Breaking Away: Leading Cultural Change
Ten Minnesota Commitments to Equity

1. Prioritize equity.
2. Start from within.
4. Go local.
5. Follow the money.
7. Monitor implementation of standards.
8. Value people.
10. Give students options.
Take this opportunity to authentically reflect.
Engage fully with a thought partner.
Be mindful of honoring others’ stories.
Seven Leadership Practices

• Developing a shared mission, vision and goals with staff
• Developing a school leadership team and fostering teacher leadership
• Recognizing, respecting and employing each student’s strengths, diversity, and culture as assets for teaching and learning (cultural responsiveness and attentiveness to equity)
• Providing meaningful and effective instructional feedback to teachers
• **Leading through change effectively for continuous improvement**
• Developing an aligned system of curriculum, assessment and instruction.
• **Building a trusting and positive learning culture/climate**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXPLORING</th>
<th>BECOMING</th>
<th>GROWING</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leader is...</strong></td>
<td><strong>Leader is working with Leadership Team to...</strong></td>
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<td>• Learning about creating cultural change... and</td>
<td>• Analyzes ...</td>
<td>• Use data</td>
<td>• Implements the action plan</td>
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<td>• Reflecting on ...</td>
<td>• practices ...</td>
<td>• Identify ...</td>
<td>• Collects evidence ...</td>
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<td>• Actively engages students and families, with particular attention to those underrepresented and /or underserved</td>
<td>• Develop an action plan and strategies to ...</td>
<td>• Adjusts actions</td>
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<td>• Identifies and develops planning steps needed to...</td>
<td>• Develop relationships with community agencies/external partners</td>
<td>• Continuously works toward increased implementation fidelity</td>
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<td>• Builds coalitions</td>
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<td>• Advocates for equity and justice</td>
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## LP# 5: Leading through change effectively for continuous improvement

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<tr>
<td>• Learning about change leadership...</td>
<td>• Engages stakeholders</td>
<td>• Identify Adaptive challenges</td>
<td>• Develops a culture of change</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Implementing district initiated changes and/or school technical changes,</td>
<td>• Assesses readiness for change</td>
<td>• Create a vision</td>
<td>• Models and supports</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Reflecting on change management practices</td>
<td>• Creates coherence</td>
<td>• Anticipate challenges</td>
<td>• Sustains focus</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Understands how change affects students, staff and community</td>
<td>• Develop an implementation plan</td>
<td>• Promotes collective collaboration</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Focuses on comprehensive communication</td>
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<td>• Systematically gathers data enabling continuous improvements</td>
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Change in organizations is challenging, but perhaps the most daunting is changing culture.
Why is changing a culture so difficult?

What are three levels of culture?

What is a cultural problem that requires change?

What steps can be taken to facilitate a change in a system’s culture?
Personality is to an individual as culture is to a system.

If the analogy holds true, how might staff respond when a change in school culture is suggested?

What might the analogy suggest as to why culture change is so challenging?
Culture is a far more amorphous concept and reflects deeply held values, traditions and patterns of behavior. Often those beliefs are so ingrained into the fabric of the school that people don’t even think about them.

Climate often reflects the relationships among and with students, teachers, families, and administrators. Climate can be described as the morale of the school at a given point in time.

Culture or Climate?
A perceived problem that needs to be addressed, to more effectively meet student needs, is a critical entry point for cultural change.
Consider an element of the culture within your school that helps define the school, is broadly and deeply shared to the point it is carried out quite often unconsciously. It is so pervasive that it has become the correct way to think, feel or behave.
Artifacts are the visible organizational structures and processes. Espoused values are the mission and vision of our organizations. Assumptions and beliefs are the often unconscious perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and thoughts behind our values and actions.
Level 1 – What Are Artifacts?

What you see, hear and feel when you... review data, walk the hallways/visit classrooms, observe a professional learning community (PLC), chat with a custodian, take calls from parents, review disciplinary reports, notice staff or student clothing, listen to conversations among staff, students, and community members, plan for year-end celebrations, induct new staff, display artwork and trophies?

...It’s the visible, noticeable facts.
What’s going on here?
Level 2 - What Are Our Espoused Values?

 Sense of what ought to be

 Ideas, goals, values, aspirations
 Mission and Vision language
 Belief Statements

 What do we say we value and believe is important?

 May or may not be congruent with artifacts
What do we say we value and believe?
Unconscious, taken-for-granted beliefs and values that determine behavior, perception, thought, and feeling.

At this level, cultures tell their members who they are, how to behave toward each other, what to pay attention to, and how to feel good about themselves. Sometimes it conveys “the only way”...
Leaders embed and reinforce (intentionally or unintentionally) beliefs, values and assumptions:

1. What do we **pay attention to, measure and control** regularly?

2. How do we **react to critical incidents**, e.g. emotional outbursts, what is not paid attention to, inconsistency and conflict?

3. How do we **allocate resources**?

4. What do we deliberately **role model**, teach and coach?

5. How do we **allocate rewards** and **status**?

6. How do we **recruit, select, promote** and **excommunicate**?
To what degree are artifacts consistent with espoused values?

What unintended messages may we be sending?
Recognizing this destabilization makes us aware why “changing” culture is so anxiety provoking.
According to Tom Smith, Senior Leadership and Field Team Advisor, and Roger Connors, authors of Change the Culture, Change the Game, experiences are the base of the pyramid, followed by beliefs, then actions and finally results. A plate divides beliefs and actions, symbolizing the obstacles (implicit biases, unconscious assumptions and beliefs) making movement to changes in actions difficult.

“It’s really simple –

experiences shape beliefs, beliefs determine actions, and actions produce results, all of which form the organizational culture – and it’s happening in your organization every minute of every day.”

www.partnersinleadership.com
www.doortraining.co.in
Schein’s 10 Step Process for Discovering Culture

1) Obtain leadership commitment to address the issue / problem
2) Identify and engage stakeholders in self-assessment
3) Create a collaborative setting where every voice is honored
4) Explain purpose
5) Understand how to think about culture – present 3 levels
6) Elicit description of Artifacts – Ask, “What is going on here?”
7) Identify Espoused Values and Beliefs – Ask, “What do we say we value and believe?”
8) Identify shared Unconscious Assumptions – Ask, “To what degree are artifacts consistent with our espoused values and beliefs? What unintended messages may we be sending?”
9) Identify cultural aids and hindrances. Given the problem, ask, “What assets and barriers exist?”
10) Make collaborative decisions on next steps.

Adapted from Edgar Schein, 2017
John Kotter’s Eight-Step Process for Leading Change

- Create a sense of urgency
- Build a guiding coalition
- Form a strategic vision and initiatives
- Enlist a volunteer army
- Enable action by removing barriers
- Generate short-term wins
- Sustain acceleration
- Institute change
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<th><strong>Competency</strong></th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Communicate</td>
<td>to build / sustain commitment</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Collaborate</td>
<td>bring people together to plan and execute the change</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Commit</td>
<td>shift own beliefs, approaches, behaviors</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Initiate</td>
<td>make the case for the change with a clear vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Strategize</td>
<td>develop the change plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Execute</td>
<td>implement and monitor the plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Support</td>
<td>remove personal and professional barriers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Sway</td>
<td>gain support and involvement of key stakeholders and groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Learn</td>
<td>gather and use feedback to make adjustments</td>
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The Change Cycle includes six stages:

- **Stage 1 - Loss**
- **Stage 2 - Doubt**
- **Stage 3 - Discomfort**

The danger zone is between stages 3 and 4; individuals and groups may turn away from the change and return to old ways of doing things if they don’t navigate this zone effectively.

- **Stage 4 - Discovery**
- **Stage 5 - Understanding**
- **Stage 6 - Integration**

“The secret of change is to focus all of your energy not on fighting for the old but on building the new.”

- Socrates
Reflecting on Change Models

How are the models similar?
How are the models different?
What are common components?
How does this compare with your experience of change? (personal and professional)
What can we learn from these change processes and models?
Resources

Change Leadership – A Guide for School Leaders (MDE website)
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<th><strong>Coaching / Mentoring</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Building foundational knowledge</td>
<td>Deep dive into one or more practices based on agreed upon needs of participants</td>
<td>Contextualized, deep dive into one or more practices based on self-assessment of prioritized needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus based upon theme of conference or request</td>
<td>Learn, Plan, Apply, Reflect cycles during regularly scheduled, ongoing sessions</td>
<td>Specific, personalized coaching and action plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grounded in evidence-based resources</td>
<td>Regional location</td>
<td>Regularly scheduled, ongoing sessions</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
1) A take-away from today’s session
2) A lingering question
Thank you!

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