

# Leading Change at Hazen Union School: The Power of Iteration

## *Video Transcript*

**Mike Moriarty, Principal, Hazen Union School:** Hazen Union School in Hardwick, Vermont is a union school that is made up of three towns in north central Vermont.

This is my fourth year at Hazen. It's John's third year. When John came on, the state of Vermont was really struggling to dive into Act 77: Flexible Pathways, and we decided in that first year that we were together as a leadership team, with our teacher leaders that PBL was really our path towards continuous improvement.

**John Craig, Associate Principal, Hazen Union School:** Mike and I talk about it being a sandbox this year. We've just sort of thrown in a bunch of toys, whether it's a learning management system, different PD on learning skills and proficiency-based learning, on authentic tasks, and letting our teachers experiment, make mistakes, learn from it, reflect.

**Mike Moriarty, Principal, Hazen Union School:** Much like we want kids in the classroom to be taking a risk, we really encourage risk taking and think of it as the most valuable thing that we can do for our faculty and staff.

When we took over at Hazen, a lot of the communication wasn't there. When we started down this road of proficiency-based learning, we really ramped it up with using as many tools as we could to communicate what is happening at Hazen.

We have a Facebook page, we have an Instagram page, we have Twitter accounts. We use snail mail, we have our website, we have word of mouth, we have our school board that is actively talking with community members.

If ten years from now I were to walk into Hazen, it would reflect a lot of what the real world is. Students really pursuing their interests in a variety of ways, a school without walls, understanding that I can access my education within the classroom, outside the classroom, within the community. I can choose from a whole host of pathways to get at a learning goal that isn't strictly about content, but about the acquisition of knowledge and skills.

**John Craig, Associate Principal, Hazen Union School:** I think the message that we'd love to send to most folks is it's messy and it's not the cleanest, but if we're trying to do



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what's best for kids and we truly believe in a model of proficiency-based education and flexible pathways, that it's work worth doing.



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