



# I am CPS

A Culture Transformation for Our Tomorrow



**Paul Daniels**

**Principal, Withrow  
University High School**

## I Continuously Improve

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Ask Withrow University High School Principal Paul Daniels what goes through his mind on Graduation Day, and the conversation grows quiet.

"There is a sense of pride for our institution," Paul says, after a pause. "It's not pride in what we've done; it's what the students were able to start and finish. They are walking out and on to a new journey!"

At Withrow, improving students' academic achievement is bolstered by a growing menu of services to address the whole child — from mentoring and tutoring programs to school-based health and dental care.

"It's innate that our kids have some challenges. The more we can negate, the better they'll be able to focus and perform," Paul says. "Students spend seven to 10 extra hours here a week with extracurricular activities, so a large part of their day is at school. I feel a tremendous amount of responsibility to students and their families to provide an environment where kids can be their most authentic selves."

Paul Daniels' own professional journey began 12 years ago at Cincinnati Public Schools after graduation from Bowling Green University. His goal was laser focused: To follow in his mom's footsteps and become the best teacher he could be.

Now, in year three as a principal, after five years teaching and four years as an assistant principal, Paul finds that, like his students, he must be willing to constantly learn, to grow and to improve — and often that's accomplished simply by asking for help.

"We encourage our students to do the same. This helps them become more collaborative and better problem-solvers," Paul says.

Paul embodies the *I am CPS* value of I Continuously Improve, which includes consistently striving for improved results and actively seeking opportunities to learn — both for himself and with his zeal for providing professional development to teachers and administrators to help them continue to grow in best practices.

In June 2015, he attended the Principals' Development Academy at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. He now shares that training with colleagues as a CPS Principal Coach, working especially with Assistant Principals to strengthen leadership skills.

Paul also took the unusual step of investing discretionary money from his school's budget to hire two teacher coaches to be in his building as constant support for his faculty. These coaches help develop new teachers and enhance the skills of veteran teachers by co-teaching, modeling best practices, and helping plan lessons.

Paul keeps his own education knowledge up to date by reading blogs and journals, researching cutting-edge best practices, and talking with parents and community members.

It all helps him in his goal of "fostering a school environment where students and professionals grow."