Leadership & Systems Thinking with an Equity Lens

San Diego County Office of Education Equity Symposium September 9, 2016
Leadership & Systems Thinking with an Equity Lens

Learning and Leadership Services
District and School Improvement Unit

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Overview

- **Explore:**
  - Equity-Centered Leadership
  - Systems Thinking
  - Systems Leadership Framework

- **Reflect:**
  - Current Reality
  - Self-Assessment
The Influence of Effective Leadership on Student Achievement

1. Establishing Goals & Expectations
   - Effect size: 0.42

2. Resourcing Strategically
   - Effect size: 0.31

3. Ensuring Quality Teaching
   - Effect size: 0.42

4. Leading Teacher Learning & Development
   - Effect size: 0.84

5. Ensuring an Orderly & Safe Environment
   - Effect size: 0.27

Source: John Hattie
Equity
What We Mean Today...

Each child receives what he or she needs to develop to their full academic and social potential.
Working toward Systems Thinking & Equity Leadership:
Removing the predictability of success and failure that currently correlates with any social or cultural factor.

Source: National Equity Project
Interrupting inequitable practices, examining biases, and creating inclusive school environments for all.

Source: National Equity Project
Discovering & cultivating the unique gifts, talents & interests that every human possesses.

Source: National Equity Project
Why Leadership with an Equity Lens?

Equity-centered leadership is essential because, through a sharp equity lens — i.e., the process to diagnose and assess equity within the culture, policies, programs, practices and processes within a school [district, system] — leaders model and set direction; they shape an environment where equity and excellence are the standard for everything; they develop people personally and professionally; and they make the organization “work” so that teachers and school-site staff can engage in effective teaching, learning and support (Leithwood, 2004).

— June Rimmer, 2016
Systems Thinking - Peter Senge
A Systems Thinker:

- Understands that an intentional mindset for continuous problem solving is based on the notion that the components in a system are interconnected.

- Has the ability to see the larger system & helps others to see the larger system.

- Has the ability to build relationships based on deep listening.

- Invites people with multiple perspectives to the table and has the ability to see through the eyes of people very different than themselves.

- Fosters critical reflection.

- Fosters a shared vision and co-creates the future.

Sources: Peter Senge, et. al 2015; Fullan 2011
A Systems Leadership Framework is:

- A set of descriptions of systems leadership behaviors
- Linked to systems improvement, improved schooling, and high quality teaching and learning
- Based on the notion that the components in a system can be best understood by examining the interconnectedness of relationships with each other and other systems
- Based on research and the work of systems leadership practitioners
Systems Leadership Framework

- Advance the vision, mission, and values
- Create a learning centered culture
- Ensure high-quality teaching and learning
- Cultivate learning and leadership
- Resource strategically
# 5 Domains of a Systems Leader

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domains</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Reflective Questions</th>
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| **Advance the Vision, Mission, and Values** | If an organization wants to move forward, it needs to develop a shared vision and mission. The vision is the big picture of where it wants to be. The mission is a general statement of why you exist as an organization and how you will achieve your vision. Shared values are critical to identify how you as an organization will behave and determine what is important during the process.                                                                 | - Is there a shared vision, mission, and values?  
  - Are decisions and actions aligned to the vision, mission, and values?  
  - What multiple measures of data are you using to shape a collective vision?  
  - How does the shared vision focus on equitable access, opportunities, and outcomes for all students?  
  - Do you embrace the vision, mission and values personally and publicly?  
  - What measurable goals are established to monitor progress toward the vision?  
  - How are you assessing and addressing barriers to the vision?  
  - What does the site climate and stakeholder interactions reveal about what is valued? |
| **Create a Learning-Centered Culture**   | The effective leader works to foster a learning-centered culture – a culture in which a strong academic emphasis with established norms and behaviors influences the school to intentionally pursue excellence. In a learning-centered culture, the learning becomes the preoccupation of the school and all efforts are examined through the lens that measures their impact on learning.                                                                 | - How are you continuously building trusting relationships among all stakeholders?  
  - Is there a common belief system amongst your staff?  
  - In what ways do you model and promote equity, fairness, and respect among all members of the organization?  
  - How are you focusing on results in student learning?  
  - How does your focus support each and every child?  
  - Do you work to shape a culture where high expectations are the norm and evident in rigorous academic work for all students?  
  - How do you develop a culture where staff celebrates successes, and collaboratively tackles problems of practice?  
  - Does a continuous improvement habit of mind exist at your site?  
  - Do you consistently maintain a safe and orderly environment that supports and promotes a learning centered culture? |
| **Ensure High Quality Teaching and Learning** | High quality teaching and learning is foundational to improved student learning. The instructional leader takes an active role in the oversight and coordination of the instructional program. Leaders consistently monitor and weigh student learning progress to inform decisions about instructional supports and resources that foster each and every student's success. The effective leader not only needs to have a strong understanding of high quality instruction but also have the capacity to observe and analyze the quality of classroom instruction, provide feedback to teachers, and use this information to inform priorities for student and adult learning.                                                                 | - Do you have an instructional framework that provides a common language shared by everyone in the system and is coordinated within and between grade levels?  
  - Does your school have an instructional focus to concentrate the collective effort?  
  - Are your improvement strategies consistently nested in the instructional core (teacher, student, content)?  
  - How do you ensure a shared understanding of high quality instruction?  
  - Do instructional practices incorporate culturally relevant pedagogy?  
  - Do you utilize evidence proven practices?  
  - Do you articulate the purpose of assessments and data in relation to how they are used to drive the instructional program?  
  - Do you practice a consistent routine of classroom observations and provide subsequent feedback to teachers?  
  - How do you use evidence of student learning to adjust practice? |
Create a Learning-Centered Culture

- What do you notice about this domain?
- How does equity show up?

Image Source: Leadershiplearning.org
Reflection

What is your current reality of leading with an equity lens in Creating a Learning-Centered Culture?

Goal = ideal state for students

Current Reality

Behavior Gap
“Who We Are” and “How We Lead” Matters
Self-Assessment Transformation

Equity-Centered Systems Thinking Leadership
Self-Assessment

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<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Novice</td>
<td>Leader demonstrates beginning knowledge and skills with limited use of the</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>defined practice.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emerging</td>
<td>Leader has growing understanding and use of knowledge and skills in the</td>
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<td>practice, but performance is inconsistent.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accomplished</td>
<td>Leader applies knowledge and skills thoroughly.</td>
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<td>Expert</td>
<td>Leader sustains an exemplary level of practice.</td>
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<td>Modeling</td>
<td>Leader models this element for others, innovating and freely sharing</td>
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<td>reflections and practices to stimulate system-wide change.</td>
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How We Go About Leading

Transformation: Leadership mindset and style set the overall tone for organizational culture and performance, including how change efforts are run (Anderson & Ackerman-Anderson, 2009). A leader’s ability to establish a sense of urgency (without causing undue panic), form a powerful guiding coalition, create a co-constructed vision and empower others to take action toward the vision via short-term wins are some key components of transforming systems into places of opportunity and support for students.

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<th>Elements</th>
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<th>Evidence of Practice</th>
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<td>Exhibits the courage to respectfully interrupt and transform inequitable systems into places of opportunity for young people and adults (ex: interrupting inequities in class placement, ineffective grading and discipline practices and policies).</td>
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<td>Demonstrates awareness and attentiveness to issues of race, class, power, and privilege and the implications for policy and practice.</td>
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<td>Establishes a collaborative culture with clearly defined roles, processes and expectations.</td>
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<td>Smoothly and effectively integrates change initiatives across system.</td>
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<td>Maximizes participation and involvement so the whole system mobilizes the change collectively.</td>
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<td>Maintains transparency throughout the change process.</td>
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<td>Allows for local control of decisions by sharing power and authority.</td>
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Version 2.0

Learning and Leadership Services
Reflection

Where do I need to grow to move toward consistently seeing my system through a lens of equity?
Equity & Systems Leadership Institute

November 3\textsuperscript{rd}-4\textsuperscript{th} 2016