Preparing School and System Leaders for Improvement Science

AN INNOVATIVE HANDS-ON MINI-WORKSHOP

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Objectives

✓ Reflect on what Improvement Science (IS) offers regarding how to engage with others to address opportunity and outcome disparities for the subaltern

✓ Compare and contrast the utility of current approaches for leader development with IS approaches particularly with regard to addressing opportunity and outcome disparities for the subaltern

✓ Know key approaches of IS and phases of an improvement journey

✓ Know how IS strategies and tools such as simulations, causal analysis diagramming, and theory of improvement mapping can be used to enhance leaders’ understandings of how to address opportunity and outcome disparities for the subaltern
The Subaltern:

- Individuals who by virtue of their particular backgrounds or particular characteristics are marginalized

- The mechanisms and practices that create hierarchies and differential opportunities and access to social, political, or economic power within a particular society, group, or organization
Discussion

1. In what context do you work?
2. What is one major challenge you face in preparing educational professionals working for and with the subaltern?
Engaging with problems of practice
What is a problem of practice?

“a persistent, contextualized, and specific issue embedded in the work of a professional practitioner, the addressing of which has the potential to result in improved understanding, experience, and outcomes.”

(The Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate)
Problems of Practice

ProBLEM OF PRACTICE: Inequitable access of historically marginalized students to higher level coursework: Students enrolled in higher-level coursework are predominantly those who identify as White and those not enrolled in the federal Free and Reduced Lunch program. Enrollment in higher-level coursework does not match the changing demographics of Chesterfield County.

FORT PLAIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

PROBLEM OF PRACTICE:

Aligned and rigorous literacy instruction to decrease numbers of elementary school students excluded from mainstream classroom instruction.
Discussion: What problems of practice bring you to the room?

1. What is a common problem of practice you and/or your students face?
2. How have you and/or your students approached addressing this problem?
3. What has been successful and what has been challenging?
Leaders’ Experiences
"How has developing knowledge of improvement science benefitted you as an educational leader?"

"Recalling your early experience, how did it feel, as an educational leader, to begin learning about and applying the principles of improvement science?"
What next?
Determining our next step means we need to know more about...

The problem and the system
- process maps, empathy techniques, fishbone diagram, 5 Whys

Our theory of practice improvement
- Aim statement, driver diagram

Spread and Scale
- technology platforms, face-to-face & virtual convenings

Tests of changes
- PDSA cycle, Lesson Study, measurement systems

Change ideas to try
- user-centered design, prototyping, research & practice scan
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What part of the journey resonates with you or interests you the most?

1. The problem and the system
   - process maps, empathy techniques, fishbone diagram, 5 Whys

2. Our theory of practice improvement
   - Aim statement, driver diagram

3. Change ideas to try
   - user-centered design, prototyping, research & practice scan

4. Tests of changes
   - PDSA cycle, Lesson Study, measurement systems

5. Spread and Scale
   - technology platforms, face-to-face & virtual convenings
Diving in
Sharing and reflecting

1. What do you value about Improvement Science approaches particularly with regard to helping leaders address opportunity and outcome disparities for the subaltern?

2. How do your current approaches for leader development differ with Improvement Science approaches particularly with regard to addressing problems of practice related to addressing opportunity and outcome disparities for the subaltern?

3. What is one aspect of the Improvement Science journey you feel you “get” the best or that resonates with you and why?

4. Which of the strategies or tools do you feel you might use and how might this help leaders address opportunity and outcome disparities for the subaltern?

5. What questions remain for you?
References

Ball, A. F. (2012). To know is not enough: Knowledge, power, and the zone of generativity. *Educational Researcher, 41*(8), 283-293. doi: 0.3102/0013189X12465334


Thank you from all of us!

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