

Part III. Making it Happen

***Calls for transforming public education are easy;
making it happen isn't.***

Introduction: *Escaping Old Ideas and Moving Forward*



Some time ago, John Maynard Keynes cogently stressed: *The real difficulty in changing the course of any enterprise lies not in developing new ideas but in escaping old ones.* So in espousing the transformation of student and learning supports into a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system, we are well aware that success requires leaving various established ideas behind. Six to escape are:

- the idea that student and learning supports are not essential
- the ideas that addressing barriers for the large number of students in need can be accomplished by relying *primarily* on direct services for individuals and an emphasis on wrap-around services
- the idea that improving student and learning supports *mainly* involves enhancing coordination of current interventions and co-locating community resources on a school campus
- the idea that adopting *a simple continuum* of interventions *is a sufficient framework* for transforming the nature and scope of school-based student/learning supports
- the idea that effective school improvement can be accomplished without ending the continuing marginalization in school improvement policy of efforts to develop a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of student and learning supports
- the idea that transformation of student and learning supports can be achieved without considerable attention to the challenges of promoting and facilitating systemic changes.

By now, we hope we have clarified what needs to replace the first five old ideas. In Part III, we turn to the challenges associated with organizational and systemic change.

As Seymour Sarason cautioned:

Good ideas and missionary zeal are sometimes enough to change the thinking of individuals; they are rarely, if ever, effective in changing complicated organizations (like the school) with traditions, dynamics, and goals of their own.

Escaping old ideas is a beginning. However, accomplishing more than cosmetic changes requires understanding systemic change and how to deal with the inevitable problems that arise. In particular, *transforming* what goes on each day in schools in substantive and sustainable ways involves focusing on both the *direct implementation* of a set of new ideas and strategically *facilitating* the phasing in of systemic changes.

In Part III, we frame systemic and organizational change processes for transforming student and learning supports so that they better address barriers to learning and teaching. We highlight

- major transformation considerations
- ways to rethink operational mechanisms for daily implementation
- processes and lessons learned in facilitating systemic transformation

Finally, given that adaptations to fit local conditions are necessary, we stress that care must be taken so that adaptations don't undermine fundamental transformation. With this in mind, we conclude with a coda stressing five essential elements that should be the focus of any place that indicates it is developing a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of learning supports.

Chapter 10

Major Phases and Key Facets of Transforming Student & Learning Supports

So how do we get there from here?

Michael Fullan stresses that effective systemic change requires leadership that “motivates people to take on the complexities and anxieties of difficult change.” We would add that such leadership also must develop a refined understanding of how to *facilitate* and *sustain* difficult systemic change. That is, successful systemic transformation of established institutions requires organized and effective facilitation, especially when change is to take place at multiple sites and at several levels.

ABOUT FACILITATING TRANSFORMATION: LOGICAL, BUT NOT, LINEAR

Accomplishing substantive and sustainable transformation requires planning both direct implementation and facilitation of systemic changes, but this infrequently happens. Most of the attention goes to strategic and action plans for *direct implementation*. The logic model for this is illustrated in the top half of Exhibit 10.1. What tends to get ignored is the necessity of *facilitating implementation*. Yet, as can be seen in the bottom half of Exhibit 10.1, the same logic applies.

In both instances, the logic models are helpful for strategic planning. At the same time, logical plans rarely play out in a linear manner in transforming schools, and plans vary in how well they anticipate common problems associated with making systemic changes.

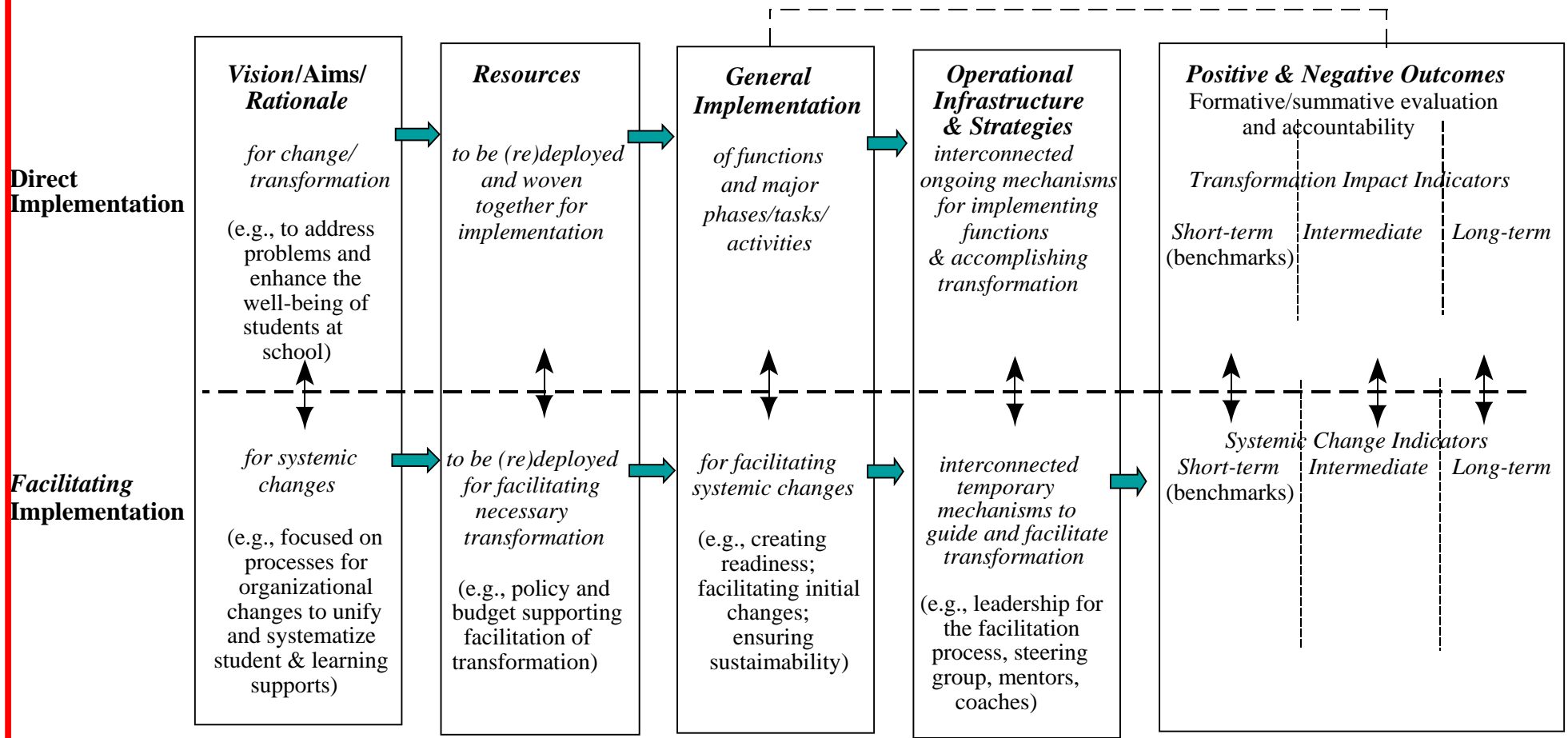
Among the most flagrant problems are failure to give sufficient strategic attention and time to

- underwriting and establishing an effective systemic change operational infrastructure
- creating readiness among a critical mass of key stakeholders in a setting where changes are to be introduced
- developing a design document to communicate and guide the work
- developing a multi-year strategic plan
- ensuring policy is instituted that makes the changes a high priority
- reworking an organization’s daily operational infrastructure to support development and sustainability of the changes

Chapter 12 discusses each of these problems in some detail.

Exhibit 10.1

Linking Logical Frameworks for Planning Direct Implementation and its Facilitation



WHAT ARE MAJOR PHASES AND KEY FACETS OF SYSTEMIC CHANGE?

In addition to the logic model, we frame major phases and key facets (see Exhibit 10.2). These guide strategic planning for implementing, sustaining, and going-to-scale.

Phases

Our formulation of four overlapping phases of systemic change is as follows:

- *creating readiness, commitment, and engagement* – increasing a climate/culture for change through enhancing the motivation and capability of a critical mass of stakeholders and generating memoranda of agreements, policy decisions, a design document, and strategic and action plans
- *initial implementation* – introducing and phasing in changes using a well-designed facilitative operational infrastructure to provide guidance and support
- *institutionalization* – ensuring that policy guidelines and a daily operational infrastructure for maintaining and enhancing productive changes are fully integrated into long-term strategic plans, guidance documents, and capacity building
- *ongoing renewal and evolution* – providing for continuous quality improvement and ongoing support in ways that enable stakeholders to become a community of learners who creatively pursue renewal

Each phase encompasses a range of tasks and steps related to facilitating implementation at every organizational level. (For a detailed discussion of the four phases and related tasks and steps, see *Scaling-Up Reforms Across a School District* – http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/publications/21_scaling-up_reforms_across_a_school.pdf.)

Key Facets

As indicated in Exhibit 10.2, transformation includes continuous social marketing based on articulation of a clear and shared vision for desired changes. It necessitates a major policy commitment and formal partnership agreements. Effectively carrying out essential functions (e.g., governance and priority setting, steering, operations, resource mapping and coordination) requires qualified leadership and an appropriately designed operational infrastructure for daily implementation and for facilitating systemic transformation. Chapters 11 and 12, respectively, address these matters and offer some lessons learned.

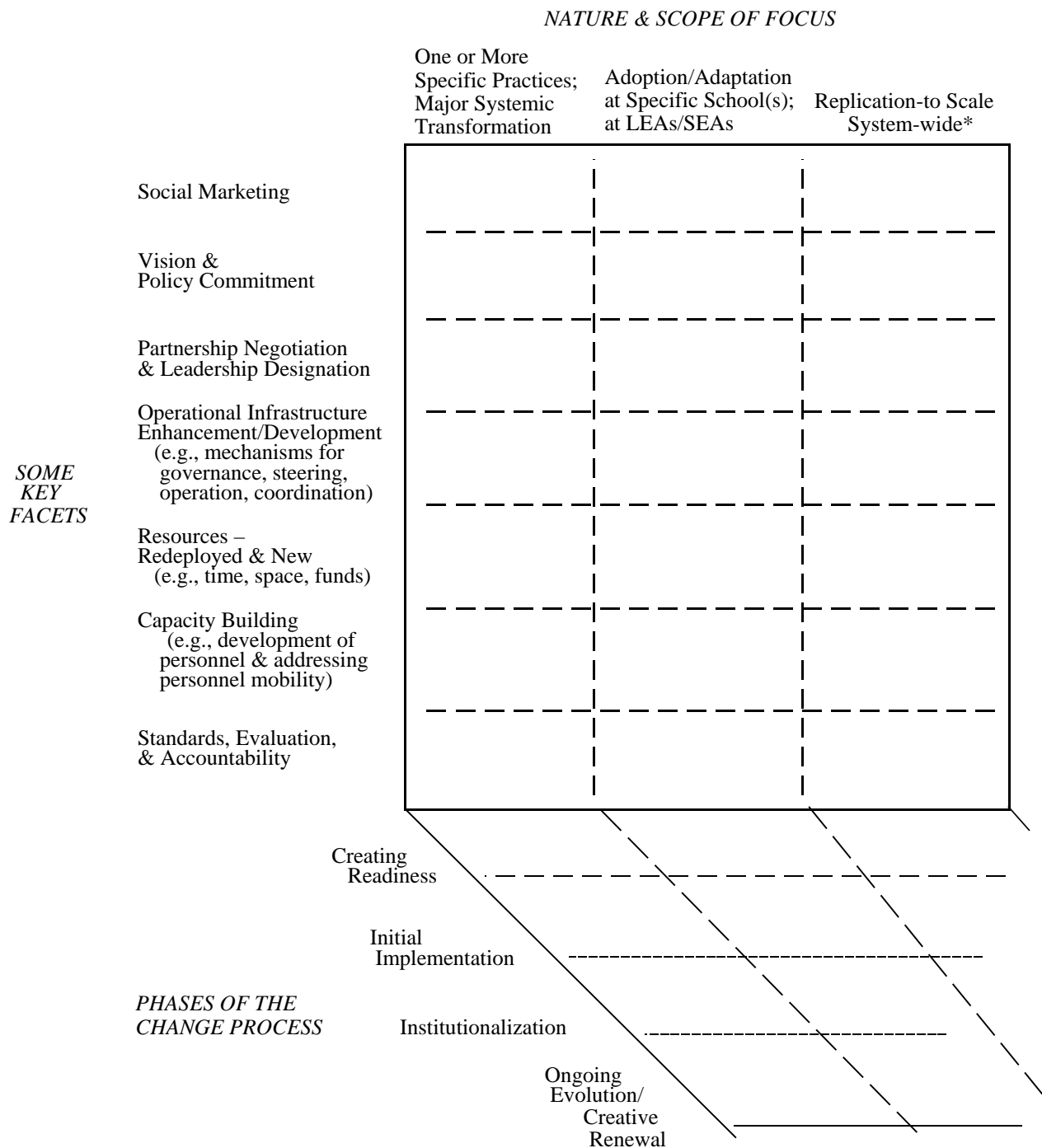
Effectiveness also requires redeploying and generating some new resources. Capacity building includes major attention to personnel development, including strategies for addressing the reality that personnel leave and newcomers appear with regularity. Finally, processes for quality improvement (e.g., formative evaluation), impact evaluation, and accountability call for establishing standards and related indicators.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

The frameworks in this chapter are meant to deepen appreciation for what is involved in planning transformative changes. The complexity of transformation may make some readers uncomfortable. The temptation is to simplify. Doing so, is a mistake. When it comes to school improvement, simplification generally leads to dressing up old ideas in new language and losing the promise of substantive and sustainable change.

Exhibit 10.2

Considerations Related to Direct Implementation and Facilitating Systemic Changes



*Transforming student and learning supports in a district involves replicating major system changes on a large-scale.

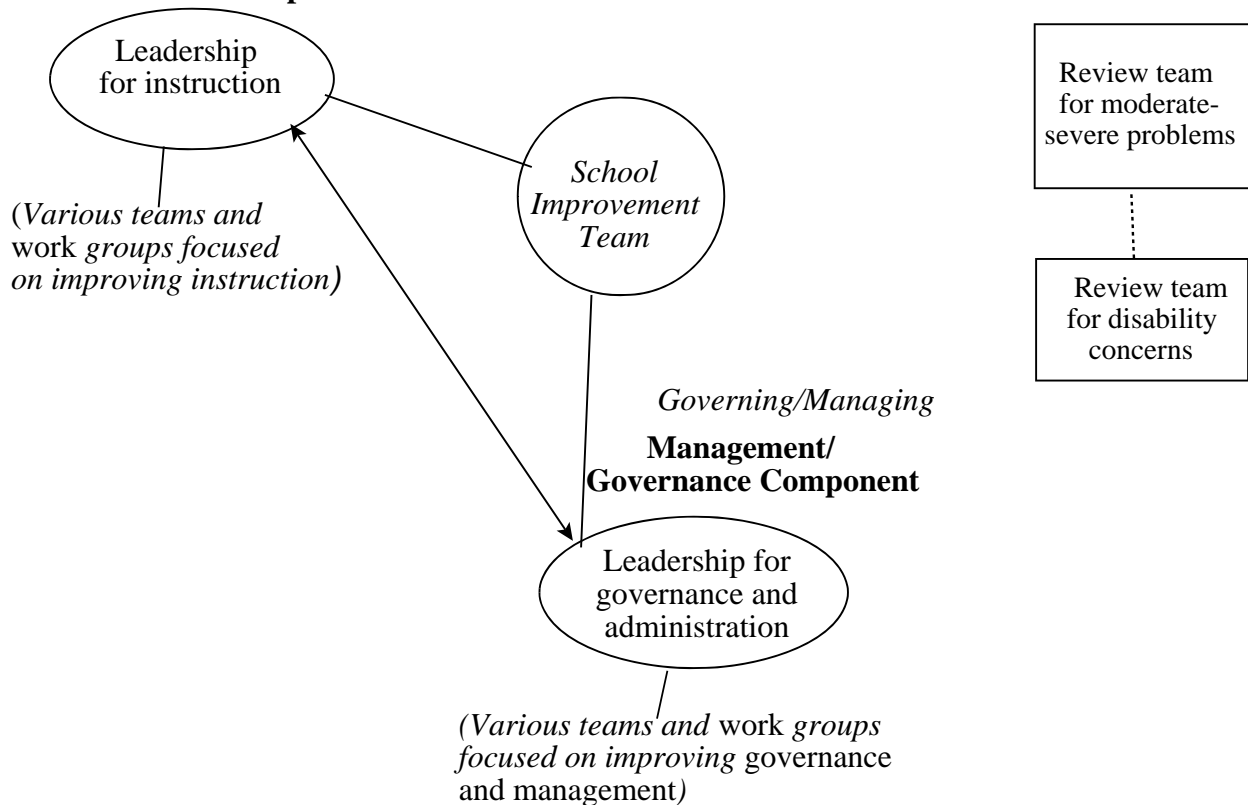
Chapter 11. A Reworked Operational Infrastructure for Daily Implementation

Changes to enhance equity of opportunity made at the district central office mean little if they do not play out at the school level

Because student and learning supports are so-marginalized, it is not surprising that the current operational infrastructure at schools reflects this state of affairs. It tends to look like this:

Facilitating Learning/Develop.

Instructional Component



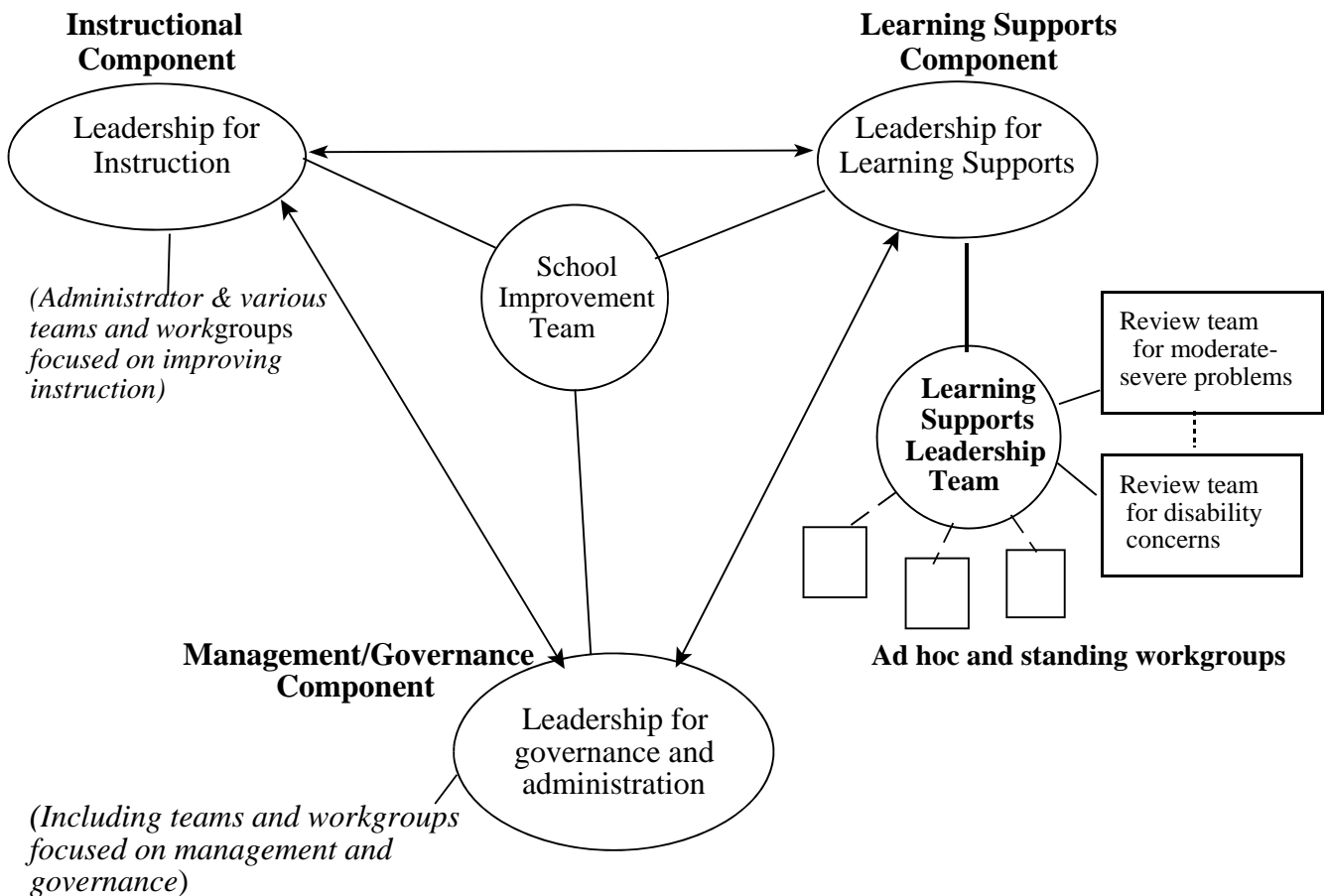
Note that there is no designated leadership for student and learning supports. Note also the situation related to the teams focused on individual students experiencing learning, behavior, and emotional problems. These teams mainly meet to review and make decisions about special assistance needs and referrals. In the process, they usually develop a perspective on the type of systemic improvements that could prevent problems and stem the tide of referrals. However, addressing these concerns is not one of their formal functions. And, in general, these teams have little or no connection to discussions and decisions about school improvement needs.

RETHINKING THE SCHOOL'S OPERATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Exhibit 11.1 illustrates the basic features of an operational infrastructure prototype that fully integrates an emphasis on student/learning supports. The prototype was designed with a view to the type of interconnected leadership and workgroups necessary for developing a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system for addressing barriers to learning and teaching and re-engaging disconnected students.

**Exhibit 11.1
Prototype for an Integrated Operational Infrastructure at the School Level**

(This operational infrastructure should be paralleled at the district level -- see Appendix D.)



Note: Each of the three primary and essential components for school improvement requires

1. administrative leadership and other advocates/champions with responsibility and accountability for ensuring the vision for the component is not lost,
2. a leadership team to work with the administrative lead on system development,
3. standing workgroups with designated ongoing functions and occasional ad hoc workgroups to accomplish specific short-term tasks.

To ensure coordination and integration, the leaders for the instructional and learning supports components are fully integrated members of the management/governance component, and if a special team is assigned to work on school improvement, the leaders for all three components are on that team.

This reworking of the operational infrastructure is a necessity for ending the marginalization of student and learning supports. Working with a system development leadership team (e.g., a *Learning Supports Leadership Team*), a learning supports' administrative lead can facilitate continuous development of a unified, comprehensive, equitable, and systemic approach to addressing barriers to learning and teaching. As conceived, each component's administrative lead is responsible and accountable not only for improving his or her component's performance but for fully integrating it with the other two.

At the school level, the administrative lead and the leadership team meet weekly to guide and monitor daily implementation and ongoing component development. The initial focus is on mapping and analyzing all resources and related budget allocations for student and learning supports. As highlighted earlier in this book, such resources include student support personnel (e.g., school psychologists, counselors, social workers, nurses; compensatory and special education staff); specialized services; special initiatives; grants; programs for afterschool, wellness, dropout prevention, attendance, drug abuse prevention, violence prevention, pregnancy prevention; parent/family/health centers; volunteer assistance; community resources linked to schools, and more. Allocated funds come from the general budget, compensatory and special education, and special projects (including those supported by extra-mural sources).

Using the framework for a unified and comprehensive system of learning supports (review Exhibit 3.4), resource analyses identify critical gaps, redundancies, and which funds can be redeployed to develop the system. Then, priorities are set for moving forward in a cohesive and integrated way.

At the district level, the need is for administrative leadership and capacity building support that helps maximize component development at each school (see Appendix D). Note: it is crucial to establish the district's leadership for this work at a high enough level to ensure the administrator is always an active participant at key planning and decision-making tables (e.g., a cabinet level administrative leader, such as an associate superintendent).

How Can Small Schools Staff a Reworked Operational Infrastructure?

All schools are confronted with (1) improving instruction, (2) providing learning supports to address barriers to learning and teaching, and (3) enhancing management and governance. The challenge in any school is to pursue all three functions in a cohesive, equitable, and effective manner. The added challenge in a small school is how to do it with so few personnel.

In small schools, the key is to modestly convert existing personnel roles and functions to establish the type of operational infrastructure illustrated in Exhibit 11.1. Usually, the principal and whoever else is part of a school leadership team will lead the way in improving instruction and management/governance. As constituted, however, such a team may not be prepared to advance development of the Learning Supports Component. Thus, someone already on the leadership team must assume this role and be provided training to carry it out effectively.

Alternatively, someone in the school who is involved with student supports (e.g. a pupil services professional, a Title I Coordinator, a special education resource specialist) can be invited to join the leadership team, assigned responsibility and accountability for ensuring the vision for the component is not lost, and provided Component leadership training. The leader, however chosen, will benefit from eliciting the help of other advocates/champions at the school and from the community.

HOW DOES A CASE-FOCUSED TEAM DIFFER FROM A SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT LEADERSHIP TEAM?

Every school that wants to improve student and learning supports needs a mechanism to enhance how schools address barriers to learning and teaching and re-engage disconnected students. As noted, most schools have teams that focus on individual student and related family problems (e.g., a student assistance team, an IEP team). These teams pursue functions such as referral, triage, and care

monitoring or management. They are not, however, empowered or positioned to focus on systemic improvements that could prevent problems and stem the tide of referrals. Exhibit 11.2 contrasts their case-by-case focus, with the functions required for system development leadership.

Exhibit 11.2
Contrasting Team Functions

A Case-oriented Team

Focuses on specific individuals and discrete services to address barriers to learning

Sometimes called:

Child Study Team
Student Study Team
Student Success Team
Student Assistance Team
Teacher Assistance Team
IEP Team

EXAMPLES OF FUNCTIONS:

- >triage
- >referral
- >case monitoring/management
- >case progress review
- >case reassessment

A System Development Leadership Team

Focuses on all students and the resources, programs, and systems to address barriers to learning & promote healthy development

Possibly called:

Learning Supports Leadership Team
Learning Supports Resource Team
Resource Coordinating Team
Resource Coordinating Council
School Support Team

EXAMPLES OF FUNCTIONS:

- >aggregating data across students and from teachers to analyze school needs
- >mapping resources at school & in the community
- >analyzing resources & formulating priorities for system development (in keeping with the most pressing needs at the school)
- >recommending how resources should be deployed and redeployed
- >coordinating and integrating school resources & connecting with community resources
- >planning and facilitating ways to strengthen and develop new programs and subsystems
- >developing strategies for enhancing resources
- >establishing workgroups as needed
- >social "marketing"

Two metaphors help differentiate the two types of teams and the importance of both sets of functions. A case-orientation fits what is usually referred to as the starfish metaphor.

The day after a great storm had washed up all sorts of sea life far up onto the beach, a youngster set out to throw back as many of the still-living starfish as he could. After watching him toss one after the other into the ocean, an old man approached him and said:

It's no use your doing that, there are too many, You're not going to make any difference.

The boy looked at him in surprise, then bent over, picked up another starfish, threw it in, and then replied: *It made a difference to that one!*

This metaphor, of course, reflects all the important clinical efforts undertaken by staff alone and when they meet together to work on specific cases.

The development leadership focus is captured by what can be called the bridge metaphor.

In a small town, one weekend a group of school staff went fishing together down at the river. Not long after they got there, a child came floating down the rapids calling for help. One of the group on the shore quickly dived in and pulled the child out. Minutes later another, then another, and then many more children were coming down the river. Soon every one in the group was diving in and dragging children to the shore, resuscitating them, and then jumping back.

But, there were too many. All of a sudden, in the midst of all this frenzy, one of the group stopped jumping in and was seen walking away. Her colleagues were amazed and irate. How could she leave when there were so many children to save? About an hour later, to everyone's relief, the flow of children stopped, and the group could finally catch their breath.

At that moment, their colleague came back. They turned on her and angrily shouted:

How could you walk off when we needed everyone here to save the children?

She replied:

It occurred to me that someone ought to go upstream and find out why so many kids were falling into the river. What I found is that the old wooden bridge had several planks missing, and when some children tried to jump over the gap, they couldn't make it and fell through into the river. So I got a team together, and we fixed the bridge.

Fixing and building better bridges is a good way to think about prevention, and it helps underscore the importance of taking time to improve and enhance resources, programs, and systems.

Who's on a Learning Supports Leadership Team?

Where feasible, a Learning Supports Leadership Team is formed as an inclusive group of informed, willing, and able stakeholders. This might include the following:

- administrative lead for the component
- school psychologist
- counselor
- school nurse
- school social worker
- behavioral specialist
- special education teacher
- representatives of community agencies involved regularly with the school
- student representation (when appropriate and feasible)
- others who have a particular interest and ability to help with the functions

Schools with few student and learning support staff will begin with only a few people.

Because schools have case-oriented teams that team may be able to expand its focus to cover the functions of a system development leadership team. This can work if the team is trained and facilitated to split its time and agenda effectively.

Once a Learning Supports Leadership Team is operational at a school, the organizational focus can turn to connecting it with other local schools, the district, and the community.

WHY CONNECT LEARNING SUPPORTS ACROSS A COMPLEX OR “FAMILY” OF SCHOOLS?

Schools in the same neighborhood experience and often share similar problems. Feeder schools commonly enroll students from the same family, and their children may all be experiencing problems. Some schools share student and learning support personnel. We think of those with such natural affiliations as a potential family of schools.

As illustrated in Exhibit 11.3, the connecting mechanism is a multi-site body, or what in the prototype is designated as a Learning Supports Leadership *Council*. It brings together one-two representatives from each participating school's Learning Supports Leadership Team. The objectives are to

- enhance communication among schools
- coordinate and integrate programs serving multiple schools
- identify and meet common needs with respect to guidelines and staff development
- create linkages and collaboration among schools and with community agencies (Multi-school councils are especially attractive to community agencies lacking the time or personnel to link with individual schools.)
- ensure cohesive and equitable deployment of student and learning support resources
- weave together human and financial resources from public and private sectors and encourage the pooling of resources to minimize redundancy, reduce costs, and achieve economies of scale

A multi-site council is particularly useful for integrating the efforts of high schools and their feeder middle and elementary schools. Think about supports for transitions. Think about shared crises. And think about working with families who have youngsters attending more than one level of schooling in the same cluster. (When such a family has several children in need of special attention, it is neither cost-effective nor good intervention for each school to contact a family separately.)

Natural starting points for councils include sharing each other's needs assessment, resource mapping, analyses, and recommendations about priorities for system improvement. Specific attention is paid to how each school can work together on common problems such as truancy, bullying, and community violence.

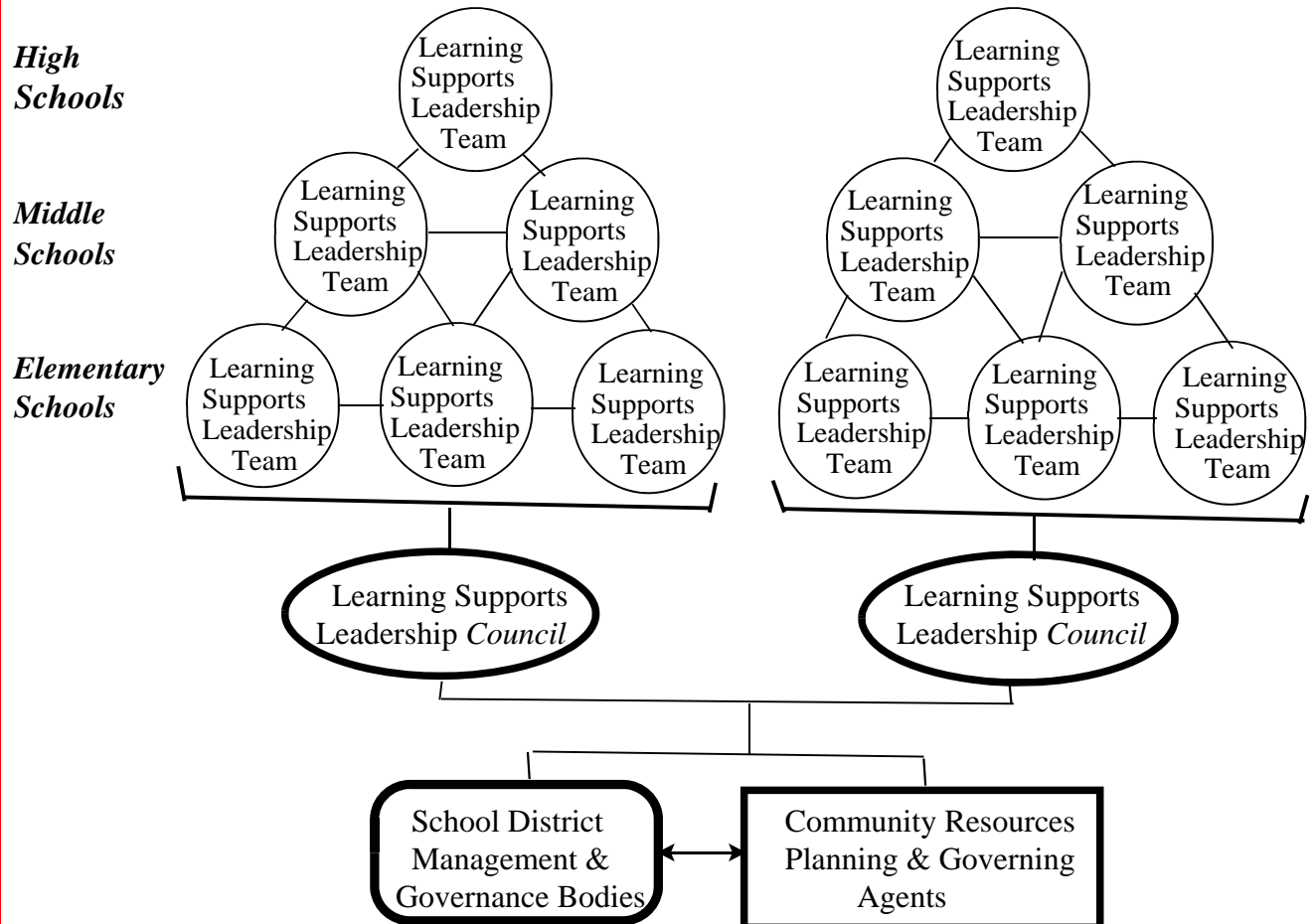
CONCLUDING COMMENTS FOR CHAPTER 11

Transformation of student and learning supports clearly requires reworking the existing operational infrastructure at school and district levels. A learning supports component must have an administrative leader. The leader needs the support of a system development leadership team and workgroups. Together they ensure the component is (1) fully developed and integrated as a primary and essential facet of school improvement, (2) working with a family of schools, and (3) outreaching to the community to fill critical system gaps.

As we have stressed, transformation of student and learning supports also requires a temporary set of operational mechanisms to *facilitate* the systemic changes. We turn these concerns now.

Exhibit 11.3

Connecting Resources Across a Family of Schools, a District, and Community-Wide



For more on details on rethinking the *operational infrastructure*, see

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/infrastructure/anotherinitiative-exec.pdf>

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/studentsupport/toolkit/aidk.pdf>

For examples of job descriptions for administrative leader for learning supports, see <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/toolkitb4.htm>

For an aid in mapping and analyzing resources, see

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/tool%20mapping%20current%20status.pdf>

Chapter 12. Processes and Lessons Learned in Facilitating Systemic Transformation

Substantive change begins with a design, a well-developed multi-year strategic plan, and resources to facilitate making it a sustainable reality

As discussed in Chapter 10, flagrant deficiencies associated with making systemic changes include failure to give sufficient strategic attention and time to

- underwriting and establishing an effective systemic change operational infrastructure
- creating readiness among a critical mass of key stakeholders in a setting where changes are to be introduced
- developing a design document to communicate and guide the work
- developing a multi-year strategic plan
- ensuring policy is instituted that makes the changes a high priority
- reworking an organization's daily operational infrastructure to support development and sustainability of the changes.

In what follows, we explore facets of each of these matters and share some lessons learned. The intent is to offer insights from research and practice as aids to those formulating strategic plans for facilitating implementation.

OPERATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE FOR ACCOMPLISHING SYSTEMIC CHANGE

In addition to the daily operational infrastructure, effective transformation requires a *facilitative* operational infrastructure. Exhibit 12.1 offers an example that can be customized (e.g., at district, school, state, regional education agency levels). This is a temporary infrastructure – put in place until the transformation is accomplished.

Dedicated, well-prepared and coordinated leadership is key to the success of systemic changes in a complex organization. Everyone must be aware of who is leading the way. And leaders must be sitting at key decision making tables when budgetary and other fundamental decisions are discussed. This is critical because the facilitative infrastructure requires appropriate resource allocation (e.g., staffing, budget, systemic change training, guidance materials, technical assistance).

With respect to staffing, it is essential to avoid just adding the work as another assignment to those who already are overly committed. Job descriptions must be modified to reflect new responsibilities and accountabilities. Professional development related to carrying out the essential functions as part of a team also requires special attention. (See examples of job descriptions online at – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/resourceaids.htm>)

Teamwork is essential!

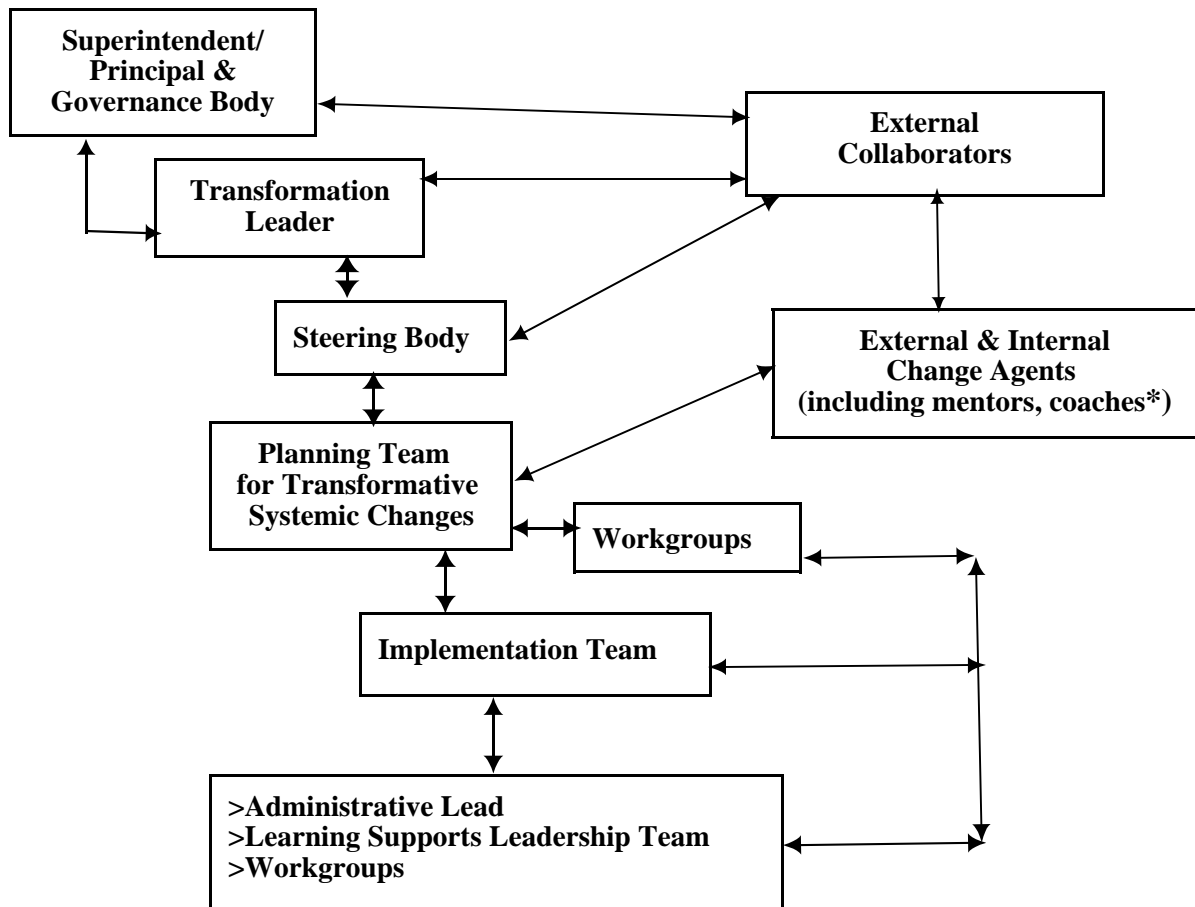


Sure it is; it lets you blame someone else.



Exhibit 12.1

Prototype for a Temporary Operational Infrastructure to Facilitate Transformation



*Mentors/coaches are used to guide establishment of the systemic change infrastructure, with a focus on

- preparing a broad enough range of key leaders and staff (e.g., leaders directly involved with student and learning supports and others, such as leaders for instruction, school improvement, data/evaluation; a given staff member may be part of several workgroups/teams)
- ensuring general understanding of each mechanism's functions and interrelationship (see Appendix E for examples)
- providing capacity building that ensures members understand the essence of what needs to be accomplished and are committed to making it happen
- assisting in development of clear action plans.

Some Lessons Learned

Operational infrastructure for change. We find that the need for a transformation leader and implementation team is readily comprehended; however, the importance of establishing temporary mechanisms to facilitate systemic changes is less appreciated. In observing efforts to transform schools, we rarely find an infrastructure for *facilitating* implementation. More characteristically, ad hoc mechanisms (e.g., a coach, an implementation team) have been set in motion with personnel who often have too little training for the job and without adequate processes for formative evaluation. And, it is common to find individuals and teams operating without clear understanding of functions and major tasks. The importance of reworking daily operational infrastructures and building an effective set of mechanisms to facilitate systemic changes cannot be overstated.

Champions/advocates. A well-chosen steering group can champion, guide, and remove barriers to moving the work forward. To do all this, the group needs a core of high level decision makers. In addition, we find it invaluable to cultivate an additional cadre of influential advocates who are highly motivated not just to help get things underway, but to ensure sustainability.

Administrative leadership. There is a tendency to just tack responsibility for the work onto already overworked administrators. When this happens, we find that leaders start strong but given the many challenges of their jobs and the complexities of systemic transformation, they become distracted and/or overwhelmed. Leadership for fundamental and major transformation is a job unto itself.

Outreach to resistant parties. It is common to find staff who are resistant to change. Some view the work as a distraction from and/or a competition with their current job descriptions. Others are afraid of losing their turf. To counter this, we make continuous efforts to reach out and include such folks in workgroups so that they become invested in the changes.

Revisiting agreements. As understanding of what is involved deepens, we have learned to review and revise initial agreements and procedures as necessary.

Protecting those making change. Because they are called upon to do many things that may be unpopular with some stakeholders, it is essential to put appropriate protections in place for those on the front line of change.

Continuous monitoring is required to watch for and strategically address all this

How many change agents does it take to change a light bulb?

Only one, but the bulb has to want to change!



CREATING READINESS, COMMITMENT, AND ENGAGEMENT

New initiatives often spend too little time creating readiness for change. Stakeholders must perceive proposed changes in ways that make them feel they are valued contributors to a collective identity, destiny, and vision. From the perspective of intrinsic motivation theory, change must be facilitated in ways that enhance participants' feelings of competence, self-determination, and connectedness with and commitment to each other.

Specific planning for creating readiness, commitment, and engagement is critical. With this in mind, we have extracted the following from the literature as highly relevant conditions to focus on in planning ways to enhance readiness for system change:

- a high level of policy commitment that is translated into appropriate resources, including space, budget, time, dedicated, respected, and accountable leadership and champions, and social marketing;
- open and effective communication about goals and procedures, including processes for countering uninformed gossip;
- incentives for change, such as intrinsically valued outcomes, expectations for success, recognition, and rewards and protections for when problems arise;
- procedural options from which those expected to implement change can select the ones they see as most workable;
- systemic change mechanisms that are perceived as likely to improve organizational health, enhance a sense of community, and empower stakeholders;*
- change agents who are perceived as pragmatic – maintaining ideals while embracing practical solutions;
- formal and flexible plans for accomplishing change in stages and with realistic timelines;
- development of formal agreements (with provision for revisions);
- procedures for engaging stakeholders who enter the system after the efforts are underway.

*Empowerment is a multi-faceted concept. Theoreticians distinguish “power over” from “power to” and “power from.” *Power over* involves explicit or implicit dominance over others and events; *power to* is seen as increased opportunities to act; *power from* implies ability to resist the power of others.

Some Lessons Learned

In our experience, the complexity of communication means it is almost always the case that initial introductory presentations are only partially understood. This interferes with creating *informed* readiness. Planning for creating readiness, commitment, and engagement must account for a variety of strategies to deepen understanding and counter misinterpretations of intended changes. It is essential to do this early to minimize the problems that will arise from uninformed “grape vine” gossip. Of particular importance is ensuring understanding and commitment to the essential elements that must be implemented and sustained if substantive, rather than cosmetic, change is to emerge (see Coda). Furthermore, given the inevitability of staff changes, a plan for bringing newcomers up to speed is vital.

DESIGN DOCUMENT

Development of a design document is key to communicating and guiding the work at state and local levels. See the state department examples developed in Alabama, Louisiana, and Iowa (online at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/trailblazing.htm>). For an example of work at the district level, see the overview document from Gainesville (GA) City School District (online at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdffdocs/wheresithappening/gainesvillebroch.pdf>), as well as the related case study (<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdffdocs/casestudy.pdf>).

A design document articulates:

- ***the imperative*** for the proposed transformative changes (see Part I)
- ***policy changes*** that ensure the intended transformation is not marginalized (e.g., that policy explicitly supports, at a high priority level, the development and sustainability of the impending changes – see Chapter 2)
- an ***intervention framework*** (e.g., that illustrates the nature and scope of a unified, comprehensive, and equitable system of student and learning supports – see Chapter 3)
- a framework for an ***organizational and operational infrastructure*** (e.g., that illustrates how existing mechanisms need to be reworked to support, develop, and sustain the transformation – see Chapter 11)
- how the systemic changes will be facilitated (see Exhibit 12-1)

As can be seen in the online examples of designs, it is common for organizations to adopt/adapt prototypes to account for situational opportunities, strengths, and limitations.

Some Lessons Learned

Mentors/coaches and working relationships. Mentors and coached have played instrumental roles in planning and guiding design document preparation. Such professional can be invaluable resources.

At the same time, we have found that not all mentors and coaches understand the complexity of their role. (See Appendix F for examples of major tasks for coaches/mentors; special references to coaching are provided at the end of this chapter.)

For instance, mentors/coaches often state: *It's all about relationship building.* However, many fail to understand the difference between just building a few good personal relationships and the importance of helping develop an extensive and long-lasting network of productive *working relationships*.

Fundamental and sustained system changes require effective *working relationships* among a critical mass of stakeholders. Such relationships emerge from establishing a set of steering, planning, and implementation mechanisms and weaving them into an effective operational infrastructure for systemic change. From this perspective, mentors and coaches and the relationships they establish are only one element in such an infrastructure.

It is worth remembering that some key stakeholders will not be interested in developing *personal* relationships with a coach or others involved in the transformation; this doesn't mean that such individuals won't play an effective role in working for change.

MULTI-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

Once the design is documented, the next step is to develop a multi-year strategic plan. A multi-year plan is essential because implementing and scaling-up a unified and comprehensive system of learning supports requires *phased-in* change over several years. Such a plan and related yearly action planning are key to effective implementation, sustainability, and replication to scale of any major transformation. (See our *General Guide for Strategic Planning Related to Developing a Unified and Comprehensive System of Learning Supports* (<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/genguide.pdf>.)

In brief, strategic planning is a systematic process that translates a desired future into (a) a broad set of goals or objectives and (b) a sequence of strategic activity to accomplish the major phases and tasks involved in achieving the transformation design. The plan spells out an answer to: *How do we get there from here?*

In general, sites need to develop a multi-year strategic plan that

- (1) provides an *overview* of how the intended transformation will be pursued,
- (2) conveys a *detailed plan for initial direct implementation and its facilitation* (with an emphasis on strategies that anticipate sustainability, renewal, summative evaluation and accountability),
- (3) delineates strategic approaches to each key facet of facilitating implementation, such as establishing a temporary operational change infrastructure, capacity building, and formative evaluation.

The multi-year plan stresses objectives, steps, and tasks for each phase of systemic change and general strategies for accomplishing them. The plan accounts for implementing the design in a given setting and facilitating replication and scale-up.

In formulating plans, keep in mind that schools and classrooms are the central focus. The simple truth is that: *If planned changes do not end up playing out effectively at schools and in classrooms, they mean little.*

Some Lessons Learned

Good strategic and action planning accounts for situational opportunities, strengths, and limitations. Such plans also address matters meant to block change – often raised by those who are reluctant or resistant to making the transformation.*

Regular reviews of plans and monitoring how they are carried out also is essential. And as noted, initial agreements and procedures often must be revised as the work proceeds and understanding deepens.

*Most fundamentally, we hear it argued that there is no money for the work. Effective responses to such challenges are essential to ensuring that the work is not undermined. Our response with respect to the financial argument is that, for many LEAs and schools, it is estimated that about 25% of the budget is expended on addressing barriers to learning and teaching. Strategic planning focuses on redeploying such resources to develop a more cost-effective system.

ENSURING POLICY FACILITATES TRANSFORMATION

Accountability and standards for guiding practice are two fundamental policy drivers. Therefore, ending the policy marginalization of a learning supports component requires (1) an expanded accountability framework that includes leading indicators of direct outcomes (review Appendix A) and (2) standards for a learning supports component (review Appendix B).

Finally, with scale-up and sustainability in mind, policy makers must ensure that sufficient resources are allocated for establishing and building the capacity of the temporary operational infrastructure for accomplishing systemic change.

Some Lessons Learned

Demonstrations, pilots, and projects. Transformation of student and learning supports requires policy for effective replication and sustainability that addresses the scale of need. A frequent problem is decisions to only implement demonstrations and pilots (e.g., at one or two sites) rather than establishing a policy for phasing in changes at all schools over several years. Demonstrations in a district rarely are scaled-up.

A related problem is escaping “project mentality” (sometimes referred to as “projectitis”). We find a common tendency is for those involved in the transformation process to think about their work only as a temporary project (e.g., “It will end when this superintendent/principal leaves.” “It will end when the special funding runs out.”). This mind set often leads to a general view that the work doesn’t warrant serious engagement. The history of schools is strewn with valuable innovations that were not sustained.

Of course, frequent leadership changes (e.g., superintendents, principals, other key stakeholders) do tend to reverse changes that are underway. Countering this requires institutionalizing transformation policies and procedures as early as feasible. It also calls for planning strategies to effectively engage new decision makers and shapers.

REWORKING DAILY OPERATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

To ensure continuing development, sustainability, and creative renewal of a learning supports component, the functions of a temporary infrastructure for facilitating systemic changes eventually are subsumed by the daily operational infrastructure. As discussed in the preceding chapter, a reworking of the daily operational infrastructure is done at school and district levels, with school needs supported by the district (review Exhibit 11.1 and Appendix D). In addition, remember that enhancing outcomes, generating efficiencies, and achieving economies of scale requires establishing mechanisms to connect a family or complex (e.g., feeder pattern) of schools and building collaborations with community resources (review Exhibit 11.3).

(For more on reworking operational infrastructure, see the Center’s Systemic Change Tool kit – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/toolkitb3.htm>).

CONCLUDING COMMENTS FOR PART III

Transforming education requires processes that facilitate substantive and sustainable systemic change. Such processes include articulating the design for innovative new directions and a multi-year strategic plan for phasing in the changes.

Supporting the work requires a temporary district/school operational infrastructure for facilitating implementation of the strategic plan. It also involves a reworking of the ongoing daily operational infrastructures at school and district levels and for connecting schools with each other and the community.

In underwriting transformation, the emphasis is first on weaving together what education agencies already allocate (e.g., pupil services, special and compensatory education and other categorical programs). Over time, increasing efforts are made to link school resources with those from home and community (e.g., formally connecting school programs with assets at home, neighborhood enrichment, recreation, and service agencies, businesses, service clubs, faith-based organizations).

Finally, well-designed and carried out leadership coaching and mentoring at every level is invaluable in making transformation a reality.

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