

SPOTLIGHT: LESLEY HAGELGANS, MARSHALL MIDDLE SCHOOL (MICHIGAN)

For more than 15 years Lesley Halgelgans has been teaching, she taken every opportunity offered to her to increase students achievement in her school community. But, those opportunities all focused inside the four walls of her school building.

Everything changed one day with one email. Lesley received an email asking the question, "If you had \$3.94 billion to spend on public education, how would you spend it?" This number was not random, it was the amount the federal government spends on teacher professional development in education.

This invitation came from **The VIVA Project's inaugural VIVA Idea Exchange**, which gave the US Secretary of Education **Arne Duncan unfiltered input directly from classroom teachers, including Lesley.**



WITH THE VIVA PROJECT TEACHERS ARE MAKING BIG CHANGES

The VIVA Project's network of teachers have taken on similar leadership in countless places have made across the country. They share many lessons about how to bring big change to public education Lesley said some of the most important things she learned from The VIVA Project are:

- If you are frustrated with a problem, look at your resources and figure out how you can use them differently
- Go to your leadership and propose a solution - don't bring a problem
- Lesley touts a "MacGyver" approach to education, be resourceful and try and solve complex problems with things you already have at your disposal.

Quote from US Secretary of
Education Arne Duncan

When I ask teachers why they teach, they almost always say that it is because they want to make a difference in the lives of children.

MAKING AN IMPACT

That first step led to a new leadership journey for Lesley which culminated in national recognition for her spearheading a multi-district initiative: The IF Data Project (Intervention Focused). By disseminating complex data teachers participating in The IF Data Project are able to improve achievement for students entering middle school through new approaches to homework and more intensive work in school for students the data showed needed it. Lesley reports with certainty that without her initial contact with The VIVA Project she would never embarked on this leadership journey.

LESLEY'S LEADERSHIP JOURNEY

- Selected as part of the inaugural VIVA Idea Exchange Writing Collaborative
- Presented her work with The VIVA Project to national education leaders
- Led a group of her peers creating and implementing the IF Data Project.
- Selected to participate in the Teach To Lead Summit in Louisville, KY
- Created the inaugural Teach To Lead Teaching Lab on Feb. 27, 2015 in Marshall, Michigan.
- Participated on a panel with Secretary Duncan at the 2015 NBPTS Teaching & Learning conference

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