

Supporting School Leaders From Behind the Scenes

Dusty Tresnak - Legacy Christian Academy
Executive Assistant to the Associate Head of School
Because "Miracle Worker" Isn't an Official Job Title





A LITTLE ABOUT ME

- Wife of 17 years to my husband Scott
- Mom to Lola (12) & Elle (7)
- Christian school administrator for 9 years
- Business Owner - The Balloon Design Studio
- Passionate about helping schools and people thrive
- Firm believer that leadership happens at every level

UNEXPECTED JOURNEY

Development Assistant - Attention to Detail

Executive Assistant to the Head of School - Discretion and Trust

Upper School Admin Assistant - Relationships and Communication

Executive Assistant to the Associate Head of School

THANK YOU...

- Rewritten an email that could have started a fire.
- Fixed a calendar disaster.
- Planned an event.
- Answered a parent concern.
- Found a missing student.
- Found a missing teacher.
- Covered the front desk.
- Solved a technology issue.
- Ordered supplies.
- Protected your leader from unnecessary drama

All before lunch...



How many of you have ever solved a problem before your leader even knew it existed?

The Secret Service of the School

We know where everyone is.

We know what meeting moved.

We know what crisis is brewing.

We know who's upset.

We know what parent called.

We remember the birthdays

We know what's happening before it happens.

We know who forgot to show up.

We know it ALL!

And just like the Secret Service, our best work often goes completely unnoticed. Because when things are running smoothly, nobody sees all the things that **almost** went wrong.

Who has survived?

A Head of School transition?

A principal transition?

How about both?

Who is in the middle of a big transition now?

LEADERSHIP THROUGH TRANSITION

NEW TEACHER

We Help Them Feel Like They Belong

- Introduce them to school culture
- Connect them with key people
- Share traditions and history
- Answer the questions they're afraid to ask

NEW RECEPTIONSIT

We Transfer Institutional Knowledge

- Explain procedures
- Share unwritten expectations
- Introduce staff and families
- Model school culture

NEW BOARD MEMBER

We Provide Context

- School history
- Key relationships
- Past decisions
- Leadership communication

NEW HEAD OF SCHOOL

We Become The Bridge

- Preserve continuity
- Share institutional knowledge
- Build trust
- Help leaders learn the culture

“Administrative Professionals Are Often the Bridge Between What Was and What Is Next”

5 WAYS TO BECOME INDISPENSABLE

LEARN TO
ANTICIPATE



Don't wait to be asked.
Ask: What's next?
What could go wrong?
What question will they ask tomorrow?
This is leadership.

MANAGE INFORMATION
NOT JUST CALENDARS



Anybody can schedule meetings.
Not everyone can say:
"Here's what you need to know before you walk into that meeting."
That's influence.

KEEPER OF
INSTITUTIONAL
KNOWLEDGE



This is HUGE.
Tell them:
"When a leader leaves, the assistant often becomes the bridge."
You lived this. Most people haven't thought about this.

LEARN HOW YOUR
SCHOOL ACTUALLY
WORKS



Do you know:
Admissions?
Advancement?
Academics?
Finance?
Operations?
The more departments you understand, the more valuable you become.

SOLVE PROBLEMS



Don't become the person who identifies problems.
Become the person who solves them.

HOW OFTEN DO YOU MEET WITH YOUR LEADER?

HAVE YOU EVER ASKED THE QUESTIONS BELOW?

- 1 What keeps you up at night?
- 2 What drains your energy?
- 3 What do you wish someone would take off your plate?
- 4 How do you like information delivered?
- 5 How can I make your life easier?

Things I Wish Someone Had Told Me 9 Years Ago...

Your title doesn't determine your influence.

Build relationships before you need them.

Trust is your greatest asset.

Not every emergency is your emergency.

Learn the business of your school.

People will remember how you made them feel.

You don't have to know everything.

Give yourself grace. You're doing a great job.

THE SECOND CHAIR MATTERS

You are not "just" an assistant

A culture carrier

A trusted partner

A problem solver

A bridge during transition

A leader

Your work matters. Your influence matters. You matter.



THANK YOU

Just for fun...

