



You would like to tap into everyone's expertise, but bringing people to the table is difficult, or turns out to be a better idea in principle than in practice.

Change Teams bring together teachers, administrators, parents, students, and community leaders to talk frankly about real issues, and plan real change; change that is grounded in the context and reality of your school.

WHAT IS A CHANGE TEAM?

Change Teams are at the core of The Learner First process. Change Teams synthesize information from *your* district and generate meaningful solutions that are grounded in *your* local setting.

Change Teams sit at every level of the system, and serve to spread new learning throughout districts and schools. They create system alignment vertically, from teachers to the superintendent, and horizontally, between teachers, students and community, so that everyone is on the same page and working toward the same goals.

HOW IT WORKS

At the beginning of the school year, schools that are working with The Learner First form Change Teams. Those teams consist of representatives from all school stakeholder groups, including teachers, administrators, community leaders, and anyone else with a vested interest in creating successful outcomes for all.

Change Teams meet every two weeks to discuss what is, and isn't working in their schools and to determine how they can most powerfully effect positive change.

DRIVEN BY THE INQUIRY CYCLE

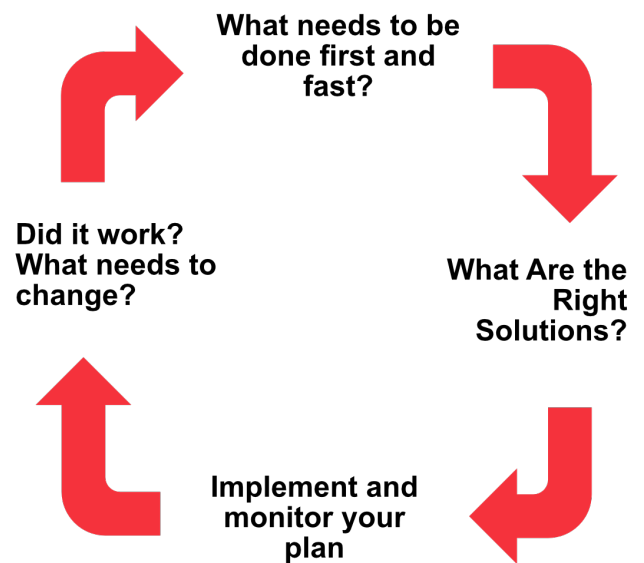


Figure 1. The Inquiry Cycle takes you through the process of identifying areas of greatest need, finding solutions, and analyzing impact.

The Learner First uses an inquiry cycle that guides Change Teams to identify the most pressing problems, design the right mix of solutions, and then verify that what they are doing is working, adjusting as needed.

Change Teams start by asking, “Who needs help first and fast?” and “what is stopping them from being successful?”

From there, Change Teams carefully design solutions that are meaningful and that directly address the problem at hand. Solutions should

have concrete outcomes that can be evaluated, and teams should ask themselves, “how will we know that this is really working?”

INFORMED BY THE LEARNER

At the center of the change process are focal learners. Teachers select a handful of students who are struggling the most in the system, and employ the Inquiry Cycle, just like the one that Change Teams use, to figure out what is and isn't working for each student.

By focusing on the students that have been the most challenging to reach, (and perhaps teach) teachers gain a deep understanding of what is and isn't working in their classroom, and start to learn what they need to change for all their students to be successful. This way of working then spreads from focal students to all students.

Teachers then bring these experiences to their Change Team meetings so that they can share and grow successful practice throughout the school.

A NESTED SYSTEM

Just as teachers take the lessons they learn in their classroom to their school Change Team meetings, lessons that are learned in each school Change Team are brought to the district level.

To accomplish this, the district office forms its own Change Team, which operates in much the same way that the school team does. Members of the district Change Team are also members of a school Change Team, such that each school has a district representative. This arrangement is not hierarchical, and in the context of the Change Team the district

member is not in charge. Their reason for being there is to learn what is really happening on the school level so that they can share learning with the district office and make sure that the real problems for schools are being supported by the most effective district wide solutions.

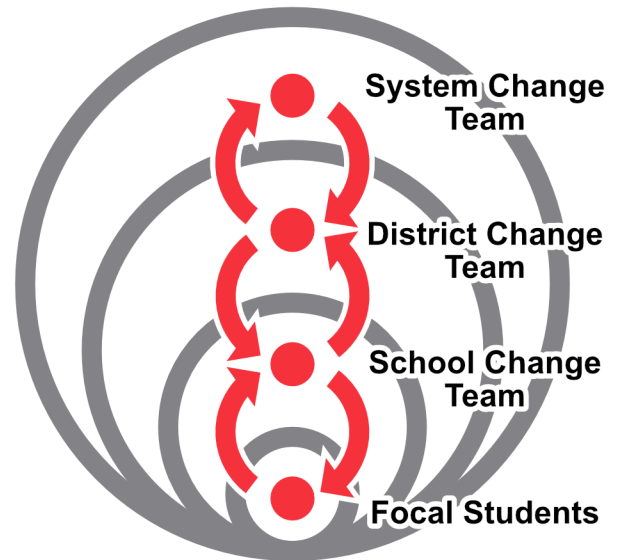


Figure 2. Change Teams at every level pass on new learning and support.

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