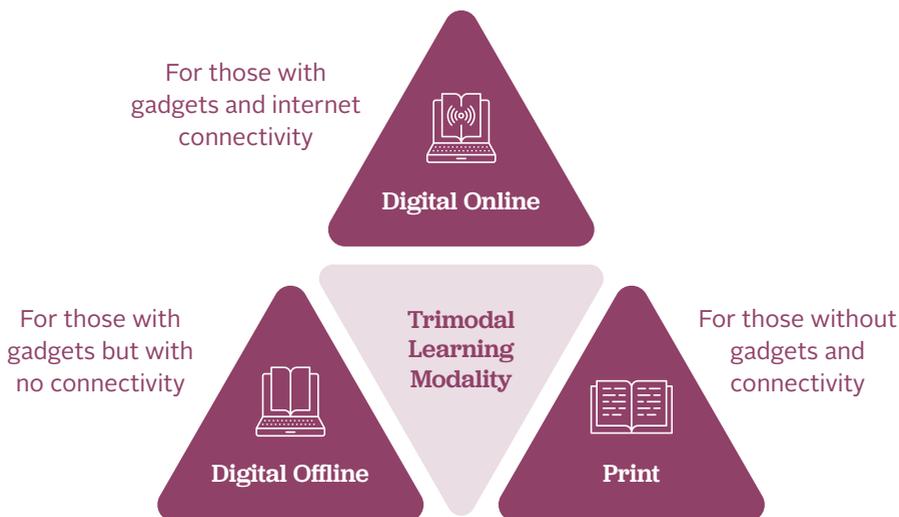
More than
10,000 staff

Students without access to digital devices and the Internet have always been disadvantaged, but school closures have made matters worse. Getting to the deep-seated roots of this inequality, and the sheer amount of resources needed to bridge it – providing computers, setting up Internet access points in remote areas – have proven to be a huge task. Partnerships are key to bridging this digital divide, and Dr. Pozon has exemplified leadership and vision in his quest to provide quality education to his learners, wherever they are.

“ Effective leaders are able to help and empower their followers to see and understand how mindsets need to shift and pivot, in order to not only survive but also thrive in these current challenges. ”

*- Hairon Salleh, Associate Professor, National Institute of Education,
Nanyang Technological University, Singapore*

Dr. Pozon adopted a trimodal learning modality in his province to address the issue of students having access to varying 'levels' of hardware and connectivity at home:



Dr. Pozon's plan for a multi-channel course for home-based learning:

1 RESPOND
Quickly identify the most pressing issues

- Profile the learning context and types of learners at the school level:
 - identify the most essential learning competencies that students must cover;
 - identify learners and teachers who do not have internet connectivity.
- Coordinate with the Local Government Units, the Parents' Association and all other stakeholders to understand the most pressing needs and gaps.

Tip

* Whichever modality you use, you need to ensure that the same competencies are covered, so that the learning gaps between each group do not widen.

2 RESTRUCTURE

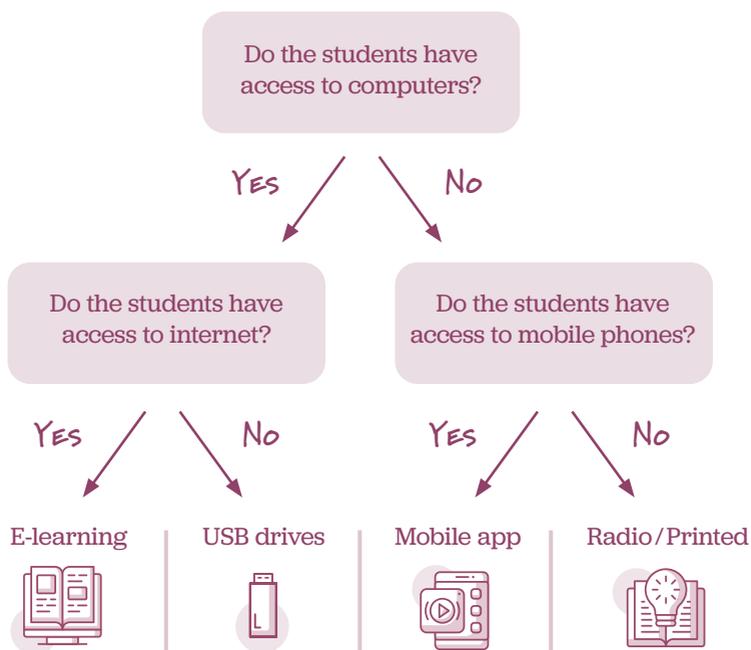
Adapt teaching and learning from face-to-face classroom interaction to remote schooling

- Adopt Learning Management systems (both online and offline).
- Produce instructional video lessons for instructional support.
- Develop e-learning modules, apps (open educational resources) and printed learning materials.

3 RISE

Ensure quality remote teaching and home-based learning

- Identify teachers, master teachers, and supervisors in charge of each subject area by grade level to guide the digitalisation of content.
- Appoint master teachers, supervisors and subject specialists to train other field teachers. Set aside certain days for e-training.
- Develop a plan and criteria for assessing effective online learning, by grade level and subject. Identify steps to take if standards are not achieved.



Mobile Applications

Dr. Pozon worked with the governor of Tarlac Province, Governor Susan A. Yap, to create a mobile application for students whose only gadgets were mobile phones. The Provincial Government, through the Governor, assisted the Tarlac province Department of Education in developing a Learning Management System. Dr. Pozon led his department to develop content for the modules at national, division, district, and school levels. Students can access the materials anytime by logging into the mobile application.

To ensure that students with no internet connectivity can also access the content, Dr. Pozon's team lobbied mayors to install internet kiosks in their municipalities for students' use. Students would walk or cycle to designated Internet kiosks and attend their e-lessons on their mobile phones.

Makeshift e-learning centres were also set up in schools to cater to students who did not have computers. These learners were scheduled to come in at various times of the day, and could access e-lessons and learning materials on the computers provided in the e-learning centre.

What if there is no electricity?

Never underestimate the creativity and resourcefulness of human minds, especially in times of scarcity. Some principals have persuaded their local government units to provide their schools with batteries and backup generators. Others are trying to devise makeshift solar equipment to power their schools and homes.

Radio

Though radio lacks the interactivity of live Zoom lessons, it has the potential to reach students without digital access. A school principal managed to secure enough funds from the town mayor to purchase the necessary hardware to set up a radio station for his students. The FM radio network was able to reach a radius of two kilometres, which covered the whole community where his learners lived; students from the other four schools in the area were able to tune in to the classes as well.

“Contemporary leaders are competent in harnessing the power of networks, where people within the school and community connect and draw from one another towards common visions and goals.

- Hairon Salleh, Associate Professor, National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

Printed materials

When all else fails, print materials are utilised. Dr. Pozon's team developed packets of learning materials that cover the most important and essential learning competencies, to ensure that students without internet and technology access can still learn meaningfully. Dr. Pozon managed to move resources and secure the help of the local government officials. They set up a drop-off station in every community, even in far-flung areas, where government officials would deliver the printed education materials that would then be distributed to students.

Tips



- * It is important to build strong relationships with your local government in normal times. These connections will help you tremendously in times of unanticipated need.
- * Telecommunication providers can be engaged to help supply gadgets and connectivity to schools in poorly resourced areas.

Educational television during COVID-19: How to start and what to consider?

According to the World Bank, here are some things you have to consider in starting, using, and sustaining educational television for remote learning:

1. **Use a mix of live broadcasts, pre-recorded (on-demand) content, and edutainment programmes** (e.g. Sesame Workshop).
2. **Identify channels for broadcasting programmes:** Existing education television networks, state television networks, private broadcasters, livestreaming, or on-demand channels (e.g. YouTube or apps).
3. **Develop a communication strategy and communicate regularly:** Communicate broadcasting schedules constantly and via a broad spectrum of media, including but not limited to television, radio, text messages, social media, government websites, and television networks.
4. **Provide support for students, parents and educators:** Support can be technological (helplines or chatbots), pedagogical, or socio-emotional.
5. **Complement television with expanded access to the Internet and devices:** Partner with Internet service providers to provide free Internet access to online learning platforms.
6. **Consider supplementary actions like text messages and print material:** Text messages can be used as reminders and to collect feedback; partner with newspapers to include activities in newspapers.
7. **Consider diversity, equity, and inclusion:** These can be achieved through lesson presenters being women as well as men, teachers with handicaps, or people from different ethnic/cultural groups.
8. **Re-use content used during COVID-19 closures when schools reopen to reach out-of-school children.**

Summarised from "Educational television during COVID-19: How to start and what to consider" written by Sharon Zacharia and Alex Twinomugisha, published on World Bank Blogs.

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

As pragmatic visionaries, we should never stop asking questions. How will you, as a leader, lead your team as you connect, persevere, and progress? How will we emerge from this experience collectively stronger? In other words, **how will you be further forged as a leader?**

Below are ten intentional questions that can kickstart your leadership thought process and help you prepare for life after COVID-19.

1. As I move on from the crisis, what will I rebuild?

2. What will I lock back in?

What have I learned within and through the crisis that will in the longer term make our schools a better place?

3. What will I reboot?

Has this crisis made me realise how some of the ways I do things can be improved?

4. What will I boot?

What will I get rid of? Has being in this crisis made me realise that some of the things I have been doing are not useful or relevant?

5. How have I/my teachers changed? Improved?

6. What are our immovables?

Regardless of what context or situation we happen to be in, what would I not be moved on?

7. What might my new rules be?

CLOSING MESSAGE

2020 has been a challenging and somewhat surreal year for us all. Singapore reported its first case of COVID-19 infection in late January. Reading about it then, I could never have predicted the grave and lasting impact of this deadly and highly contagious virus.

Beyond the health crisis, this pandemic has wrecked many other aspects of life we often take for granted and devastated the global economy: education has not been left unscathed.

This pandemic has forced society to re-evaluate many long-held dogmas on education. Through The HEAD Foundation's webinar series on *Educational Leadership in a Crisis* and this handbook, we hope to challenge and motivate educators to find creative, sustainable, and impactful solutions to minimise students' learning loss; to engage and activate their communities to support their learners and staff; and to nurture and support their staff and colleagues as they approach new and often unfamiliar technologies. On behalf of The HEAD Foundation, I would like to express my deepest thanks to our webinar moderator Dr. Vicente Reyes, and to our esteemed leadership experts and school leaders, whose illuminating insights have provided us much food for thought and inspiration for action.

As the year draws to a close, there is still no clear end in sight to this devastating global pandemic. Now more than ever, our children need dedicated educators. We must continue the job of educating. If we fail to do so, we might end up with a lost generation constantly struggling to catch up.

I hope you have found the ideas in this handbook informative, educational, and most importantly, transformational.

Stay safe!

Vignesh Louis Naidu

Director, Operations
The HEAD Foundation

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20 Upper Circular Road
The Riverwalk #02-21
Singapore 058416

headfoundation.org

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