

Key Messages from the Carol Mutch Webinar Series.

One: Leading through a crisis - What you bring as a leader

Crisis cycle: Response, Recovery, Renewal.

From event to response:

- Leaders need to zoom in and out, to view the bigger picture and the immediate needs. The first actions are around managing the immediate response.
- Be aware, there will be different aspects of the crisis, some you can anticipate and some you can't.
- Communication (in and out) is a key component of the response phase.

How does the crisis leaders' role change during different aspects of the cycle?

- Initial response, command and control. Show you have a plan, but do not stay in that mode.
- Always include the human side, the compassion, while managing the 'things' which have to be done.
- At response and recovery: Leadership here is a higher level oversight plus bringing others in, more the role of facilitator, and negotiator with others, including the community.

There will be layers of recovery, you need a plan for each. COVID recovery in schools requires plans for the physical, emotional and psychosocial.

Fracturing will occur: Listen out for it, is a normal part of the process in a crisis. Pull people together and discuss why they think/believe what they do. Look at what can be done. Remember "Build back better" and use the opportunity to think about doing things differently. (Peter O'Connor)

Scenario planning: Can be useful to think about what may come next, use a risk management matrix. Any planning you do now will be useful for decision making when it happens. The plan can be tweaked and quickly applied.

Further comments from Professor Mutch

- People do look to leaders (you have no choice they will look to you). You do have to look after yourself as a leader. (Pace yourself and have support systems in place).
- Note: Look out for people in your school who, while not officially leaders, have risen to the occasion.
- Suggestion: Use 'Response, Recovery, Renewal: The crisis cycle' to talk with your staff about the crisis cycle. Do this now, talk it through including fracturing, and refer to it when these things come up.
- Dealing with fracturing: Refer to the third webinar - Distributed Leadership.
- You can build back better by: Look at your community and see what resources you have to share with the wider community (cluster of schools, ECE, Govt departments). Work with the school/cluster of schools as the hub. You have the opportunity to think about what really matters, what you value, how you build these back in/on from the experience, i.e. using IT to tap into families in homes, as we have done in lockdown.