Resources for Pursuing Systems Change in Collective Impact

READY BY 21 CONFERENCE, SEATTLE
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Here’s what we hope to accomplish today

• Develop a **shared understanding** of systems change

• Improve your ability to **apply systems change strategies** your work
The human mind does not read every letter by itself, but preciesieves the word as a whole.
A group of **interacting, interrelated, and interdependent** components that form a whole.

A system’s overall purpose or goal is achieved through the **actions and interactions** of its components.
*systems* generate outcomes and hold problems in place
Introduction to the iceberg

EVENTS
What just happened?

PATTERNS
What trends have there been over time?

UNDERLYING STRUCTURES
What has influenced the patterns? What are the relationships between the parts?

MENTAL MODELS
What assumptions, beliefs, and values do people hold about the system? What beliefs keep the system in place?
Systems thinking can be leveraged to accelerate systems change

**Systems change** is a process of shifting the conditions holding a problem in place

Source: John Kania, Mark Kramer, and Peter Senge, “The Water of Systems Change”
There are several leverage points in the system, some of which are more explicit than others.

**Systems Change Conditions**

- **Policy**
- **Practices**
- **Resource Flows**

**Structural Change** (explicit)

- **Relationships & Connections**
- **Power Dynamics**
- **Mental Models**

**Policies**
Government / school boards / businesses / nonprofits rules, regulations and priorities

**Practices**
Organizational and practitioner activities that reflect their values and priorities

**Resource Flows**
How money, people, knowledge and information are allocated and distributed across a system
There are several leverage points in the system, some of which are more explicit than others.

**Systems Change Conditions**

- **Policy**
- **Practices**
- **Resource Flows**

**Relationships & Connections**
Quality of relationships, connections, and communication occurring between system players.

**Power Dynamics**
Which individuals and organizations hold decision-making power, authority, influence.

(semi-explicit)
There are several leverage points in the system, some of which are more explicit than others.

Mental Models
Deeply held beliefs and assumptions that influence one’s actions
## Systems Change Examples: Students graduate from high school college and career ready

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>System Change Condition</th>
<th>Illustrative Strategy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policies</strong></td>
<td>Adjust the credential requirements; integrate more culturally diverse content in assessment materials, promote competency based courses, reduce zero tolerance policies</td>
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<td><strong>Practices</strong></td>
<td>Mandate implicit bias training for principals, assistant principals, teachers, and guidance counselors, incorporate SEL into classrooms, the school building and with external partners. Conduct equity scans of districts on funding, teacher quality, access to electives</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Resource Flows</strong></td>
<td>Increase funding for year-round mentorship programs for black &amp; Latino youth as well as additional extracurricular academic &amp; recreational programs and programing with OST partners</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Relationships &amp; Connections</strong></td>
<td>Create more cooperative education programs at universities to provide students with in-depth work experience and early connections to potential employers after graduation, expand partnerships with OST,</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Power Dynamics</strong></td>
<td>Educate students on how to take ownership of their learning and effective approaches for self-advocacy in different contexts, add students as voting members to school boards and school building committees</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Mental Models</strong></td>
<td>Educate students, families, and the collective community about the available options for financial support to fund a college degree or trade credential</td>
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Action Learning Exercise

Part 1: External Assessment

Part 2: Internal Assessment

Part 3: Next Steps

*Today we will work through Part 1 together*
Part 1: Think!

- Question 1: Select the issue
- Question 2: Write your aspirational outcome
- Question 3: What existing elements are reinforcing current conditions holding the problem in place?
- Question 4: What strategies can help advance systems change efforts? Who needs to be involved?

Take 15 minutes to work through pieces 1 - 4
Pair!

Spend 5 minutes each sharing your work with a partner
Share!

• What came up for you when completing the exercise?

• Which system change levers are you most focused on, and why?

• Which system change levers would be new or different for you to engage on?
Thank you!

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