Transformation Design Deep Dive Guide

Define the Problem

The extent to which the problem to solve and its root causes are clearly identified by the district community.

Transformation Design Core Practice

Activate
change agents

Build
an inclusive environment

Embed
a culture of innovation

Transformation Design

a shared purpose
Activate

the learning experience
ReBuild

an aligned infrastructure
Embed

This Deep Dive Guide is an extension of the Transformation Design District Self-Assessment to help district communities move from reflection to action. For guidance on using this tool, visit www. transformation-design.org and download the District Self-Assessment Guide.

Why Define the Problem?
Define the Problem is one action district communities can take to Activate a Shared Purpose: Collectively developing a shared purpose, so that everyone—teachers, administrators, students, families, school board members, community and business leaders alike—has a common understanding of the vision, mission, values, principles, and goals for transforming learning district-wide.

Reflections from the Transformation Design District Self-Assessment (Discuss as a team.)

Reflect on the self-assessment findings about this action.

What did your team discover about this action? What are your district's strengths, assets, and resources that support this action?

Questions to Consider
(Reflect as a team.)

Use these questions to identify how this action shows up in your district community.

- *What is the problem to solve through your learning transformation and what are the root causes?*

- *What strategies has your district used to collectively identify this problem? To what extent do staff, students, and stakeholders have a common understanding of the problem to solve? How do you know?*

- *In what ways does this definition of the problem address district values and assumptions as well as district practices and outcomes?*

- *What opportunities does the learning transformation offer your district community?*

- *How does your learning transformation address the diversity of aspirations and needs of individuals and groups in your district community?*

Notes from the team discussion about these questions:

The Big Idea
(Complete independently.)

Review the following resources to better understand this action and why it is important.

- [The Iceberg Model](#), Center for Innovative Cultures. The Iceberg Model presented on this website provides a holistic view of the education system and all of its patterns, processes, and structures. Root cause analyses should examine both the hidden and visible aspects of the system that are represented in the model.

- [Root Cause Analysis, Explained with Examples and Methods](#), Tableau. This webpage provides a definition, goals, and principles of root cause analysis along with techniques such as the 5 Whys.

- [Root Cause Analysis](#), Colorado Department of Education. This website provides links to templates developed by the department to support teams conducting root cause analysis, along with links to activities and templates used by schools and districts in the state.

- [Rethinking the Achievement Gap](#), Matt Riggan on the NGLC Blog (2016). How we define achievement influences how we understand the achievement gap. The Workshop School used a different assessment to gauge student performance which helped uncover strengths not shown in a more traditional standardized test.

What new ideas from these resources seem most exciting for your community? What strengths do they reveal about your district? What opportunities would you like to explore more deeply?

District Artifacts
(Complete independently.)

Review the following artifacts from leading districts to benchmark the Transformation Design action in your own district and to spark new ideas.

Arcadia Unified School District

- Purpose Statement and Values Process, AUSD. The tagline, purpose statement, and values for the district guide the district's learning transformation. This brief overview details the process the district used to engage its community in developing these statements.

- Climbing a Ladder to the Wrong Destination, David Vannasdall (2018). In this one-page interview excerpt, the superintendent describes how he articulates the need for transformation in this traditionally high-performing district.

Kettle Moraine School District

- Scenario Building Process: Summary of Workshop #1, McRel International (2018). Rather than traditional strategic planning, district staff, students, and stakeholders engage in futurecasting. The group imagined what the world would be like in 2030, as described in this 7-page summary. They then examined what changes schools would need to make to respond to the possible scenarios and prepare students for these future worlds. This process situates the "problem to solve" in the future rather than the past and explores opportunities as well as challenges.

District Artifacts (continued)
(Complete independently.)

Review the following artifacts from leading districts to benchmark the Transformation Design action in your own district and to spark new ideas.

Vista Unified School District

- Learning Journey, VUSD (2019). Slides 2-11 of this presentation deck display the changing skills and abilities that are now required by employers and the factors that lead to student success. The district community defined why transformation was necessary by matching these external factors with the district's vision, mission, and values.

- Vista Unified's P-3 Continuum: Closing the Achievement Gap Before It Opens, Matt Doyle, Laura Kohn, and Gerri Burton on the NGLC Blog (2017). This article examines the causes and impact of investments in early childhood development compared to later remedial efforts.

Barnstable Public Schools

- What Learners Need to Thrive in a World of Change, Barnstable Intermediate School (2020). Through the video/audio embedded in this presentation deck, the school team describes how they identified the need for transformation by conducting empathy interviews and surveys with students, soliciting feedback from families, engaging local employers in a community forum, and examining national research on student success in careers, learning, and life.

Which artifacts inspired you? Why?

What do you notice about the districts' processes for building common understanding of the problem? To what extent do the districts address values and assumptions as well as practices and outcomes as they define the problem?

What do these examples illuminate about your own district's work?

A Common Understanding
(Discuss as a team.)

Gather as a team to develop a common understanding about this action and why it is important. Share insights and inspirations gained from your independent study of Big Idea resources and District Artifacts. Challenge yourselves to think big and be bold as you take on this action in your district.

What are the key takeaways to keep in mind as you plan?

Action Planning
(Complete as a team.)

Developing this Transformation Design action into common practice across your district community can advance your learning transformation and help you better serve your students, family, and local community. Use the structure below to create a plan to strengthen use of this action by your district community.

What has your district already done? (Refer to your responses to Questions to Consider earlier.)

What needs further development? Which of these are key levers that, if they were strengthened, would significantly advance your district's transformation journey?

What is your goal for moving forward? What do you want to accomplish?

Assign people to take action with clear deadlines and deliverables (e.g., by the end of the month, the communications director and a parent representative on the core team will create a prototype of a community newsletter). These Action Steps are an opportunity to "walk the talk" of the change you are trying to create in your district: consider how team members will own these steps and how to invite stakeholders to participate!!

Action Steps	Timeline	People Responsible	Communication Plan (Listen & Share)	Success Criteria

Progress Tracking

Set a date to reconvene to review progress on the Action Steps. Use a project management tool or another way to collectively track progress between meetings.

Date to review progress:

Other Notes: