



CT Superintendent's Community of Practice

December 8, 2015

Series Facilitators

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www.greatschoolspartnership.org/presentations

Series Outcomes

- Build capacity to implement mastery-based learning at scale across a school district
- Explore and share ideas and strategies underway or planned in alignment with implementation
- Create a network of like-minded educators for political and cultural support

Meeting Dates

- September 22, 2015—Cromwell, Crowne Plaza
- October 27, 2015—New Haven
- **December 8, 2015—Farmington**
- January 26, 2016—location TBD
- March 1, 2016—location TBD
- May 3, 2016—location TBD

Agenda

Welcome & Agenda Overview

Engaging the Public

Presenting Dilemmas

Closing and Next Steps

Group Norms

- Build on and support one another's efforts
- Acknowledge and encourage different approaches as we collaborate
- Trust the integrity of our colleagues
- Monitor our air time in group gatherings
- Communicate openly, clearly, and directly
- Acknowledge and honor different perspectives
- Assume positive intentions of all members
- Honor confidentiality regarding the conversations held here

Participant Expectations

- Follow and support the norms
- Attend all PLG meetings
- Contribute as able between meetings

Engaging the Public

How to **talk** about
Mastery-Based Learning

Things to Think About

- Effective communication strategies can make or break a school-improvement process
- Public schools will only change as much as the public allows...and can understand
- Everyone is an expert

What Does the Research Tell Us?

Frameworks Institute Findings

School Board Focus Group Findings

Frameworks Institute Findings

Little Picture Thinking

Education systems are invisible, which makes many reforms unimaginable.

Frameworks Institute Findings

The Tangible Triad

Unframed conversations about education and education reform tend to default to three highly visible actors who are judged as primarily responsible for education results: **parents, teachers, and students.**

Frameworks Institute Findings

Default Settings

The kinds of reforms that are easiest to think about are the most conventional: **money,**
“the basics,” and computers.

Frameworks Institute Findings

Avoid the Crisis Frame

Crisis thinking, while common in educational communications and campaigns, leads to caution and conservatism, not innovation and transformation.

Frameworks Institute Findings

A Focus on Self Interest

Since most people feel they do not have an agency, power, or authority when it comes to changing the education system, they adopt a defensive posture that favors a consumerist “me and my kid” approach to education issues.

Frameworks Institute Findings

A Future Preparation Focus

When the goal of education is explicitly described as the future preparation needed to maintain and support our country's quality of life, people understand that a new set of skills and experiences are necessary.

Frameworks Institute Findings

Make it Understandable

When people begin to understand the education system in concrete, familiar terms, and they recognize the need to coordinate its different parts for the good of the whole, they become more expansive in their thinking about how and where reform might take place.

Frameworks Institute Findings

Reform versus “Transformation”

When people can see reform as a practical act or as a set of methodical steps toward an ultimate goal, they gain agency and become more enthusiastic about education reforms.

Frameworks Institute Findings

Lead with Values + Simplify

Individual education reforms need to be connect to core values and familiar concepts to avoid people's tendency to default to strong, entrenched patterns of thinking.

Frameworks Institute Findings

Universal Values

Freedom ★ Prosperity ★ Opportunity

Fairness ★ Honesty ★ Trust

Community ★ Cooperation ★ Protection

Fulfillment ★ Self-Determination ★ Family
Responsibility

NESSC School Board Focus Groups

21st century skills—like critical thinking, problem solving, teamwork, financial literacy, and technology—are essential for success in today’s world.	4.91
The goal of high school is to prepare every student for success in life.	4.83
High schools need to make sure that graduates leave with the skills they need to be competitive workers in the global knowledge economy.	4.60
It’s every high school’s responsibility to teach students the skills they need to succeed in college, work, and citizenship.	4.50
Today’s high schools need to teach relevant, real-world skills that students can apply in every area of adult life.	4.47
High schools should provide personalized learning opportunities and flexible pathways to graduation that allow students to manage and design their own education.	4.43
Our high schools need to be more student-centered and provide personalized learning opportunities that are based on each student’s interests and aspirations.	4.39
A high school diploma should be based on demonstrated proficiency—it should certify that all students have achieved high learning standards.	4.37
In the 21st century, students need some form of higher education or postsecondary training to get a good job.	4.28
We need strong high schools to make sure our students can compete for jobs against workers from India and China.	4.11
Our high schools haven’t changed much for decades—they need to be more innovative when it comes to how they teach today’s students.	4.09
Improving equity and reducing achievement gaps between poor students and wealthy students, and between minorities and white students, should be a primary goal of our education system.	3.93
Every student should graduate from high school prepared for college.	3.20

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Are We Marketing **To** or Engaging **With** the Public?

Marketing ←————→ **Engagement**

When are we doing marketing and public relations?

When are we authentically engaging?

At what point are we on the continuum?

Communications Continuum

Marketing

Engagement



Fast

Slow

You

Them

One-way

Multidirectional

Broadcasting

Conversing

Positional

Relational

Salesmanship

Leadership

Autocracy

Democracy

Engagement Continuum

Selling

Informing

Advising

Co-Deciding



Key Points to Consider in Public Engagement Mastery-Based Learning

KEY POINTS

What is on the table for engagement?
And what is not?

Engagement Continuum

Selling

Informing

Advising

Co-Deciding



KEY POINTS

Teachers need to understand the changes and be able to communicate well about the changes.

KEY POINTS

Parents and the community must feel that they have had input into the changes.

KEY POINTS

Use of the media is important

KEY POINTS

Board members need to be ready to lead.

KEY POINTS

Simplify what you are doing by using graphics and compelling stories.

KEY POINTS

Students—be clear about the role and content of student engagement.

KEY POINTS

Timeline is important to clarify both for the engagement as well as the implementation plan.

KEY POINTS

Teachers

Parents

Use of media

Board members

Simplify

What is on the table?

Students

Timeline

Table Discussions

Your administrative team
*(superintendent, assistants,
principals, assistant principals, etc.)*
has explored and researched
mastery-based learning and
decides that this will be the next
initiative for the district.

Using “sticky notes” for the **KEY POINTS**, figure out a pathway of public engagement around this initiative.

You can use the **KEY POINTS** more than once.

Gallery Walk

And Debrief

Take a look around to see what other groups have done and then debrief the activity.

Quick Fire Consultancy

Step 1	Preparation of dilemmas (3 minutes)
Step 2	First person presents (3 minutes)
Step 3	Clarifying questions (2 minutes)
Step 4	Feedback from the group: What did we hear? What do we think about the problem? (8 minutes)
Step 5	Presenter response (2 minutes)
Step 6	Repeat with each group member (15 minutes each)
Step 7	Summary conversation (5 minutes)



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HOMEWORK: Read High Leverage Policy Framework