



Breakout Session

Partnering with Families to Shape the Post-COVID World

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In February, we were here. Moving along in the relative safety of the status quo.

Then, COVID created
CHAOS

Now we are sitting here, in a turbulent place between where we came from and where we must go. Hidden currents & unpredictable challenges can keep the team in CHAOS



Once we came through the the **CHAOS** of COVID, there was no going back: Families and communities have a significant new role in education... racial inequity is on full display... going back is going up stream with those who care about these issues.

So how do we engage with this messy middle space?

We embrace the nature of working in complexity



We are at the bottom of the waterfall

Projecting the transmission dynamics of SARS-CoV-2 through the postpandemic period

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“...prolonged or intermittent social distancing may be necessary into 2022. Additional interventions, including expanded critical care capacity and an effective therapeutic, would improve the success of intermittent distancing and hasten the acquisition of herd immunity....Even in the event of apparent elimination, SARS-CoV-2 surveillance should be maintained because a resurgence in contagion could be possible as late as 2024.”

Our current models are unsustainable

At a local elementary school, 26% of students elected to return to in person in October. That was fortuitous - it would have allowed there to be on average 22 students per grade - about 1 class worth. With a redistribution of paraprofessionals across the grades, that would have allowed 2 adults to split the 22 students to maintain social distancing in two classroom spaces.

The entire district has decided to remain virtual due to rising numbers, pushing off possible in-person instruction to January.

But what if in January, we have 40% of students electing to return? In this situation, we have 34 students per grade. What if the COVID surge continues and in-person is delayed again?

“

I hate it when I am right. I said this would happen over a month ago. Good luck riding it out waiting on a reopening plan that now won't come until "at least Jan 2021". We can't (and won't) put my son through that. Maybe we will be Pandas again next fall. But until then, we are officially going to be an unenrolled from public school, homeschool family. I've learned a lot about the relationships I've had or thought I had with many people around here. And I suppose you have all learned a lot about me too. As some of you celebrate your victory over choice and the emotional wellbeing of children like my son, I'm happy to know that there is still one choice that you can not take away from us.

”

Districts and schools will face two impacts of having increasingly desperate families

An **INCREASE** in the number of people who are opting into returning to buildings

AND

An **INCREASE** in the number of people opting out of school altogether

Both of these will be tremendous strains on the system, one in the short term, the other in the long term.

Reflective Pause - In the chat...

In what ways does feel consistent with your experience?

In what ways does your context differ?

What is the way forward?

How do we keep everyone in the raft?

How do we manage the complexity, uncertainties and pitfalls ahead?

How do we paddle together?



Equity-seeking Tenets: Involve families in radically different ways

WHAT IS THE WORK?

Learning is the work, and how we do the work. As children learn, adults should learn.

WHO IS IN THE ROOM?

We convene many perspectives to learn and act together.

WHAT DO WE LEARN ABOUT?

We do equity-seeking inquiry on complex issues.

HOW ARE PEOPLE ORGANIZED?

We disrupt traditional silos while supporting affinity groups of many kinds.

HOW DO PEOPLE ACT TOWARDS EACH OTHER?

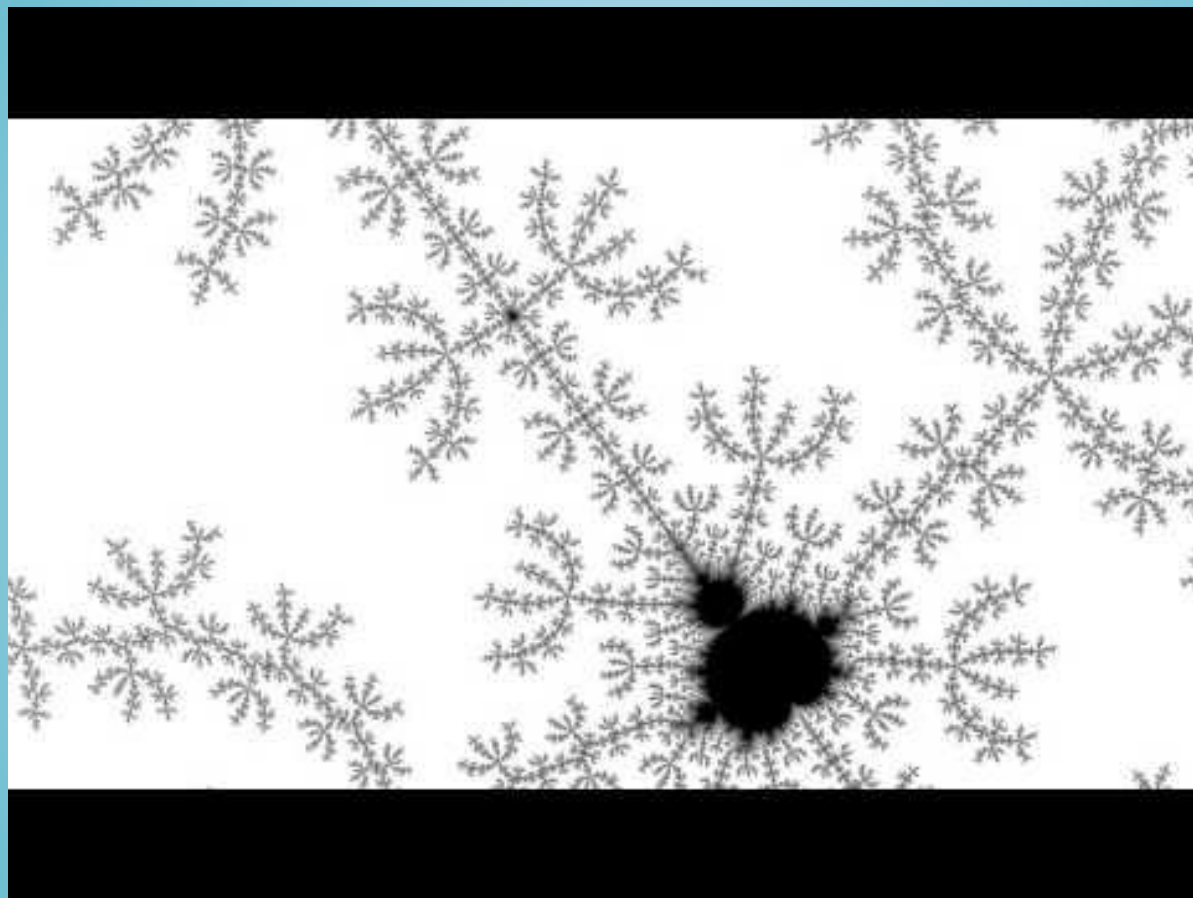
We interrupt patterns of oppression.

HOW DO WE WORK?

We co-create so that everyone feels shared responsibility and reciprocity.

WHAT IS THE LONG GAME?

We make systems more just and democratic by spreading these ways of working.



What might it look like to work within the tenets?

	Looks like less of this...	and more of this
<i>Learning is the work</i>	Knowing exactly where you are going	Asking important questions
<i>Deep inquiry on equity</i>	Avoiding uncomfortable truths	Exploring thorny issues
<i>Convene many perspectives</i>	Focus groups and surveys	Learning communities that explicitly include students and families on the margins
<i>Disrupt silos, respect affinities</i>	Department meetings siloed from all-staff meetings	Role-alike groups and identity-based groups weaving in and out of teams working across hierarchies and boundaries
<i>Interrupt patterns of oppression</i>	Highest paid person in the room has sway	Treating everyone like an expert
<i>Co-create for shared responsibility</i>	Change via memo and press release	Shared compacts, plans. Marshalling shared political weight.
<i>Make systems more open</i>	Closed meetings where the “real” decisions happen.	These ways of working spreading from one project team to another. Communities of communities.

Tenets Self-Reflection

In looking at the “less of this and more of this” slide, where are your (or your organization’s) areas of strength and where are your areas of potential growth?

3 experiments in living out these Tenets

North Dakota PK-12 Alliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● We convene many perspectives to learn and act together.● We disrupt traditional silos while supporting affinity groups of many kinds.
Local Build-Measure-Learn cycles	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● We co-create so that everyone feels shared responsibility and reciprocity.● We do equity-seeking inquiry on complex issues.
Climb Higher Colorado	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● We do equity-seeking inquiry on complex issues.● We interrupt patterns of oppression.● We co-create so that everyone feels shared responsibility and reciprocity.

North Dakota PK-12 Alliance

Who	A group of parents, community members, teachers, administrators from across the state
What	Develop innovative strategies to support student learning during COVID and beyond
How	Design thinking focused on users who are traditionally marginalized by the system
Example of the work	<u>Innovation Strategies</u> <u>Overview of Process</u>
Questions to consider	How did this process break down traditional silos and surface diverse perspectives?

Local Build-Measure-Learn Cycles

Who	School-based teams that include educators, students and families
What	Test assumptions of re-opening with increasingly sophisticated experiments that require collaboration across silos
How	Lean Startup techniques - Build, Measure, Learn
Example of the work	<u>Progression of tests and process</u>
Questions to consider	How does this process support co-creation and shared learning?

Climb Higher Colorado

Who	4 teams from schools and districts across Colorado Each team has educators, families and students
What	Develop innovative strategies to support student learning during COVID and beyond
How	Liberatory Design focused on users who are traditionally marginalized by the system Intentional focus on power dynamics within teams
Example of the work	<u>Examples of “equity pauses”</u> across 4 sessions
Questions to consider	How does this process interrupt patterns of oppression?

Choose breakouts

In the chat, type your choice: Climb Higher, Build Measure Learn, or North Dakota

Discussion Prompts:

Climb Higher	How does this process interrupt patterns of oppression?
Build Measure Learn	How does this process support co-creation and shared learning?
North Dakota	How did this process break down traditional silos and surface diverse perspectives?

Closing Reflections

What resonates about the Equity-Seeking Tenets? What do you still have questions about?

Where do you notice alignment between the Tenets and the experiments you studied? Where is there misalignment?



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