

LEADING CHANGE IN A STRESSED SYSTEM

Schools started a massive, unplanned experiment in virtual learning – and support – for educators, staff, and their students in spring 2020. Here's what we've learned from across the country about what they need to respond to the current situation that schools are facing.

NEED #1: CONNECTIVITY AND EQUITY

Resources for basic connectivity to online learning experiences are scarce in many places and are not equitably distributed.

"Throwing [educators] into the water and telling them to swim is going to set them up for failure. It's our job to scaffold this in a way that teachers can grasp."

NEED #2: EFFECTIVENESS

Challenges with instructional practice and technology integration are amplified in an online environment.

"I have been in the mode of getting teachers what they need and making sure they have a platform. I have not been focusing yet on what I need to do to support them and the types of VLCs [virtual learning communities] that I need to make sure are in place for my admin team and teachers."

NEED #3: INCLUSION

Few online learning tools and techniques are appropriate for ALL learning needs.

"Everyone isn't tech savvy or able to multitask a chat AND a presentation. Additionally, some thrive better with the ability to have live discussions... or chat box discussions."

NEED #4: SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

Missing touchstones of community for classes or PLCs can create barriers to social-emotional learning, engagement, and progress.

"I know language skills will be impacted. Those critical facial cues are just a bit different than in person. It's harder to recognize especially if you're sharing your screen and you can't see all faces."

NEED #5: SUSTAINABILITY

Schools do not yet have ways to ensure continuity of effective online learning for students or professionals.

"I want to be sure that we learn from this experience and figure out what to carry forward to redesign the education system moving forward"



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ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF CHANGE LEADERS

What will it take to address the needs educators identified so that students can be supported in these challenging times? Here are some key concepts they are addressing.

VISION AND STRATEGY

ADMINISTRATORS

How might we...

- Co-create or articulate a vision for what we are working to accomplish during this time of crisis?
- Engage teachers to determine the degree to which academic expectations have been adjusted to meet current circumstances?

TEACHERS

How might we...

- Engage in the co-creation of a modified vision for what can be accomplished during this time of crisis?
- Leverage our knowledge of student needs to inform the vision and strategy of our department/school/district?

SUPPORTIVE ADMINISTRATION

How might we...

- Ensure that educators have access to the supports they need to transition teaching and learning online?
- Translate what we know about effective adult learning to an online space?
- Design professional learning that addresses the specific needs of individual educators?

How might we...

- Communicate with administration about the social-emotional and professional supports we need?
- Ensure that administrators are informed about the status of our students, especially those who are most vulnerable?

CAPACITY AND RESOURCES

How might we...

- Ensure that educators can quickly develop the skills needed to adapt to the individual needs of students in an online space?
- Provide the resources educators need to create an equitable learning environment for their students?

How might we...

- Build our skills to translate what we know about effective teaching practice to an online learning environment?
- Access and utilize previously underutilized resources to create a more equitable learning environment for all students?

WORK STRUCTURES

How might we...

- Adjust expectations about how learner time is structured?
- Support mindful articulation from in-person to online, as a new skill set for teaching and leadership?
- Use teamed facilitation (or co-teaching) to support a degree of consciousness in creating effective online learning environments?

How might we...

- Redesign how online class time is structured to meet with individual or small groups of students?
- Restructure how we interact with students so that we can create a safe environment for all students?
- Create authentic learning experiences for students that leverage the current reality of their learning environment?

RELATIONSHIPS

How might we...

- Support the social emotional needs of educators so that they can do the same for students?
- Create a sense of community in virtual space?
- Cultivate critical self-awareness among educators that is necessary to improve online practice and community-building?

How might we...

- Provide authentic opportunities for students to build strong relationships with us, one another, and other significant adults in their lives?
- Provide enough online class structure for students to feel safe, yet enough flexibility for them to engage in deeper learning experiences?



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