Transformation Design Deep Dive Guide

Start with a Shared Priority

The extent to which small groups and teams are trying new approaches to learning that are collectively chosen as high priority based on the district's shared purpose.

Transformation Design Core Practice

Transformation Design

Activate change agents

Build an inclusive environment

Embed a culture of innovation

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 Start with a Shared Priority?
Start with a Shared Priority is one action district communities can take to ReBuild the Learning Experience: Trying new approaches to learning that are based on our district's shared purpose, often by small groups changing the learning experience in classrooms and schools, inviting the district community to learn as we go.

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 efforts to transform learning are already underway in your district? How did these efforts get started? Who is involved?*

- *What are the top strengths and assets of your district's current curriculum, instruction, assessment, and learning models? What opportunities do these strengths present to move the learning design closer to your shared purpose?*

- *What has emerged as a high priority for the learning transformation among your district community? What first steps might lead to observable impact on your shared purpose in a short time frame (e.g., 90 days)?*

- *Which small groups or teams are involved in starting to try new approaches to learning? How did they get involved? What agency do they have to influence the learning transformation?*

- *How are staff, students, and stakeholders who are not directly involved connected to the work of the small groups or teams? How are they engaged in learning alongside those who are more directly involved?*

- *What new behaviors and ways of working are the small groups or teams using as they try new approaches to learning? How are these new behaviors supported and/or celebrated?*

- *What barriers exist to using new behaviors and ways of working in support of the learning transformation? In what ways might systemic inequities create and contribute to these barriers?*

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.

- [Bringing Life to Organizational Change](#), Margaret J. Wheatley and Myron Kellner-Rogers in *Journal for Strategic Performance Measurement* (1998). This article offers four principles to effect change in organizations, all centering on shared significance leading to shared action.

- [Social Change is a Fractal Thing](#), Rita Sinorita Fierro in *Medium* (2019). The Fractal Social Change Model, with four components, relies on the premise that social change is fractal: if you change the pattern in one place all places will readjust. Big changes impact small changes, small changes impact large change.

- [Leading Change: Why Transformation Efforts Fail](#), John P. Kotter in *Harvard Business Review* (1995). The sixth "error" organizations often make is not systematically planning for and creating short-term wins. Commitment to a long-term transformation journey gets a boost when teams meet short-term goals and celebrate their success.

- [Charting the Course: The Path to Transformation in Education](#), Kotter (2019). This article applies Kotter's change leadership process to education. Getting started involves a compelling opportunity, collectively identified, that channels the potential and power within a district in an aligned and inspiring direction.

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.

Vista Unified School District

- PL Challenge, VUSD (2016). With this press release, the district announced advanced progress on its "Personal Learning Challenge Moonshot." The challenge invited schools to a three-year phased journey to transformation. Each phase is defined by a set of commitments, goals, and tasks: Phase 1, Phase 2, and Phase 3.

- Creating Our Work @ Mission Vista High School, Nicole Allard (2019). The learning transformation for Mission Vista presented in this slide deck is grounded in developing a collective understanding of "why" and a revised articulation of their mission, vision, and values. Collectively, the team chose to start their learning redesign with three "Wildly Important Goals" (see slides 10-19).

Arcadia Unified School District

- Purpose Statement and Values Process, AUSD. The tagline, purpose statement, and values for the district (see page 3) have guided much of the transformation work that followed their creation. The district executive team recognized the need to better define themselves as an organization after recognizing their published mission statement was outdated. As a first step, they engaged stakeholders all over the district through in-depth interviews, using these Interview Questions.

- Personalized Learning Timeline and Rollout Video, AUSD (2017). In this 12-minute video, Superintendent Vannasdall explains the district's "very slow strategic progress" of a new initiative that starts small and then scales over time.

Lindsay Unified

- Early Transformations, 3-page excerpt from *Beyond Reform* (2017). In the late 1990s, LUSD determined they needed to immediately address the most pressing academic challenges of language acquisition and literacy. The Reading Recovery program and selected instructional strategies served as a stepping stone to the performance-based system the district was beginning to envision. Before making further instructional changes to enact the performance-based system in the 2000s, the team addressed organizational challenges, created a strategic design, engaged in a systemic transformation of leadership and personnel, and worked with a small group of educators to create a viable curriculum and mastery-based assessment process.

Distinctive Schools

- Pilot, pages 24-30 in *Journeys to Personalized Learning: Chicago International Charter School (CICS) West Belden,* FSG (2018). This section of the case study of CICS West Belden's learning transformation details how the school launched personalized learning in two classrooms, introduced new practices and components over time, and engaged teachers throughout the school to observe and learn together. It also identifies some missteps and how the school responded to them.

Which artifacts inspired you? Why?

How did the districts get started with trying new approaches to learning? What do their strategies for starting reflect about their shared purpose and what their community values?

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, families, 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 learning transformation?

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: