PLAYBOOK

FOR REDESIGNING SCHOOLS for the 21st Century

Written by Nathan Cross and Monica Martinez
With contributions from Amy Cox and Meghan Neary

Acknowledgments

About Cross & Joftus

C&J supports nonprofit organizations, school districts, foundations and public-private partnerships to drive organizational improvements that ultimately increase student achievement. For more information about C&J visit our website www.edstrategies.net.

About the Authors

Nathan Cross is a senior associate with Cross & Joftus and President of Education Solutions Consulting. Nathan was the senior program director of the new administrator program with the New Teacher Center's school leadership division. He has created and delivered professional development activities for educational leaders across the nation. Nathan has also taught educational administration as an adjunct professor at San Jose State University and has extensive training and experience in program development, collaborative decision-making, professional development design and delivery, leadership team building, meeting management, and interest-based bargaining.

Monica Martinez is an author, education consultant and strategist for ConsultEd Group, appointee to the White House Commission of Educational Excellence for Hispanics, and Senior Fellow sponsored by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. As an education strategist, Monica serves in an advisory capacity to assist education leaders in nonprofits, foundations, and education systems across the K-16 sector in creating, revising, or implementing their initiatives. Prior to becoming an independent consultant, Monica served as the President of the New Tech Network and the Vice President for Education Strategy at KnowledgeWorks. In Washington, DC, she was a senior associate at the Institute for Educational Leadership where she founded the National High School Alliance. She has been a columnist for Phi Delta Kappan and is author of *Deeper Learning: How Eight Innovative Public Schools Are Transforming Education in the Twenty-First Century* and *Deeper Learning: The Planning Guide.*

Foreword

Dear District Leaders:

This district reform playbook stems from an exciting partnership between the Hewlett Foundation and San Jose Unified School District here in California. San Jose's goal was to surface, and support, new school models that delivered "deeper learning" outcomes for all students.

Deeper learning refers to a set of interrelated content knowledge, higher-order thinking skills, and academic mindsets that are essential to preparing students for post-secondary achievement (whether 2-year or 4-year college, military, or industry certification, among others) and long-term success in the new workforce, modern civil society, and life:

- Mastery of rigorous academic content
- Development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills
- The ability to work collaboratively
- Effective oral and written communication
- Learning how to learn
- Developing and maintaining an academic mindset

Former Superintendent Vincent Matthews and his team had a long-standing vision to move the whole district toward promoting these skills using an innovative strategy to catalyze interest, action, and new funding for reform from within the district itself. They created a competition of ideas that energized the entire community, culminating in three reform model schools serving as pilots. We were proud to help San Jose support that strategy.

This playbook serves as a guide for the reforms that emerged from the pilots under the watchful eye and assistance of Cross & Joftus, who provided technical assistance and support to the entire initiative. We hope that it will prove useful to other schools and districts as they consider initiating, supporting, and scaling reform in their own districts.

Sincerely,

Barbara Chow

EDUCATION PROGRAM DIRECTOR
WILLIAM AND FLORA HEWLETT FOUNDATION

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Introduction

Education for a New World

Every generation quite possibly has claimed that the world is fundamentally different and that entirely new ways of going about things are required. Humanity is a pioneering species, with a natural inclination for always reaching for the next great possibility. Our innate curiosity has delivered *extraordinary* discoveries and new functionalities in just about every realm of human endeavor for as long as we have wandered this planet.

The current generation though may deserve the claim for something much more disruptive than any other generation had to contend with: a world of exponential development with no end in sight.

In the mid-50s of the past century something profoundly transformational happened in what was then known as *The Valley of Heart's Delight: The development of the microprocessor.* The microprocessor functions as a computer's central processing unit. The highly automated microprocessor manufacturing methods have allowed them to be produced in ever more powerful, reliable and smaller forms at an increasingly lower cost (the doubling of chip performance every 18 months is known as Moore's Law). This exponential development has led to the digitization of just about every human activity; and now increasingly of interactions among machines — without any human engagement.

For the first time in human history the device that has brought about a new era continues to mutate at exponential rates. All previous technological discoveries — from the printing press, to motors and turbines, to radio and television — profoundly transformed humanity, bringing with them new ways of production and exchange, and new structures and roles. But once they appeared they continued to improve along basically incremental paths, allowing for relatively linear adaptation by humanity and its institutions and enterprises. In the digital age this is no longer so.

Every one of these earlier technological developments had an impact on education. While transformational change has been fundamental for modern humanity, in the field of education one thing has remained unchanged throughout all these changes: the notion of mastery of the known. When significant change occurred, it was the role of educators to understand the new, learn to master its implications, and to interact with students in ways that transmitted that new knowledge, in return allowing them to master it for themselves.

Mastering the Unknown

Incremental change of schools in a world of exponential transformation means that they too are now falling behind exponentially. While market forces typically catalyze actions from commercial enterprises that either help them thrive in a new environment or simply go away, this does not really apply to education and its institutions. Existing modalities of education can endure over longer periods of time, even as they become increasingly irrelevant for the realities of a continuously and rapidly changing world.

Whether or not students will succeed in a world of exponential developments with the competencies required largely depends on the vision and courage of those with direct influence about how teaching is done.

For the first time in human history educators are called to create methods and systems that are projective, that is, are focused on preparing our young people for realities that we have never seen before. And to face these realities with the kind of confidence that traditionally came from mastering the known. In the old world, confidence came from doing things as well as those that already mastered them, and possibly expanding a bit on that existing mastery. In the new exponential world mastery is something very different. Mastery is about effectively facing the unknown, with skills that allow human beings to learn about and manage things that currently are still unknown, by joining with other intelligence (both human and non-human); figuring it out together: testing, experimenting, learning from it; and then applying the now-known for a period of time when it is relevant, expanding on it as required by changing realities, and then discarding it altogether and starting anew again with something entirely different.

Whether or not these critical capabilities are available to our students depends on the capacity of educators to promote this kind of new thinking, to promote new ways of being, new ways of working both individually and in collaboration with other, to promote the kind of pioneering work that is about constant discovery and solution finding.

The purpose of this Playbook is to offer up a process for creating systems to enable our young people to confidently enter into this new world in ways that allow them to be competent in areas and with problems that no one has ever mastered before.

So many districts, including the San Jose Unified School District, have undertaken bold experiments to discover innovative approaches that encourage the kinds of behavior that enable young people to enter a world of exponential developments with clarity, confidence and competence.

The Playbook in your hands is merely a start. Our vision is to catalyze a national and even global exchange among visionary educators. Our world demands it and our students deserve nothing less.

Let's connect and learn — together.

Herman Gyr

FOUNDING PARTNER
ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT GROUP

User's Guide

The new realities of the 21st century call for a fundamental shift in how we educate our students; redesigning schools for the 21st century will require education leaders to truly reimagine teaching and learning. This Playbook offers practical guidance on how to initiate, plan, implement, and manage the process of redesigning schools for the 21st Century. The Playbook guides readers through the process of developing a clear and coherent vision for change and then designing and managing the change process. It also provides tools and resources to develop key skills, knowledge, and dispositions necessary to support a highly effective redesign effort.

PART I of this Playbook serves as a comprehensive step-by-step guide for redesigning schools. It seeks to help school leaders implement a thoughtful, well-organized redesign process and avoid the change 'free-for-all' that occurs in many schools seeking transformation. By following the steps in this Playbook, you will develop a clearer shared vision and create a road map to help everyone in your school reach that destination—while making the trip feel much more manageable.

This step-by-step process includes establishing a redesign team (Chapter 1); developing a shared vision (Chapter 2); setting goals, strategies, and action plans to achieve your vision (Chapter 3); and setting up your goals and action plans for success (Chapter 4).

Planning and coordination is critical to the success of the redesign process. Without sufficient coordination of the many strategies and timelines involved, the redesign process quickly becomes unwieldy. Part I of the Playbook ensures that school leaders are well prepared to design, implement, and fully manage all elements of the change management process. Further, it creates the infrastructure to track the progress of the redesign effort, helping leaders to better understand and build on their successes during the transformation.

Part I also guides users in engaging and involving the whole school community, including key stakeholders invested in the school's success. Ensuring that a broad range of perspectives and support is integrated into the change

management process will mean the redesign process has access to all available resources, that there is wide collective ownership of the redesign plans, and that the school community does not become overwhelmed and abandon its redesign efforts.

PART II of this Playbook is designed to help school leaders develop the core knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to manage the change process. Part II is packed with tools and resources that readers can use to assess and develop the capacity of leaders participating in the redesign.

The tools are designed to support school leaders in gaining deeper understanding about how to create a positive school culture (Chapter 5); develop productive teams (Chapter 6); plan for and facilitate meetings (Chapter 7); support collaborative decision making (Chapter 8); and assign responsibilities effectively (Chapter 9).

Whereas Part I of the Playbook is designed as a comprehensive step-by-step process for redesign, Part II is meant to provide a series of tools, resources, and processes to be used individually or with your Redesign Team on an as-needed basis. School leaders and Redesign Teams determine which tools are the most pertinent to their goals and when is the most strategic time to put them into play. The articles and activities within Part II seek to deepen knowledge about the theoretical frameworks underpinning successful school change efforts while offering some practical tools and templates that can improve leadership effectiveness.

Redesigning schools for the 21st century is an incredibly challenging task. It will not work as a top-down mandate. Instead, it requires a shared focus on vision, a clear understanding of goals and action steps, and the collective time and energy of an entire school community.

It is best to approach the redesign effort as an iterative, inquiry-based process; one that brings multiple layers of the school community together to engage in cycles of deep reflection and action; one that supports a growth mindset, celebrates successes, and reinvigorates educators; and ultimately one that enables all students and teachers to develop the capacity to excel in the 21st century. This Playbook will guide you through the steps and strategies to engage in this process and to ensure that your redesign is a success on all of these levels.

Steps to Redesigning Your School

Establishing Your Design Team

Overview

Before you initiate any major redesign initiative at your school, we recommend that you form a Redesign Team to collectively initiate, plan, implement, and manage the change process.

There may already be several key leadership teams or committees at your school, such as a School Leadership Team or a "School Improvement Team"—either as mandated by Title I or formed internally to focus on student achievement—that you may want to repurpose into your new "Redesign Team." Alternatively, you may want to establish an entirely new team for the sole purpose of implementing your school plan. Only you can decide what is most advantageous and what will provide the strongest start to redesigning your school.

Outcomes

Working through this chapter will allow you to:

- Understand the role of a Redesign Team in successfully achieving your vision.
- Deepen your knowledge on Redesign Team composition and the importance of being thoughtful and deliberate in determining its composition.

The Role of a Redesign Team

You will be relying on your Redesign Team to play a number of roles, including:

- Establishing and communicating your vision.
- Identifying key goals and related strategies.
- Developing your action plan.
- Ensuring that implementation of the plan is successful.

The Composition of a Redesign Team

There are several key principles to consider when building your Redesign Team:

BROAD REPRESENTATION. Ideally, your redesign team will include a representative cross-section of staff members from various departments, grades, and types of experience within the school. Veteran educators offer a perspective different from that of newer staff members, while cross-departmental membership ensures thoughtful consideration of the most effective strategies to employ across departments. Representation from all departments is critical, because in order to generate true collective ownership, the Redesign Plan must be able to reach all educators throughout the school community.

You may also consider bringing in voices of community stakeholders that are not often heard but that could be strong forces of momentum for change. These community stakeholders might include highly regarded parents, students, and members of the business community or district central office. While it may take some time to get these members of the team up to speed on various school policies and practices, the dividends of having ownership across the entire community will have powerful, ongoing effects.

CAPACITY. Consider not only who your hardest-working educators and stakeholders are, but also who has the capacity to do this work. If you identify people who already have very full plates, the level of work they can contribute to the group may be limited. On the other hand, if you find willing and passionate members of the community who don't have a lot on their plates, they might be able to contribute more of their time and energy.

COMMITMENT. It may seem obvious, but your design team should be filled with individuals who are interested in and committed to implementing a powerful vision for your school and who have a strong sense of resilience. Those who seem invested in supporting positive change or those who volunteer extra hours for various school improvement opportunities should be at the top of the list. Those who are reliable and who have a strong track record of following through and completing the tasks they say they will accomplish should also be on the short list.

TEAM MEMBER ATTRIBUTES. There are several specific attributes of Redesign Team members that will ensure your team has the 'right stuff' to see the Redesign Plan through. In addition to a strong track record of following through on projects, team members should be excellent problem-solvers and relationship managers and expert coaches. It is also important to select people who are highly regarded and have strong relationships across the school, as they can be instrumental in adding legitimacy to any project and supporting whole-school ownership of the Redesign Plan. Having a data-savvy person may also be useful, since assessment of progress on your Redesign Plan is one of the pillars of success.

The key is to identify a core cadre that includes a broad range of individuals you can rely on to think critically, shape the change process, and commit to the hard work of transforming the school community.

The Example Redesign Team Composition Template that follows illustrates how The Burnett Middle School used the School Redesign Template to create a team. Burnett (see Appendix) wanted to focus on

creating an inclusive Redesign Team that included at least five parents and gave students as well as any teacher who wanted to join an opportunity to be part of the team. This proactive approach expanded the original core Redesign Team they had previously created to pilot a set of innovative practices. The expanded team included a representative from the administration, the International Baccalaureate Coordinator/music teacher, two math teachers who were part of a pilot blended learning initiative, a science teacher who piloted project-based learning, three English Language Arts teachers, one physical education teacher, and one art teacher—a group of whom formed a subgroup that researched criterion-based grading.

Similarly, Lincoln High School, another school in San Jose, designed a Redesign Team that included 25 teachers and counselors as well as a group representing the administration.

ACTIVITY 1.1 Assess Your Redesign Team

Instructions

1. Review the Example Redesign Team Composition Template on the following page. This example illustrates how one school has organized its Redesign Team.
2. As a group, discuss whether you feel you have a team in place at your school that can play the role of the Redesign Team. Is this team representative of the principles listed in this chapter? If the answer is "no" you will need to create a new team to plan your redesign. It is crucial to be thoughtful and deliberate about this team's composition, purpose, role, and responsibilities.
3. Complete the Redesign Team Composition Template for an existing team to determine its strengths and capacity or complete the template to design a new team.

Redesign Team Composition Template

Names of individuals who currently make up the team or who you want to consider for the team	Broad Representation	Reason for Selection			Commitment
	Consider the role, number of years at the school, subject, grades, specialty, etc.	Has Problem Solving Skills	Has Strong Relationships in School	Has Data Expertise or Other Skills	Commitment Level
DAREN	Ninth-grade English teacher. The only teacher in the school with less than 3 years' experience	He is always helping to solve problems for his grade-level team	Everybody likes Daren, because he helps them with their technology	Social media/tech	Always works to expand students' skills beyond content knowledge
DARA	A founding teacher at the school, teachers 9th-12th grade science classes	Active in school-wide and grade-level committees	Knows everyone and is well respected	Is always developing new projects	Always follows through on his projects, with great success
JANET	Spanish teacher for 5 years	Develops creative ways to teach foreign language	Works to integrate Spanish with Humanities and Social Studies	Coordinates Community Service	Works holistically on student reading, writing and speaking skills
MONICA	Counselor at the school for 7 years	Works effectively with students and family	Works with teachers across all grades. Teachers ask for her support regularly.	Encourages a holistic view of students	Works hard to prepare students for college and career
MAURICE	Chair of Math Department for 8 years	Involved in national math education organizations	Chairs the Academic Standards Committee	Data savvy - leads teachers in interpreting student test scores	Dedicated to the academic success of students
HOLLY	Manager of IBM's local engineering division	Strong leader on the Community Business Board, actively tries to partner with schools	Is well known to many schools in the district through partnerships	Great tech and social media skills, plus access to resources such as computers and new funds	Frequently works on partnerships to support students' work in engineering and math
GLORIA	Parent of Michael and Timothy	During field trips, she was the go-to person when issues came up	Most of the parents know and respect Gloria from her work on parent teams	Is great at project-management	Always volunteers when there are opportunities for parents

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Conclusion

Teams just don't happen! Professional collaboration, trust, and strong working relationships are crucial to effective team building. It takes time to build this type of community. It requires the understanding that the group will grow into a team as it moves through the identified stages of team development.

If your team is in the early stages of development, before moving forward we encourage you to review Chapter 6, Understanding the Stages of Team Development. This will help your team to anticipate the many peaks and troughs of the team-building process and ensure your team is set up for success.

If and when your team is ready to move forward, convene the first meeting for your Redesign Plan and begin with the next chapter: Developing a Shared Vision.

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Developing a Shared Vision

Overview

This chapter will walk you through the value of and process for developing a shared vision for your school as the foundation of the redesign process. This chapter provides a three-step process and a set of tools to help you create a strong vision statement in collaboration with your school community. This will help to ensure that your school will be able to generate the necessary momentum and collective ownership to launch and sustain your redesign work.

Outcomes

Working through this chapter will allow you to:

- Understand the value of a vision.
- Consider the district context and how your vision aligns with that context.
- Develop a vision that engages key stakeholders and builds ownership across the school community.
- Establish a vision statement that is clear, ambitious, and integrates the values and ideas of your key stakeholders.

The Value of a Vision

Imagine that you are going on a day trip to a state park with some friends. You do the work to coordinate all of the logistics, manage schedules, and ensure that everyone arrives on time. You are very excited at the notion that you will be with your friends enjoying hikes through the forest, getting exercise and fresh air, and spending quality time with friends.

Once you get there, however, you find out that each of your friends has very different ideas for how they want to spend time in nature. One wants to go swimming in the nearby lake, another wants to go bird watching, and another wants to try the zip line that just opened. There is no way you can accomplish all of these tasks within your timeline. You end up spending most of the time at the park discussing whose ideas should get priority, and in the end you realize you've spent so much time talking that there is no time to accomplish any of the activities.

The confusion could have been avoided if a few simple questions were asked during the planning process:

- What does everyone envision for the weekend?
- What are each person's goals for the trip?
- How can we achieve everyone's goals in the time frame we have?
- How will we know if we are meeting everyone's goals?
- What do you want to tell your friends, family, or spouse you accomplished while on the trip?

The state park example is an oversimplification of what schools and educational systems face everyday. However, the underlying principles are the same. If a group of people wants to move forward together, the group needs to first have a common vision for where they are going, what they are doing, and why they are doing it.

By following the steps in this chapter, you will be able to establish a clear and coherent vision for the school and communicate that vision to the many school leaders, faculty, students, and other school community members who must to unite around a set of common goals to achieve it.

Without a clear and coherent vision for the purpose of the school, many school leaders, faculty, and students may get lost in the sea of policies, expectations and activities, and people can end up moving in many different directions. It is likely that those in your school and community may not even be aware of one another's hopes, values, and aspirations for your students, much less share and own them.

Taking the time to discover what the school community values is critical to developing a clear, well-defined vision with full community buy-in that reflects what you want your students to know and do. With this in place, school and community members can have a substantive conversation about how your school needs to be redesigned to achieve your vision. The vision statement is foundational to the school redesign process—the starting point to get where you want to go. True transformation in schools can only happen when everyone shares the same hopes, values, and aspirations for what students should know and be able to do. Only then can everyone in your school community work in tandem toward the same outcome.

Consider the District Context for Visioning

This section provides you with an opportunity to review your district's vision as context and consider how your school's vision can be aligned with and supported within a larger system.

The San Jose Unified School District (SJUSD) has set its vision as "All SJUSD students are inspired and prepared to succeed in a global society." With this in mind, the district identified six competencies it feels are fundamental to ensuring that students are prepared for society and work in the 21st century.

Your team will be engaging in a similar process as the San Jose Unified School District to lay out your vision for what you want your students to know and do, but before you do, consider the ideas above and ask yourself the following questions:

- What are the implications the district vision has for your school?
- What resonates most with you about the district's vision?
- What would your students, staff, and parents agree or disagree with among these ideas?

You may consider all of these questions as context when you begin your visioning process as, ultimately, your role will be to answer two questions: "What is your unique vision for ensuring that our students will develop 21st century skills?" And "How can you develop a collective commitment among your school's community and stakeholders to move forward with the redesign process?"

In San Jose School District Schools
21st Century Skills Are Broader and Deeper

CRITICAL THINKING & PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS

Such as being able to weigh evidence, examine claims, and question facts to make judgments based on these criteria

CREATIVE THINKING SKILLS

Such as being able to generate multiple responses to a problem or an idea

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Such as using multiple media and technologies and knowing how to judge their effectiveness as well as assess their impact

COLLABORATION SKILLS

Such as working effectively and respectfully with diverse teams to reach a group goal

GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

Such as having cross-cultural skills to develop deep understanding and appreciation of different cultures and societies

DIGITAL LITERACY

Such as knowing how to navigate the web to find credible, relevant information

Develop a Vision that Engages Key Stakeholders to Build Community Ownership

One of the most effective ways to develop a shared vision is to simply revisit your school's current vision statement and consider if it captures what your school and district currently value and your aspirations for your students. If so, like many schools, you can leave the vision statement as it is and just refer to it when you develop your plan to redesign your school.

If your current vision statement is not aligned to your values and aspirations for what you want your students to know and do, your Redesign Team, developed in Chapter 1, can use the process that follows to rewrite your school's vision statement.

Step 1: The Redesign Team Brainstorms: What Do You Value?

Use the following process to start to unearth your common values, hopes, and dreams for your school and to help your team contemplate the larger purpose of the redesign process.

ACTIVITY 2.1 **Brainstorm Your Values**

Instructions

Brainstorm with your team answers to the following three questions.

- What kind of learning do we value?
- How do we feel this can be achieved?
- What would success look like?

If other questions feel more relevant for your school's context, feel free to add or change the questions to customize this process for your community. The goal is to begin to get the juices flowing about what you feel is most important to your Redesign Team in thinking about your school's overall purpose and goals for student success.

Step 2: The Redesign Team Engages Stakeholders in Visioning

Clarifying your starting point and engaging the entire school community in the process are critical to getting everyone moving together toward a common outcome or purpose. Clarity also serves as a galvanizing point to inspire your school community and generate enthusiastic ownership for the impending work related to redesigning your school.

For this reason, it is imperative that the process of creating or revising your vision statement—the starting point for your redesign efforts—includes the ideas of all those who feel invested in the outcomes of the school. This could be a small group, such as teachers and administrators, or it could include a wide array of key stakeholders, including students, union, staff, local businesses, higher education institutions, school board members, community based organizations (CBOs), and others.

The larger the group, the more work will likely be required to coordinate the ideas that come back to the Redesign Team. However, the benefit to including more stakeholders means that you will increase the number of people engaged in the redesign work, particularly in the types of strategies that your school will ultimately implement to achieve your vision and the resources available to ensure the changes you make are powerful and sustainable. In short, the more people who feel invested in your visioning process, the more likely you are to succeed.

ACTIVITY 2.2 Identify the Stakeholders You Want to Include

Instructions

To identify the stakeholders you wish to engage, ask your team the three questions that follow. As you ask these questions, put a checkmark next to each of the groups listed below that you would like to ask for input.

1. Who are the groups of people whose knowledge, attitudes, and behavior will be affected by this redesign effort?
2. Who are the groups of people who may be affected if the redesign effort is successful?
3. Who are the groups of people who might be able to bring knowledge, skills or additional resources to the table during the redesign effort?

___ Teachers

___ Coaches

___ Guidance Counselors

___ Nurses

___ Students

___ Parents

___ School Administrators

___ Community-Based Organizations

___ Business Leaders

___ Philanthropic Institutions

___ District Administrators

___ Strategic Partners/Vendors

___ School Support Staff (i.e. secretary, janitor, etc.)

___ Community Members/Neighbors

___ Media (bloggers, reporters, etc.)

___ Higher Ed Institutions

___ Local Elected Officials

___ Other: _____

Create a Process for Reaching Out to Stakeholders

Once you have identified the groups that you want to invite to contribute to the redesign process, consider which members within those groups you want to include, how many people from those groups you want to engage, and who will reach out to them. This is where personal networks come into play. Some members of your team will have connections to various stakeholders, making it easier to ask them to participate. For example, Sarah on your team might have a niece who is married to a councilman, while Michael is good friends with one of the school board members. Asking these individuals to take the lead in reaching out may prove effective.

ACTIVITY 2.3 Plan for Outreach

Instructions
Use the template below to help your team plan for outreach.

Planning for Outreach Template

Key Stakeholders (Enter all stakeholders marked above)	How many from that group?	Who specifically?	Who will take lead on reaching out?
Example: Elected officials	*2*	*Mary Johnson, School Board Member Michael Adams, City Councilman & head of Education Committee*	*Sarah will reach out to Mary. Bob will reach out to Michael.*

The Burnett Middle School (TBMS) decided to engage parents through the Principal's Coffee (Café Con La Directora), Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA), and School English Learner Advisory Committee (SELAC) meetings, and to engage students though the Student Council and Leadership class, which includes

approximately 35 students (see Appendix). Beyond these key stakeholders, however, TBMS did not identify any others. Similarly, Lincoln High School identified a purposeful approach to engaging parents through the PTSA, SELAC, and the Lincoln Foundation. While the school's Redesign Team acknowledged that "their stakeholder groups recognize the value in an increased focus on 21st Century Skills and real-world application of learning," no other stakeholder groups beyond parents were listed.

Invite Groups to a Visioning Meeting

Once you have identified the groups that you want to contribute to your redesign efforts, invite members from that community to join you for a special in-person visioning session. Providing food is a great strategy for securing a higher level of turnout to the event.

Try to craft an invitation that makes those involved feel special and excited about the prospect of participating. For example, put a flyer into teacher mailboxes or send an email to parents that might say:

You Are Invited To a Special Visioning Session!

We know you care about our kids. We also know you have great ideas about how we will ensure that our students develop 21st Century Skills. We need your big ideas to help us manifest the type of school that we dream of!

The vision we design together will help shape the redesign process on which we will embark this school year, so your input is vital. Be a part of this exciting effort to transform our learning community.

Please Join Us on Wednesday, May 8th

5-7pm

XYZ High School Library

Dinner will be served.

RSVP to Monica@sjusdschool.org by May 1st

TBMS held two voluntary administration-run after-school meetings as well as an all-day open-door time to talk with the principal to solicit feedback from staff. At Lincoln High School, an invitation was sent to teachers to identify student needs and develop a vision to meet those needs. Over this eight-week period, teachers developed and presented a plan to the entire faculty to redesign their instructional model. The next step would involve using similar processes for other stakeholders.

Facilitate Engaging, Structured Visioning Sessions with Stakeholders

At the meeting, engage participants in a brainstorming process that has enough structure to tap into everyone's ideas while still managing to come out with a specific understanding of that community's priorities. You may have your own process for doing this. If you don't have a process in place, consider engaging in the following steps as a group activity.

ACTIVITY 2.4 Engage Stakeholders in Brainstorming and Prioritization

Instructions

1. Gather materials. For each group of 3-4 people, you will need:
   a. 4 large pieces of paper/chart paper
   b. 5 stickers (or small post-it notes) per person
   c. Ideas worksheet to write down final answers (provided below)
2. Break the group into smaller groups with 3-4 people per group.
3. Guide small groups to work through Parts A and B, below, to brainstorm and share the results.
4. Together as a whole group, work through Part C to identify priorities.
5. Share the data from this process with your Redesign Team.

PART A. BRAINSTORMING Ask each group to:

- Identify a "recorder"—the person who will write the answers on the paper.
- Identify a "timekeeper"—the person responsible for keeping everyone on time.
- Brainstorm and record answers to the following questions, spending no more than 4 minutes on each question:

  1. What do we value about education?
  2. By the time our kids graduate, what do we want them to know and be able to do?
  3. Ten years from now, if money were unlimited, what would our ideal school look like?
  4. What would the teachers, parents, community members, and other stakeholders be doing to support student success in this future school?

*Note: You may change the questions included in this exercise, but we strongly recommend limiting the questions to four or fewer.

PART B. WEIGHTED POLLING After the 20 minutes, once the groups have had opportunities to brainstorm answers to all four questions, ask each group to take their stickers/post-it notes and place them on the answers or ideas that they feel most strongly about for each of the four questions. (They can place one sticker on each of five items or all five stickers on one item depending on how they feel.) Let them know that they will have 4 minutes for each question for this process (16 minutes total).

PART C. IDENTIFYING THE PRIORITIES Once the small groups have placed their stickers, the larger group will together take 3 minutes per question to identify the top three to five answers that have

the most stickers/post-its. If there are more than 3-5 questions or ideas that resonated most with the group, participants should try to collapse and synthesize some responses. Once the group has agreed upon 3-5 questions or ideas, the notetaker should record them on the Final Answers & School Priorities Worksheet that follows.

Let participants know that the results from the meeting will be used to guide the development of the visioning statement and subsequent goals for the redesign process. Be sure to thank them for their time, and let them know you will remain in touch about the process.

Final Answers & School Priorities Worksheet

Group Member Information

Name	Title	Organization	Contact Info

Top Answers to Question 1: What do we value about education?	Additional comments, thoughts, questions
Answer #1:	
Answer #2:	
Answer #3:	
Answer #4:	
Answer #5:	

Top Answers to Question 2: By the time our kids graduate, what do we want them to know and be able to do?	Additional comments, thoughts, questions
Answer #1:	
Answer #2:	
Answer #3:	
Answer #4:	
Answer #5:	

Top 5 Answers to Question 3: Ten years from now, if money were unlimited, what would our ideal school look like?	Additional comments, thoughts, questions
Answer #1:	
Answer #2:	
Answer #3:	
Answer #4:	
Answer #5:	

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Top 5 Answers to Question 4: What would the teachers, parents, community members, and other stakeholders be doing to support student success in this future school?	Additional comments, thoughts, questions
Answer #1:	
Answer #2:	
Answer #3:	
Answer #4:	
Answer #5:	

Review Answers and Identify Themes (Word Cloud Optional)

Now that you have determined the answers your school stakeholders believe are most meaningful, share the data with your Redesign Team, and identify the themes that emerged from the meeting(s). You can either do this by hand (have team members review the answers and generate themes across worksheets), or you can enter the data into Word Cloud, which provides a graphic representation of the data you collected and draws out the themes from the responses. In the Word Cloud, the more times a word appears, the larger the word appears in the cloud. The process of creating a Word Cloud is easy and free. Just go to: www.wordle.net.

Here is an example of a Word Cloud conducted in Great Oaks Public Schools:

No matter how you decide to determine the themes, consider storing the information online so it can serve as an ongoing resource to guide this and future redesign efforts.

Establish a Vision Statement that Integrates the Values and Ideas of Your Key Stakeholders

Review Vision Statements from Other School Communities

Now that your team has identified the learning themes that matter most to your team and to your school's biggest stakeholders, it's time to look at what other schools have done with their vision statements.

As a team, review the sample visions statements below and discuss what everyone likes and dislikes about each statement. This can include structure, length, content, focus, etc. This process will give you a sense of the types of vision statements that appeal to your team and a direction to take with your statement.

Sample School Vision Statements

We commit to inspire, motivate, and prepare all students to think critically and to use their talent and creativity to thrive in the global community.
—Lincoln High School, San Jose Unified School District, CA

All students are inspired and prepared to succeed in a Global Society.
—The Burnett Middle School, San Jose Unified School District, CA

At Casco Bay, we challenge and support our students to become college-ready through our 3Rs: Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships. Our aim is for each student to "Get Smart to Do Good."
—Casco Bay, Portland Public Schools, ME

At Battlefield Senior High School, we believe that student learning is the chief priority and all students can learn to their full potential. Students will develop their individual talents, critical thinking, and technology skills by being actively engaged in the learning process. Continuous commitment to improvement ensures that our students are well-rounded, self-directed, lifelong learners. By maintaining a safe and optimum learning environment, we provide the opportunity for students to be successful. Promoting high standards and expectations, teachers, administrators, parents, and the community share the responsibility for advancing the school's mission.
—Battlefield Senior High School, Prince William County Schools, MD

Avalon School prepares students for college and life in a strong, nurturing community that inspires active learning, engaged citizenship, and hope for the future.
—Avalon Charter School, St. Paul, MN

John T. Baker Middle School seeks to be an exemplary learning community school. We build the foundation of this community through meaningful relationships, relevant and engaging learning, and effective communication. We challenge ourselves to be better than we think we can be, and advocates for the greater good of our multidimensional community. Our success in this mission will build lifelong, confident learners who have the tools necessary for success in a changing world.
—John T. Baker Middle School, Montgomery County Public Schools, MD

Draft Your Vision Statement

Now that your Redesign Team has received and synthesized the feedback from the multiple stakeholder groups from your school and determined what you like and don't like about other schools' vision statements, it's time to craft your own vision statement.

ACTIVITY 2.5 Craft Your Vision Statement

Instructions

1. In the box below, or on a flip chart page, brainstorm with your team a series of potential vision statements. This should be done without judgment. All ideas and sentences are good ones for this process.
2. After the Redesign Team has gone through the brainstorming process, each member should underline or put a circle around the words, sentences, or ideas that they like best.
3. Begin to synthesize the idea that were most liked by the team into one cohesive vision statement, and record them in the box on the following page.

In the box below, begin to synthesize into one cohesive vision statement the ideas generated in the brainstorming process that were most liked by the team. Record your draft vision statement in the box below.

> ### Brainstorm Ideas for Vision Statement Here

Note that the vision statement does NOT need to be perfect. Determining the perfect paragraph or sentence is an impossible task. Rather, view this statement as a work in progress that will evolve over time. And more importantly, recognize that the Redesign Team used a process that laid the foundation

for bringing the school stakeholders together to understand the school's values and priorities. It is the process itself (and not necessarily the outcome) that serves as the galvanizing point and that will help people move forward in tandem to meet the vision you set.

Draft Your School's Revised Vision Statement Here

Step 3: Share Your Vision Statement Draft with Entire School Community (Including Stakeholders)

Now that your Redesign Team has crafted a new vision statement, it is time to share the statement with the entire school community and lay the foundation for the next steps of your redesign process. During the visioning process, you identified and brought together stakeholders from across your community. These should be the first people with whom you share the final vision statement. However, all members of the community should be informed about the vision you have created and the process you underwent to create that vision and should receive a quick overview of what next steps will look like. You may wish to consider including the Word Cloud if you chose to use it in your brainstorming process. Many people are visual learners, and the graphics will help to generate interest and understanding.

Equally important to identifying the message is determining the vehicle that will be used to spread the message. You will want to be sure that you have in place from the start a system to communicate your intentions, plans, and activities to everyone in your school community, including your stakeholders. This will be critical to keeping everyone moving in the same direction and working towards the same goal throughout the redesign process. Some of the potential communication vehicles include:

- The school's website or social media channels
- An online portal that is accessible only by staff or parents
- The school's orientation program
- Staff meetings

- Parent meetings
- Business or community newsletters, e-news, social media venues
- School newsletter
- Teacher handouts to students
- Other (add your ideas here):

You may also consider tailoring the message to each specific community to honor their particular perspectives and lay the foundation for opportunities to collaborate.

Sample Communications

After engaging in a visioning process led by teachers, parents, administrators and business leaders, we have identified a vision statement that we believe captures our school's unique vision for preparing our students in the 21st Century. Please find our statement below:

"We believe that all students have the right to an excellent education that supports their ability to achieve their dreams and engages them in a global society with mastery of 21st century skills."

This statement builds on the many exciting ideas and themes that emerged from our valuable stakeholders. The image below represents some of the key themes that surfaced during the visioning process. (The larger the word, the more times it was mentioned in the visioning process.)

Now that we have identified our common vision, we will be taking next steps to identify 3-5 redesign goals that our school will prioritize to make our vision a reality. We will continue to seek your engagement, support and ideas to help us succeed! If you have any questions or comments, please send them to: mary@greatschool.com.

ACTIVITY 2.6 **Determine Your Methods of Communication**

Instructions Complete the Target Audience Communications Template below.

Target Audience Communications Template

Stakeholders/ Target Audiences	Specific Message (What the target audience needs to hear that is unique to its role)	Key Communication Channels
Example: Parents	*After engaging in a visioning process led by Parent Leader Marcy Windell, we've identified our vision statement and would like to request your support in sharing that vision with your child.*	• *Parent-Teacher Meetings* • *Calls by Parent Coordinator* • *Online Parent Portal*
Parents		
Students		
Parents		
Faculty		
District		
Community members/ neighbors		
Community-based organizations or institutions		
Higher Education institutions		
School Board		
Businesses		
Others:		

Conclusion

Based on this chapter, you should now understand that a vision needs to be well articulated, easily understood, and created with the participation of all of the school's stakeholders in order to develop support and enthusiasm for your Redesign Plan.

If, however, your school is dubious about the need to establish a clearer vision and/or to engage in a redesign process to achieve it, you may want to review Chapter 5, Establishing a Positive School Culture, in Part II. It is imperative that stakeholders are not only engaged in the visioning process but also understand the priorities and the need for redesign.

In the next chapter, you will identify goals to achieve your vision. As part of the goal-setting process, your Redesign Team will return to the themes and outcomes that were generated from the vision statement development process to determine if they can serve as goals to help your school achieve the aspirations that have been captured in your vision statement.

Creating Goals, Strategies and Action Plans

Overview

The previous chapter supported your Redesign Team in generating a revised vision statement for your school while enabling the stakeholders within your school community to contribute meaningfully to the start of the change process. But now, how will you achieve your vision?

This chapter takes readers through the action steps needed to realize the school's vision. It is a three-step process that includes goal setting, strategy development, and action planning.

Outcomes

Working through this chapter will allow you to:

- Understand the value of goal setting and generate general goals that are aligned to your vision.
- Develop SMART goals to achieve your vision through your redesign process.
- Understand the development and use of strategies to meet your SMART goals.
- Identify high-impact strategies to achieve your SMART goals.
- Create an Action Plan to implement your strategies for each SMART Goal.

Generate Your Goals

Goal setting is one of the most critical aspects of any change process. When your goals are aligned with your school's vision, you create the infrastructure needed for realizing your vision. This section is designed to help you connect your school's visioning process that you completed in the last chapter to your redesign team's goals, which will lay the foundation for your redesign work.

Use the exercises below to help you identify and prioritize your school's goals. Feel free to modify any of the exercises to better meet the needs of your Redesign Team.

ACTIVITY 3.1 Generate Your Goals

Instructions

1. Review the Example Goal Generation Template below to help you understand how to use this chart.
2. With your Redesign Team, use the Goal Generation Template on the next page to do the following:
   a. Identify the major priorities that emerged from your school community through the visioning process. List these priorities in the first column in the table. If there are many priorities, seek to identify those that had the most energy behind them—the ones that recurred most often and/or the ones that generated the most meaningful conversations.
   a. Review the priorities and determine whether they can be written or reframed as goals that will help you achieve your vision.
   a. Review the goals you developed from your priorities and brainstorm additional goals—those that may be missing but that you know will be imperative to achieving your vision.

EXAMPLE Goal Generation Template[1]

Write Your Vision Statement Here: *We commit to inspire, motivate, and prepare all students to think critically and to use their talent and creativity to thrive in the global community.*

Priorities identified from the visioning process	Frame the priorities that are aligned to your school's vision into a goal statement	Brainstorm more goals and write them as goal statements
Use technology for teaching and learning	Equip classrooms with computers and software that support blended learning in math and ELA.	Improve capacity of teachers to use technology for students to master math and ELA. Students participate in personalized learning.
More comprehensive analysis of student achievement and progress	Use criteria-based grading assessment model for all students.	Use performance-based assessment. Have access to a robust learning management system.
Critically thinking students	Improve students' ability to think critically through cross-curricular projected-based learning.	Problem-based learning Blended learning

---

1 This template is loosely based on The Burnett Middle School's Innovation Proposal

Goal Generation Template

Write Your Vision Statement Here:

Priorities identified from the visioning process	Frame the priorities that are aligned to your school's vision into a goal statement	Brainstorm more goals and write them as goal statements

Prioritize Your Goals

Now that you have identified a potential set of general goals that can help your school achieve the vision, the team needs to prioritize the goals towards which you will first begin working. Your job now will be to narrow your list of general goals to no more than three. This may feel difficult, but focusing on more than three goals at a time can easily become unmanageable.

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ACTIVITY 3.2 **Prioritizing Your Goals**

Instructions

1. Engage your team in a discussion about each of the goals described in your Goal Generating Template. Use some or all of the following questions to guide your discussion:
   a. What will have the biggest impact on achieving your vision?
   b. What is most important to each stakeholder group (teachers, students, parents, school board, etc.) based on our visioning process?
   c. What seems most urgent?
   d. What seems the easiest to pull off given our budget and resources?
   e. What seems to be aligned with things we are already focusing on?
2. Based on the discussions above, list the top three general goals your Redesign Team will focus on for your school's Redesign Plan. If you are still struggling to prioritize the top three goals, consider using the 5-sticker prioritization method introduced in Activity 2.4 (Chapter 2).

Note: Do not worry about neglecting other goals. As soon as you have accomplished these goals, you will move on to the other goals on your list, so keep your list of general goals on file!

EXAMPLE **Top 3 General Goals, The Burnett Middle School
(see Appendix for the full proposal)**

List Your Team's Top 3 Goals It Will Focus on Now
1. Full implementation of blended learning in math, core (SLA & S/S) and science
2. Cross-curricular project-based learning
3. Schoolwide criterion-based grading

Top 3 General Goals Template

List Your Team's Top 3 Goals It Will Focus on Now
1.
2.
3.

Develop SMART Goals to Achieve Your Vision Through Your Redesign Process

Now that you have determined your top 3 general goals that will ensure your school can achieve the vision, it's time to articulate the specific results you are seeking to create. You can do this by turning each of your three selected general goals into a SMART Goal. Many of you are probably familiar with a SMART goal by now, but just to remind you, a SMART goal is defined by setting a goal that is:

Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Results–focused, Time–bound

Specific (S)

Make your goal as specific as possible. Narrowing the scope of the goal and using a higher level of detail will make it more attainable and support you and your team in understanding how to get to your next steps. For example, a general goal might be "make learning fun for all of our students." This is a noble idea, but it would be hard to know where to begin for most schools. A more specific goal would be "we want to improve student engagement through increased critical thinking in all 6th grade math and science classrooms." This provides a much stronger context for knowing what to do next and likely feels less daunting than the former goal. The difference between being specific and general is the difference between making your goal realistic for your team and talking about a nice theoretical idea.

Measurable (M)

One of the most crucial elements of SMART goals is the M, making your goal measurable. It creates the benchmarks to figure out whether or not you are successful in achieving your goal. You can make your goal measurable by asking such questions as: How much? How many? How will I know when it is accomplished? Making sure your goals are measurable will also ensure that your team uses evidence, rather than opinion, to drive decisions.

Your team may want to look at the school's data to support your team in coming up with achievable measurements to assess growth. You can look at items such as attendance rates, graduation rates, discipline records, interim assessments, surveys, observation forms and many other forms of data.

However, it is also important to use measures that are reliable and easy-to-use so that your team will be able to see their successes as the redesign process takes hold. To help you generate user-friendly, reliable measures for your goal, review the next section, "Identify Achievable Measures of Success."

Achievable (A)

There is no doubt that when people come together, they can bring enormous change. However, in any given moment, people only have so much time and capacity to support the change process. To achieve the success of your goals, try to find the right balance between being ambitious and being realistic

about what your team can accomplish. Ask yourselves questions such as: How much time do we each have to commit? Do we have all the resources to make this happen in the timeframe we are suggesting? What resources do we need to reach our goal?

Generally speaking, it is often better to start with a smaller goal than a larger one. If you can accomplish success early with a small goal, it builds confidence and enthusiasm and enables your team to become more ambitious over time. If you start too big and don't accomplish your goal, it often leads to lower morale and a loss of interest in the process of redesign.

Results-focused (R)

It is critical that your SMART goal is focused on tangible outcomes that will actually advance your school's vision. Focusing on the results your team wants to see will help you create the roadmap to make it a reality. Sometimes teams inadvertently focus on process or strategies instead of the results. This approach does support some levels of change but often does not yield the level of change they were ultimately seeking.

For example, if a team wanted to create a SMART goal focused on improving critical thinking skills of students, they could say: "We will engage all students in writing essays that use critical thinking skills by June of 2016." However, this SMART goal reflects a *strategy* of the goal, and not the results they are seeking to achieve.

To make the SMART goal results-focused they could instead say, "All students will have the ability to ask critical questions of texts by June of 2016—as measured by student essays in each classroom." This approach means that all of the strategies developed to meet the goal will be aligned and have a greater chance of creating deep and sustainable change.

Time-bound (T)

Every goal needs a specific timeframe in which your team seeks to accomplish the goal. This creates a sense of urgency, which helps all parties stay invested in the process. It also ensures that the initiative does not go on in perpetuity. Without a time frame, initiatives are likely to get relegated down the list of priorities and are eventually forgotten.

As your team is considering timeframes, remember to make them achievable. If the timeframe is too long, people may lose steam. If the timeframe is too short, people may feel overwhelmed. Finding the balance is key.

Identify Achievable Measures of Success

One of the trickiest parts of a SMART goal is making it measureable. This overwhelms many people, since often it is unclear how to measure success in schools. However, there is a way to make the task much easier and more reliable.

First, it is important to note that we do not believe SMART goals should focus solely on raising student achievement because of the ambiguity and scale of such a goal. There are so many variables that impact student achievement that it becomes extremely difficult (even for researchers) to understand what actions directly influence student achievement outcomes.

In addition, it is challenging for any initiative—no matter how wonderful—to move student achievement forward right away. It often takes three years for change to take root before student scores start rising. It is important that Redesign Teams see their successes early and often. Waiting multiple years before the team can see its impact is an easy way to ensure that a team loses steam.

Thus, rather than focusing on standardized tests as our goal right away, it is often easier and more strategic to focus on data that we can surely attribute to the actions we are taking. These might be called *current change indicators*.

*Note, as your school gets comfortable with current change indicators and starts seeing regular success in achieving your goals, you may seek to move up to the idea of raising student achievement scores on standardized tests. However, we strongly recommend using current change indicators as you first begin to implement change.

Below are some examples of SMART Goals that include current change indicators. The current change indicators are underlined.

- At least 50% (10 out of 20) of intervention students will score proficient or higher <u>on the Algebra I CST</u> (From The Burnett Middle School, see Appendix).
- At least 80% of teachers will feel that their time in Professional Learning Communities is productive, engaging, and helpful to improving their instructional practice by the end of 2015, as measured by <u>teacher surveys</u>.
- By the end of the 2015-2016 school year, 75% or more of students will demonstrate growth in writing with critical thinking, <u>as measured by an analysis of student writing samples using a rubric</u>.
- By the end of Dec 2015, all teacher teams will deepen student engagement, as measured by <u>pre- and post observations from teacher peers using the Student Engagement component on the Danielson Framework rubric</u>.

ACTIVITY 3.3 **Developing Your Smart Goals**

Instructions

1. Now it is time for your team to develop its SMART goals. Using the ideas in this chapter for developing SMART goals and achieving measurable success, generate a SMART goal for each of your three general goals. As you discuss the development of your SMART goals, consider the following questions:
   a. What do we really believe we can achieve?
   b. What are the different ways we can measure if it's working?
   c. How much time can people devote to this?
   d. Who will be involved in making it work? What is their capacity? Do they have the skills and knowledge to make this work?
   e. What is a realistic timeframe for us?
   f. How will we know if we need to revise the SMART goal?
2. When you are ready, record your SMART goals in the SMART Goals Template.

SMART Goals Template

Smart Goals:
SMART Goal 1:
SMART Goal 2:
SMART Goal 3:

Identify SMART Goal Leaders

Now that you have your three SMART Goals, it's time to identify a SMART Goal Leader for each of them. The SMART Goal Leader is the person who takes responsibility for overseeing all of the strategies and activities related to the SMART Goal. His or her job is to bring together a team of people to develop strategies and an action plan to achieve the goal and to support to each member of the team in implementing his or her tasks within the action plan. Additionally, the Goal Leader will work with school leadership to proactively communicate to the rest of the school community (including all stakeholders) the progress made on each of the strategies throughout the year.

SMART Goal Leaders should have a strong record of following through on projects, be well respected among their peers and be great problem solvers. If there is no one on your team who meets these criteria, this is a wonderful opportunity to support the growth of your colleagues to become effective leaders.

SMART Goal Leaders should take on no more than one goal to oversee at time. Otherwise, the process becomes unwieldy very quickly.

ACTIVITY 3.4 List Smart Goals and Leaders

Instructions

1. Use the Smart Goal and Leader Template to identify SMART Goal Leaders for each of your SMART Goals. SMART Goal Leaders will work with the Redesign Team to design the SMART Goal Team for each goal.

Smart Goal and Leader Template

SMART Goal	SMART Goal Leader

By creating a SMART goal and identifying Goal Leaders to oversee the path toward success, you are narrowing the focus of your team's energy so there is clarity, purpose and capacity to help you reach your goal. It is key that all of the **goals you have prioritized will add up to achieving your overall vision.** Nonetheless, the reality is that all goals are moving targets, and your SMART goals may shift over time as you do the work and become more familiar with what you are trying to achieve. The next chapter of the Playbook introduces and describes a process for how your school can engage in a collective review of progress toward your goals and make changes as needed.

SMART Goal Teams

Now that you have identified three SMART goals and three SMART Goal Leaders, it is time for each of your Goal Leaders to identify a set of strategies that will enable them to succeed in reaching their goals. Before engaging in this work, Goal Leaders will need to put together their Goal Teams. Team members could include the whole Redesign Team, a sub-committee of the Redesign Team, or brand new members

from the school community. For example, a SMART Goal focused on parent engagement might entail reaching out to others in the school community, including parent coordinators, parents, and teachers. A SMART Goal focused on critical thinking skills might include some members of the Redesign Team who also happen to be PD developers, PLC coordinators, and English teachers.

The Goal Leader should work with the Redesign Team to identify who should be on his or her SMART Goal team. Once a range of people has been identified, the Goal Leader is responsible for inviting these individuals to participate. Consider looking for potential team members who are reliable, knowledgeable about the topic, and passionate about the issue the Goal is seeking to address.

Developing Strategies to Reach SMART Goals

The Goal Leader's job at this point is to bring the Goal Team together and identify a set of strategies to achieve the goal. Doing this brainstorming work with the newly developed Goal Team will ensure a high level of ownership and excitement for seeing the Action Plan through.

Once the team is together, use the following exercise to identify the strategies the group will use to achieve the goal.

ACTIVITY 3.5 Identify Potential Strategies

Instructions

1. Make copies of the Strategy Identification Template that follows for each of the Goal Leaders to use with their teams.
2. For every SMART Goal, each Goal Leader will facilitate a conversation with their Goal Team to complete the template:
    a. Fill in your SMART Goal in the leftmost column.
    b. In Column A, record any structures, activities or practices you already have in place that, if done better or more intensively, would help you reach your goal.
    c. In Column B, identify and record the greatest challenges your school faces in achieving your goal.
    d. In Column C, identify and record new structures, activities, or practices that can help you overcome your challenges and help you meet your goal.
    e. In Column D, identify and record any existing structures, activities, or practices that your school currently has in place that should **be discontinued** because they do not help your school achieve success of the goal.

EXAMPLE **Strategy Identification Template**

	Assets in Meeting Goal (Column A)	Challenges to Meeting Goal (Column B)	New Activities to Address Challenges & Meet Goals (Column C)	Existing Activities that need to be Modified or Discontinued (Column D)
Enter Goal Here: Improve school culture	Orientation program for teachers and students is strong.	Lack of trust, respect, and collective responsibility among staff.	Create a school-wide PD focused on building a strong school culture.	Restructure grade and subject grade level teacher meetings to be more productive and engaging.
	Advisories for students offer opportunities to address students one on one.	Students don't respect one another or the teachers.	Train facilitators to support kids in interacting with staff in respectful ways that also honor their voice.	Create more time for advisories.
		High levels of discipline-related issues resulting in a large number of in-school suspensions.	Create a restorative justice program to address discipline issues.	Revise policy on discipline.
			Create a mentoring program for peer-to-peer student learning across grade levels.	

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Strategy Identification Template

	Assets in Meeting Goal (Column A)	Challenges to Meeting Goal (Column B)	New Activities to Address Challenges & Meet Goals (Column C)	Existing Activities that need to be Modified or Discontinued (Column D)
Enter Goal Here:				

Prioritize Strategies

You probably have identified more potential strategies than you will be able to implement for one SMART goal. If that is the case, this section is designed to help you set your priorities so that you can keep your strategies to a manageable number.

It is important to prioritize strategies that are easy to implement for each of your identified SMART goals so as to produce "early wins." This will help your team to feel successful and will generate the momentum and positive energy to move on to harder strategies or goals in the future. At the same time, you will want to implement strategies that will address the long-term challenges you are undertaking in redesigning your school to achieve your school's vision.

The following exercise takes you through this process. You should conduct this exercise for each of your SMART goals. However, if you know which strategies you need to prioritize for each of your SMART goals, you may want to skip this exercise and move on to the next section.

Prioritizing Strategies

Instructions

Using a 2x2 matrix, you will identify the potential impact of each of the new or modified strategies you identified in the previous exercise for each of your SMART Goals.

1. Label the Matrix for the SMART Goal you intend to address.
2. Using the Y-axis of the matrix, mark the potential impact of the new or modified strategies to achieve your SMART Goal as high or low.
3. Using the X-Axis of the matrix, mark the degree of difficulty to implement the new or modified activities/strategies for your SMART Goal.
4. Use the results to identify and list below the strategies you will use to achieve your goals.

SMART Goal Prioritization Template

SMART Goal: _____

Adapted from: U.S. Education Delivery Institute (2015). Prioritizing strategies using a 2x2 matrix.

As a SMART Goal Team, use these results to identify the strategies that you will use to achieve your goal. A general rule of thumb is the number of strategies should not be more than the number of participants on the team.

Based on the matrix that appears on the previous page, list the strategies that will be your top priorities:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

ACTIVITY 3.7 Identify Team Member Responsible for Strategy

Instructions

If appropriate, the SMART Goal Leader along with his or her SMART Goal Team should identify individuals who will take responsibility for ensuring that specific strategies are implemented. Use the following template for this process.

Strategy and Strategy Leader Template

SMART Goal: _____

Strategy	Strategy Leader

Create Your Strategic Action Plans

Now that you have identified a set of high-priority strategies to achieve your SMART Goals and a cadre of leaders to oversee the work, you are ready to create your Strategic Action Plan. A Strategic Action Plan will enable the Goal Leader and, potentially, the Strategy Leaders to identify the set of activities needed to pursue the strategy, success measures of the strategy, assignments of responsibilities, and timelines to ensure that the activities are implemented with fidelity.

With the Goal Team, engage in the activity that follows to complete the Strategic Action Plan Template.

ACTIVITY 3.8 Complete the Strategic Action Plan

Instructions

With your Strategy Team, review the example template and enter the following information into the blank template that follows.

1. Name the SMART Goal that a particular strategy will address.
2. List the strategy name.
3. Identify the name of the Strategy Leader.
4. Name the team members who will be responsible for planning and implementing this strategy.
5. Describe the strategy.
6. Describe what success will look like at the end of next school year, as this will determine your key activities and milestones.
7. Identify how many students/schools this strategy will reach, including the characteristics of the target population.
8. Identify the critical milestones for successful implementation working backwards from defined outcomes of the strategy.

EXAMPLE **Strategic Action Plan Template**

Enter goal that strategy aligns with	
Goal	Cross-curricular project-based learning
Strategy name	Create interdisciplinary collaboration pods for cross-curricular project-based learning.
Strategy lead	Reginald
Team members	Michael Leger, English Lit 7th Grade teacher Suzanne Thomas, Professional Development Coordinator Reginald Williams, The Writing Workshop Coach Bhumika Sha, Data Analyst
Strategy description	Group teachers and counselors into interdisciplinary collaboration pods to develop rigorous, inquiry-based projects through which students will demonstrate their learning and skill development.
Definition of success	By the end of the Spring semester, 2-4 collaboration pods of 2-7 teachers for the 7th grade will design and implement interdisciplinary projects.
Reach	Apply findings from the two collaboration pods so that the PBL-based Redesign Plan will impact all 7th and 8th graders PBL for next Fall semester.

Key Activities	Person Responsible	Completion Date	Milestones (Success/Outcomes)
Develop PD workshop for PBL.	Reginald & Suzanne	9/20/15	90% or more of 7th grade teachers will have received PD.
Redesign the schedule for the two pods.	Reginald	10/20/15	The schedule for the two pods using cross-curricular PBL will provide additional course time through a form of block scheduling.
Teachers within the pods start to provide feedback to each other on the projects they create during their regularly scheduled grade level professional learning community meetings.	Michael	12/15/15	100% of the 7th grade teachers with the pods have created one cross-curricular project they can use starting the next semester and receive feedback on those projects.
7th grade teachers incorporate cross-curricular PBL within a pod for their courses.	Michael	1/4/16	100% of 7th grade teachers start integrating cross-curricular projects they can use starting the next semester and receive feedback on those projects.

Name, Strategy 2:	Blended Learning in Math and ELA
Strategy description	Professional Development will be provided to support math and ELA teachers using blended learning.
Definition of success	All math and ELA teachers will use blended learning in their classrooms.
Reach	All math and ELA teachers

Key Activities and Milestones	Person Responsible	Completion Date	Success
Classrooms will be equipped with computers & software in math and ELA to support blended learning.	Dara, Tech Director	9/1/15	100% of all math and ELA classrooms will be equipped with the appropriate computers and software for blended learning.
Design a Professional Development Summer Workshop and ongoing PD for the math & ELA teachers to receive over the school year.	Reginald & Suzanne	11/20/15	Workshop is designed by Reginald & Suzanne along with an outside expert in blended learning
Conduct a two-day workshop for all math and ELA teachers in the summer.	Reginald & Suzanne	8/15/15	100% of math and ELA teachers will attend the workshop.
Gather teachers' feedback after the workshop regarding their level of understanding and the additional support they believe they will need.	Bhumika	8/30/15	75% or more of teachers will report in the feedback form that they better understand how to use blended learning effectively in their subject—either math or ELA.
Math and ELA teachers begin using blended learning in their subject areas.	Michael	9/4/15	100% of all math and ELA teachers begin using blended learning in their subject areas.
PD workshops offered two times over the Fall semester for math and ELA teachers.	Reginald & Suzanne	12/31/15	100% of all math and ELA teachers participate in both workshops.
Regular classroom observation will be conducted and formative feedback will be given to each teacher on his or her progress in applying the PD on blended learning.	Michael	10/15/15- 6/15/16	The Blended Learning Coach will observe 100% of the math and ELA classrooms along with at least one or two other math & ELA teachers who are implementing blended learning.

Strategic Action Plan Template

Enter goal that strategy aligns with	
Goal	
Strategy name	
Strategy lead	
Team members	
Strategy description	
Definition of success	
Reach	

Key Activities	Person Responsible	Completion Date	Milestones (Success/Outcomes)

Once you have created a Strategic Action Plan, take time to identify potential barriers and determine possible solutions to the barriers you identified. Then determine the resources you will need to implement your strategy.

ACTIVITY 3.9 Identify Potential Barriers and Solutions

Instructions

1. Review the Example Potential Barriers and Solutions Template below.
2. Brainstorm potential barriers and solutions and record them in the Potential Barriers and Solutions Template that follows.
3. Review the Example Resource Implications Template and complete the Resource Implications Template that follows.

EXAMPLE Potential Barriers and Solutions Template

Strategy Name	Potential Barriers	Possible solutions
PD for Critical Thinking in Writing	Non-English teachers will not want to be responsible for teaching critical thinking through writing.	Show them how much more successful students will be in their class if they can use critical thinking.
Critical Thinking Questioning	Some will not understand this because they lack depth of content in their subject area.	Provide additional professional development that is content specific.
		Provide a coach who can help them and give them feedback.
		Use PLCs to help one another use this kind of questioning.

Potential Barriers and Solutions Template

Strategy Name	Potential Barriers	Possible Solutions
Example: Providing a two-day PD workshop on blended learning to math & ELA teachers	*Cannot get the funds to offer stipends for the teachers to attend.*	*Talk with the principal, the district, and, if necessary, the volunteer coordinator of the school's foundation.*

EXAMPLE Resource Implications Template

PD for Critical Thinking in Writing	
Budget Implications	None if we create the PD ourselves, some if we hire someone to design and offer the PD.
Curriculum Implications	All subject teachers will have to incorporate writing into their curriculum.
Policy Implications	We need to make sure that the district does not have a mandated PD that our school will have to participate in on the early release day that we are using for the PD.
Professional Development Implications	We will need to commit and communicate the focus of the early release days.
Staffing Implications	None—it is an early release day.
Technology Implications	None

Resource Implications Template

Strategy Name:	
Budget Implications	*What are the implications for the budget?*
Curriculum Implications	*What are the implications for the curriculum?*
Policy Implications	*What are the implications for policy changes?*
Professional Development Implications	*What are the implications for professional development?*
Staffing Implications	*What are the implications for staffing?*
Technology Implications	*What are the implications for technology?*

Conclusion

This chapter led you through the process of goal setting, strategy development and action planning toward your vision. This represents the most critical element of your Redesign Process—planning.

Now that you have the foundation for how you will roll out your redesign process, it is time to create the conditions that will ensure all of the elements of your action plan are implemented with fidelity and enthusiasm. Read the next chapter, Setting Up Your Plans for Success, to learn how to create these conditions.

As you can see from the various exercises and planning processes, the entire Redesign Team needs to be engaged in the work and share in the responsibility for leading it. For these reasons, everyone needs to be comfortable with how decisions are made, how best to lead meetings and how best to delegate various responsibilities across a team. Whether you are a member of the Redesign Team, a SMART Goal Leader, a Strategy Leader or a Principal, you may want to review Chapters 7-9 in Part II for information about and strategies for planning and facilitating meetings (Chapter 7); supporting collaborative decision making (Chapter 8); and assigning responsibilities effectively (Chapter 9).

Setting Up Your Plans for Success

Overview

Now that you have a clear vision for your school along with what you want your redesign process to address to achieve your vision—including a set of goals, strategies and an action plan—it's time to create the conditions to ensure that your well-developed Redesign Plan is implemented with fidelity. This includes creating the processes and structures to organize and track your Redesign Plan and deepening collective ownership of the plan across the school community. Establishing the processes and structures detailed in this chapter will help your leaders to circumvent the potential pitfalls that lead to action plan abandonment and will help to ensure that your school maintains the motivation needed to see your plan come to fruition.

Outcomes

Working through this chapter will allow you to:

- Organize your vision, SMART goals, and strategies into a Redesign Plan.
- Understand how to avoid abandoning your Redesign Plan by creating structures for accountability.
- Learn how to monitor progress of your goals.
- Communicate the progress of your Redesign Plan to your community.
- Learn how to organize meetings for success.

Organizing Your Plan

There are now many pieces and moving parts of your Redesign Plan. This section offers you an opportunity to integrate and summarize all the work you have completed to this point as part of the change management process: your vision and general goals, which then became SMART Goals; your set of strategies to achieve your SMART goals, and concomitant action plans to ensure that each strategy is actualized. To keep all of the pieces in one place, this chapter will provide you with an organizing template for the Redesign Team to use.

The organizing template will serve as your guidepost and remind your teams of how each of their efforts are contributing to a larger goal and, ultimately, to realizing the school's vision.

It is important to note that this template is not a static document. Goals, strategies and even team members may change over time as the Redesign Plan is implemented. This is a natural and positive outcome of the redesign process; it means your team is getting smarter about what needs to change and how best to change it. It is extremely important to keep track of the changes so the redesign process is manageable and not confusing and unwieldy. For instance, The Burnett Middle School had a Redesign Team that initiated the redesign work through a pilot phase but expanded the team to "every teacher who wants to be involved."

Be sure to complete a new template, or revise your current template, every time there is a change in a SMART goal or strategy, and record the date you updated the template.

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Redesign Plan Template   Date _____

Vision Statement:				

Redesign Team Members:
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

Goals	SMART Goals	SMART Goal Leaders	Strategies	Milestones
Goal 1				
Goal 2				
Goal 3				

Avoid Abandoning your Redesign Plan

Now that you have all of your information from the previous chapters integrated into a Redesign Plan (aka, the template above), you are poised to take action; however, as any school leader who has engaged in change initiatives knows, there are fundamental challenges to successful implementation even when the best laid plans exist.

The first challenge is the most common— everyone gets busy, the sense of urgency wanes, and the plan falls by the wayside. The second challenge happens when no data is collected to monitor the progress of the plan implementation. The group has no sense of when activities are completed and which goals are met, so people lose interest and the plan is ultimately forgotten. And the final challenge is that there is not a system in place to follow up, problem-solve and provide support for those running into challenges in the redesign process, so as soon as obstacles arise, it feels easier to abandon the strategy than to stick with the plan.

How to Monitor Progress of Your Goals

You can easily eliminate these and similar challenges that lead to abandoning a Redesign Plan by instituting processes and structures to monitor the success of the plan and providing the appropriate support. A plan for tracking and communicating the success of strategies will engender responsibility and accountability across the Redesign Team, the Strategy Teams, and the Goal Leaders, along with the principal and the larger school community. Invoking a system of processes and structures will also help your team maintain a sense of urgency and excitement for the Redesign Plan over time while ensuring that your team can clearly articulate the successes that occur throughout the process.

The system of processes and structures is illustrated in the figure here below:

**Strategy
Teams Meet**
(weekly or bi-weekly)

**Strategy Leaders Meet
with their Goal Leaders**
(semi-monthly or monthly)

**Redesign Team Meets
to Assess Progress**
(every two to three months)
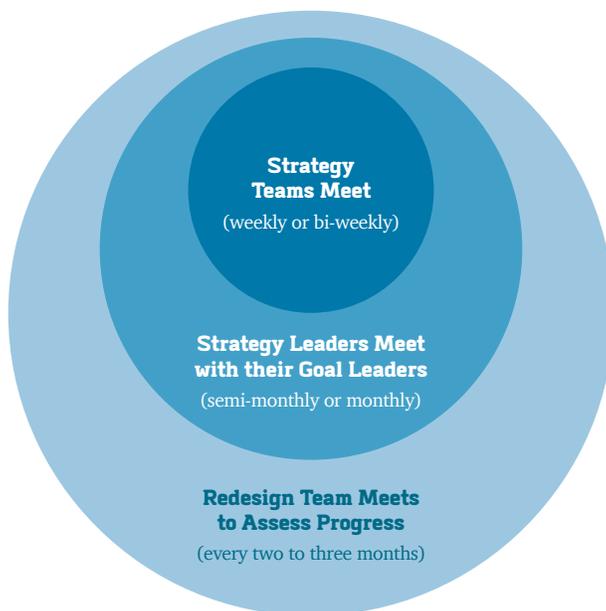
Strategy Teams Meet

After the plan has been created, members of each strategy team come together at least once a week to discuss basic tactical activities related to implementing each task from their Strategic Action Plan. Each member of the team should be expected to provide an update on how his or her efforts are faring. The group works together to problem-solve issues that arise for each team member and finds new ways to support one another in doing the work.

For example, one of the goals developed in the previous chapter was "Cross-curricular project-based learning." The strategy to meet this goal was to "group teachers and counselors into interdisciplinary collaboration pods to develop rigorous, inquiry-based projects through which students will demonstrate their learning and skill development." The strategy meetings would be used to review the progress on developing, scheduling, and establishing these interdisciplinary pods. Similarly, the strategy to provide blended learning in math and ELA courses requires that professional development is provided to support math and ELA teachers using blended learning. The strategy meetings would be used to review progress on developing, scheduling and providing appropriate professional development consistent with the established timeline. The frequency of the meetings is critical to maintaining the momentum of the group and to ensuring that the urgency of each person's task is maintained and that everyone feelings supported in moving forward on their action steps—even when obstacles arise. Thus, participation in these meetings should be a high priority for all participants.

ACTIVITY 4.1 Hold Weekly Strategy Team Meetings

Instructions

1. Hold weekly meetings for the strategy team.
2. Prior to each meeting, develop a team meeting agenda. Use the Sample Strategy Team Meeting Agenda that follows to guide you.
3. Prior to each meeting, print a clean copy of the Strategy Progress Template that follows for each meeting.
4. Use the document and keep track of responses during each meeting.
5. Make copies of the completed Strategy Progress Templates. The completed templates will enable each Strategy Team to track its progress over time, communicate key insights to other groups, and ensure that the process stays manageable for all team members.

Sample Strategy Team Meeting Agenda (45 min)

Time	Activity
3:00pm	Participants review Strategic Action Plan and report on action steps taken.
3:05pm	Participants discuss positive outcomes and milestones accomplished from action steps.
3:15pm	Participants discuss which milestones were not met and which challenges they faced.
3:30pm	Participants work to problem solve issues that arose and revise the Action Plan as necessary.
3:40pm	Review next steps and acknowledge all those who have taken action steps over the week.

As you discuss the items on the meeting agenda, use the template that follows to document and track responses. Note that the template focuses on milestones met and not met as opposed to actions taken. This approach seeks to move beyond tactics used by each member to implement each strategy and instead focuses on the results of strategy implementation. By focusing on the results of the efforts, the team will be able to see and create deeper-level changes more quickly.

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Strategy Progress Template

Weekly Strategy Progress Report

Name of Strategy: _____

Name of Strategy Leader: _____

Strategy Team Members: _____

Date: _____

Milestones Met	Milestones NOT Met	Challenges Inhibiting Solutions	Potential Solutions/ Next Steps

Strategy Team Leaders Meet with their Goal Leaders

Goal Leaders convene all of the Strategy Leaders at least every two to four weeks. Strategy Leaders should use the Strategy Progress Template to share progress made on each strategy and to get advice and support from Goal Leaders on how to address problems they have identified.

Using the previous example in which the strategy was, "Conduct professional development for 9th grade teachers on the Writing Workshop Unit focused on critical thinking for students," the Strategy Meetings might review the progress on developing, scheduling, and delivering this professional learning opportunity. If the milestone of conducting the PD was not met, the group may have identified that it hasn't occurred because one of the team members did not follow through on his or her tasks. Upon

deeper analysis in the meeting, they may have identified that the team member was unsure how to implement his or her action step or felt a lack of confidence about it. In this example, The Goal Leader might offer to have a conversation with the team member and provide ancillary support, such as talking through the action step and/or partnering to implement the task together.

There are myriad other steps that the teams can take when working through strategy implementation challenges. For example, if a team member is regularly unreliable in following through on tasks, the Goal Leader might suggest inviting new members who will be more reliable to the team to do the work. If time is inhibiting action steps for some members of the team, the Goal Leader might approach the principal for compensation to follow through on action steps after the workday. If the problem warrants a higher-level intervention, they could ask that the principal approach the district central office to request a modification of a policy that is impeding the progress of the strategy.

There is a multitude of ways overcome obstacles that surface around the Redesign Plan. The critical element is creating the time and space for people to come together to think creatively and problem solve. Doing so will not only ensure that your plan stays on track but also that each Strategy Leader and team member feels supported and motivated to continue the work.

ACTIVITY 4.2 Hold Meetings Between Strategy Team Leaders and Goal Leaders

Instructions

1. Hold biweekly or monthly meetings for Strategy Leaders to meet with their Goal Leaders.
2. Prior to each meeting, develop a meeting agenda. Use the Sample Strategy Leader Meeting Agenda that follows to guide you.

Sample Strategy Leader Meeting Agenda (45 min)

Time	Activity
3:00pm	Participants review Progress Reports from each Strategy Team Meeting, highlighting milestones met and key challenges to success.
3:15pm	Participants brainstorm together potential solutions to issues and challenges that arose.
3:30pm	Participants discuss and problem-solve additional questions and challenges (e.g. team dynamics, finding resources, etc.).
3:40pm	Review next steps and acknowledge those who have been working hard over the past two weeks.

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Meet as a Redesign Team

All members of the Redesign Team should meet every two to three months to accomplish two goals. First, to review progress towards achieving the goals of the Redesign Plan. Second, to identify milestones of progress to share out with the rest of the school community.

During the meetings, each of the Goal Leaders present to the entire team based on the information gleaned from their regular meetings with their Strategy Leaders. The focus for the Redesign Team is to understand the extent to which strategies are working and whether any goals need to be revised based on the new information coming in. The Redesign Team along with the Goal Leaders may also consider changes to the Strategy Teams' leadership if certain strategies are not carried out within the timeframe allotted (though this should be done thoughtfully, with great sensitivity, and only after several efforts to support each leader have failed).

Subsequent to the conversations, the Goal Leader may update the Strategy Progress Template and, if relevant, revise any Strategic Action Plans or the Redesign Plan.

The second purpose of the meeting is for the Redesign Team to identify the Milestones of Progress that have been made in the past few months and to strategize how to communicate the milestones across the school community. The Redesign Team may want to consider which milestones of achievement would be worthy to share with the school community and all stakeholders so that members of the community can maintain their excitement and support for the change efforts.

The Redesign Team may also consider what kinds of challenges they want to share regarding implementation of the plan to manage expectations. Sharing challenges may feel awkward, but it is a great way to ensure that the work and the progress of the work is transparent, and it brings more focus and attention to overcoming various obstacles. Issuing a call for help to overcome challenges is a great way to add momentum to your Redesign Plan (see sample communications that follow).

ACTIVITY 4.3 Hold Redesign Team Meetings Every 2–3 Months

Instructions

1. Hold meetings of all Redesign Team members every 2-3 months.
2. Prior to each meeting, develop a meeting agenda. Use the Sample Redesign Team Meeting Agenda that follows to guide you.

Sample Redesign Team Meeting Agenda (1 hour 30 min)

Time	Activity
3:00pm	Goal Leaders report on highlights from meetings with Strategy Leaders, highlighting milestones met and key challenges to success.
3:15pm	Participants discuss and problem-solve challenges faced by teams (i.e. team dynamics, finding resources, modifying goals, etc.).
3:45pm	Participants identify particular milestones of progress to communicate out to school community and stakeholders.
3:45pm	Participants create and develop plan for sending out communications about successes.
4:25pm	Review next steps and acknowledge all those who have been working hard.

WARNING:
Do not skip this step, even if it feels like a large time investment.

These communications will be the life-blood of your Redesign Plan, ensuring the Action Plan stays alive, that people feel recognized and supported, and that the momentum for change is sustained.

Share Out Successes to School Community and Stakeholders

After the Redesign Team identifies key milestones of success for some or all of the goals that will be shared with the entire school community and stakeholders, a short communications piece should be developed that will be used to share out the results with people across the school community and with all school stakeholders. This step can be completed by the Redesign Team or a subcommittee of team members to ensure that the communications are shared with the school community and all stakeholder groups.

The communications do not need to be as thorough as those from the stakeholder meetings held to develop a vision, but they should extend to all of the groups invited to attend the visioning process. Communications could be disseminated via email blast, flyers, letters to parents, etc. A subcommittee of the Redesign Team may be established to ensure that these communications are circulated monthly or quarterly.

These communications go far in maintaining a sense of positivity and urgency for the activities related to the school redesign process and make future action steps easier as people want to become a part of a "winning strategy." Additionally, these communications become a source of community accountability. As the school community becomes accustomed to receiving updates, it becomes an expectation that means each Strategy Team, Goal Leader and member of the Redesign Team must do his or her part—lest they let the members of their school community down.

In The Burnett Middle School, the principal purposefully held office hours for the community at large, including both parents and staff. The Redesign Team for Lincoln High School made all of its meetings open to all interested parties, and they updated the faculty on a continual basis as progress and key decisions were made. Their workroom was also open with the products from their brainstorming, research, and planning process displayed on chart paper. Teachers were invited to survey their work and leave notes with questions or concerns as the plan developed.

Sample Communications Regarding Design Progress

School Redesign Update:

Thanks to everyone who has participated in our school's visioning and redesign process. We have exciting news to report. Thanks to the hard work of our faculty and staff, we have been seeing some early successes from our efforts, including:

ON OUR GOAL TO INCREASE CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS OF STUDENTS:

- 95% of our faculty have received PD in supporting critical thinking, and 85% of these teachers agree that the PD has been helpful in getting their kids to think more critically in class!
- 60% of our teachers who are not English teachers have begun integrating critical-thinking assignments into their classrooms.

ON OUR GOAL OF ENHANCING SCHOOL CULTURE:

- 45% of our 8th grade students are now signed up to be mentored by our seniors through our new peer mentoring program.
- Two teams of teachers have attended a workshop on facilitating highly effective Professional Learning Communities and will be sharing the results with our teachers in November.

Special shout outs to all the teachers and staff who have made large contributions to this month's successes, including: *Reginald Williams, Suzanne Gray, Bhumika Shah, Michael Leaderman, Thomas Miller, and Nancy Cross.*

CHALLENGES:

We continue to struggle with time to follow up with teachers to see how integration into the classroom of the critical thinking PD is going. This is because many of our staff are already at capacity with their current workloads.

WAYS YOU CAN HELP:

Mentors and Instructional Coaches

If you are a teacher mentor or instructional coach who is willing to work additional hours to follow up with teachers one-on-one around critical thinking, please contact us at Jason@myschool.com. A limited number of hours with compensation are available.

Parents & Those Who Interact With Students Outside of the Classroom

Ask your child critical-thinking questions such as those that start with "Why do you think…?" and keep asking questions. Try not to let them give you yes or no responses!

Look out for another update coming next month! If you want to get involved in the redesign process, email Jason at Jason@myschool.com.

Ensure Full Participation in Meetings

Sometimes, team members have other competing priorities that come up and decide that it is more important that they attend to the other matter, especially when meetings occur regularly. Or, sometimes when people don't do the work they have committed to in the action plan, they feel embarrassed and find an excuse to not attend the meetings. This can—and often does—derail efforts to move forward on the Action Plan. Other team members may see member absenteeism as a lack of interest and decide it is not as important to show up themselves. It is only a hop, skip, and a jump before no one is showing up to the meetings and the entire plan is abandoned.

To circumvent this issue, your team can engage in the following three strategies:

1. Creating incentives and disincentives for participating regularly
2. Setting expectations that leave room for growth
3. Celebrating successes early and often

Participation Incentives and Disincentives

The team may consider using incentives and disincentives to ensure full participation in meetings. Below are a few examples to get your team started in considering the possibilities.

Example Incentives:

- Those who have succeeded in accomplishing all of their tasks for the month and who come to all of the meetings will receive their photo and a 'thank you/shout-out' on the website and the monthly communications piece that is circulated to all members of the school community and stakeholders.
- Gift certificates to Amazon (or other coveted prizes) for all of the Strategy Teams who successfully implement their strategies.
- Gift certificates to Amazon (or other coveted prizes) for all of the Goal Teams who reach their SMART goals.

Creating such incentives promotes a sense of urgency and fun while honoring the extra work that the participants have taken on to support the Redesign Process (which is typically on top of their already very full plates).

However, sometimes disincentives are also a powerful force for motivating people so long as they are done thoughtfully and with respect for people's capacity and expectations.

Example Disincentives:

- Your team can set up a maximum number of meetings that can be missed or a maximum number of actions that aren't taken. If the maximum number is reached, then those participants may be asked to leave the team, and others may take their place.

- If someone misses a meeting, they automatically get volunteered to do any task that comes up that week (even the unsavory ones).
- When someone is late to or misses a meeting, they make a monetary donation to the group. At the end of the year, all of the money goes toward a celebration of the team's successes.

The ideas for the incentives and disincentives are less important. What is more important is that the group together decides on a set of carrots and/or sticks to ensure that everyone feels accountable to one another and that the momentum for supporting full implementation of the strategy is sustained.

Set High Expectations with Room for Growth

Some leaders want to set the expectation that everyone follows through on their tasks with a 100% success rate. While it is good to have high expectations, this is not always realistic, especially in schools that have literally hundreds of competing priorities. To be more realistic, leaders can set the expectation that everyone tries their best to implement their tasks, but if for some reason someone cannot follow through on what they agreed to do, it is still OK to come to the meetings. After all, if they didn't follow through it was likely because they faced a challenge (i.e., not enough time, didn't have all the resources, didn't have the confidence, forgot about it, etc.). Thus, in the meeting, the team can work together to address the issues that obstructed them. For example, if one team member forgot to follow through on his or her task, another team member could support him or her in remembering next time by sending out a reminder email. Or if someone has realized he or she doesn't have time to complete a task during the work day, the group could approach the principal and ask for compensation to do the work before or after school.

The larger point is that all members of each Strategy Team feel supported in moving forward on their tasks and attend the meetings — even when obstacles prevent them from doing what they said they would do. This empowers each member to try his or her best while knowing they will receive help if something isn't working for them. It is the emotional safety net that keeps everyone feeling invested in the process without letting fear or shame from imperfection overtake the process.

Celebrate Successes Early and Often

Change is hard work. Most of the people engaging in change efforts are doing so above and beyond their regular school duties. If they do not feel that they are being successful, or if their efforts are underappreciated, they are likely to lose steam and eventually drop out. Yet, many initiatives fail to see or acknowledge the progress each person and each team is making. To ensure your redesign process maintains its momentum, it is vital to identify and celebrate the successes of your teams early and often.

One of the ways to do this is through the monthly communications to the school community and stakeholders. As described previously, this communication shares the level of progress in the redesign process occurring on each of the teams. Naming in those communications the successes and those

responsible for the successes is a great way to acknowledge the hard work of your team members and to make sure they know their time is valued.

However, there are other ways to celebrate successes that will support your team in maintaining a sense of urgency, positivity and momentum for the work. These typically include recognition and support for the work that team members are doing. You may consider engaging in any of the following activities to engage participants:

1. Thank you notes to each member of a team that successfully implements a strategy.
2. A party with the community each time a SMART goal is reached.
3. High-fives or fist-bumps every time consensus is reached on a team.
4. A round of "I appreciate you because…" to close all team meetings.
5. "Change Artist of the Week" announcements on the school's loudspeaker for members of the Redesign Team who have worked to accomplish a specific change.
6. High-end coffees for everyone who overcomes a big obstacle to accomplishing a task.
7. [Your idea here.]

Conclusion

Through this chapter, you have learned how to organize and set up your redesign process for success. You know how to ensure that your teams have the support they need to maintain their momentum and thrive regardless of any obstacles they come across. You know how to assess the progress of your change efforts and how to share that progress with your school community in ways that motivate ongoing positive change. Most importantly, you know how to avoid the pitfalls that many change initiatives face so that you can ultimately realize the vision that you and your school community established.

Now your job is to put all of these pieces together — your vision, your goals, your Strategic Action Plans and your structures for implementing and tracking progress. With your team, you are ready to embark on a redesign process that taps into the imagination and talent of your faculty, staff, and community — and ultimately helps your school transform into the learning space that everyone has dreamed of.

Additional Support

If you feel you need additional support to build the skills necessary to implement some of these processes, particularly skills in managing the meetings to review progress on the various goals and strategies that are part of your Redesign Plan, take time to review the resources and exercises in Part II of this Playbook: *Skills to Support the Redesign Process*. The chapters in this section can help you think through:

- Establishing a strong school culture
- Building teams

- Planning for and facilitating meetings
- Making decisions collaboratively
- Assigning responsibilities

In addition, if these processes are new for you or your Redesign Team, consider reaching out to facilitators or consultants. These individuals can help walk your school through the visioning process and the first round of goal development and goal actualization. Once your team has seen how these processes look on the ground it will have the capacity to continue the process for all future redesign work and to ensure that positive ongoing change becomes a regular part of the school day.

Skills to Support the Redesign Process

Establishing a Positive School Culture

Overview

This chapter outlines important connections between your school's culture and your redesign work. It includes tools that you can use to assess your school's culture and suggestions for how to use the information you collect to ensure that your school's culture supports the redesign process.

Outcomes

Working through this chapter will allow you to:

- Understand the importance of analyzing your school's culture to determine if the school is ready for complex change.
- Understand how to assess your school's culture.
- Develop strategies to ensure a highly functioning culture in your school.

The Importance of Culture

An organization's culture is a product of the shared norms, values and beliefs of members of the community—in this context, your school community. When there is a high degree of trust, communication, and collaboration among school stakeholders, schools and students thrive. When relationships among stakeholders are damaged and when stakeholders feel undervalued, are un-empowered, or do not work together, school and student success are significantly more difficult to attain.

> **The thing I have learned at IBM is that culture is everything.**
>
> **– LOUIS V. GERSTNER, JR.**
> **FORMER CEO, IBM**

Culture and Redesign Work

Redesigning your school is a highly involved change management process that requires the support and participation of many stakeholders. Because a strong school culture is essential to the success of your Redesign Plan and its implementation, you need to consider issues related to school culture from the get-go. For example, if you find that your school's culture is not strong enough to support large-scale change, you might want to take a step back from the redesign work to focus on improving your culture and ensuring readiness for change. You may also find that your school's culture is strong in some areas but needs work in others. You can use the redesign process to think about how to strengthen your school's culture via the design and implementation of your Redesign Plan (e.g., including culture-related goals as part of your plan).

Assess Your School's Culture

Assessing your school culture is an important practice to undertake. It can also serve as a springboard to open discussions about your school's readiness to take on redesign, and can provide you with rich information that you can use to inform your Redesign Plan. Given this, the Redesign Team should undertake an assessment of your school's culture at the beginning of the redesign process.

The following activities represent three approaches to assessing your school's culture:

- **ACTIVITY 5.1** School Culture Triage Survey, used to evaluate three aspects of school culture (professional collaboration, affiliative collegiality, and self-determination/efficacy).
- **ACTIVITY 5.2** Eight Dimensions of a Highly Effective Culture School Assessment, used to evaluate eight aspects of school culture that have been found to have a positive effect on school and student achievement.
- **ACTIVITY 5.3** Culture of Collective Responsibility Self-Reflection, used to consider the extent to which teachers are able to function as professionals with a high level of autonomy, share in the leadership of the school, direct and design their own professional development, and have time to work together.

Choose the one that feels the most appropriate for your school, and follow the respective instructions.

ACTIVITY 5.1 **School Culture Triage Survey**

Instructions

1. Distribute the survey on the following page to teachers and administrators *without* the scoring information.
2. Ensure that everyone understands that this is an anonymous survey—no names should be included.
3. Collect and average the survey results as a team, assigning an "overall school rating" for each item.

Survey Scoring

The lowest possible School Culture Triage Survey score is 17 and the highest score is 85. Special consideration should be given to your school's readiness to move forward with a redesign process if your overall school rating falls between 17 and 59. If your score is in this range, it is unlikely that your school culture will support a large-scale change initiative. Focus instead on improving your school's culture, and then revisit the redesign process.

Use the following guidelines to determine your next steps based on your school's survey results.

- **17–40** Critical and immediate attention needed. Conduct a deeper assessment of your school's culture (see Activity 5.2 for an example of a more in-depth assessment) and invest all available resources in establishing a positive culture in your school.
- **41–59** Modifications and improvements are needed. Begin with a more in-depth assessment of your school's culture (see Activity 5.2) to determine which areas are most in need of improvement.
- **60–75** Identify steps for improving your school's culture in specific areas as indicated by your results. Monitor your improvement strategies to make sure that positive changes are being made.
- **76–85** Amazing! Keep up the good work!

School Culture Triage Survey

Scoring: 1 = Never 2 = Rarely 3 = Sometimes 4 = Often 5 = Always or Almost Always

Professional Collaboration

1. Teachers and staff discuss instructional strategies and curriculum issues.   1 2 3 4 5

2. Teachers and staff work together to develop the school schedule.   1 2 3 4 5

3. Teachers and staff are involved in the decision-making process with regard to materials and resources.   1 2 3 4 5

4. The student behavior code is a result of collaboration and consensus among staff.   1 2 3 4 5

5. The planning and organizational time allotted to teachers and staff is used to plan as collective units/teams rather than as separate individuals.   1 2 3 4 5

Affiliative Congeniality

1. Teachers and staff celebrate student and school accomplishments.   1 2 3 4 5

2. Teachers and staff visit, talk, or meet outside of the school to enjoy each others' company.   1 2 3 4 5

3. Our school reflects a true sense of community.   1 2 3 4 5

4. Our school schedule provides teachers and staff with opportunities to communicate with one another.   1 2 3 4 5

5. Our school supports and appreciates the sharing of new ideas by members of our school community.   1 2 3 4 5

6. There is a rich and robust tradition of rituals and celebrations, including holidays, special events and recognition of goal attainment.   1 2 3 4 5

Self–Determination/Efficacy

1. When something is not working in our school, the faculty and staff predict and prevent issues rather than react to and repair them.   1 2 3 4 5

2. School members are interdependent and value each other.   1 2 3 4 5

3. Members of our school community seek alternatives to problems/issues rather than repeating what we have always done.   1 2 3 4 5

4. Members of our school community seek to define the problem/issue rather than blame others.   1 2 3 4 5

5. The school staff is empowered to make instructional decisions rather than waiting for supervisors to tell them what to do.   1 2 3 4 5

6. People who work at our school choose to be here.   1 2 3 4 5

Adapted from: Wagner, C.R. (2006). The School Leader's Tool for Assessing and Improving School Culture. Principal Leadership 7(4), 41-44.

ACTIVITY 5.2 **Eight Dimensions of a Highly Developed Culture School Assessment**

Instructions

1. Distribute the article *"Culture — The Missing Link to Sustained Student Learning"* on the pages that follow to all attendees. You'll need to make copies in advance of the meeting.
2. Give participants 10-15 minutes to read the article.
3. Distribute copies of the Eight Dimensions of a Highly Developed Culture Rubric that also follows. Again, be sure that you have enough copies for all participants.
4. Instruct participants to follow the directions on the first page of the Eight Dimensions rubric.
5. Once individuals have completed their rubrics, ask each person to share his or her ratings and examples that support each rating. This is a time for open sharing; group members should not challenge one another's ratings or examples.
6. Capture each participant's ratings and examples on a flip chart for everyone to see.
7. After all of the ratings have been recorded, the group should calibrate the ratings and establish consensus, or as much agreement as possible, on the ratings for each dimension.
8. Once some level of consensus is reached, the facilitator should record the collective ratings and evidence in support of the ratings.
9. Using the group's collective ratings of each dimension, identify and record areas of strength and challenge for your school.

Note

All teachers and administrative staff should complete this activity, though you have some flexibility in how to group staff to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to share his or her reflections. For example, if your school is large, you may want to conduct the activity in smaller groups, such as grade-level or departmental teams. If your school is small, you should be able to complete this activity as a full group at a faculty meeting or other gathering of the full staff and administrative team. If you choose to conduct the activity in smaller groups, make sure that a member of the Redesign Team participates in each group to ensure fidelity to the process.

Culture: The Missing Link to Sustained Student Learning

A positive school and district culture is an essential underpinning to all improvement efforts. Yet school and district culture can be difficult to assess.

A positive organizational culture is often confused with "school climate," which is actually a barometer of a school's culture. Culture is the cornerstone of all good districts and schools. It is the foundation for all school improvement efforts. Culture is often ignored because it is so difficult to assess, understand, and address.

Researchers looking at business culture have spent countless hours investigating the impact and importance of culture in the workplace. While there are differences between the work educators do and work in the private sector, educational institutions are still organizations with cultures that impact their accomplishments. All groups of people who work together, whether in the private or public sector, develop ways of being and working together that impact their effectiveness. Educators can draw important lessons from the work that researchers have done in this area. Louis V. Gerstner, who is credited with turning IBM around, is quoted as saying, "The thing I have learned at IBM is that culture is everything."

To quote Edgar Schein, professor at MIT Sloan School of Management, "If you have been trying to make changes in how your organization works, you need to find out how the existing culture aids or hinders you." And Terrance Deal, a highly regarded education researcher and co-author of the book, *The Shaping of School Culture*, writes, "Reforms that strive for educational excellence are likely to fail unless they are meaningfully linked to the school's unique culture."

As we look deeper into the culture of a school or district we find there are certain elements in high-functioning education organizations that contribute to continued improvement in student learning. Our premise is that schools and districts will reach a plateau in improving student learning if only responding to test data, reacting to sanctions and threats, or implementing new curriculum or other structural changes. They begin to say, "So now what? What's next?"

We had the unique opportunity to work on changing a school's culture while successively serving as principals at the same school. This school had a very strong teaching staff, supportive parents, and a good reputation in the community. Yet teachers' morale was low, and student performance was well below what could have been predicted given the school demographics and the high quality of staff.

What happened? The teaching staff's self-esteem had suffered as a result of the opening nearby of a new school and the transfer of selected colleagues to this school. There was a perception that "stars" had been selected to open the new campus. The school community concluded that they were second best. This was a culture problem.

The basic assumption driving behavior was incongruent with the mission of the school: to educate children to their highest potential. Having recognized this, both principals, in succession, worked carefully on many fronts to change the culture to one of a group that knew they highly capable. Over

the ensuing decade, this school's Academic Performance Index (API) steadily rose from the high 600s to well into the 800s, and the school was named a California Distinguished School. Many factors contributed to this school's success, but the change in the organizational culture was fundamental to its future achievements.

So what are the key elements fundamental to a high–performing school organization?

We have gathered research and analyses from business and education and have identified Eight Dimensions of a High-Performing Educational Culture. These are the cultural components and norms of the school or district that have a positive and lasting impact on student learning and student lives.

ONE: PROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION More than just working together, true collaboration is an ongoing and focused exchange of ideas about effective practice, actively problem-solving challenges to student learning.

TWO: DRIVE TOWARD INNOVATION Support is given for taking informed risks to encourage creative alternatives, growth and innovation. A true drive toward innovation is not reckless but is focused on a vision of improving student learning through bold innovation.

THREE: HIGH EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENTS, STAFF AND PARENTS Having high expectations is more than having standards and teaching to them. It's the power of students, staff and parents having a "can-do" attitude in the face of challenges and accepting responsibility for the outcomes. It is everyone in the organization taking the responsibility to push beyond the perceived limits of the organization and self.

FOUR: TRUST AND CONFIDENCE These two fundamentals are inextricably linked. Trust and confidence include a firmly held belief that others have good intentions in their interactions and are honest, open, reliable and competent. Chances for self-management are accompanied by the confidence that others believe in us. This trust exists between students and staff and then beyond the school walls, moving from within the organization to the community and flowing back gain.

FIVE: TANGIBLE SUPPORT Tangible support is everyone—students, staff, parents and the community—backing up talk with action, following through, and providing or sharing the tools and resources necessary for students to achieve at their highest levels.

SIX: REACHING OUT TO THE KNOWLEDGE BASE There is recognition of the research-based body of knowledge for education and an aggressive curiosity about that body of knowledge. All staff use a variety of avenues for accessing the knowledge base for their tasks. Knowledge bases are used in the pursuit of continuous improvement.

SEVEN: ACKNOWLEDGMENT Acknowledgment is multi-faceted in high-functioning organizations. It happens through celebrations, rituals, recognition, traditions, and stories. It includes being praised or positively called out for what you do well, linked to pride and respect for what we accomplish as individuals and as a group. There is also the deeper acknowledgment that comes from a feeling of connectedness to the group, of belonging and being part of something greater than oneself.

EIGHT: RELATIONSHIPS Building and sustaining relationships must be done with intention and for mutual benefit. Relationships are built and sustained by sincerely caring about the well-being of others, communicating honestly and openly, believing in people and their good intentions, listening, extending yourself first and looking for opportunities to show your trust.

The unexplored frontier of assessing school culture has the potential to create practical plans that result in sustained school improvement. The eight dimensions draw from *the best* of business and education research to create a platform for analyzing the cultural components in schools.

We can no longer expect schools to improve student learning by relying on quick fixes, especially those that often emanate from Federal or State sanctions. Schools must become organizations whose foundation, vision, mission and operation are based on a highly functioning culture where every staff member, no matter their role, is committed to the achievement of all students regardless of the personal challenges those students face.

Source: Cross, N., Howard, K., & Pearson, C. (2003). Culture: The Missing Link to Learning. Leadership, 42(4), 36-37.

Eight Dimensions of a Highly Developed Culture Rubric

Instructions

For each of the eight dimensions, place an "X" in the box (under Undeveloped, Developing, Developed, or Highly Developed) that best reflects where you think you are individually and a "Y" in the box that best reflects the current state of the school as a whole. Under each dimension, write evidence that supports your ratings for both X and Y.

	Undeveloped	Developing	Developed	Highly Developed
Professional Collaboration	Individuals generally work independently and there is little exchange of information prior to execution.	Individuals at times go along with the group process but tend to be passive. Individuals sometimes work in groups and periodically exchange information; work is occasionally distributed amongst individuals in the group.	Individuals exhibit a stake in the success of others by periodically exchanging ideas about effective practice when prompted or directed to do so. Individuals generally participate and contribute to achieving group goals.	More than individuals working together, collaboration is viewed and practiced as an ongoing and focused exchange of ideas about effective practice. Individuals actively problem-solve challenges to student learning.
Evidence	X			
	Y			
Drive Toward Innovation	Most individuals are highly resistant to and/or attempt to limit the development of new innovations. Individuals are averse to taking informed risks that have the potential to improve student learning.	Individuals can sometimes be persuaded to consider new ways of doing things and may take limited, informed risks if supported by a research base demonstrating success in improving student learning.	Individuals are open to and embrace new ideas, approaches, and ways of doing and thinking that may involve informed risks based on demonstrated success in improving student learning.	Support is given for taking informed risks to encourage creative alternatives, growth and innovation. A true drive toward innovation is not reckless but is focused on a vision of improving student learning through bold innovation.
Evidence	X			
	Y			

	Undeveloped	Developing	Developed	Highly Developed
High Expectations for Students, Staff and Parents	Lack of student progress is attributed to outside forces, such as the socioeconomic base of the community. Parents are not expected to be partners in the education process. Staff feels that they are doing all that can be done given the make up of the community in which they work.	Parents are viewed as consumers of education, or as customers to placate. Interactions with parents only take place when required. Rather than targeting all learning levels, teachers tend to teach to the middle.	Staff members and parents hold fairly high expectations for each student. There tends to be a resistance to stereotyping based on factors such as students' language and socio-economic status. Staff and parents know that the education of children warrants an age-appropriate and effective partnership between home and school.	Having high expectations is more than having standards and teaching to them. It's the power of students, staff, and parents having a "can-do" attitude in the face of challenges and accepting responsibility for the outcomes. Everyone in the organization takes responsibility to push beyond the perceived limits of the organization and self.
Evidence	X Y			
Trust and Confidence	Individuals have little or no confidence in each other and do not feel they can count on others to follow through competently. Individuals feel little confidence in the effectiveness of the organization, and there is little confidence that hard work and personal competence will be recognized.	Individual staff members feel that they can depend upon others to do what is right and to complete what they have agreed to accomplish. The sense that individuals can depend upon each other to keep agreements is extended to parents.	The environment among staff is trusting. Generally, staff members feel that they can have faith in each other to do the right thing. The level of trust is such that both staff and parents are willing to take risks together to collaborate and innovate.	Trust and confidence include a firmly held belief that others have good intentions in their interactions and are honest, open, reliable, and competent. Chances for self-management are accompanied by the confidence that others believe in us. This trust exists between students and staff and beyond the school walls, moving from within the organization to the community and flowing back again.
Evidence	X Y			

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	Undeveloped	Developing	Developed	Highly Developed
Tangible Support	Necessary tools and resources for teaching and learning are largely missing from the learning environment and/or the broader school setting.	Individuals, the school, and the community provide tangible but easily available tools and resources, particularly when significant effort and fiscal commitment aren't needed for their acquisition. Tools and resources may not be directly related to current improvement efforts.	Necessary tools and resources are provided through an organized and focused approach in conjunction with some fiscal commitment. Gaps in important tangible support remain. Budgeting decisions are made based on specific improvement plans.	Tangible support takes the form of everyone—students, staff, parents and the community—backing up talk with action, following through, and providing or sharing the tools and resources necessary for students to achieve at their highest levels.
Evidence	X			
	Y			
Reaching Out to the Knowledge Base	Knowledge regarding practice and content is primarily sourced between site staff members using existing knowledge and site-based materials.	Knowledge regarding practice and content is sourced through a combination of site staff's existing knowledge and additional materials and information accessed through school- or district-initiated staff development. There is a desire to extend knowledge beyond that already held by site staff, but new sources are not often used.	Individuals have a desire to move beyond existing knowledge. New knowledge regarding practice and content accessed through staff development is extended by individual research, including use of digital resources. Individual staff members may find and share new resources with colleagues.	There is recognition of the research-based body of knowledge for education and an aggressive curiosity about that body of knowledge. All staff members use a variety of avenues for accessing the knowledge base for their tasks. Knowledge bases are used in the pursuit of continuous improvement.
Evidence	X			
	Y			

	Undeveloped	Developing	Developed	Highly Developed
Acknowledgment	Acknowledgment and the recognition of both students and staff are not evident or are confined to annual, formal ceremonies, such as graduations and annual staff evaluations.	Staff and students, if asked about celebrations, acknowledgments, and recognition, would primarily point to formal events, such as quarterly award assemblies or statements in formal staff evaluations. Staff and students may believe that the activities seldom apply to them.	Formal and informal avenues exist for acknowledgment and recognition. There are both ongoing and regular avenues for acknowledgment of achievement and progress. Staff and students believe they are directly connected to these activities and that they are potential recipients of recognition.	Acknowledgment takes place through celebrations, rituals, recognitions, traditions, and stories. It includes being praised or positively called out for what you do well, linked to pride and respect for what you accomplish as individuals and as a group. There is also a deeper acknowledgment that comes from a feeling of connectedness to the group, of belonging and being part of something greater than oneself.
Evidence	X			
	Y			
Relationships	Staff members tend to function as independent entities working at the same location. Parents, students and staff express little connection to the school.	Professional relationships of staff are generally limited to loaning/sharing materials or procedural matters, though there may be personal friendships between staff members. Those who disagree with agreements made may silently "go along" but fail to keep the agreements over time. Parents and students may express individual connections to individual staff members.	Substantive collaborative processes are established. Staff can count on others to keep agreements. Staff members believe they are safe to express concerns. Staff demonstrates professional commitment to reach consensus when issues arise. Parents and students express a sense of connectedness to their school.	Building and sustaining relationships is done with intention and for mutual benefit. Relationships are built and sustained by being sincere about the well-being of others, communicating honestly and openly, believing in people and their good intentions, listening, and looking for opportunities to show trust. Relationships result in collaborative processes that respect all perspectives and concerns and result in positive actions that can be supported by all, even when there may not be full agreement. Students feel connected to and part of the school and have a variety of opportunities to build relationships.
Evidence	X			
	Y			

Source: Cross, N., Howard, K., & Pearson, C. (2003). Culture: The Missing Link to Learning. Leadership, 42(4), 36-37.

ACTIVITY 5.3 **Culture of Collective Responsibility Self–Reflection**

Instructions

Complete the following instructions as a Redesign Team or with a larger group of school staff.

1. As a group, review each principle related to teachers functioning as professionals in a collaborative community, located in the far left-hand column of the self-assessment rubric that follows.

2. Also review the differences between the various levels of implementation (Level 1, 2, 3, or 4) for each principle as a group.

3. After understanding the ratings, individually determine the extent to which your school currently has implemented this principle and place an "X" in the appropriate column for "Level Achieved."

4. Each individual should write specific evidence that supports his or her rating in the "Rating Evidence" row of the rubric.

5. Once individuals have completed their rubrics, ask each person to share his or her ratings and supporting evidence. This is a time for open sharing; group members should not challenge one another's ratings or evidence.

6. Capture each participant's ratings and evidence on a flip chart for everyone to see.

7. After all of the ratings have been recorded, the group should calibrate the ratings and establish consensus, or as much agreement as possible, on the ratings for each category.

8. Once some level of consensus is reached, the facilitator should record the collective ratings and evidence in support of the ratings.

9. Using the group's collective ratings of each principle, identify and record areas of strength and challenge for your school.

Teachers Function as Professionals	Level 1 Limiting	Level 2 Initiating	Level 3 Integrating	Level 4 Systematizing
	Not valued or simply exists within school policy	Initiate or establish key activities, practices, or structures	Multifaceted implementation that is practiced somewhat consistently across the school	Comprehensive and highly systematized implementation, with consistent practices across the whole school
Teachers function with a high degree of autonomy	The structures and policies at the school control teachers' work. Teachers are required to follow a school or district curriculum and pacing guide and are discouraged from any deviation.	The structures and policies at the school control and standardize teacher work, inhibiting any autonomy and creativity. Nonetheless, the principal expresses support for teachers who improve student achievement outcomes in their classes. These teachers are able to deviate from the standardized curriculum and pacing guide.	The structures and policies at the school indicate that teachers are trusted. They are able to function somewhat as professionals with a high degree of autonomy. The school does not have a standardized curriculum or pacing guide. Most teachers either use other curricula or design their own.	The structures and policies at the school indicate that teachers are trusted. They are able to function as professionals with a high degree of autonomy in creating learning experiences that will be most effective with students and in making decisions about students.
Level Achieved				
Rating Evidence				

Teachers Function as Professionals	Level 1 Limiting	Level 2 Initiating	Level 3 Integrating	Level 4 Systematizing
	Not valued or simply exists within school policy	Initiate or establish key activities, practices, or structures	Multifaceted implementation that is practiced somewhat consistently across the school	Comprehensive and highly systematized implementation, with consistent practices across the whole school
Teachers share in the leadership of the school	The structure and policies at the school are hierarchical and bureaucratic. The power and control lies predominantly with the principal and other administrators. Teachers do not have any input in school-wide polices.	The structure and policies at the school are hierarchical. A school-wide leadership team exists in which the teacher's role is advisory in nature. There are some instructional support roles but these exist primarily in hierarchical structures, such as department chairs or administrators.	The structure and policies at the school are not hierarchical or bureaucratic. Teachers have substantial influence on school-based decisions, especially regarding issues of teaching and learning, including their own professional development, yet hiring, creating school schedules, developing partnerships with off-campus organizations or businesses, and dealing with funders remains the primarily responsibility of the principal.	The structure and policies at the school are not hierarchical or bureaucratic. Teachers have substantial influence on school-based decisions, especially regarding issues of teaching and learning, including their own professional development. Teachers commonly take on responsibilities such as hiring, creating schedules, developing partnerships with off-campus organizations or businesses, and dealing with funders. Teachers formally and informally assume multiple roles.
Level Achieved				
Rating Evidence				

Teachers Function as Professionals	Level 1 Limiting Not valued or simply exists within school policy	Level 2 Initiating Initiate or establish key activities, practices, or structures	Level 3 Integrating Multifaceted implementation that is practiced somewhat consistently across the school	Level 4 Systematizing Comprehensive and highly systematized implementation, with consistent practices across the whole school
Teachers direct their professional development and learning	The district or principal prioritizes teachers' professional development. It is typically district- or principal-designed and led through an outside professional development provider. Professional development is only offered before the school year and at designated professional development days set by the district.	The principal prioritizes and directs teachers' professional development with some input from teachers. The principal and teachers value collaboration to improve teacher practice, but there are no structures to support school-embedded professional development in teacher teams.	Teachers are able to prioritize and direct their own professional development. There are limited, though dedicated, times for teachers to work collaboratively to improve their practice. Professional development for these limited opportunities takes a variety of forms, including using peers, outside professional development providers or district staff.	Teachers are able to prioritize and direct their own professional development. They have the time, support and opportunities to work collaboratively to improve their practice. Professional development takes a variety of forms, including workshops, study groups, mentoring, peer classroom observations, and numerous other formal and informal learning experiences.
Level Achieved				
Rating Evidence				

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Teachers Function as Professionals	Level 1 Limiting Not valued or simply exists within school policy	Level 2 Initiating Initiate or establish key activities, practices, or structures	Level 3 Integrating Multifaceted implementation that is practiced somewhat consistently across the school	Level 4 Systematizing Comprehensive and highly systematized implementation, with consistent practices across the whole school
Teachers have time to work together	The principal and the teachers alike do not recognize that good teaching requires teamwork. Teachers operate mostly in isolation.	The principal and teachers value collaboration, but there are no structured opportunities for it to take place. Teachers have to take individual initiative to carve out time during or after the school day to work on the learning experiences they are conducting, designing or revising; develop solutions to both classroom and school-wide issues; or strategize how to improve student learning.	The principal and teachers value collaboration and have structured opportunities for all teachers to draw upon their expertise and experience to work on the learning experiences they are conducting, designing or revising; develop solutions to both classroom and school-wide issues; and strategize how to improve student learning. Teachers are active and engaged in the limited structured opportunities and take individual initiative to carve out time during or after the school day to work together.	Teachers have access to multiple opportunities to work together to draw upon their expertise and experience to work on the learning experiences they are conducting, designing or revising; develop solutions to both classroom and school-wide issues; and strategize how to improve student learning. Teachers are active and engaged in at least two or more structured opportunities per week to collaborate.
Level Achieved				
Rating Evidence				

Source: Martinez, M.R., & McGrath, D. (2015). Deeper Learning: The Planning Guide. *Menlo Park, CA: Hewlett Foundation.* www.DLPlanningGuide.com.

Put Your Culture Assessment to Use

Now that you've gathered information about your school's culture, you need to put it to use. As a first step, the Redesign Team should look together at your assessment results and discuss areas of strength and those that need improvement. Given the results, does the Redesign Team think that the school is ready to take on a redesign process? Are there any culture-related issues that should be addressed before the team moves forward with its work? Are there any culture-related issues that the team should address as part of its work (e.g., by establishing one or more culture-related goals in its action plan)?

Because you engaged stakeholders in conducting the culture assessment, you should circle back to school staff to share its results and discuss next steps. Next steps could either be part of or separate from your redesign work, depending on how the Redesign Team chooses to use the information it collected. If there are areas that show a need for improvement, it is strongly recommended that you take steps to address them, either as part of or as a separate initiative of the redesign process.

The rubrics introduced in the previous activities can also be used to create and document strategies for improving culture-related challenges. Consider using these rubrics either to create culture-related goals and strategies for your Redesign Plan or to address issues generally. The following activity is based on the Eight Dimensions rubric but could also be adapted for use in conjunction with the Culture of Collective Responsibility Self-Reflection Activity.

ACTIVITY 5.4 Strategies for Improving School Culture

Instructions

1. Refer to your results from Activity 5.2: Eight Dimensions of Culture School Assessment and identify 1-2 areas in need of improvement.
2. In the Strategies for Improving School Culture Template that follows, indicate the dimension that you want to work to improve, the school's current stage of development on this dimension, and the stage of development that you want to reach. Be sure to set ambitious, but realistic goals.
3. Copy and paste text from the Eight Dimensions rubric into the template for your current and desired states.
4. Identify specific actions that will be undertaken to improve on this dimension. Again, make sure that these are ambitious, but realistic activities. Also identify the person or group responsible for the action and its anticipated date of completion.
5. Share the identified strategies with stakeholders for appropriate buy in.
6. Report out to stakeholders on progress and develop new strategies as needed.

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EXAMPLE **Strategies for Improving School Culture Template**

Dimension: Professional Collaboration

Existing Stage of Development	Desired Stage of Development	Actions to be Taken to Positively Impact the Dimension	Person or Group Responsible for Action	Projected Completion Date
Developing	Developed			
Individuals at times go along with the group process but tend to be passive. Individuals sometimes work in groups and periodically exchange information; work is occasionally distributed amongst individuals in the group.	Individuals exhibit a stake in the success of others by periodically exchanging ideas about effective practice when prompted or directed to do so. Individuals generally participate and contribute to achieving group goals.	1. Create agendas for department meetings focused on an analysis of unit assessments. 2. Develop a process in which teachers have the release time to observe other teachers in their departments. 3. Create a schedule of collaboration time for teachers to meet and exchange ideas about effective teaching practices.	1. Principal working with the department or grade-level representatives 2. Principal and leadership team 3. Principal and leadership team	October 14 October 14 November 6

Strategies for Improving School Culture Template

Dimension:

Existing Stage of Development	Desired Stage of Development	Actions to be Taken to Positively Impact the Dimension	Person or Group Responsible for Action	Projected Completion Date

Re-Assess Your School's Culture

A school's culture is dynamic and influenced by many factors. Given this, it is important to assess your school culture on a periodic basis. Doing so will allow you to gauge whether improvement strategies are working and to make adjustments as needed. It will also allow you to see if and how your redesign work is impacting the culture of your school.

Conclusion

A school's culture can make or break any change effort. In this chapter, you have received tools to assess your school's culture and suggestions for how to use this information to ensure that your school—and your Redesign Plan—is set up for success.

Understanding the Stages of Team Development

Overview

This chapter is intended to help your Redesign Team become as effective as possible so that you can successfully plan for and implement your school's redesign process. It includes information about common stages of team development, tools to help you uncover the stage your group is currently experiencing, and tips for moving your group towards becoming a highly effective team.

Outcomes

Working through this chapter will allow you to:

- Deepen your knowledge of the importance of transforming a group of people into a high-performing team, and the developmental stages that occur in that process.
- Learn about behaviors that can help a team to move through the developmental stages.
- Use tools to assess the developmental stage in which your team is currently operating.

Difference Between a Group and a Team

Chapter 2 outlined steps for forming a team to lead your redesign process. Creating a team, however, is not as simple as assigning a name to a group. As you have likely experienced, there are many differences between being part of a group and a member of a team. Groups of people are often called upon to work together, often with individual members responsible for specific tasks or serving specific roles.

Teams, on the other hand, are characterized by their collaborative, open nature. Teams still rely on the strengths of each of its members, but they tend to tap one another's expertise in a more collaborative spirit, discussing and deciding matters openly, co-creating materials, evaluating their shared success, and distributing leadership across members. The following table includes some of the key differences between groups and teams.

Not All Groups are Teams: How to Tell the Difference

Working Group	Team
Strong, clearly focused leader	Shared leadership roles
Individual accountability	Individual and mutual accountability
The group's purpose is the same as the broader organizational mission	Specific team purpose that the team itself delivers
Individual work products	Collective work products
Runs efficient meetings	Encourages open-ended discussion and active problem-solving meetings
Measures its effectiveness indirectly by its influence on others (e.g. student learning goals)	Measures performance directly by assessing collective work products
Discusses, decides, delegates	Discusses, decides, does real work together

Source: Katzenbach, J.R. & Smith, D.K. (1993). The discipline of teams. Harvard Business Review, *71(2), 111-20.*

Team Development and Redesign Work

The road to becoming a high-functioning team is not always smooth. Over the course of your redesign process, your team will not only need to work together to create a plan but also to keep one another and the school focused on its implementation, weathering inevitable challenges along the way. To be able to do so, you will likely need to invest some time in addressing your team dynamics, talking together about your expectations for goals for individuals and the group, assessing your team's performance, and working together to overcome any challenges within the team. This is not easy work, but is critical to the success of your redesign process.

Tuckman Model of Team Development

Perhaps the most well-known theory of team development was introduced by Bruce Tuckman in 1965. According to Tuckman's model, every team moves through a series of four stages before they are able to perform effectively as a group: Forming, storming, norming and performing.

Forming

As its name suggests, the forming stage is when the team initially comes together to identify its goals and objectives and start laying out its work. It's common for this stage to be driven by one or two leaders, with all members acting fairly independently. This is a learning phase; team members are learning about their work, about one another, and starting to figure out their roles on the team.

Storming

In the storming stage, the team shifts from learning about the work to doing it. During this shift, team members' different—and sometimes competing—ideas, opinions, and preferences surface. This can lead to divisions and conflict within the group. In this stage, team norms are emerging, but not fully formed, which can result in uncertainty and miscommunication among members.

Though it can be contentious, unpleasant and even painful to some conflict-averse members, the storming stage is necessary to the growth of the team. Without appropriate levels of tolerance and patience, this phase can become destructive to the team and lower motivation of its members. Some teams will never develop past this stage.

Norming

In the norming stage, team members come to agreement on goals and approaches, and each person assumes responsibility for the success of the team's work. Coming to these agreements may require some team members to set their opinions or ideas aside. Motivation for the work starts to climb in this stage, as the group begins to make progress in its work.

Performing

It is possible for some teams to reach the performing stage. In this stage, leadership for the team's work is distributed across members, work is done efficiently, and decisions are largely made as a group. By this point, team members are motivated and knowledgeable and team norms are fully functioning.

The table that follows highlights characteristics of each of the four stages in Tuckman's model.

Stages of Team Development

Stage 1: "Forming"	Stage 2: "Storming"	Stage 3: "Norming"	Stage 4: "Performing"
• Individuals are not clear on what they are supposed to do. • The group does not own its mission. • People wonder where the group is headed. • No trust has been established yet. • High levels of learning occur. • No group history exists; people are unfamiliar with group members. • Norms of the team are not established. • People check one another out. • People are not committed to the team.	• Roles and responsibilities are articulated. • Agendas are displayed. • Problems solving doesn't work well. • People want to modify the team's mission. • Trying new ideas is common. • Splinter groups form. • People set boundaries. • Anxiety abounds. • People push for position and power. • Competition is high. • Cliques drive the team. • Little team spirit exists. • Personal attacks may occur. • Level of participation by members is at its highest (for some) or lowest (for others).	• Success occurs. • Team has all the resources for doing the job. • Appreciation and trust build. • Purpose is well defined. • Feedback is high, well-received and objective. • Team confidence is high. • Leader reinforces team behavior. • Members self-reinforce team norms. • Hidden agendas become open. • Team is creative. • More individual motivation occurs. • Team gains commitment from all members on direction and goals.	• Team members feel very motivated. • Individuals defer to team needs. • No surprises occur. • Team operations are very efficient. • Team members have an objective outlook. • Individuals take pleasure in the success of the team—big wins occur and are celebrated. • The group has a "we" versus "I" orientation. • High levels of openness and support are prevalent. • High levels of empathy are apparent. • Members display high levels of trust in one another. • Superior team performance takes hold. • Members feel comfortable risking confrontation.

Non–Sequential Nature of Team Building

It is important to realize that the stages of team development do not move in smooth, sequential stages. The team may move from performing back to storming as it reacts to changing circumstances (e.g., as it establishes a new process, takes on a new piece of work or involves a new member). These shifts do not mean that the team is no longer functioning. Instead, they signal evolution of the team and typically result in stronger team dynamics. Recognizing these shifts and discussing them in an honest, open way is essential to the team's continued development.

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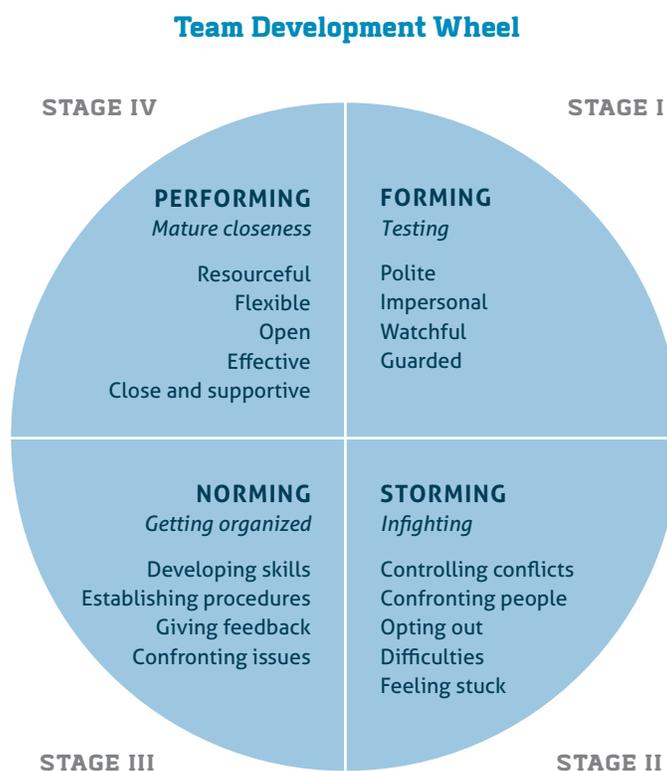## Assess Your Redesign Team's Stage of Development

Because the stages in Tuckman's model are so common, it can be helpful to discuss them at the outset with a new team, and to work together to assess your current stage of development. Use the activity below to begin to develop common language about team development and to assess your current stage.

ACTIVITY 6.1 Which Stage is Your Team In? Questionnaire

Instructions

Complete this activity with your full Redesign Team.

1. Distribute the article *"Transforming your Group into a TEAM"* on the following pages to all Redesign Team members. You'll need to make copies in advance of the meeting.
2. Give participants 5-10 minutes to read the article.
3. As a group, discuss the Team Development Wheel in the article and determine the stage at which the group is functioning.
4. Distribute copies of the What Stage Is Your Team In? survey that also follows. Again, be sure that you have enough copies for all participants.
5. Ask participants to read the instructions, and then complete and score the survey individually.
6. Once everyone has completed and scored their surveys, ask each participant to share his or her result with the group, capturing each member's result on a flipchart.
7. Discuss trends across the group and whether the survey results align with the group's earlier discussion about its stage of formation.
8. Develop next steps for continuing to develop as a team (see next section, Take Actions to Become a High-Performing Team).

Team Development Wheel

STAGE IV	STAGE I
PERFORMING	**FORMING**
Mature closeness	*Testing*
Resourceful	Polite
Flexible	Impersonal
Open	Watchful
Effective	Guarded
Close and supportive	
NORMING	**STORMING**
Getting organized	*Infighting*
Developing skills	Controlling conflicts
Establishing procedures	Confronting people
Giving feedback	Opting out
Confronting issues	Difficulties
	Feeling stuck
STAGE III	STAGE II

Transform your Group into a TEAM

A professional learning community craze is sweeping the country.

School after school is setting aside time for teachers to meet in grade-level groups or subject area teams. PLC time is noted on calendars that parents hang on refrigerator doors. Students start school later or leave school earlier so teachers have time to meet with colleagues.

But, as many schools are learning, professional learning communities don't just happen because a principal sets aside time for teachers to meet and slaps a new label on that meeting. That's especially the case when teachers have been accustomed to working in isolation.

Principals and teacher leaders must be very intentional about helping groups of teachers become communities of learners. And, somewhere between the naming and becoming highly productive teams, many schools get lost. How do you move from being a group of people with a common characteristic—such as teaching the same subject or grade level—to being a team or a community with a common vision and focus?

Ann Delehant, who consults with many school districts on team development issues, said many teachers don't immediately recognize that professional learning communities is the new name for a team.

"A professional learning community is not a new thing. It's not a new fad. A PLC is what we call a team with an intentional focus on learning," she said. Although many educators understand the need to devote time to group or team development, they often neglect to spend time on the basics when working on PLCs because they don't perceive PLCs to be teams that require the same kind of support," she said.

Understanding the four stages of group development is a good place to begin learning how a PLC might evolve from being a group to being a team. In 1965, psychologist Bruce Tuckman reviewed the literature on group functioning and described the four stages of group development as forming, norming, storming, and performing.

In the initial stage—"forming"—group members have high expectations and anxiety about how they fit in. They are testing themselves and each other. At this early stage, they depend on some authority or facilitator to create a structure for them. During this period, group members are likely to be polite but impersonal, watchful, and guarded in their behaviors.

Conflict characterizes the second stage of development—"storming." Group members rebel against each other and against authority. Storming behaviors, he said, are each individual's response to being influenced by the group and by the work that is required to achieve the assigned tasks. Group members may describe themselves as feeling stuck. They may opt out of the process or they may compete with other group members for power and attention.

If groups successfully resolve their storming issues, they arrive at the third stage—"norming." At this point, group members have overcome their feelings of resistance and begin to feel that they are a

cohesive group. Harmony, trust, and support develop. Participants develop a sense of cohesiveness and "intimate, personal opinions are expressed," Tuckman wrote. At this stage, the group is developing skills and agreeing on procedures for doing the work. They are confronting issues represented by their work, not other individuals.

If group members persist, they reach the fourth stage—"performing"—in which they become a team rather than a group of disparate individuals. They work collaboratively and interdependently, share leadership, and perform at high levels. They are flexible and resourceful, close and supportive.

Groups may spend different amounts of time at each stage and they may move through them in a different sequence but each group will experience each stage. You can use the "What stage is your team in?" questionnaire to help your groups determine which stage of development they are currently in.

Adapted from: Richardson, J. (2005). Transform your group into a TEAM. Tools for Schools, 9(2), 1-8.

Which Stage is Your Team In? Questionnaire

Instructions

This questionnaire contains statements about teamwork. Next to each question, indicate how often your team displays each behavior by using the following scoring system:

1 = Almost never   2 = Seldom   3 = Occasionally   4 = Frequently   5 = Almost always

1. _____ We try to have set procedures or protocols to ensure that things are orderly and run smoothly (e.g. minimize interruptions, everyone gets the opportunity to have their say).

2. _____ We are quick to get on with the task at hand and do not spend too much time in the planning stage.

3. _____ Our team feels that we are all in it together and shares responsibilities for the team's success or failure.

4. _____ We have thorough procedures for agreeing on our objectives and planning the way we will perform our tasks.

5. _____ Team members are afraid or do not like to ask others for help.

6. _____ We take our team's goals and objectives literally, and assume a shared understanding.

7. _____ The team leader tries to keep order and contributes to the task at hand.

8. _____ We do not have fixed procedures, we make them up as the task or project progresses.

9. _____ We generate lots of ideas, but we do not use many because we fail to listen to them and reject them without fully understanding them.

10. _____ Team members do not fully trust the others members and closely monitor others who are working on a specific task.

11. _____ The team leader ensures that we follow the procedures, do not argue, do not interrupt, and keep to the point.

12. _____ We enjoy working together; we have a fun and productive time.

13. _____ We have accepted each other as members of the team.

14. _____ The team leader is democratic and collaborative.

15. _____ We are trying to define the goal and what tasks need to be accomplished.

16. _____ Many of the team members have their own ideas about the process and personal agendas are rampant.

17. _____ We fully accept each other's strengths and weakness.

18. _____ We assign specific roles to team members (team leader, facilitator, time keeper, note taker, etc.).

19. _____ We try to achieve harmony by avoiding conflict.

20. _____ The tasks are very different from what we imagined and seem very difficult to accomplish.

21. _____ There are many abstract discussions of the concepts and issues, which make some members impatient with these discussions.

22. _____ We are able to work through group problems.

23. _____ We argue a lot even though we agree on the real issues.

24. _____ The team is often tempted to go above the original scope of the project.

25. _____ We express criticism of others constructively.

26. _____ There is a close attachment to the team.

27. _____ It seems as if little is being accomplished with the project's goals.

28. _____ The goals we have established seem unrealistic.

29. _____ Although we are not fully sure of the project's goals and issues, we are excited and proud to be on the team.

30. _____ We often share personal problems with each other.

31. _____ There is a lot of resisting of the tasks on hand and quality improvement approaches.

32. _____ We get a lot of work done.

Scoring

Next to each survey item number below, transfer the score that you give that item on the questionnaire. For example, if you scored item one with a 3 (Occasionally), then enter a 3 next to item one below. When you have entered all the scores for each question, total each of the four columns.

Item	Score	Item	Score	Item	Score	Item	Score
1.	_____	2.	_____	4.	_____	3.	_____
5.	_____	7.	_____	6.	_____	8.	_____
10.	_____	9.	_____	11.	_____	12.	_____
15.	_____	16.	_____	13.	_____	14.	_____
18.	_____	20.	_____	19.	_____	17.	_____
21.	_____	23.	_____	24.	_____	22.	_____
27.	_____	28.	_____	25.	_____	26.	_____
29.	_____	31.	_____	30.	_____	32.	_____
TOTAL _____		TOTAL _____		TOTAL _____		TOTAL _____	
FORMING STAGE		**STORMING STAGE**		**NORMING STAGE**		**PERFORMING STAGE**	

The highest of the four scores indicates which stage your team normally operates in. If your highest score is 32 or more, it is a strong indicator of the stage your team is in.

The lowest of the three scores is an indicator of the stage your team is least like. If your lowest score is 16 or less, it is a strong indicator that your team does not operate in a manner that is consistent with this stage.

If two of the scores are close to the same, you are probably going through a transition phase, except:

- If you score high in Forming and Storming, you are in the Storming stage.
- If you score high in Norming and Performing, you are in the Performing stage.

If there is only a small difference between three or four scores, then this indicates that you have no clear perception of the way your team operates, the team's performance is highly variable, or that you are in the Storming stage (this stage can be extremely volatile with high and low points).

Source: Richardson, J. (2005). Transform your group into a TEAM. Tools for Schools, 9(2), 1-8.

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Take Actions to Become a High-Performing Team

Progressing through the developmental stages of a team is not a matter of fate or luck. There are many things that teams and individual members can do to spur the team's development. For example, to move from the forming to storming stage, team members can set a mission and goals, determine and follow direction from a leader, and commit to the work of the team. To move from the storming to norming stage, team leaders should demonstrate strong facilitation skills and hold team members accountable for results, while members can work to honor commitments, actively endeavor to create a supportive environment, and ask for and receive constructive criticism. Finally, to move from norming to performing, teams can ramp up their communications, share leadership responsibilities, and keep raising expectations for the group. The following table outlines several steps that your team and its members can take to progress through the developmental stages.

Action Steps for Progressing Through Developmental Stages

Action Steps: "Forming" to "Storming"	Action Steps: "Storming" to "Norming"	Action Steps: "Norming" to "Performing"
• Set a mission. • Set goals. • Establish roles. • Recognize the need to move out of the "forming" stage. • Appoint and accept direction from a leader. • Find ways to build trust. • Define a reward structure. • Take risks. • Bring the group together periodically to work on common tasks. • Assert power. • Decide once and for all to be on the team.	• Team leaders should actively support and reinforce team behavior, facilitate the group to find common agreements and create a positive environment. • Leaders must ask for and expect results. • Recognize and publicize team wins. • Agree on individuals' roles and responsibilities. • Buy into the established objectives and activities. • Listen to one another. • Set and take team time together. • Work actively to set a supportive environment. • Adopt the vision: "We can succeed!" • Request and accept feedback. • Build trust by honoring commitments.	• Maintain traditions. • Praise individual and group accomplishments. • Self-evaluate willingly. • Share leadership roles based on who does what the best. • Share rewards and successes. • Communicate constantly. • Share responsibility. • Delegate freely within the team. • Commit time to the team. • Keep raising the bar, setting new, higher goals. • Be selective of new team members and train new members to maintain the team spirit.

Re-Assess Your Developmental Stage

As your team moves forward with its redesign efforts, you will experience shifts between the stages described in Tuckman's model. As your work progresses, it can be helpful to revisit these stages and talk openly about how the team's dynamic is evolving. To aid these discussions, consider retaking the questionnaire in Activity 6.1 or use the following activity to prompt a discussion about the functioning level of the team.

ACTIVITY 6.2 Reassessing Your Team's Development

Instructions

Complete this activity with your full Redesign Team.

1. Distribute the summary of Tuckman's Group Development Model on the following page. You'll need to make copies in advance of the meeting.
2. Give participants 5 minutes to read the summary.
3. As a group, discuss the four stages of development and in which stage(s) team members believe the team is currently operating. Ask participants to share their rationale and examples to support their responses.
4. Discuss ways to continue to grow into a high-performing team.

NOTE: Remind team members that all teams progress through these stages, and that even the most high-performing teams will revert to earlier stages under certain circumstances. Identifying current team dynamics as fitting within an earlier stage is neither bad nor unusual!

Tuckman Model of Team Development

Perhaps the most well-known theory of team development was introduced by Bruce Tuckman in 1965. According to Tuckman's model, every team moves through a series of four stages before they are able to perform effectively as a group: Forming, storming, norming and performing.

Forming

As its name suggests, the forming stage is when the team initially comes together to identify its goals and objectives and start laying out its work. It's common for this stage to be driven by one or two leaders, with all members acting fairly independently. This is a learning phase; team members are learning about their work, about one another, and starting to figure out their roles on the team.

Storming

In the storming stage, the team shifts from learning about the work to doing it. During this shift, team members' different—and sometimes competing—ideas, opinions, and preferences surface. This can lead to divisions and conflict within the group. In this stage, team norms are emerging, but not fully formed, which can result in uncertainty and miscommunication among members.

Though it can be contentious, unpleasant and even painful to some conflict-averse members, the storming stage is necessary to the growth of the team. Without appropriate levels of tolerance and patience, this phase can become destructive to the team and lower motivation of its members. Some teams will never develop past this stage.

Norming

In the norming stage, team members come to agreement on goals and approaches, and each person assumes responsibility for the success of the team's work. Coming to these agreements may require some team members to set their opinions or ideas aside. Motivation for the work starts to climb in this stage, as the group begins to make progress in its work.

Performing

It is possible for some teams to reach the performing stage. In this stage, leadership for the team's work is distributed across members, work is done efficiently, and decisions are largely made as a group. By this point, team members are motivated and knowledgeable and team norms are fully functioning.

Conclusion

High-performing teams don't just happen. They require time, commitment, and hard work from their members. In this chapter, you have read about the common stages of team development and learned how to determine your team's stage. You've also received some suggestions for how to progress through the various stages to become a high-performing team. This information should help you at all stages of your redesign process, from the moment your Redesign Team is established through your plan's design and implementation. Paying attention your team's dynamic throughout your redesign process will help you take your work further faster.

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Planning and Facilitating Productive Meetings

Overview

This chapter introduces several considerations and skills that can help you plan for and run productive meetings. It also includes several tools and templates that you can use to prepare for and conduct your meetings.

Outcomes

Working through this chapter will allow you to:

- Understand the components of planning for and leading successful meetings.
- Deepen your knowledge of effective meeting facilitation practices.
- Learn strategies for constructing effective meeting agendas.
- Learn strategies for handling disruptive behaviors at meetings.

Conducting Productive Meetings

A good facilitator makes running a meeting look easy. Quite the opposite— effective meeting planning and facilitation are skills that must be fine tuned to ensure that meeting goals are met and that participants feel that their time and energy are well spent. Remember, meetings are expensive; school staff are extremely busy—their time is valuable to them and one of the school's most precious resources. This makes effective meeting planning and facilitation all the more critical.

Meetings and Redesign Work

Your Redesign Team will need to meet frequently to prepare for and implement its work. One of the best ways to ensure that the team gets off on the right foot is to ensure that your meetings are well planned and led. Having clear meeting

objectives, a strong facilitator, and opportunities for team members to use their time productively will immediately help team members start to interact and build their capacity as a team. As your work unfolds, making sure that meetings are efficient and effective will help keep team members engaged and make sure that you are using your time together wisely. You may want to share or trade responsibilities for agenda development, meeting facilitation, and other meeting-related roles among group members so that everyone is able to continue to refine their skills in these areas.

The sections that follow provide many considerations for planning and leading effective meetings. As you read this chapter, you should focus on the components that are most relevant to the particular meeting you plan to hold. Remember to keep in mind the culture of your school as you decide which information will be useful in your particular situation.

Select Your Meeting Participants

One of the first steps in planning a meeting is deciding who should attend. Most often, you will be inviting either the full or some subset of the Redesign Team to your meetings. There will also be times, however, when you will want other school staff or stakeholders to attend so that they can work with you on various aspects of your Redesign Plan. You should develop your agenda with your participant list in mind. Once your agenda is complete, look back at your participant list and decide if anyone else needs to be part of the meeting for you to be able to accomplish your objectives.

Tips for Selecting Meeting Participants

- The decision about who should attend depends on what you want to accomplish in the meeting. Having the right people around the table is essential to accomplishing the task at hand.
- Don't only depend on your own judgment about who should come. Ask key players for their opinions as they have will have a strong sense of who will be able to contribute to the conversation and who has a stake in the topic(s) that will be covered.
- Always send a meeting reminder to participants one or two days before the meeting. We all get busy, and people do forget. If possible, send a copy of the proposed agenda with the meeting reminder.

Source: McNamara, C. (2010). Field Guide to Leadership and Supervision in Business. *Authenticity Consulting, LLC.*

Develop Your Agenda

Your agenda is your roadmap for the meeting. The first thing you need to decide is what you want to accomplish during your time together. These are your meeting objectives. You can then build an agenda with discussion points and activities that will help you meet your goals.

You will likely hold at least two different types of meetings during the redesign process: Check-in meetings and working meetings. In check-in meetings, your agenda will likely focus on updates on specific elements of your redesign planning or implementation. There will be opportunities for discussion and decision-making, but actual work time for the team will likely be limited. Working meetings are typically longer and are specifically designed to allow the team to create a work product together. These are generally more active and require more intensive planning.

A few tips for agenda development include:

- Prioritize the agenda, making sure that key items are placed first and lower priority items are placed towards the end of the agenda.
- Next to each major topic, include the type of output expected (information, discussion, decision, other) and time estimates for addressing each topic.
- Try to vary the meeting activities. Sometimes your team will need to check in on a number of discussion or decision points. Other times, you will be digging into the work directly. Particularly for working meetings, try to vary the types of activities (large group discussions, small group or pair discussions, large or small group work, etc.). This will help keep everyone engaged and active throughout the meeting.
- Consider creating a more detailed "facilitator's agenda" for meeting planners and facilitators, and a more basic agenda for other participants, especially for longer working meetings.
- Work with others to develop the agenda, or at least get one or two team members to give feedback on your agenda before the meeting.
- Keep the agenda posted at all times.

The following activity will provide you with additional planning suggestions and an agenda template.

Any meeting worth holding is worth planning.

—ANONYMOUS

ACTIVITY 7.1 **Well-Constructed Agendas**

Instructions

Complete this activity with your Redesign Team or individually. If you complete the activity independently, request that one of your teammates review and provide you feedback on your draft agenda. If you complete the activity as a group, identify a facilitator to lead the group discussion described in the instructions below and a recorder to capture key ideas from the discussion.

1. Distribute the article *"Successful Meetings: Well-Constructed Agendas Lead to Effective Meetings"* that follows to all attendees. You'll need to make copies in advance of the meeting.
2. Give team members approximately 10 minutes to read the article.
3. Ask each team member to share points that resonated with him or her from the article, and then facilitate a group discussion how the article help in the planning of future Redesign Team meetings.
4. Working together or in groups of 2-3, develop an agenda for your next meeting using the template that follows the article.

Successful Meetings: Well-constructed agendas lead to effective meetings

Groans seem to be the universal first reaction to the announcement of yet another meeting.

According to 3M, most professionals believe that up to 50% of their meetings are unproductive and that up to 25% of meetings are spent discussing irrelevant issues. "They complain that meetings are too long, are scheduled without adequate time to prepare, and end without any clear result," according to the 3M Meeting Network.

Successful meetings—meetings that produce the results you intend—begin with developing agendas that accurately reflect what needs to happen, developing and following timelines, and evaluating each meeting in order to continually improve meeting effectiveness.

Here are some tips from two meeting pros—David Straus, co-author of *How to Make Meetings Work* and chairman of Interaction Associates of San Francisco and Cambridge, Mass., a consulting, training, and facilitation firm, and NSDC Board of Trustees president Kathryn Blumsack, who frequently teaches educators about how to improve meetings—about developing agendas that can lead to successful meetings.

Clarify the reason for each meeting.

Why do you need to meet? Blumsack recommends looking at the 10 reasons for meeting that are outlined in Robbie Champion's *Tools for Change* manual.

1. Dispense information.
2. Make decisions on group issues.
3. Solve problems.

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4. Create new options, visions, directions, and proposals.
5. Plan or strategize on group tasks.
6. Establish new governance procedures.
7. Air concerns.
8. Evaluate progress on work.
9. Invest in the group's growth and learning.
10. Celebrate successes.

The meeting convener creates the agenda.

If the group meets periodically, the recorder can note which business from one meeting requires follow-up at a later meeting. Or participants can formally suggest agenda items.

Distribute the agenda well in advance of the meeting. Note time, date, and place of meeting prominently on the agenda.

Early distribution of the agenda gives all participants time to prepare. Revisit the agenda at the beginning of each meeting. Events may dictate rearranging, dropping, or even adding emergency items.

Label each agenda item so participants understand how much input is expected from them.

Drawing from Champion's list of reasons for meeting, note the reason for including each agenda item. That will help participants understand their roles and responsibilities at the meeting. If participants are expected to reach a decision, they will prepare differently than if they're expected to just receive information.

For every decision item on the agenda, the convener also should note the decision-making method (consensus, majority vote, etc.) that they intend to use. Blumsack said group members can become particularly aggrieved if they believe they're being asked to make a decision when the meeting convener wants only their input into a decision.

Set starting and ending times. Assign a time to each agenda item.

Designating the time for each item can help prevent a five-minute information item from becoming a 30-minute discussion item.

"The times are saying that, if you want to get through all of these items during this meeting, this is our best estimate on how much time it's going to take to do that," Straus said. But Straus cautions that groups shouldn't be inflexible about the times. Instead, groups should make conscious decisions about how to use their meeting time.

Place agenda items strategically.

In most cases, items that will benefit most from the high energy early in a meeting should be placed at the top of the agenda. But, if a hot topic is on the agenda, Blumsack said she often puts smaller, easier items first in order to ensure they get covered. "I want to move the meeting along and not get bogged down in one issue," she said.

Straus urges caution when doing this. If group members know the issue they want to address is being deliberately delayed they can become angry. If the convener knows one item will require a lengthy discussion, Straus recommends devoting an entire meeting to a single topic rather than trying to jam in other items around it.

Identify a recorder for each meeting.

Having a non-participant as recorder is best, Straus said. "It's very hard to record and participate. Anyone who has a clear stake in the outcome of the meeting should be a full participant," Straus said.

If that's not possible, change recorders from item to item, he said.

Evaluate each meeting as a group.

Evaluating the meeting should be done with an eye towards improving the next meeting, not criticizing the just-finished meeting, Blumsack said.

Straus recommends a two-part strategy for evaluation. First, ask participants what they valued about the meeting. Encourage them to use comments such as "I appreciated John when he did ..." or "I really liked the way that...."

Then, ask participants to focus on improvements for future meetings with comments such as "Let's agree not to make phone calls during the meeting." Or "Let's set realistic times for each agenda item."

At the next meeting, point out how suggestions from the previous meeting have been addressed, he said. "In this way, the evaluation becomes a continuous improvement tool," Blumsack said.

Source: Richardson, J. (1999). Successful Meetings: Well-constructed agendas lead to effective meetings. Tools For Schools, 2(1).

Agenda Template

Meeting Date: _____

Meeting Location: _____

Starting Time: _____   Ending Time: _____

Facilitator: _____

Timekeeper: _____

Recorder: _____

Objectives:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Agenda Item and Process or Activity	Outcome	Who	Estimated Time Needed
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

Notes: _____

Next Steps: _____

Implement Meeting Basics

A few basic steps can go a long way to make sure that participants feel welcomed and respected in meetings. Consider implementing the following meeting basics in your Redesign Team meetings and when engaging others in your work:

- Always start on time; this shows respect to those who arrive on time and reminds late comers that the scheduled time matters.
- Welcome attendees and thank them for their time.
- Review the agenda at the beginning of each meeting, giving participants a chance to understand all of the proposed major topics.
- Provide some kind of refreshments for the participants. Refreshments do not need to be elaborate, but the gesture shows that you care.

Establish Meeting Norms

It is important to establish some meeting norms at the start of your meeting. Norms are the agreed-upon rules regarding how team members will interact with one another during the meeting. Norms allow you to lay the groundwork for honest, open, and respectful discussions. They also help to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to participate and be heard.

Allowing the team to jointly identify and document their norms inspires shared ownership. You will find other norms will surface once you make a few suggestions of your own. Some examples of group norms include:

- Participate fully and with positive intent
- Maintain focus
- Ensure equity of voice
- Be tough on the topic not the person
- Be an active listener
- Provide constructive ideas
- No cell phones

After the norms have been written and agreed to, include them in the heading of future agendas, post them and review them before each Redesign Team meeting, and periodically ask the team if they are adhering to the norms or if they want to change any of them.

Use the following activity to develop norms as a team.

ACTIVITY 7.2 Developing Group Norms

Instructions

Complete this activity with the full Redesign Team.

1. Distribute the article *"Norms Put the 'Golden Rule' Into Practice for Groups"* that follows to all attendees. You'll need to make copies in advance of the meeting.
2. Give participants 10-15 minutes to read the article.
3. As a Redesign Team, develop a set of norms for the meetings you will be holding, recording agreed-upon norms on flipcharts for everyone to see.
4. Once you have determined your team norms, select a monitor who will track your team's success at keeping to its norms during future meetings.

Norms Put the 'Golden Rule' Into Practice for Groups

Lillian always arrives late and thinks nothing of chatting with her seatmate while someone else is trying to make a point. Arthur routinely reads a newspaper during each meeting. Barbara can't wait until each meeting ends so she can head to the parking lot to tell someone what she could have said during the meeting. Later, most of them grumble that "these meetings are just a waste of my time. We never get anything accomplished."

Having a set of norms—or ground rules—that a group follows encourages behaviors that will help a group do its work and discourages behaviors that interfere with a group's effectiveness.

Think of norms as "a behavior contract," said Kathryn Blumsack, an educational consultant from Maryland who specializes in team development. Norms are the unwritten rules for how we act and what we do. They are the rules that govern how we interact with each other, how we conduct business, how we make decisions, how we communicate, even how we dress when we get together.

"Norms are part of the culture. They exist whether or not you acknowledge them. They exist whether or not you formalize them," Blumsack said. Pat Roy, director of the Delaware Professional Development Center, said identifying a set of norms is an effective way to democratize a group. "Writing norms help create groups that are able to have honest discussions that enable everyone to participate and be heard," she said.

Who Needs Norms?

Any group that meets regularly or that is trying to "do business" needs to identify its existing norms or develop new norms. In school districts, that would include department groups, grade level teams, interdisciplinary teams, content area teams, school improvement teams, action teams, curriculum committees, leadership teams, advisory committees, and special project groups.

Although a group can pause and set norms at any time, Blumsack and Roy agree that it's ideal to set norms at the beginning of a group's work together.

"If you don't set norms at the beginning, when the behaviors become ineffective you have a harder time pulling behavior back to where it should be," Roy said.

Because every group has unspoken norms for behavior, groups need to work at being explicit about what they expect from each other. "Get those assumptions out on the table," Blumsack said.

Creating Norms

Some groups would prefer to have a set of norms handed to them. But Roy and Blumsack both said groups will feel more ownership of the norms if they identify and write their own. "If they don't do this, 10 minutes after you've handed them a list, they'll begin violating the norms because they aren't their norms," Roy said. There are two distinct ways to write norms. The first is by observing and writing down the norms that already are in use. That's how the NSDC Board of Trustees established the set of norms it has used for about eight years. The NSDC board meets for two days twice a year, each time with a lengthy agenda of material that must be addressed. The norms grew out of a board discussion about how it operated and how it wanted to operate. Pat Roy, who was then a board member, was tapped to observe the board's implicit norms during one meeting and draft a set of norms. "Essentially, I wrote down what I saw in operation," Roy said.

Roy's first draft was edited and refined by staff and other board members. That set of initial norms has been largely unchanged over the years.

The second way to develop norms is to have group members suggest ideal behaviors for their group, eventually refining those suggested behaviors into a set of norms.

Blumsack cautions that norms must fit the group. Not every group would feel comfortable with the same set of rules, which is why each group must create its own rules, she said. For example, she recently worked with a group that was "very chatty, very extroverted." Initially, the group wanted a norm that banned side conversations. Two days into their work, the group was frustrated because Blumsack, as the facilitator, kept trying to enforce the norm against side conversations. Finally, the group agreed to modify the norm to fit its unique personality. Their new norm was: "If you need to make a comment, do so but return quickly to the main conversation."

Publicizing the Norms

Simply writing norms does not guarantee that the group will remember and respect them. Groups need to continually remind themselves about the norms they've identified. At a minimum, the norms should be posted in the group's meeting room, Roy said. "Post them and celebrate them," she said.

Blumsack recommends creating tented name cards for each group member. On the side facing out, write the group member's name; on the side facing the member, print the group's norms.

The NSDC board receives a list of its norms along with materials for each of its twice-a-year board meetings. Then, at the beginning of each meeting, the president reintroduces the norms to reacquaint

board members with them. Since new board members join each year, this also helps to acculturate newcomers with the board's expectations.

Sometimes, the board uses activities to aid in that. During one meeting, for example, each board member was asked to illustrate one norm and the others tried to identify the norms based on those illustrations. Those illustrations were then taped to the meeting room's walls as visual reminders to be vigilant about the norms. Another time, board members were asked to write down as many board norms as they could recall from memory.

Enforcing the Norms

Perhaps the toughest part of living with norms is having the norms enforced. "The reality is that every group will violate every norm at one time or another. So you have to talk about violations and how you'll deal with them," Roy said.

Blumsack agrees. "If you don't call attention to the fact that a norm has been violated, in effect you're creating a second set of norms. For example, a common norm is expecting everyone to be on time. If you don't point out when someone violates that norm, then, in effect, you're saying that it's really not important to be on time," Blumsack said. After a group identifies its norms, they suggest asking how they would like to be notified that they have violated a norm.

Roy recommends finding light, humorous ways to point out violations. One group she worked with kept a basket of foam rubber balls in the middle of the table. Violation of a norm meant being pelted with foam rubber balls. Other groups have used small colored cards, flags, or hankies that could be waved when a violation was noted.

Having all group members take responsibility for enforcing the norm is key, Blumsack said. Enforcing the norms should not be just the job of the group's leader.

Evaluating the Norms

Finally, each group needs to periodically evaluate its adherence to the norms. A group that meets once or twice a year might evaluate each time they meet; a group that meets weekly might evaluate once a month or so. Blumsack recommends giving each group member an opportunity to speak about what he or she has observed or take each statement and ask group members "how well did we do on this norm?"

Each member should be encouraged to identify the group's areas of strength as well as its areas of weakness, but not to single out violators.

"The more 'up front' you are about how the group is doing, the easier it will be to communicate about the other issues you' re dealing with," Blumsack said.

Source: Richardson, J. (1999). Norms put the 'Golden Rule' into practice for groups. Tools For Schools*, August/September issue.*

Assign Meeting Roles

In addition to implementing meeting basics, reviewing the agenda, and setting norms, an early step in any meeting is to establish the roles that people will play. To encourage active involvement, you may want to talk with your teammates prior to the meeting about which role(s) they are interested in taking on. Key roles for productive meetings are detailed below. Keep in mind that it can be very challenging to play multiple roles in a meeting, i.e., facilitator and recorder, recorder and participant, etc. Consider rotating roles among your team members so that everyone has a chance to play multiple roles throughout the redesign process.

Facilitator

The facilitator's primary role is to ensure that everyone actively participates in the meeting and that the team reaches its desired outcomes. Meeting preparation and facilitation are very tightly linked.

Facilitation requires neutrality and constant self-reflection. When focusing on both process and outcomes, the facilitator continuously asks him or herself:

- How am I moving the team towards resolution through effective paraphrasing, questions, and feedback?
- Who is not contributing? How can I make sure that their thoughts or ideas are drawn out?
- Is someone dominating the group?
- Is participation constructive or destructive?
- Is the team keeping on track?
- Are we observing the time limits? If not, should we renegotiate the agenda?
- Are participants building upon one another's ideas?
- What is the level of energy and enthusiasm? Am I modeling the level of energy and participation that I would like to see from meeting participants?
- Are people tuning out? Why?
- Is the team showing signs of closure?

Recorder

The recorder's responsibility is to capture the team's key discussion points, decisions, agreements, and actions to be taken. This differs from the traditional secretary's role in that the recorder is not expected to take detailed minutes. Generally, the recorder maintains the meeting record on a flipchart, allowing the group's thinking and agreements to be visible to everyone during the meeting. Charting the meeting in this way helps the team remain focused on the task at hand and remember key points after the meeting has adjourned.

Timekeeper

The timekeeper makes the team aware of when the time for each agenda item has expired. It is often helpful for the timekeeper to give a "time check" several minutes (5-10) before an agenda item is set to be finished, notifying the group and/or facilitator that it is nearly time to move to a next item.

One of the most difficult facilitation tasks is time management—time often seems to run out before agenda items are completed. The responsibility of the timekeeper is very important in helping to make sure the group stays on track. However, the facilitator has ultimate responsibility for keeping the agenda moving and coming to closure on items that need action and future attention. It is therefore up to the facilitator to negotiate more time on the agenda as needed or to move to the next item in accordance with the planned agenda. The facilitator may solicit feedback from the team to help with that decision.

Participants

Participants have a shared responsibility to help the team achieve the meeting outcomes. Effective participants are good listeners, share constructive ideas, and are appropriately silent and vocal over the course of the meeting. The facilitator should take the opportunity to clearly establish expectations for the meeting participants at the outset of the meeting.

Evaluate the Meeting Process

Another important role of a meeting facilitator is to check in periodically with the group to get input on how they feel the meeting is progressing. By requesting participants' feedback during the meeting, you have the opportunity to adjust the meeting process in real time. There is no tried and true method for how or how often to check in with the group. It can be done with a simple prompt like: "Let's do a quick check in on how the meeting is going" or by asking "Does anyone have any comments about how the meeting is going?"

Evaluate the Overall Meeting

Evaluating the meeting creates an opportunity for participants to give valuable and honest feedback. Some meeting evaluation tips include:

- Leave time at the end of the meeting to evaluate the meeting; don't skip this important step.
- Provide time to ask participants to popcorn out statements that reflect pluses "+" and deltas "−" regarding whether the meeting met their expectations and what might be changed to make it even more efficient or productive.
- The facilitator can also ask participants to write down suggestions for changing or improving future meetings. Sometimes people will be more willing to provide feedback if it is anonymous.

Close the Meeting

The way in which you end a meeting is as important as how you open it. Some considerations for effectively closing meetings include:

- Always end meetings on time and on a positive note. This can be as simple as thanking everyone for their work, reviewing all that was covered, or reflecting on the work the Redesign team has been doing to bring its vision to reality.
- At the end of a meeting, review next steps, assignments, and relevant timelines. If appropriate, also set the time for the next team meeting.
- Clarify that the meeting notes—including key discussion points, decisions, agreements, and actions to be taken—will be typed and distributed to all participants in a specified time.

Make Your Facilitation Count

Facilitation is a skill worth honing. As a facilitator, it is important to recognize your own behaviors that help or hinder team productivity. The table below includes specific behaviors that fall into each of these categories. Seasoned facilitators can use this chart to conduct a quick self-assessment of their facilitation techniques: Which behaviors do you feel like you've mastered? Are there any that you want to work on in your next facilitation role? New facilitators can identify a few behaviors that they want to practice and improve on in each meeting. You can also use this as a self-reflection tool after your facilitation experience: What do you think you did well in the meeting? What are some areas you might want to work on next time?

Facilitation Practices That Make a Difference

Behaviors that Help	Behaviors that Hinder
• Listens actively	• Oblivious to group needs
• Maintains eye contact	• No follow up on concerns
• Helps identify needs	• Poor listening
• Gets buy-in	• Strays into content, acting as a participant instead of facilitator
• Surfaces concerns	• Loses track of key ideas
• Defines problems	• Fails to manage or lead processes
• Brings everyone into the discussion	• Takes poor notes
• Use good body language and intonation	• Ignores conflicts or disruptive behaviors
• Paraphrases effectively	• Provides no alternatives for structuring the discussion
• Accepts and uses feedback	• Lacks a repertoire of process skills
• Checks time and pace	• Gets defensive or takes comments personally
• Provides useful feedback	• Does not use paraphrasing or clarifying skills
• Monitors and adjusts the process	• Lets a member dominate
• Asks relevant, probing questions	• Fails to take pulse of the group
• Summarizes effectively	• Tries to be the center of attention— is not transparent
• Keeps an open attitude	• Lets the group get sidetracked or off task
• Offers suggestions	• Takes too much "air time"
• Is optimistic and positive	• Uses sarcasm or a negative tone
• Manages conflict well	• Does not know when to stop
• Takes a problem solving approach	• Uses put downs
• Stays focused on process	
• "Ping-pongs" ideas around group	
• Makes certain that accurate notes are taken and reviewed	
• Maintains a calm and pleasant demeanor	

Adapted from: Bens¸ I. (2000). Facilitation with Ease: A Step-by-Step Guidebook. *San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.*

Deal with Disruptive Behavior

Disruptive behaviors are usually unintentional, but they must be dealt with if a meeting is going to be effective. Disruptive behaviors come in many different forms. You have likely, at one time or another, experienced these types of behaviors and have more than likely been frustrated when the facilitator hasn't acted to stop them.

The role of a facilitator is not easy, but everyone appreciates a meeting that is facilitated well and in which tasks are accomplished. Dealing with the disruptive behaviors as a facilitator will increase the

team's sense of commitment and ownership. Following are some facilitation tips for effectively dealing with disruptive behaviors. When possible, be sure to use the lowest form of intervention first.

Reinforce acceptable behavior

This can be as simple as starting the meeting on time. Starting on time rewards the people who are on time and sends a message to those who arrive late that tardiness is not acceptable; it is also a subtle way to communicate an expectation and reinforce a norm.

Protect participants' self-esteem

It is important to ensure that participants focus on the issues and challenges, not the personalities in the room. You must follow that rule, too. As a facilitator dealing with disruptive behaviors, remind yourself that you want to stop the behavior, not the person.

Stay calm

Loosing your cool will not achieve a positive result, but instead creates a feeling of confrontation and often leads to someone feeling that they have been disrespected. Check your emotions at the door.

Avoid overreacting

Always use the lowest level of intervention dealing with the behavior first. Use strategies like non-verbal cues (e.g., standing closer to a person exhibiting disruptive behaviors) and redirecting statements.

Use your sense of humor

When possible, keep the mood light. There will plenty of time for serious discussion when making critical decisions.

Use nonverbal behavior

When dealing with disruptive behavior, body language and facial expressions have an incredible impact. A quick glance towards the person exhibiting the behavior can work wonders.

Use the team norms

Remember to refer to the norms that you established as a team. When disruptive behaviors surface, a good way to extinguish them is to review how and whether participants are adhering to the norms.

Let the group help

During the meeting, remind the team of the importance of monitoring one another's participation. This increases participants' sense of responsibility for accomplishing the meeting objectives.

Refer to the agenda

Post the agenda for everyone to see. Walking to the agenda and checking in with the group on the progress that is being made often refocuses participants.

Make a direct statement

Making a direct statement to an individual or the group as a whole about an observed disruptive behavior (e.g., participants holding side conversations) can be very effective. Make the statement in a matter of fact manner and without emotion.

Speak privately with the individual

When you speak privately with a disruptive individual, remember to focus on the behavior(s), not the person. Indicate how their behavior is preventing the team from moving forward in the agenda and accomplishing their objectives.

Examples of Disruptive Behaviors

Examples of disruptive behaviors that a facilitator might encounter are listed below.

WHISPERING A person who whispers often does not pay much attention to the meeting, instead making quiet comments to the people around him or her. S/he also tends to make limited contributions to the group discussion.

NEGATIVISM Someone displaying negativity may make comments about how useless the meeting is and that there will be no action taken on the solutions created by the group.

DROPPING OUT People who "drop out" fully disengage themselves from the meeting. Instead, they often do other work such as correct papers, doodle or read the newspaper.

QUIET NEGATION A person who displays quiet negation in a meeting communicates primarily through body language. This may include shaking their head, rolling their eyes, or slouching or fidgeting in response to a facilitator or participant's input or opinions.

DOMINATING Dominating behaviors include cutting others off before they are able to finish their thoughts or filibustering to prevent the group from moving forward in the agenda.

INTERPRETING Someone who interprets often speaks for others. S/he might make broad statements starting with generalizations, such as: A lot of parents, the entire community, etc.

ACTIVITY 7.3 **How Would You Handle the Behavior?**

Instructions

Complete this activity as a Redesign Team or individually.

1. Imagine that you are facilitating a meeting and encounter many types of disruptive behaviors.
2. Complete the template below, noting the type of intervention that you would use as a first step to deal with each type of disruptive behavior.
3. Discuss your responses with the team, looking for common themes and seeking to understand different approaches.

Behavior	Intervention
Whisperer	
Negativism	
Drop Out	
Quiet Negation	
Dominating	
Interpreting	

Conclusion

Your Redesign Team will need to use its time together effectively so that it can successfully plan and implement a redesign process. This chapter has provided you with many considerations for effectively planning and facilitating meetings, as well as several tools to help make your meetings productive.

Collaborative Decision-Making

Overview

Good decision makers approach the task with some foundational strategies. This chapter walks you through several activities for analyzing decision-making trends in your school and making agreements regarding practices you would like to adopt as a Redesign Team. It also includes several techniques for making group decisions, as well as information about how to build consensus within your team.

Outcomes

Working through this chapter will allow you to:

- Deepen your knowledge of the importance of mindful decision-making.
- Understand the context of decision-making in your school.
- Develop agreements about how your Redesign Team will make decisions.
- Learn about a variety of decision-making strategies and processes.

The Act of Decision-Making

Decision-making is essentially the act of choosing a solution to an identified problem, opportunity or issue. Making good decisions requires decision-makers to have a deep understanding of the issue at hand, identify and weigh pros and cons of various options, and balance the need to involve others in identifying a solution with taking action in a timely manner. Good decision-making also involves following up to evaluate the results of a decision after it has been made and put into action.

Decision-Making and Redesign Work

Your Redesign Team will make countless decisions as it moves through the redesign process. The real question you face is not "Will we make the wrong decisions?" but "How can we make the best decisions possible?"

Time spent carefully analyzing decisions will ultimately save your team time and allow you to function at a higher level. Being mindful about how and by whom decisions are made will help you set and

Decision–Making Words of Wisdom

- Checking the results of a decision against its expectations shows executives what their strengths are, where they need to improve, and where they lack knowledge or information.
- Making good decisions is a crucial skill at every level.
- Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things.
- Most discussions of decision-making assume that only senior executives make decisions or that only senior executives' decisions matter. This is a dangerous mistake.

Source: Drucker, P.F. (2008). The Essential Drucker: The Best of Sixty Years of Peter Drucker's Essential Writings on Management. *NYC: HarperBusiness.*

reinforce group norms, clarify roles and responsibilities of team members, and involve the right stakeholders at the right time in the process.

Keep these questions in mind as you approach decisions as a team:

- **WHO SHOULD MAKE THE DECISION?** How will you decide who needs to make or be involved in making decisions related to your redesign work?
- **WHAT LEVEL OF AUTHORITY DOES THE DECISION-MAKER(S) HAVE?** How can you establish a clear understanding of each individual's or stakeholder group's level of authority in the decision-making process?
- **HOW WILL THE DECISIONS BE COMMUNICATED?** How will you communicate your decisions so that they are clearly understood by everyone they affect?

Analyze and Adopt Decision–Making Practices

The experiences you have had making or as a result of decisions will be a tremendous resource as you set up your Redesign Team's decision-making processes. You will also want to consider your school's culture as you think about which decision-making processes you will adopt.

The following activities represent three approaches to analyzing decision-making trends:

- **ACTIVITY 8.1** Five Elements of Decision-Making, which walks through five steps to effective decision-making and asks Redesign Team members to identify decision-making trends in your school.
- **ACTIVITY 8.2** Digging Deeper into Decision-Making, which provides a set of reflection questions that can be used to identify decision-making trends in your school.
- **ACTIVITY 8.3** Unpacking Five Levels of Decision-Making, which describes various levels at

which decisions are made and encourages discussion about which levels are typically used at your school, and should be used in decision-making related to your redesign work.

Choose the one that feels the most appropriate for your context, and follow the respective instructions. Regardless of which activity you choose, be sure to discuss implications for your team's decision-making practices.

ACTIVITY 8.1 Five Elements of Decision–Making

Instructions

1. Distribute copies of the Five Elements of Decision-Making and Five Elements of Decision-Making Checklist to each team member. Be sure to make enough copies in advance of the meeting.
2. Give everyone 2-3 minutes to review the Five Elements of Decision-Making.
3. As a team, list some decisions that have been made at your school site and who made them in the checklist.
4. Refer to the Five Elements of Decision-Making and determine which elements were used in making each decision.
5. Use the prompts that follow the checklist to look for patterns in the way decisions are made at your school site.
6. Discuss implications for your Redesign Team's decision-making practices.

Five Elements of Decision–Making

Step	Key Ideas
Know Your Context	Know your culture and decision-making context, as well as the past history of decision-making at your site. Set clear norms and conditions for decision-making.
Problem Definition	Establish a clear problem definition. Ensure that the group is able to articulate the problem. Make certain that the current state versus the desired state is clear.
Solution Criteria	Develop Solution Criteria as a group. Ensure that criteria are specific and concrete. Consider which criteria are "needs," "wants," and "nice-to-dos." Once developed, criteria become a yardstick for decision analysis.
Solution Generation	Determine decision-making processes in advance. Make decision-making processes explicit to the group. Determine who will facilitate decision-making. Ensure that the facilitator is not also tasked with recording—someone else should take on that role. Use skillful facilitation practices. Utilize group norms during conflict. Make ideas visible (e.g., through flipcharts, overheads, etc.).
Solution Choice	Evaluate solutions against Solution Criteria. Prioritize solutions. Use clear closure/summarization techniques to ensure group understanding.

Adapted from: Harvey, T.R., Bearley, W.L., & Corkrum, S.M. (1997). The Practical Decision Maker. *Lanham, MD: R&L Education.*

Five Elements of Decision-Making Checklist

Decision	Who made the decision?	Check which of the five elements were used to make the decision
		Know your Context Problem Definition Solution Criteria Solution Generation Solution Choice
		Know your Context Problem Definition Solution Criteria Solution Generation Solution Choice
		Know your Context Problem Definition Solution Criteria Solution Generation Solution Choice

Now, look for patterns in your team's decision-making process. For example:

- Are decisions consistently made by a specific person or group of people?
- Which of the Five Elements are consistently used?
- Which are used with less frequency or not at all?
- Which of these trends do you want to emulate in your Redesign Team's practices?
- Are there any less-common practices that you want to be sure to adopt?

ACTIVITY 8.2 **Digging Deeper into Decision-Making**

Instructions

1. Brainstorm a list of decisions that have been made at your school.
2. Select one decision from the list and work through the reflection questions that follow as a group.
3. Continue this process with several other decisions from your list.
4. Identify and discuss any emerging trends regarding how the decisions at your school are made, including successful and less-successful practices.
5. Discuss implications for your Redesign Team's decision-making practices.

Reflection Questions

1. What was the issue?
2. What was the decision?
3. Who made the decision?
4. What process was used in making the decision?
5. How was the decision communicated to the staff?
6. What steps were involved in implementing the decision?
7. What were the repercussions, if any, from the decision that was made?
8. What worked well in the decision-making process?
9. Reflecting back, is there anything you would have done differently in identifying or implementing the decision?
10. How can that be applied to future decision-making opportunities?

ACTIVITY 8.3 **Unpacking Five Levels of Decision-Making**

Instructions

1. Distribute the Five Levels of Decision-Making, found below. Be sure to make copies in advance of the meeting.
2. Give everyone 2-3 minutes to review the overview.
3. As a team, discuss which of the levels is most often used at your school and which ones you feel will be the most effective in your redesign planning and implementation.

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Five Levels of Decision-Making

Level One: Leader Makes the Decision Alone

This is used especially in emergency situations in which immediate action is critical. There is not enough time for input, quick action and immediate compliance is what counts.

Level Two: Leader Makes the Decision with Input from Key Stakeholders

A leader seeks input, usually to cover blind spots and enhance his or her depth of understanding around the issue to be decided. Stakeholders hold important information. Not consulting them would threaten the effectiveness of the decision.

Level Three: Consensus Building—Leader Gets Final Say

A leader solicits input from a variety of sources, builds consensus around a specific direction, and allows the group to make a recommendation, which the leader must finally approve.

Level Four: Delegate the Decision to Someone Else

The authority and responsibility for decision-making are clearly shifted away from the leader. Both the leader and the designated decision maker must live with the consequences of the decision—good or bad. The leader reviews the decision, but does not change it and uses the decision making experience as an opportunity for development.

Level Five: True Consensus

A leader fully delegates the decision to a group (usually a committee). If the leader is part of the committee then s/he is one vote among many. The group processes all decisions, compromising positions until everyone is in agreement.

Source: Taylor, J.T. Five Levels of Decision Making. Team Building USA.
Accessed at: http://www.teambuildingusa.com/articles/making-effective-decisions/.

Build Consensus

Working as a team will require that you build consensus around decisions. Building consensus can be challenging, but doing so evokes ownership of the work and leads to better implementation of decisions once they are made. The following activity will help you identify some best practices in consensus building based on your own experiences.

ACTIVITY 8.4 Consensus Building

Instructions

1. Distribute the article *"Consensus: Arrive at Agreement Agreeably"* on the following pages to all team members. You'll need to make copies in advance of the meeting.
2. Give everyone 10-15 minutes to read the article.
3. Ask individual team members to write down examples of the experiences they have had coming to consensus on a decision.
4. As a team, discuss practices that contributed to or detracted from the ability to come to consensus in the examples each member identified, referring to the article as needed.
5. Keep a list of helpful and unhelpful practices for future team reference.

Consensus: Arrive at Agreement—Agreeably

Each time a school or district forms a team, study group, or working group to explore an issue, there is usually an underlying assumption that these groups will operate on consensus. Team members will not take formal votes but reach an understanding about what should be done and how it should be done.

But how does a group of individuals—especially a group that is not accustomed to working together—arrive at consensus?

Washington educator and consultant Connie Hoffman believes groups must first agree on a definition of consensus. Although many would define consensus as unanimity on a topic, Hoffman disagrees. With her colleague Judy Ness, Hoffman defines consensus this way:

Consensus is a decision that has been reached when most members of the team agree on a clear option and the few who oppose it think they have had an opportunity to influence that choice. All team members agree to support the decision.

To make this definition work, a team decides in advance what "most" means for the group. In a large group, that's typically 75% to 80%; in a small working group of five or six teachers, it might mean that four or five must agree.

But getting to consensus does not just happen. Groups need to take deliberate steps in order to get to a point where they will have consensus. Here is a process that Hoffman and Ness created and have used with dozens of groups and teams in their work in Washington.

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Preparation Phase

Groups should spend some time in the beginning establishing how they will work together and exactly what work they will do.

1. STATE THE SITUATION.

One of a principal's key responsibilities with any team is ensuring that the group understands what it is expected to do. Hoffman suggests that the principal verbally explain her expectations to the group and then work with the group to put those expectations into a written charge statement. Questions that the group answers in this document include:

- What is the team's goal?
- Is this group making a decision, advising on a decision that will be made by another group, or collecting information that will be used by another decision-making body?
- What product(s) is the group expected to develop?
- How often will the group meet?
- Who will set the agenda?
- What are the operating norms for the group?
- What budgetary constraints must the team work within?
- What is the deadline for this work?
- Hoffman said discussing the group's understanding and expectation for its work helps reduce the possibility of confusion. "We assume everybody's working on the same problem but often we're not," Hoffman said.

Write the situation on a flip chart so everyone can view it. Each team member reviews the situation and signs the chart paper to indicate that he or she believes the statement is accurate. If some participants are confused, the team continues to discuss the situation until everyone is clear.

2. IDENTIFY THE GROUP'S OPERATING NORMS.

Understanding the behavioral expectations for the group is as important as understanding the group's goal. Although spelling out a group's norms may feel awkward in a small group, knowing those expectations can eliminate confusion and misunderstandings down the road.

For example, team members might want to say out loud that each meeting will begin at the agreed-upon time, that participants will not grade homework during the team meeting, but that participants are allowed to bring snacks and drinks to the meeting table.

Possibilities Phase

This is a time to get as many options on the table as possible. During the possibilities phase, the facilitator is responsible for ensuring that the group does not begin evaluating individual options, which could damage the process.

3. BRAINSTORM OPTIONS.

After the team has done its reading, interviews, and examined the necessary data, it is ready to identify various options for action. Participants are encouraged to let the ideas flow without trying to sell or explain their ideas.

Several styles of brainstorming could be used: free-for-all where everyone verbally shares ideas; a round-robin in which each participant takes a turn and shares one idea; journaling in which participants write down all of their ideas and then share with the entire group.

Whichever form of brainstorming is chosen, all ideas eventually are announced publicly and written on a flip chart.

4. DIALOGUE ABOUT THE OPTIONS.

Once a list of options is created, the group spends time ensuring that each participant understands each option. Participants ask clarifying questions and share examples to ensure that everyone understands each option fully. The group avoids evaluating the options.

Probing Phase

Where the first two phases open up and broaden the decision-making process, the final two phases narrow possibilities by analyzing and eliminating options.

5. ELIMINATE UNACCEPTABLE OPTIONS.

Quickly eliminate options for which team members have little enthusiasm or support. Invite participants to vote by placing sticky dots next to their favorite options. (Calculate one-third the total number of options on the list. If there are 15 options on the list, give each participant five sticky dots.)

6. DEVELOP CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING REMAINING OPTIONS.

As the team moves into decision-making, participants must be clear about the standards that will be used to evaluate the acceptability of each option. "A group will reach consensus more easily when all participants apply the same criteria," Hoffman said.

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7. DISCUSS THE OPTIONS.

The facilitator guides the team through a discussion of each remaining option. Any team member who does not support an option should state his or her concern. The team responds by trying to problem solve those concerns. The discussion continues until most of the team supports one option.

Declaring Phase

When an option has achieved the support of most of the group and everyone has been able to influence the choices, the group moves into the declaring phase. In this phase, the group takes the final steps to ensure that everyone has been heard, knows they have been heard, and agrees to move together into implementation.

8. DETERMINE LEVELS OF SUPPORT.

Before participants can determine their level of commitment to an option, they must understand what the group expects for each level of commitment.

Create a chart with categories labeled "minimal support," "moderate support," "proactive support," and "maximum support." Solicit and chart ideas from the group about what each level of support looks like.

9. DECLARE THE GROUP'S DECISION.

The facilitator reminds the group that it has agreed on a definition of consensus and that the group has reached a consensus on the option it will pursue.

Adapted from: Richardson, J. (2004). Consensus: Arrive at Agreement—Agreeably. Tools for Schools, *7(5), 1-2.*

Use Tested Decision–Making and Facilitation Techniques

Luckily, the field of management is ripe with techniques to use when making decisions and building consensus as a team. Following are descriptions of several decision-making processes that you can try out in your redesign work.

Brainstorming and the Group Technique

The following table outlines characteristics and process steps for two types of brainstorming and the group technique.

Process	Characteristics	Process Steps
Brainstorming	Encourages divergent, creative thinking Accepts all voices and ideas Facilitator remains neutral	Clarify purpose of brainstorming Open discussion Designate a recorder Set a time limit Facilitator remains neutral Review ideas at end for clarity
Carousel Brainstorming	Uses small group interaction Moves group to charts posted on walls with pre-identified categories	Review rules for brainstorming Form groups Each group selects a recorder Groups rotate through the charts, reviewing, editing and adding to others' work Review all charts Clarify comments as needed
Group Technique	Creates a fair, systematic way to elicit ideas, information or solutions Use for problem solving goals, budgets, schedules, etc.	Each person shares an idea or information systematically (round-robin, alphabetical or numerical order) Ideas are recorded Group members seek clarification as ideas are offered Speaker clarifies Ideas are grouped Group uses a prioritization strategy to narrow, select, and/or decide

Snow Card Technique

The Snow Card Technique is a non-threatening approach to generating ideas, problem causes and possible solutions. It allows for visual identification of commonalities and differences among group's ideas.

PROCESS STEPS

- Facilitator presents the decision situation
- Individuals generate a brainstormed list of ideas, and then select 3—5 of their best items and record them on cards—one idea per card (use 3" x 5"or 5" x 8" index cards or large Post-its™)
- Participants post cards on chart or butcher paper, grouping like ideas/similar themes
- Participants generate a tentative label for each group of ideas
- Group agrees to each category's name
- Group arranges categories in an order that makes sense to the group
- Group discusses categories
- Recorder captures Snow Card ideas in writing for group information and follow up

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT)

A Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis generates group ideas as an organization approaches planning and implementation.

PROCESS STEPS

- Post four charts around room, one labeled Strengths, another labeled Weaknesses, and so on
- Divide team into four groups
- Each group generates ideas that address the category (i.e., What are the strengths of a solution? Weaknesses? Possible threats or opportunities?)
- Each group rotates completely through all four charts, reviewing, editing and adding to others' work
- The full team discusses implications of the idea from each SWOT perspective

Prioritization Techniques

Several techniques can be used to prioritize solutions or ideas.

Process	Steps
Single Dot Voting	List goals, proposals or ideas Discuss or clarify as needed Combine if necessary Give each participant one dot Participants vote with dots The group discusses the vote and clarify decisions and next steps
Divide by Three	List goals, proposals or ideas Divide the number of goals, proposals or ideas on the list by three Give each participant that number of dots Participants distribute dots in any way desired (e.g., placing one dot on three separate options or placing all three dots on one option to denote a high priority) Options receiving the highest number of dots represent the group's priority list
Spend a Buck	List goals, proposals or ideas Give each participant the equivalent of one dollar Participants may "spend" their vote in any denomination they choose, from 1 dollar to 10 cents Facilitator calculates the totals as a means to assess priorities
Cast Five Votes	List goals, proposals or ideas Giver participants five votes each Participants cast their votes by placing dots or check marks on the list Remove the items with no votes or with the least number of votes Discuss the pros and cons of each item to further narrow the list

Adapted from: Kaner, S. (2007). Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-Making. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Facilitation Tips for Moving Consensus Forward

The facilitator is often responsible for guiding a group to consensus. When consensus stalls, the facilitator can ask questions to move the group forward, such as:

- Under what conditions would you support this solution?
- What part(s) of the solution do you oppose?
- What modification(s) to the solution would make you more comfortable with it?
- What would be necessary for you to agree with this solution?
- Would you be willing to live with the solution for a limited time?
- What would be a reasonable amount of time to wait before assessing the decision?
- Under what conditions would you be willing to put aside your differences and move forward with the solution as it stands?

Conclusion

As a Redesign Team, you will need to make many decisions—big and small. Establishing decision-making processes and using best practice techniques will help you make the best possible decision in every situation and garner buy-in for implementing the decisions once they are made. This chapter has given you several tools for assessing and establishing decision-making practices, as well as some resources that you can use to facilitate effective decision-making.

Assigning Responsibility

Overview

This chapter provides tools that you can use to help keep your individual and team work on track. Information within can serve as a springboard for discussions about how to hold the team and its members accountable for helping to develop your Redesign Plan and carry it out.

Outcomes

Working through this chapter will allow you to:

- Deepen your knowledge of task assignment.
- Gain knowledge around using tools to plan and organize assigned tasks.
- Assess your delegation strengths and areas for growth.

Assigning Responsibility

Assigning responsibility for—or delegating—tasks is one of the core concepts of management leadership. If tasks aren't assigned with clarity, individuals can become confused or frustrated and work can easily get stalled. Delegation is a key component of workflow—the way in which an organization (in this case, a school) manages and coordinates staff and activities to accomplish key tasks and goals.

Assigning Responsibility and Redesign Work

Your Redesign Team has joint responsibility for leading and carrying out your work. Your team will determine many task assignments together, though individuals may also have some responsibilities for helping to manage the process and coordinate team member's contributions. It will be critical for each team member to understand his and her responsibilities and for the team to work together to hold itself and its members accountable for assigned tasks. Distributing tasks across your group can help you leverage your team's strengths, build better relationships, and free up time.

Delegation Basics

Following are some basic steps that you can take to make sure that tasks are successfully assigned and completed.

1. Identify the tasks that need to be completed.
2. Decide who is best suited to take on the responsibility for specific tasks. This doesn't necessarily mean that one person will need to conduct the task, but it does mean that one specific person will be held responsible for its completion.
3. Make sure that the person understands the task(s). Be sure you clearly outline their—and others'—related responsibilities. If needed, also explain how the task fits into the larger project. Finally, clarify objectives and decide on deadlines.
4. Encourage the person who is responsible for the work to act independently and to make his or her own decisions. Coach him or her as needed to differentiate between what they should act alone on and where the team or other members should be involved.
5. Allow the person to perform the task. Offer help as needed, but don't be too intrusive. If they approach the task in a different way than others on the team would, be flexible and open-minded and wait for the end result.
6. Periodically check in on how things are progressing. Provide feedback as needed. This can be done in regular team meetings.
7. Recognize the person or people who do the job and give them credit for it. Public recognition for a job well done will encourage future efforts and promote a positive culture.

Plan and Organize Assignments

Keeping track of important tasks is essential to completing any project efficiently and on time. Consider using the template in the following activity or something similar to track progress against your many tasks. Using this as a team can also encourage mutual responsibility.

ACTIVITY 9.1 Assigning Tasks

Instructions

1. Identify a set of tasks that need to be completed by your Redesign Team.
2. As a team, discuss when the tasks need to be completed and who will be responsible for each.
3. Complete the Task Assignment Template on the following page as a means of documenting agreements.
4. Refer to the completed template as appropriate to check in on agreements and progress on tasks.

Task Assignment Template

Date	Date Due	Task	Person Responsible	Mid-Point Check-in Date	Date Completed	Notes

Assess Your Own Delegation Skills

It can sometimes be challenging for leaders to heed responsibility for tasks to others. No one person will be able to manage or do the work of your Redesign Team. All members will need to rely on the talents and capabilities of their teammates. The activity that follows allows you complete a quick check on your delegation skills.

ACTIVITY 9.2   **Delegation Self–Assessment**

Instructions

1. Distribute the Delegation Self-Assessment and scoring and interpretation instructions on the following pages. Be sure to make copies in advance of the meeting.
2. Ask team members to read the instructions at the top of the self-assessment, and then complete the tool.
3. Individual team members share their scores and reflections from the self-assessment.
4. After each member has had an opportunity to share, discuss as a group how you see delegation improving your team time and work, as well as how it might help individual team members build skills and stay motivated.

Delegation Self–Assessment

Instructions

For each of the following questions, answer Yes or No regarding the way in which you usually handle delegation. Don't think too long on a question; go with your first reaction. When you are done, follow the debrief instructions at the end of the scoring page.

	Yes	No
I spend more time than I should doing work my team members could do.		
I often find myself working while other team members are idle.		
I believe I should be able to personally answer any questions about any project in my area.		
My "inbox" is usually full.		
My team members usually take initiative to solve problems without my direction.		
My operation functions smoothly when I am absent.		
I spend more time working on details than I do on planning.		

My team members feel they have sufficient authority over the tasks they have agreed to perform and for which they are responsible.		
I have bypassed my team members by making decisions that were part of their responsibilities.		
If I were incapacitated for an extended period of time, there is someone who could take my place.		
There is usually a big pile of work requiring my action when I return from an absence.		
I have assigned a task to a team member primarily because it was distasteful to me.		
I know the interests and goals of every person working on the team.		
I make it a habit to follow up on the task I delegate.		
I delegate complete projects as opposed to individual tasks whenever possible.		
My team members are trained to maximum potential.		
I find it difficult to ask others to do things.		
I trust my team members to do their best in my absence.		
I feel my team members are performing below their capacities.		
I nearly always give credit for a job well done.		
My team members tend to refer more work to me than I delegate to them.		
I support my team members when their authority is questioned.		
I personally do those assignments only I can or should do.		
Work piles up at some point in my operation.		
All team members know what is expected of them in order of priority.		
Total		

Delegation Self-Assessment Scoring

Add one point for each "Yes" for numbers 5, 6, 8, 10, 13, 14,15, 16, 20, 22, 23, and 25.
Add one point for each "No" for numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 9, 11, 12, 17, 19, 21, and 24.

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Score Interpretation

SCORES 20–25 You follow excellent delegation practices that help the efficiency and morale of your work group. These skills maximize your effectiveness as a leader and help develop the full potential of your team.

SCORES 15–19 Your score is adequate, but does not signal excellent leadership. To become a master delegator, review the questions you did not receive points for and take appropriate steps so that you will not repeat these delegation mistakes.

SCORES 14 AND BELOW Delegation weakness is reducing your effectiveness as a leader. The overall performance of your work group is lower than it should be because either you are unable or unwilling to relinquish power to others. In addition, delegation mistakes may cause dissatisfaction among your team members.

Adapted from: West Virginia Division of Personnel Organization and Human Resource Development. Let Go and Stay Close: Skills and Techniques for Successful Delegation *training materials.*

Conclusion

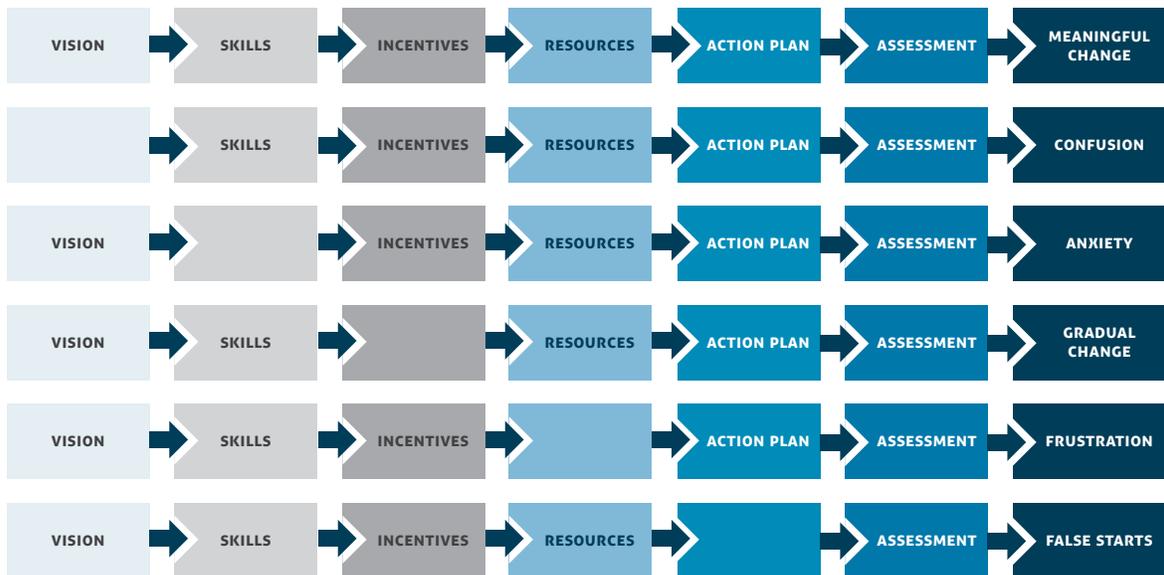Delegating or assigning tasks will be critical for your team to work effectively. Individuals need to be accountable for completing the tasks to which they are assigned and also to trust in others to accomplish those tasks for which they are responsible. This chapter has provided you with a simple way to document and track task assignments and for assessing your ability to delegate — and relinquish responsibility for—work.

Conclusion

At its core, a school redesign is a complex change management process. It is challenging work that requires a shared vision, a clear understanding of goals and action steps, and the collective time and effort of the whole school community. The importance of implementing a thoughtful, well-organized redesign plan tailored to your school's needs—and attending fully to each step in the process—cannot be overstated. The good news is that your redesign vision is not only worth the effort, it's also possible to achieve. This Playbook distills much of what is known about effective change management so that you may apply it to your redesign efforts. It also includes the resources to build the skills needed to manage the process effectively. With this Playbook to guide you through the steps and strategies needed for a successful school redesign, you should be well on your way to not only creating your vision for your school, but also achieving it.

Managing Complex Change

VISION	SKILLS	INCENTIVES	RESOURCES	ACTION PLAN	ASSESSMENT	MEANINGFUL CHANGE
	SKILLS	INCENTIVES	RESOURCES	ACTION PLAN	ASSESSMENT	CONFUSION
VISION		INCENTIVES	RESOURCES	ACTION PLAN	ASSESSMENT	ANXIETY
VISION	SKILLS		RESOURCES	ACTION PLAN	ASSESSMENT	GRADUAL CHANGE
VISION	SKILLS	INCENTIVES		ACTION PLAN	ASSESSMENT	FRUSTRATION
VISION	SKILLS	INCENTIVES	RESOURCES		ASSESSMENT	FALSE STARTS

Adapted from: Delores Ambrose, 1987

The Burnett Middle School
A Case Study in Redesign

School Overview

Burnett Middle School serves 850 sixth- through eighth-grade students in the often-underserved community of downtown San Jose, California. Eighty-three percent of the student population identifies as Hispanic, 89 percent of students are eligible for Free or Reduced-Priced Lunch (an indicator of low socioeconomic status), and 51 percent are English language learners. If research-based statistics were applied to the school population based on demographics alone, one could expect that nearly 30 percent of students would not graduate from high school, only 12 percent would graduate from college, and even fewer would be able to successfully break the cycle of violence and poverty prevalent in the community.

Burnett leaders and staff, however, are committed to defying these odds. Over a five-year period, starting in 2009, the school's state Academic Performance Index increased from 654 to 740 (on scale of 200 to 1000)—substantially outperforming growth rates of the state, district and similar schools. Gains were made across every student subgroup and are attributed to the school focusing on building trust, creating a culture of high expectations for every student, and increasing rigor in classrooms.

A Redesign Opportunity

Even with these gains, Burnett's four administrators and 38 teachers knew that more could and needed to be done to ensure the academic success of each of their students. To achieve dramatic results, dramatic changes were needed. Specifically, the school needed to rethink the traditional academic model of schooling and focus on individualizing learning for every student to prepare them with the knowledge and skills they need to be successful in the 21st century.

The staff's conversations about making a paradigm shift at the school dovetailed with a San Jose Unified School District opportunity for schools to "rethink how to inspire and engage students." In Spring 2012, the central office invited schools to apply for funding to redesign their learning environments and approach. At this time, Burnett had two pilot math blended learning classrooms and was engaged in rich conversation around "fair" student grading. The site leadership team, consisting of the principal, assistant principal of instruction, and six teachers, decided to move forward with a

redesign proposal that built on these existing efforts. They developed a letter of intent without much detail or research—knowing that more needed to be done to prepare for the full proposal.

March 11, 2012

To Whom It May Concern:

This is a letter of intent for The Burnett Middle School to submit a redesign proposal by May 3, 2012.

BLENDED LEARNING CONCEPT

The concept of blended learning is that teacher-led instruction works hand-in-hand with online work that addresses students' individual needs. Instruction will be self-paced using a combination of Virtual Nerd and Khan academy math programs on the class set of iPads. Teachers will look at the data and arrange students into small table groups to give Explicit Direct Instruction lessons around the troublesome standard.

Students who complete the online assignments for a unit will be allowed to proceed to the next unit. Unit assessments will be given as each student shows readiness to be assessed.

SCHEDULE

Teachers will teach all 5 periods during the day, as well as a 7th period intervention class. The 7th period is a fluid class that students are required to attend if they fall behind in the units or need more instruction. Once students catch up or understand the matter, they are exited out of 7th period.

BURNETT MODEL

The math department will be the first subject area to fully implement the blended learning concept, with plans to expand to science and language arts.

The leadership team worked together to flesh out an approach for addressing individual student needs by reading case studies, looking at data, and conducting external school visits. Based on what they learned, staff believed that the combination of high-quality blended learning and authentic criterion-based grading would empower students in ways that they have never been before. The team's theory of action was centered on providing students with a more personalized learning experience to increase their academic performance. Blended learning provided a structural platform for pacing content based on students' individual needs resulting in improved content mastery, as demonstrated by performance on Common Core State Standards-aligned assessments. Criterion-based grading provided students with regular, systematic feedback that they could use to identify and focus on growth areas in their academic and personal development. The team believed that providing students with multi-dimensional feedback on their application of content would lead to increased student ownership of and investment in their learning. Together, these strategies would increase

student engagement, further develop students' 21st century knowledge and skills, accelerate learning for all students, and help close remaining achievement gaps.

SJUSD selected Burnett's proposal as one of its redesign projects in Spring 2012. Then it was time for the hard redesign work to begin.

The Redesigning Process

Building Buy-In

The team that wrote the redesign proposal consisted of an English language arts teacher, two math teachers, the music teacher, physical education teacher, principal and assistant principal. These members—selected by the principal—included formal leaders (school administrators), informal leaders (teachers whose opinions and advice were widely and highly regarded within the school), and expert teachers. After the proposal was approved, one of the first immediate tasks was to gain school-wide buy-in for the group's core ideas. To do so, group members delivered presentations to school staff and spoke individually to their colleagues to garner needed buy-in.

All-Staff Invitation to Join the Redesign Team

With the Redesign, we want to look at having the school with a new sense of purpose and a totally new "feel." We need a team to help design and implement details of our plan. Some things are already completed, some in process and others yet to be discussed. Interested and will be committed? Come join us!

Once Burnett staff had more information from leaders and peers about the redesign, a larger team was formed to oversee and make critical decisions about the redesign process. A letter was sent to all staff, inviting them to join the Redesign Team. While some would-be team members replied directly to that invitation, the principal specifically enlisted a handful of innovative, committed, hard-working and highly trusted school staff to join. The principal also intentionally recruited the school's loudest "excuse maker" to be part of the group to both secure their buy in and make sure that any potential barriers were raised and vetted during the redesign process. In the end, the Redesign Team was comprised of three ELA teachers (one from each grade level), two math teachers, one physical education teacher, one science teacher, one art teacher, the music teacher/International Baccalaureate Coordinator, and site administration. Even though a core team was guiding the work, school leaders believed that it was important for all school staff to be kept appraised of progress and able to join discussions if they wanted to do so. To this end, all meetings were open to all school staff; meeting agendas and locations were publicized to encourage participation.

Getting Started

The Redesign Team's first meeting focused on setting expectations and exploring the interplay between the school and district's work on redesign. SJUSD had dedicated staff to overseeing its redesign work

across the district, including providing project management resources, coaching, and other supports to schools. It was important for the group to be explicit about how the various players—within and outside the school—would work together on the redesign.

Team Expectations

REDESIGN TEAM

1. Hold on-going meetings: Every other Monday after the staff meeting in the Media Center.
2. During staff trainings, show examples of what the Redesign Team is doing or thinking about.

SJUSD LEADERSHIP AND DECISION COMMITTEE

1. Participate in the Burnett Redesign Team meetings (at least the project manager).
2. Provide on-going feedback on the Redesign Team's submitted documentation to push our thinking and help move decisions along.

The team also decided early on that parents and students needed to be included in the process. To that end, redesign updates, discussions, and brainstorming became regular agenda items on the school's monthly Cafe con la Directora, School English Language Advisory Committee and the bimonthly PTSA meetings. Students' input was regularly solicited during student council meetings and in the school's leadership class to ensure that they had a voice in the work.

Redesign Team members also worked together in their initial meeting to establish norms for the group. They believed that it was important to set some ground rules for their work that they could refer back to, especially during challenging moments.

Redesign Team Norms

1. Don't stop at marginal - Ideas and decisions need to stay outside the box and be transformational
2. Be thoughtful and strategic - Focused, open-minded, patient, quick, and relentless
3. Respect colleagues - Be on time; hold one conversation at a time; monitor air time; respect one another; and have fun
4. Make thoughtful decisions - Ask questions; understand that conflict is normal; speak your truth; after-action review

Establishing a Supportive Culture for Change

The team recognized that even the best plans would fail if the school didn't have a supportive culture to buoy the redesign process. They formed a subcommittee, including administrators and teachers, which focused its time early in the process on establishing a strong, unified school culture and a set of school-wide norms that would guide and support redesign implementation.

At Burnett, students and adults are BEAR STRONG. THIS MEANS WE...

- Work hard to get better
- Never give up
- Tackle challenges with a smile
- Adapt to changing conditions
- Make informed decisions together

San Jose Unified crafted a vision for all schools to adopt: All students are inspired and prepared to succeed in a global society. Subcommittee members, however, thought that it was important to define what it meant for Burnett "Bears"—members of the school community—to work together to achieve that vision. Committee members discussed attributes that they wanted to see reflected in their school community, taking input from as many sources as possible to get all ideas on the table. They then organized attributes into categories and created a final set of school norms.

BEAR STRONG encompassed the guiding principles for how the school community would work together through and beyond the redesign process. The five attributes were shared widely with stakeholders—at parent meetings, staff meetings, student meetings, in newsletters, notes, emails, letters to staff, etc. Beyond informing people of the norms, school leaders and staff worked hard to make them part of daily practice. For example, staff and students were routinely recognized at staff meetings and in class for displaying the attributes, students developed a BEAR STRONG chant to end every student meeting, and faculty regularly engaged students in discussions about what it meant to be BEAR STRONG in interactions with their parents and peers and within their community. Over time, BEAR STRONG became the mantra that the school rallied around and the language its stakeholders used when times got tough.

Planning for the Redesign Process

In addition to building a supportive culture, the Redesign Team quickly started mapping out its work in greater detail. Stakeholders helped the team prioritize its goals for the work, which were:

1. Personalized, blended learning will occur in all classrooms for 50 percent of the instructional time by the 2014-15 school year.
2. 100 percent of teachers will use criterion-based grading by the 2014-15 school year.

To decide which strategies and actions were needed to operationalize these goals, Redesign Team members visited and had phone conversations with leaders from other schools who were creating similar learning environments. They also dug into research and case studies to learn from the missteps and successes of others who had implemented similar work. After poring over these details, the group developed an action plan for the redesign process.

Given the complexities of redesigning a school, administrators recognized that a full-time staff member needed to be dedicated to making sure that the plan was being implemented with fidelity and keeping track of the many moving parts. They created a position for a redesign administrator who was charged with providing on-the-ground project management and technical support for the redesign effort.

Managing the Process

The Redesign Team used a project management tool—developed by SJUSD—to drive its work and hold team members accountable for progress. The tool allowed them to lay out how the major redesign activities, as well as many related "sub-activities", would unfold over time. Team members volunteered or were assigned responsibilities for specific tasks based on their roles and talents. Documenting responsibilities in the tool ensured that everyone knew who was on point for each activity.

The tool soon became the driving force behind Redesign Team meetings, helping to keep them focused on the details that mattered most. Those who led specific tasks were able to get feedback, advice, and help from other team members in meetings. The group summarized decision points and next steps at the end of each meeting, which formed the basis of the next meeting's agenda. The tool also allowed the team to see where they might be falling behind on the schedule and make adjustments or add resources to stay on track. With the help of the tool, the Redesign Team quickly operated as a well-oiled machine.

Transformational Redesign Project Management Tool

Major activities and sub-activities	Owner	Status	5-Aug	12-Aug	19Aug	26-Aug	2-Sept	9-Sep	16-Sep	23-Sep	30-Sep	7-Oct	14-Oct	21-Oct	28-Oct	4-Nov	11-nov	18-Nov	25-Nov	2-Dec	9-Dec	16-Dec
Space Configuration	Princial/	Some issues																				
Oakland Pilot Visit	Principal	On track										X	X	X	X	D						
—Professional Development	Team	Not Started															X	X	X	X	X	X
—Technology Hardware	Principal/TSG	On track					X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Learning Management System	Redesign Team	Not Started																				
Pilot in each subject area	Redesign Team	On track					X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	D
Visit to APS	Team	On track														X	X	X	X	D		
Visit Gilroy Prep	Team	On track															X	X	X	X	X	D
BL Implementation Team Classroom Visits	Implementation	On track														X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Piloting the Work

In the 2013-14 school year, blended learning and criterion-based assessments were piloted in each subject area (English Language Arts, math and science). During this year, the Redesign Team gathered student assessment and survey data to compare progress and perceptions in traditional versus redesigned classrooms. They also regularly met with pilot teachers to better understand how they needed to support the full staff in a shift the following year. The team was able to use this information to inform full redesign roll-out and to confirm or dispel any assumptions that were embedded in their plans. It also helped them to create a realistic timeline for increasing the percentage of classrooms implementing blended learning and criterion-based grading the following year.

Taking It School–Wide

The Redesign Team's goal was for all Burnett Middle School teachers to be using criterion-based grading and blended learning for 50 percent of instructional time by the end of the 2014-15 school year. Since this was the first time that many teachers would be applying these strategies, the Redesign Team developed a set of supports to ensure that they would be successful. All teachers attended three days of redesign training before the start of school. Led by site administration, Redesign Team members, and leaders from the culture subcommittee, the trainings focused on allowing teachers to experience blended learning first hand, primarily through independent, station-based rotations. The Redesign Team also created a "Redesign Reflection Tool" to support teachers in their implementation and to capture progress data that could be used to identify areas in which they needed support. Teachers could use the rubric to reflect on whether and how their practices might be improved and flag areas where they needed more information or coaching. Staff and administrators used the rubric during classroom walkthroughs to collect data that could be tabulated to identify areas for school-wide improvements.

Burnett Middle School Redesign Reflection Tool

		Stage 1 Implementation	Stage 2 Implementation	Stage 3 Implementation	Stage 4 Implementation
Daily Learning Objective	A)	DLO is not posted, or is undefined, vague, or not standards-based	DLO is visible, but may be vague, wordy, or entire standard is used.	DLO is visible and includes a standards-based course level outcome.	DLO is visible and includes an appropriate student demonstrated course level outcome.
	B)	DLO does not connect to a specific criteria being assessed	DLO connects to specific criteria; some students (1/4-2/4) can articulate this connection.	DLO connects to specific criteria; most students (3/4) can articulate this connection.	DLO clearly connects with specific criteria being assessed, and all students (4/4) can articulate this.

		Stage 1 Implementation	Stage 2 Implementation	Stage 3 Implementation	Stage 4 Implementation
Personalized Learning: Strategies	N)	Activities are applied to small groups, with no variance in the activity	Activities are applied to small groups, with limited variance in the activity.	Activities are applied to small groups, with significant variance based on GROUP needs.	Activities are adaptive to INDIVIDUAL students based on their needs.
	O)	There is no evidence of a teacher-led station	Teacher is leading a station but objectives of station are the same for each group.	Teacher is leading a station and participants/objectives are based on weekly or daily data.	Teacher is leading a station and participants/objectives are based on real time data obtained within the instructional block.
	P)	Student progression is not based on mastery	Student progression is based on mastery some of the time.	Student progression is based on mastery most of the time.	Student progression is based on mastery all of the time.

Administrators—including the redesign administrator—worked to identify "small goals" that they would work on with instructional staff each month. In the beginning, these goals were intended to represent quick wins that they could use to focus the full staff on making incremental changes and to celebrate teachers' progress. The goals were introduced in monthly all-staff meetings and displayed in common adult spaces throughout the school. The Redesign Team shared data on goal attainment and introduced the next set of goals during the following all-staff meeting, increasing the challenge of the goals over time. In addition to moving the staff forward on a common path, the Redesign Team was able to use the data collected to understand what was working, what was not, and what was needed to improve practice.

Goal Check

BY THE END OF AUGUST:

- Use ExitTicket every day — **90%**
- Complete at least one station-rotation lesson — **90%**
- Map semester units to four criterion, with assessments for each — **50%**

Support Sessions

- Support sessions to hit our September goals will be offered before school, on your prep and after school.

- You do NOT have to wait until a session is created. Reach out now to X, Y, Z, or K.

The Redesign Team understood, however, that setting a goal was not enough—it was critical to support teachers in as many ways as possible during the school's first year of full implementation so that goals could be met. Opportunities for instructional supports included drop-in sessions, 1:1 coaching, and peer coaching, among others; these were publicized regularly at all-staff meetings and via school-wide communications.

To keep momentum strong and spirits high, the Redesign Team encouraged regular celebrations of accomplishments, recognized "bear strong" staff, acknowledged feelings of despair, and talked at length about the emotional cycle of change. Leaders recognized that a sure way to fail was if people worked or worried in isolation and were insistent on staff becoming "stronger as we go, together."

Redesign Results

In its first full year of implementation, Burnett showed several signs of progress. The school's discipline referrals decreased by 20 percent, and attendance increased by one percent, indicating that students were more engaged in learning. Students in several teachers' classrooms also outperformed the district average on benchmark assessments, showing that the new instructional strategies were having an impact on achievement, too.

A buzz soon started about the work that was happening at the school; over the course of the year, more than 100 visitors from across the country toured the school to learn about Burnett's approach and progress. Visitors often commented on the level of engagement of the students, which they found to be remarkable. As one educator from another district shared: *"In an hour-long, unannounced visit, I saw over 100 students, and every single one was engaged on some level. That's not easy to accomplish."*

Mid-Course Corrections

The Redesign Team knew that plenty of mid-course corrections would be needed in the first implementation year. The reflection rubric, classroom walkthrough routines, and student data helped them understand where things were going well but also where adjustments were needed. For example, early classroom walkthroughs showed that many teachers were emulating the independent station-rotation blended delivery model that was used in the three-day professional development sessions. While these were appropriate for adult learners, the team had intended teachers to be facilitating and synthesizing learning for individual students and the class throughout the instructional period. Instead, teachers seemed to be hanging back and letting students tackle their learning tasks on their own. Once this issue was identified, the team was able to plan and implement teacher supports to help them get comfortable and confident in their roles in the school's ideal blended learning model.

While the team was excited about the positive results from their redesign work, they also took every opportunity to reflect on how to make sure that results were seen at scale. After seeing benchmark scores for students in certain classes rise significantly, they investigated why those teachers were showing such immediate—and strong—results. In so doing, they found a strong link between the use of data and student performance: Teachers who were assessing and taking action on the assessment results at least three times during one instructional period were increasing student achievement at a much higher rate than teachers who were assessing once per period. Again, this became an opportunity for the group to learn about what was needed to make the model work and find ways to support teachers in the school's redesign.

Closing

Over the course of two years, Burnett Middle School teachers and leaders fundamentally changed their approach to educating students. Transitioning from an initial big idea to a new way of operating took time, dedication, and a willingness to confront challenges head on. It also required painstaking attention to the change process itself—building buy in; establishing a strong culture; making, moving, and adjusting plans; committing resources to the work; monitoring over time; using data to assess progress; making mid-course corrections; and supporting people who were impacting and impacted by the change. Change is not easy. But for Burnett staff—if it meant that they could do more for their students—it was worth it.

Reflections from a Redesigner

LISA AGUERRIA LEWIS, BURNETT MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL 2006–2015

From my view, the keys to Burnett's redesign success were the extensive research that was conducted up front to learn about best practices and possible pitfalls, the collective efficacy of the staff, and having the right people on the Redesign Team. As the school's principal, I understood that my role was that of the loudest and best cheerleader for the redesign plan and spreading my belief that all staff could and would work together to tackle the redesign challenge. I had an unwavering belief in the value and ability of each and every staff member to make our redesign vision a reality—it was my job to help instill that belief within the hearts and minds of the school's staff and stakeholders. It was important for me to remind everyone—in as many ways and as often as possible—of the value of our school to our students and the importance of nurturing our own growth and the growth of others so that we could all grow stronger and better together.

That's not to say it was easy. Redesigning a school was the most challenging and stressful—but rewarding—experience of my career. The challenges came in many forms—from developing a detailed plan, implementing it alongside all of the other work associated with running a school, and managing a group of people through a change process. I knew that I had to make time to support and show true appreciation for the many players who were working to make redesign possible. And I also anticipated and was met with a natural human resistance to change when asking an entire faculty to fundamentally change the way they run their classrooms. Honoring each individual's feelings while encouraging and supporting everyone to move forward was exhausting. But watching the true euphoria that people felt when we were successful outweighs the stress of change.

Most importantly, the reward of seeing students actively engaged in classrooms was absolutely worth the work of redesign. Knowing that what we were doing was making a difference for students and their future was the ultimate honor. At the end of the full implementation training, a very veteran teacher stood up and said, "This work is going to be difficult and I am scared. I know I am going to fail, we all probably will at some point, but if we fail forward we are going to be alright." He was right.

The Burnett Middle School (TBMS) Redesign Proposal

"The World is Changing Daily…. Our Schools Must Change, too"

Vision, alignment and scale

a) What need has been identified, and how does it align to closing the opportunity gap and 21st century skills for all students?

TBMS student body is 82% Hispanic or Latino, 84% socioeconomically disadvantaged, and 67% English Learners. Our current API score (734) is in the third decile. We have made incremental improvement in our API over the last three years, posting API gains of 17, 23, and 42 points, respectively. During the 2011-12 school year, TBMS posted the largest API gain (42) of any middle school in Santa Clara County. Yet, in spite of our recent improvements, an achievement gap persists between our majority and minority students. Further, our current way of schooling is based on a 19th century, traditional concept that simply cannot do justice to the wide variety of individual needs present in our student body.

Nationwide, there is a case for significant change at schools similar to Burnett. In 2011, studies estimated that only 70.4% of Hispanic students, nationwide, graduated from high school (as compared to 85.5% white), and only 14% of socioeconomically disadvantaged students enrolled in a fouryear college[1]. Based on current SJUSD data, when students leave Burnett, they are not enrolling in AP/IBDP courses due to a lack of preparedness or not having the confidence to enroll in these higher level courses. Knowing that in 2018, 63% of all jobs will require a postsecondary degree, we have to do more for our students.

Our need is to increase the number of underrepresented students with access to college and the 21st century workforce. On a local level, this need is to increase the number of our students enrolling in AP/IBDP courses in high school, increase the number of students "on grade level" (as deemed by a measurement tool), and to increase our student's capacity to demonstrate 21st Century skills.

b) What is the redesign concept, and "theory of action" to meet the identified need?

While our students have displayed gains in API scores over the past three years, Burnett seeks a true transformation. At the heart of our redesign vision is the desire to expand the use of our best practices.

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1 Latino Ed Beat. July 2, 2012. Katherine Leal Unmuth.

Burnett wants to increase the number of small learning groups within the classroom (to better address student individual needs), explicitly teach 21st Century skills in the classroom through the lens of our International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program (IB/MYP), and provide students with a more thorough and transparent assessment of academic skills and knowledge as well as their performance in the areas of the "5 Cs". If we implement the following three items with fidelity, then we will address our identified needs.

1. Full implementation of blended learning in math, core (ELA & S/S), and science
2. Crosscurricular project based learning
3. Schoolwide criterion based grading

BLENDED LEARNING IN MATH, SCIENCE, AND ELA

Blended learning is a relatively new, innovative subsector of the broader education industry. As such, it's fastpaced and rapidly evolving. Blended learning isn't about computers, tablets, or even software. It's about how educators use technology to more efficiently and effectively educate individual students. As an innovative, new approach to teaching and learning, it's important to encourage teachers to be innovative in their approach to blended learning, and not to try to impose a onesize fits all model on faculty. Though different blended learning pilots are currently under way in TBMS Math Department, the broader Burnett staff will be encouraged to both improve existing models and create wholly new approaches to blended learning in the classroom.

In Burnett classrooms thus far, one approach to blended learning that current data (see below) point to being effective is to combine two large classrooms into one larger, cotaught space. This blended learning model has taken off in both 7th and 8th grade math. This single classroom allows for more flexible grouping and improved monitoring. It also allows for selfpaced student learning, both across and within units. On a typical day, students begin class by working on a warmup. The warmup is determined based upon a concept in a unit that a large number of students are experiencing difficulty understanding. Using EDI, teachers explain and reteach the class warmup exercises. After the warm-up, there is little whole class instruction. Instead, teachers use student data to rearrange students into small table groups for individual selfpaced instruction using an online program, collaborative teaching by students using an online program, collaborative teaching by students using an online program, and/or teachers working with table groups around troublesome standards. Online content providers that have been utilized with students to date (with significant success) include Khan Academy, Virtual Nerd, ck12.org, and LearnZillion.

As we move into the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) era, existing Burnett blended learning models will be adapted to include more problembased learning and greater application of learning. Further, as this occurs, it is likely that refined, hybrid blended learning models will emerge at Burnett that utilize new content providers and mirror broader improvements in the blended learning sector as a whole.

To streamline and focus Burnett's innovative blended work, we will research and select a high-quality Learning Management System (LMS). This system will allow for staff and students to collaborate and

custombuild their blended learning models, by engaging with a wide variety of content providers across all subject areas, within one portal where students and staff can access interactive learning material and performance data. To implement and utilize the LMS effectively, significant professional development will occur around this system in the 2013-14 planning year (see budget template for additional information here).

Though Burnett's Math Department has been spearheading its blended work, the school intends to extend its blended work schoolwide. Within the twohour core block (ELA and Humanities), for example, students will be strategically placed in small instructional groups (centers) doing an online reading program (such as Achieve300, iReady, or STAR reading) to address individual needs, literacy circles to promote communication and critical thinking skills, and teacher run small group program to target a specific skill. This model will be used for all students, ELLs, LTELs, LDs, EOs, and intervention.

In Science, the blended learning program will consist of students using an online program, such as Explore Learning, for a percentage of the day to apply skill/content learned to reallife application, based upon their level. During the planning year, we will research the best online program, structure, and technology tool (nook, iPad, laptop, etc.) for the class.

In Math, the blended learning program will expand to include teachers teaching 5 periods, as well as a 7th period intervention class. The 7th period intervention class is a fluid class where students are required to attend if they fall behind in the units or need more instruction. Once students demonstrate the understanding of the content, they are exited out of 7th period. This is for all students, including ones that have been identified as "intervention" students based upon test score data.

CROSS-CURRICULAR PROJECT BASED LEARNING

While blended learning models provide our students with an individualized and selfpaced education, project based learning will allow for the explicit teaching of 21st century skills. In project based learning students interact with key curriculum objectives as a means to solve real world problems. This results in increased student engagement as the real world problems create a need for students to know the essential content and skills of the given curriculum. Further, project based learning requires the use of 21st century skills of critical thinking, problem solving, communication and collaboration.

Authentic real world problems generally do not fit neatly within the realm of a single subject area. A holistic approach is needed to find solutions. The IB/MYP directly provides the framework for addressing 21st century skills through crosscurricular project based learning. Students and teachers are to explore issues/ problems that are current and relevant to their communities and lives. This type of learning environment explicitly displays the interdependence of subject areas and develops within students a true world view, while also increasing collaboration at the staff level.

Projects can vary in length from a couple of days to a full semester. What is more important is that the projects focus around open ended questions with real world applications. Again, the framework of the IB/MYP directly align as its units of study are designed around these types of open ended questions.

All students will be engaged in inquiry, peer collaboration, the creation of a solution and ultimately the communication of this solution. This approach to the learning process leads students to take ownership of their education by partnering with their teachers to find solutions rather than passively receiving instruction.

Being an IB/MYP school, some of our teachers have first hand experience with project based learning in their own subject areas and have seen its benefits. There are examples of crosscurricular projects in current and past years but our aim is to have all subject areas participate in this approach. An example from the 2011-2012 school year had physical education, science, and math collaborate to take pulse rates after running a mile and graphing the data. Currently, the science and music departments are collaborating to have students attempt to create a musical instrument (something that creates sound waves) and ultimately use it to perform music.

While more examples exist, we still have a long way to go in having all subject areas participating in cross-curricular project based learning. Reluctance from teachers to embrace this approach is justified as many still require basic level training and professional development in the IB/MYP and Project Based Learning implementation. Further, this approach demands teacher collaboration time in order to develop quality projects that truly challenge our students to engage in critical thinking and problem solving. Providing all staff with opportunities for IB/MYP and Project Based Learning training and on site collaboration time will be key to the successful implementation of crosscurricular project based learning in all subject areas.

CRITERION BASED GRADING

TBMS would like to implement the IB/MYP criteriabased grading assessment model. In doing so, students and parents will receive a much more thorough analysis of achievement and progress than has been delivered through use of the traditional AF grading model. For example, in Humanities (social studies), students will be assessed in the four criterion categories of *A: Knowing & Understanding, B: Investigating, C: Thinking Critically,* and *D: Communicating.* Assessment is based upon the pre-established learning objectives of the IB/MYP, as well as CCSS. Student achievement is determined by the success in meeting these objectives.

Active student involvement and engagement play an important role in the assessment process and will better meet the needs of the 21st century learner. The criterion categories in Humanities previously listed display just how closely the aims of the IB/MYP align with 21st century skills, namely *Thinking Critically* and *Communicating.* Further, in providing this more detailed approach to student assessment, the objectives and standards for learning, in turn, are more clearly articulated to all members of the learning community; students, teachers, and parents.

In addition to the IB/MYP grading criteria, Burnett would add a World Citizenship assessment to further address 21st Century Skills (AKA "5 Cs"). Teacher input will be key to the creation of this new assessment criteria as it will address traditional elements of teacher grading not addressed by the IB/MYP. Elements of PBIS also will be included in this grading criteria as the overall focus of

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World Citizenship will focus on the "business of being an engaged student" rather than subject area knowledge.

c) How many students will it impact in the first year of implementation, as well as going forward?

Starting in the 2014-15 school year and going forward, 100% of the Burnett student body will be impacted as we aim for full implementation of our three areas of change. During the 2013-14 school year we will continue to pilot these programs in classes where teachers feel ready to make these changes.

d) How does this concept create a transformational experience for students and teachers?

Criterion based grading changes the way students are evaluated and the way teachers grade. This alone will greatly change the school culture in that all stakeholders will have a more detailed view of our students' strengths and areas of needed improvement. Blended learning allows for students to work at their own pace and address individual needs. The transformation here is that the focus of the learning process is placed directly on the student and away from the restrictions of a single teacher's limitations within the current 19th century schooling model. Project Based learning allows students to critically think, collaborate, problem solve, as well as to apply their learning to real-world problems and issues. Through this model, students and teachers will see education in terms of the "big picture" and world view verses the current practice of seeing each subject area as separate entities with little relation to one another.

Through the eyes of our students, the school experience will have a much more personal feel. Their concerns and questions about their world and local community will be addressed directly through cross-curricular projects. It will be commonplace to work in peer groups, take on different roles and present their unique solutions. Students will know exactly where their strengths and needs for improvement lie as they will work with technology that gives immediate feedback via blended learning models. In these ways, our student learning experience will revolve around 21st century skills.

Further, students and their parents will receive regular detailed feedback through a consistent set of assessed criteria. Students will know that in order to achieve their highest potential, they must be an active participant in the learning process. For no longer will the focus be on a single grade, but on how they can access prior gained knowledge to continue their personal growth and address the bigger needs of their world.

Evaluation/evidence

a) What is the plan to evaluate the model, and what Key Performance Measures will be impacted?

KPMS: Advanced reading and math achievement, EL reclassification, Writing performance assessment, AP, Exhibiting 21st century skills, attendance, student resiliency.

EVALUATION: We will work with existing district evaluators (Kristen Rohanna) and our Learning Management System vendor to assess our performance against our identified needs, which include (1) increased number of students at/above grade level (as measured by a measurement tool), (2) increased number of students demonstrating 21st century skills (as measured by Criterion based grading), (3) increased eventual enrollment in AP/IB courses, and (4) increased number of underrepresented students with access to college and 21st century workforce.

b) Is there evidence and/or research to support this concept?

BLENDED LEARNING

Blended learning pilots have been underway at TBMS for two years now, beginning with the 2011-12 academic year. The data below summarize the evidence of the positive impact of blended learning at Burnett thus far:

2011–2012 BLENDED LEARNING RESULTS

- Intervention students in one 8th grade Algebra class
- 50% (10 of 20) of Intervention students scored Proficient or Higher on the Algebra I CST (By definition, Intervention students had previously scored Below Basic or Far Below Basic for two consecutive years)
- 70% (14 of 20) scored out of continued Intervention in high school
- 75% (15 of 20) Gained a Performance Category on the CST
- Achievement Gap between Intervention and NonIntervention students decreased from 52 to 14 scale score points (see below)

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Intervention Students (Blended) vs. NonIntervention Students

Student Group	2010–11 Average CST Scale Score (Baseline)	2011–12 Average CST Scale Performance	CST Scale Score Gain
NonIntervention	321	348	27
Intervention	269	334	65

2012–2013 Blended Learning Results

- Blended Program implemented for approximately 200 8th grade Algebra students
- Preliminary data available now (as of April, see below) suggest a positive impact, but end of year data are needed
- CST data and results of student surveys will be used as end of year outcome measures

Burnett Blended Algebra Program vs. 8th grade Algebra at Muir and Hoover[2]

Student Group	Average PBA Score PBA 1 (October)	Average PBA Score PBA 2 (March)
Burnett Blended	1.63	1.78
Burnett Basic	1.94	1.89
Burnett BB or FBB	1.28	1.66
Hoover and Muir (HM)	1.47	1.30
HM Basic	1.74	1.43
HM BB or FBB	1.09	1.12

[2] Source: Kristen Rohanna, SJUSD

CRITERION BASED GRADING

The MYP's assessment model was developed in line with the theoretical framework of educative assessment, as described by Grant Wiggins. Research in assessment shows that the quality of school

assessments are greatly increased when all members of the learning community are involved.[3] Additionally, when students know what is expected of them, what the goals for learning are, and what the purpose of assessment is, they have a greater opportunity to prepare by identifying their strengths and areas for improvement.[4] There is a plethora of research regarding the benefits of criterion based grading. The IB/MYP criterion model is currently used in 145 countries in over 3500 schools.

The IB/MYP criterion model has been in limited use at TBMS historically. Over the past few years, use of the criterion model has incrementally increased with some positive results to evidence implementation. The table below shows the results of student surveys at Burnett in comparison to districtwide results. The items selected in the table are strongly aligned with the IB/MYP criterion model. The data reveal that Burnett has consistently outperformed district averages over the last three years, and increasingly over time.

3 *WNCP, 2004*

4 *Bargainnier, 2003; Wiggins, 1998*

Percentage of Middle School Students Agreeing or Strongly Agreeing on SJUSD Student Survey

	2010		2011		2012	
	TBMS	SJUSD	TBMS	SJUSD	TBMS	SJUSD
The work in my classes is engaging.	44%	38%	57%	50%	65%	55%
My teachers show how classroom lessons are helpful in real life.	65%	57%	69%	56%	75%	57%
I usually look forward to class.	48%	48%	51%	43%	57%	41%
The topics we are studying are taught in an interesting way.	48%	48%	52%	42%	54%	48%
My teachers help me look at the quality of my work so that I can improve.	63%	60%	64%	55%	70%	58%

Buy–In

a) What is the level of support from impacted teachers?

There have been two voluntary, administrative run afterschool meetings on the redesign proposal. The proposal was sent out electronically to the entire staff, as well as an all day open door time to chat with the Principal regarding the proposal. During each meeting, feedback was solicited from staff and plan revised based on feedback. The final RFP is a product of all staff voices. Not a single staff member has expressed negative sentiment about this redesign proposal, or is unwilling to move forward. TBMS is at 100% support from all teachers.

b) What is the level of engagement of students and parents?

Parent community has been updated on the proposal via Principal's Coffee, Cafe Con La Directora, PTSA, and SELAC meetings. Student Council and leadership class (approximately 35 students) reviewed the preliminary plan and gave input.

Risks and support

a) What are the primary risks to implementation, and what support do you need to mitigate?

Our aims are contingent upon having a solid infrastructure to support these programs. A well functioning LMS is key to conducting effective blended learning. Our system for reporting grades, currently Infinite Campus, must be adapted to reflect our new system of criterion based assessment. Further, teachers will require professional development and collaboration time during the work day to effectively conduct crosscurricular project based learning. TBMS has a culture that is open and ready for transformation. We simply require the funds to support this transformation.

Planning team and activities

a) Who is on the core team for planning 2013–14?

At least 5 parents, 5 students, Administration, IB Coordinator, and every teacher who wants to be involved. The core teachers who have been involved in the writing and planning of the Redesign are two math teachers who are currently piloting blended learning, a science teacher who has been piloting project based learning, and a team of 7 teachers (2 ELA/SS, 1 math, 1 music, 1 PE, 1 science, and the ELIC) who have researched criterion based grading. All will continue to be an integral part for next years planning, but we are looking to add more teachers.

b) What are the major activities that will be completed in the planning year?

BLENDED LEARNING

- Research and continued adoption of online content providers
- Linking online content providers with problembased learning
- in the classroom so as to align BL with CCSS
- Research and Selection of a Learning Management System (LMS)
- Professional Development for all staff for the LMS
- Professional Development for all staff on Content Provider Landscape (through LMS vendor)
- Research, Pilot, Evaluation, and Documentation of Blended Learning Best Practices at TBMS and externally

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CRITERION BASED GRADING

- Partner with Mt. Mourne Middle School in North Carolina who fully implemented the IB/MYP grading criteria this year and did away with AF grading.
- Find and work with a trainer to train staff on the full implementation of criterion based grading.
- IB training (Burnett will pick up this cost)
- Staff collaboration time

CROSS-CURRICULAR PROJECT BASED LEARNING

- Collaboration time for crosscurricular project planning
- Book study of project based learning
- IB training (Burnett will pick up this cost)
- Visitation of schools using project based learning and/or blended learning models (Burnett will pick up this cost)
- Confirm dates of Buck Institute of Education (BIE) professional development
- Core group of teachers to attend a BIE training
- Architect firm will survey campus to determine possible space redesign plans to maximize student collaboration

Budget

a) What are estimated onetime funding requirements for planning and implementation?

Items in budget template denoted with an asterisk(*) are not essential for implementation.

Onsite we have approximately 500 computers that are out of date. We are not sure, but guessing, that by refurbishing these computers or trading them in, we may be able to cut costs on the additional computers needed for our redesign plan.

Also, employee benefits are based on current rates. The costs could increase or decrease depending on state and federal government.

b) How will you achieve financial sustainability within 3 years of implementation?

Ongoing costs related to content providers and the LMS are slated to come out of site allocated textbook funds beginning with the 2016-17 academic year. Most importantly, within three years, current school budget funds will be reallocated to support sustainable school redesign.