



# CALMI

California Labor Management Initiative

## Building Partnerships to Create Great Public Schools

June 2022



CDE FOUNDATION

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# The Seven Norms of Collaborative Work

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## Pausing

Pausing before responding or asking a question allows time for thinking and enhances dialogue, discussion, and decision-making.

## Paraphrasing

Using a paraphrase starter that is comfortable for you: “So . . .” or “As you are . . .” or “You’re thinking . . .” and following the starter with a paraphrase assists members of the group to hear and understand each other as they formulate decisions.

## Probing

Using gentle, open-ended probes or inquiries such as, “Please say more . . .” or “I’m curious about . . .” or “I’d like to hear more about . . .” or “Then, are you saying . . .?” increases the clarity and precision of the group’s thinking.

## Putting ideas on the table

Ideas are the heart of a meaningful dialogue. Label the intention of your comments. For example, you might say, “Here is one idea . . .” or “One thought I have is . . .” or “Here is a possible approach . . .”

## Paying attention to self and others

Meaningful dialogue is facilitated when each group member is conscious of self and of others and is aware of not only what they are saying but how it is said and how others are responding. This includes paying attention to learning styles when planning for, facilitating, and participating in group meetings. Responding to others in their own language forms is one manifestation of this norm.

## Presuming positive presuppositions

Assuming that others’ intentions are positive promotes and facilitates meaningful dialogue and eliminates unintentional put-downs. Using positive presuppositions in your speech is one manifestation of this norm.

## Pursuing a balance between advocacy and inquiry

Pursuing and maintaining a balance between advocating a position and inquiring about one’s own and others’ positions assists the group to become a learning organization.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS



This Table of Contents is interactive! Select any title to jump to the appropriate page.

Links throughout this document are also interactive. Select any [link](#) to view websites, original resources, videos, and more..

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>2–15</b>
About the California Labor Management Initiative	2
Frequently Asked Questions	3
What Is Labor-Management Partnership?	4
The Purpose of This Guidebook	5
Using This Guidebook	6
Diagram of an Element (What You'll See Inside)	7
CA LMI Overview of Support Opportunities	8
The Three Pillars of Collaboration	9
Fostering a Culture of Trust Within and Outside a School System	10–11
Building Trust	12
Leading Collaborative Professionalism: Quadrants of Collaboration	13
The Six Elements of Partnership	14
<b>ELEMENT 1: LAUNCH</b>	<b>17–39</b>
1.A. Commit to Collaborate	19–30
1.B. Create a Shared Vision and Purpose	31–39
<b>ELEMENT 2: BUILD</b>	<b>41–56</b>
2.A. Form Teams	43–47
2.B. Establish Guiding Behaviors	48–56
The Seven Norms of Collaborative Work	50
<b>ELEMENT 3: REFINE</b>	<b>59–79</b>
3.A. Clarify Systems, Structures, and Priorities	61–71
3.B. Clarify Boundaries and Power Dynamics	72–79
<b>ELEMENT 4: PROBLEM SOLVE</b>	<b>81–91</b>
A Guide to Building a System of Collaborative Problem Solving	83–84
Stage 1. Identify the Issue You Are Trying to Solve/Resolve	85
Stage 2. Define Our Authority and Agency	86
Stage 3. Launch Ideas and Test Assumptions	87
Stage 4. Focus and Reflect on Effectiveness	88
Demonstrate Accountability and Transparency Through Communication	89
Build Enduring Systems	90
<b>ELEMENT 5: GROW</b>	<b>93–109</b>
5.A. Establish Joint Committees at the District Level	95–100
5.B. Develop Labor-Management Partnership at the Site Level	101–108
<b>ELEMENT 6: ADVANCE</b>	<b>111–125</b>
6.A. Reflect and Monitor	113–118
6.B. Ensure Sustainability	119–124
<b>RESOURCES</b>	<b>127–134</b>
About CDE Foundation	129
Additional Resources	130–132
Videos	133–134

## ABOUT THE CALIFORNIA LABOR MANAGEMENT INITIATIVE

More than  
170 districts  
and county  
offices have  
participated  
since 2015.



### Our approach

**CONVENE** labor-management teams from across California to promote inquiry into the processes for effective systemwide partnership.

**CATALYZE** collaboration in districts through ongoing support and by connecting teams in regional and statewide peer networks.

**COMMUNICATE** to build awareness and access to key resources across districts, state associations, and educational stakeholder groups.

For more information, visit  
[www.cdefoundation.org](http://www.cdefoundation.org).

**The California Labor Management Initiative (CA LMI) fosters and supports labor-management partnerships as a foundational element of improving public schools and advancing educational equity in California.** The initiative creates safe, supportive learning environments in which public school union and management leaders can have tough conversations that lead to collaborative problem solving, exploring new frameworks and research, and more effective ways to meet the needs of students and staff. A project of the CDE Foundation, CA LMI aims to bring leaders together to codevelop structures and practices that lift staff voices and build systems for continuous improvement to create better outcomes for students and staff, parents and communities.

Since 2015 more than 170 districts and county offices have participated in CA LMI. By convening labor-management teams of administrators, union leaders, and board members, CA LMI promotes inquiry into processes and structures for systemwide partnership. Convenings provide joint learning and team-building opportunities. Teams can participate in statewide, regional or local events. Direct in-district consulting is also available. State-level discussions with our steering committee members and others serve to embed labor-management partnership into the fabric of California public education.

CA LMI is guided by a steering committee that includes top leaders of our state education agencies and employee organizations. The steering committee includes these diverse stakeholders:

- Association of California School Administrators (ACSA)
- California Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE)
- California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (CCSESA)
- California Department of Education (CDE)
- California Federation of Teachers (CFT)
- California School Boards Association (CSBA)
- California School Employees Association (CSEA)
- California Teachers Association (CTA)
- Ray Gaer, President, ABC Federation of Teachers
- Mary Sieu, Superintendent, ABC Unified
- Shannan Brown, Executive Director, San Juan Teachers Association; Director, California Teacher Union Reform Network (Cal/TURN)

CA LMI invites and encourages other labor and management organizations, educators, and civic leaders across California to join us in the work of collaboratively solving California's most pressing educational issues and building capacity for long-term growth. CA LMI looks forward to continuing to drive deep, authentic partnerships and improve school culture across the state of California.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### » Why should my team participate?

CA LMI convenings provide safe, supportive learning environments in which public school union and management leaders can have tough conversations that lead to collaborative problem solving to collectively meet the needs of students and staff. CA LMI provides labor-management teams hands-on tools to highlight issues and develop practical solutions to improve outcomes.

### » Who should participate in my labor-management team?

Most teams typically include, at a minimum, the superintendent, classified and certificated union presidents, and a school board member. Additional key leaders may include the assistant superintendent for human resources, the chief academic officer, and other top union executive officers. As teams continue to participate, they typically add site labor-management leaders such as principals and building representatives. Larger districts often roll out the effort via cohorts of school site teams once the district-level leadership has engaged.

### » How do we get started?

We encourage teams to sign up to attend our convenings to begin the process. Events for new teams are held several times a year. You can find upcoming events by visiting the [CA LMI website](#). Please contact [Gustavo Morales](#), the CA LMI associate director, for additional information on engaging your team.

### » Can I participate as an individual?

Labor-management partnership and collaboration is a group activity. We encourage you to connect with your labor and management leadership to organize your labor-management team attendance at CA LMI events. Some virtual events, such as webinars, are designed for individual participation, but we encourage teams to participate together whenever possible to take advantage of team-building and joint problem-solving opportunities.

### » How much does it cost to participate?

CA LMI is supported by several foundations that help reduce the price of participation. Our low-cost convenings can run as little as \$50 per person. Materials in our resource and video library are available at no charge.

### » What state agencies and associations are involved?

CA LMI works closely with the California Department of Education and the California Collaborative for Educational

Excellence. State educational associations representing teachers, classified staff, administrators, and school board members also play a critical role in advancing labor-management collaboration on a broad scale. CA LMI has had ongoing support from leaders of state associations and agencies, as demonstrated by their participation on our steering committee and involvement in CA LMI statewide institutes and trainings. CA LMI steering committee members meet at least once a year to provide high-level guidance to the CA LMI team and connections to their members.

### » What research supports this work?

Research studies have highlighted the importance of developing collective trust among school staff. Recent research from Saul Rubinstein and John McCarthy, from Rutgers and Cornell Universities, respectively, has shown the impact of labor-management partnership and collaboration on student achievement and staff retention. These impacts are particularly pronounced in high-poverty schools. Rubenstein and McCarthy found that formal union-management partnerships at the district level seem to be a catalyst for building highly collaborative schools, finding that district partnerships are positively associated with school collaboration.

### » How do labor-management partnerships interact with our bargaining processes?

Developing labor-management partnerships is not a substitute for collective bargaining and CA LMI does not get involved in negotiations. Participating with CA LMI and building labor-management partnerships is often cited by labor and management leaders as being helpful in providing additional problem-solving strategies, relationship building, and opportunities outside the formal bargaining process.

### » Is this work supported at the national level?

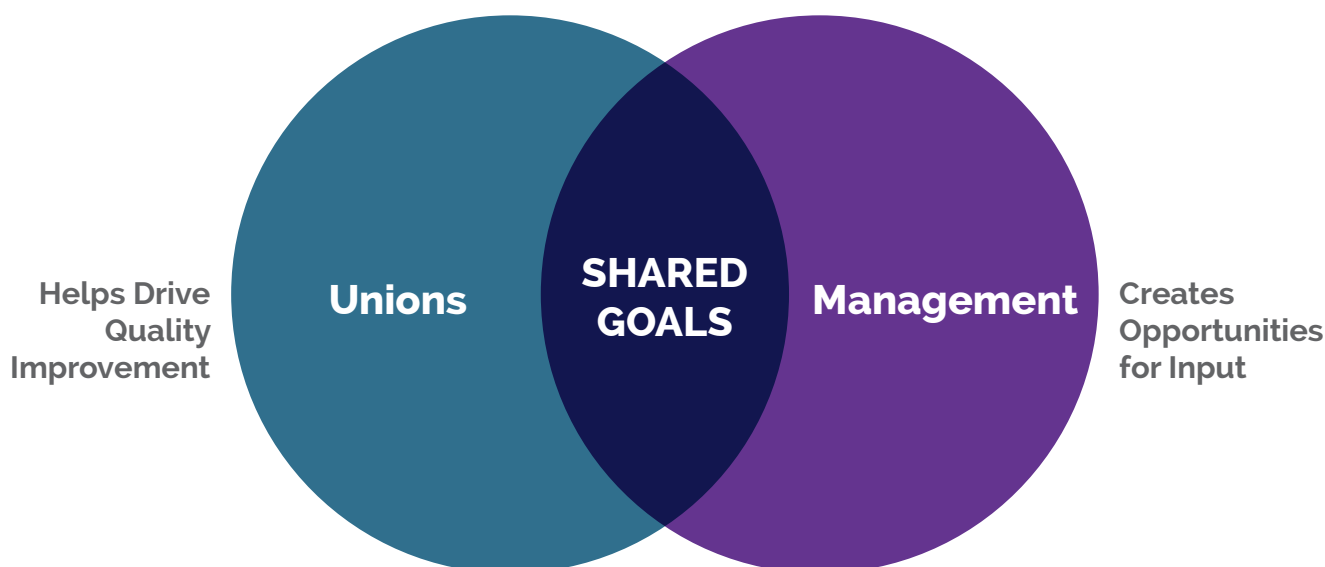
The focus on labor-management partnerships has been growing at the national level, as evidenced by the activity of the National Labor Management Partnership (NLMP). NLMP is a working group comprised of the American Association of School Administrators, American Federation of Teachers, National School Boards Association, and the National Education Association (NEA). From their [2018 National Call to Action](#) to the recent NEA workbook [“Collaborating for Student Success,”](#) there is a growing recognition of the importance of effective labor relations in improving public education.

## What Is Labor-Management Partnership?

**Schools and school systems are driven by how staff and students feel while interacting with each other.** The student experience often echoes the experience that staff have. School and district cultures that value student and staff voices provide spaces that allow all members of the organization to drive improvement and deep learning. Labor-management partnership is the vehicle to organize education stakeholders and catalyze opportunities for educators to design more equitable learning experiences that empower students and staff.

Labor-management partnership is the intentional partnering of management and labor leaders within an education system focused on improving district culture and climate and student outcomes. Moving beyond the traditional frames of interactions, labor-management partnership allows for deeper coherence, goal alignment, and impact. Leaders who intentionally focus on building trust and psychological safety for staff can shape an organizational culture that supports continuous improvement and the needs of our students and communities. Creating opportunities for the educator voice, and the insight of the staff closest to the work and their union representatives, to impact decision-making improves outcomes for all and builds leadership and accountability across the system.

### Working Differently Together



### The National Labor-Management Partnership (NLMP)

NLMP is a working group that includes the American Association of School Administrators, the American Federation of Teachers, the National School Boards Association, and the National Education Association, which together represent the professional voices of educators, school board leaders, and administrators. NLMP was founded in 2011 to acknowledge and promote a unified philosophy: Improving student learning and equity requires strong, consistent, and sustained collaboration among parents, teachers, school boards,

superintendents and administrators, business leaders, and the community. Such improvements require that we all take responsibility for the well-being of the students in our charge. As a national-level partnership, NLMP supports local-level transformation, including greater shared responsibility and leadership toward the educational outcomes we seek. Additional materials and resources from the NLMP are linked [here](#).

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1tryg50n7QNzVMBky5BTTKSLYxZFAqhz>



## The Purpose of This Guidebook

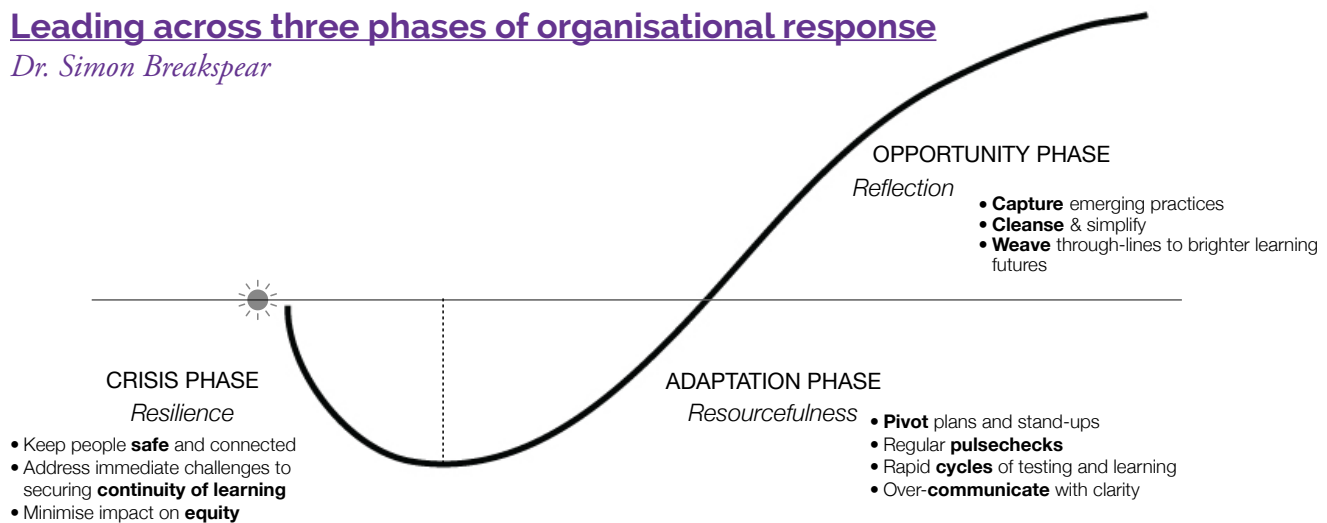
The CA LMI Resource Guidebook is designed to support education leaders in developing deeper labor-management partnerships and augment CA LMI convenings for labor-management teams. The guidebook provides an organized platform for tools, research, and strategies that help build and sustain labor-management partnerships engaged in collaborative solution building. The guidebook includes short descriptions of resources, suggestions for how to implement each element, and opportunities for joint reflection toward improvement. The guidebook is designed to be a working document for labor and management leaders throughout the school district or county office of education. The guidebook is a tool and not a step-by-step outline for building collaborative practices. Revisit sections as often as you need. We encourage you to use a highlighter, write in the book, and focus on adapting the resources to your own context. This guidebook is an evolving document. We will continue to add tools and information. We encourage your feedback and submission of examples and materials for the continued development of this resource.

With this guidebook in hand, education leaders will:

- Build, navigate, and sustain effective labor-management partnerships
- Deepen their understanding of the issues of trust, equity, and communication
- Review and practice learnings outside structured convenings
- Improve the culture and climate of their school or system to improve outcomes for students and staff
- Develop solutions to the unique challenges of their community

### Leading across three phases of organisational response

*Dr. Simon Breakspear*



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<https://www.simonbreakspear.com>

This descriptive graphic from Simon Breakspear illustrates the three phases of organizational response to crises. COVID-19 was a crisis unlike any we had experienced. With the initial spread of the pandemic, organizations focused on the resilience needed to get through the crisis moment. But after that initial shock, institutions, including educational systems, were in a period of necessary adaptation. It was clear at that time that the pandemic was not going to end quickly, and educators had to adapt to the new reality. It is often noted that the pandemic put into plain view the many inequities of the education system. During the adaptation phase, new ideas began to be tested for addressing the now starkly exposed education system deficiencies. In the Breakspear curve, and in life, the progression from crisis to adaptation leads to opportunity. Using collaborative problem solving, it is time for unions and management to come together to remove outdated and unuseful programs and strategies, grow the adaptations that show promise, and create a coherent education system that empowers its employees to collectively focus on meeting the needs of all learners.

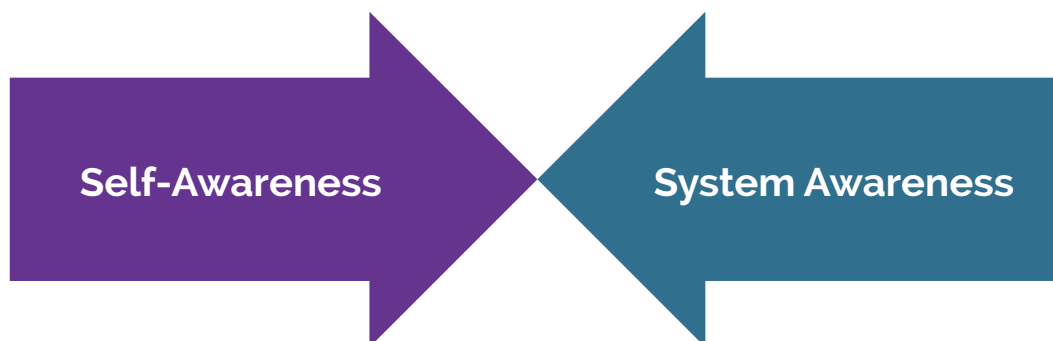
## Using This Guidebook

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**This guidebook is designed to provide labor and management leaders and teams with accessible tools to build a sustainable culture that encourages teams to be engaged in problem solving using collaborative professionalism.** It is not a one-size-fits-all, rather, it is designed to assist you with implementing a labor-management partnership that best suits the needs of your education system.

CA LMI recognizes three key pillars: trust, equity, and communication. CA LMI's elements of partnership detail the components of a functioning labor-management structure, from launch to sustainability. In this guidebook, there is a detailed section focused on each element and its component parts, including resources, tools, guiding questions, and indicators of progress that can help teams and team leaders implement that element. Because every team and every community is unique, this guidebook is organized to encourage you to visit the section(s) that best meet your needs. You can skip to the resource or tool of interest or work through the entire guidebook section by section. Additional resources can be found in the back of this guidebook. This guidebook does not provide enough detail to serve as the sole source of information; however, reviewing it will help you and your labor-management team understand the basic aspects and components of forming and sustaining a labor-management initiative organized to solve problems and develop solutions. CA LMI encourages your team to adapt this to your own needs and experiences and develop your own contextual approach to building and sustaining vibrant labor-management partnerships.

Tools, frameworks, and materials throughout this guidebook are meant to help education leaders deepen their ability to create positive change in their organizations. That effort requires education leaders to continually focus on two key areas, self-awareness and systems awareness. Tools in this resource provide insight into both.



*This guidebook is informed by **The ABC's of Partnership**, CEC's **Resource Guidebook: Cultivating a Culture of Collaboration Focused on Student Learning**, NEA's **Collaborating for Student Success**, and the **California Professional Standards for Educational Leaders**.*



## Diagram of an Element (What You'll See Inside)

Each chapter or element in this guidebook is formatted in a similar way.

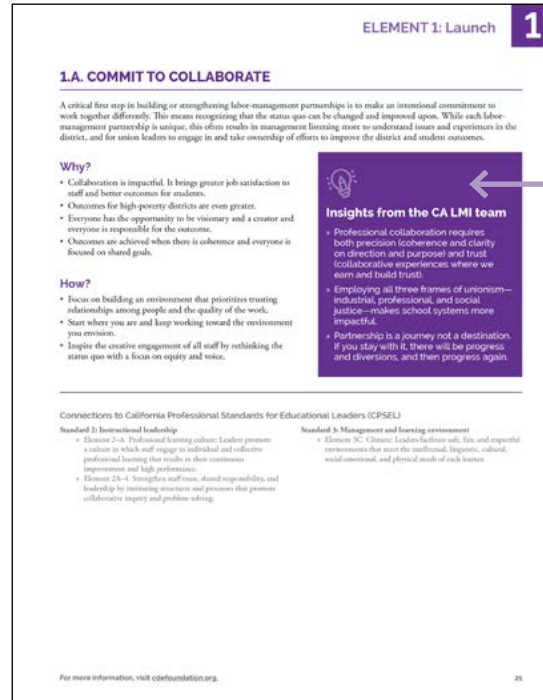
There is a deeper dive into the component parts or subelements to help teams with implementation.

Information about why this element is important . . .

. . . and how it is implemented.

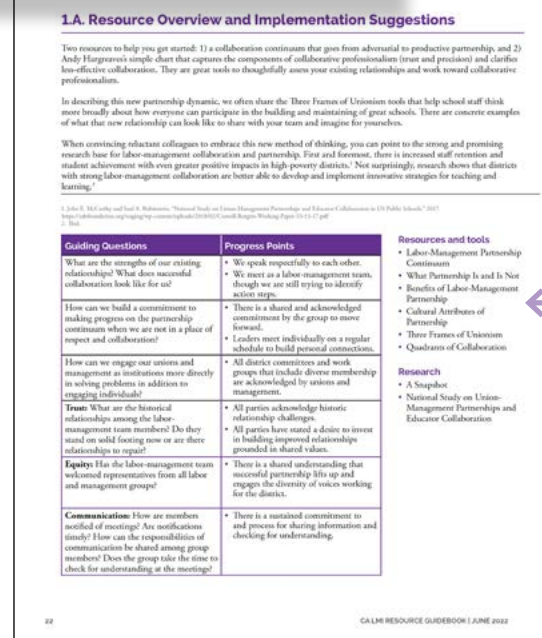
Connections to California Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (CPSEL) highlights examples within California's education standards that mirror or sync with elements of collaboration and collaborative problem solving to encourage education leaders to model the change we have already adopted in the state.

Guiding Questions and Progress Points offer reflective thoughts and activities to assess implementation plans or efforts through a labor-management and equity lens.



The guidebook has a section devoted to each of the six elements in the CA LMI partnership framework.

Insights feature relevant experiences that CA LMI has collected from the field.



Finally, each section includes a description of resources to support implementation.

## CA LMI Overview of Support Opportunities

If you are interested in learning more about CA LMI and would like to participate, CA LMI provides districts and county offices with three tiers of support to advance labor-management collaboration.

### Universal Convenings

**Universal convenings** provide labor-management teams across the state opportunities to learn about labor-management partnership and understand key collaborative frameworks. They are designed as a shared learning and team-building experience for school districts and county offices. Universal convenings are provided in various regions of the state as well as online virtual offerings. These convenings provide a place for unions and management to learn together and build trust and relationships. See the CA LMI website for upcoming events, materials and our [CA LMI Resource Library](#).

### Regional Networks

**Regional networks** connect multiple districts within a geographic region and support localized networks that build capacity and peer learning opportunities over time. Regional networks support sustained peer-to-peer learning, and they provide a structure for teams to share resources, celebrate successes, and navigate challenges. CA LMI has worked to connect regional networks to county Offices of Education as a hub for convening districts and developing labor-management regional planning committees to further CA LMI networks.

### Individualized Supports

**Individualized supports** provide an opportunity for districts or county offices to work with the CA LMI staff or consulting partners to support their labor-management teams. The support is tailored to the individualized context of the district or county office. Teams can contract with the CA LMI staff or consulting partners directly to develop a customized scope of work to advance their labor-management partnership efforts via in-district coaching.



## The Three Pillars of Collaboration

Underlying and supporting the work of building labor-management partnerships are the Three Pillars of Collaboration—Trust, Equity, and Communication. These foundational elements are connected to every part of the work. Partnerships between labor and management are built around trust, equity, and communication, as are school system and educator relationships with students, parents, and communities. Additional resources and linked materials connected to the Three Pillars of Collaboration can be found following the article below on the relationship between trust and district effectiveness.

### TRUST

"Trust is institutionalized in an organization's rules, roles and relations. That means it is embedded in everything an organization does or tries to do. It is explicit and implicit. It is in the climate and culture. It is found in every interpersonal encounter, at every meeting. It is displayed in how outsiders are treated. It permeates organizations."

—Anthony Carnevale  
Director of Education and the Workforce,  
Georgetown University

Relationships are the building blocks for trusting interactions among staff and leaders within a school system. If school systems are to become effective agents in supporting student learning, educational leaders should prioritize the importance of trust. Trust is built through shared responsibility, mutual accountability, follow-through, integrity, and a willingness to be vulnerable. Creating a culture of trust is a foundational element of continuous improvement.

Education leaders can build trust by creating structures and processes that promote interaction, dialogue, and collaboration that engage staff and constituents in decision-making at all levels of the organization. Sociodemographic and cultural factors also affect organizational trust levels as the shared values, beliefs, and behavioral norms reflect the members of the community.

### EQUITY

"Within each of us lies the most powerful, and still untapped, resource to turn schools and entire school systems into places for powerful learning. This resource, the resource most equally distributed among us humans, is our capacity to act, learn, and change the world. I've seen it work, and I trust we'll see it work more and more in the coming years."

—Santiago Rincon-Gallardo  
Chief Research Officer,  
Michael Fullan Enterprises

Students and employees are more likely to succeed when labor-management relations are healthy, inclusive, and diverse. Including the voices of typically marginalized staff and stakeholders creates a diversity of perspectives that improves decision-making, collaborative practices, and the ability to address learning gaps.

Structures and processes that allow for the insight of teachers and support staff to impact decision-making lead to more equitable outcomes for all. Creating access, maximizing opportunities for diverse voices, and dismantling racial inequities is the work of both labor and management. Management should create more opportunities to listen to the voices of staff, and unions should embrace their role in driving improvement.

### COMMUNICATION

"When we listen with the intent to understand others, rather than with the intent to reply, we begin true communication and relationship building. Opportunities to then speak openly and to be understood come much more naturally and easily."

—Stephen Covey  
Author, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*

Communication requires consistent, honest, and authentic dialogue. Leaders who foster an open, psychologically safe space for questioning and reflection increase communication and cause us to view each other as resources. Open communication and transparency build an organizational culture that supports collective learning and shared responsibility.

Ongoing open dialogue and shared information among school staff, labor, and administrative leaders builds a shared understanding and a common language of the assumptions and processes used for decision-making. Structures that enable communication, like joint committees and labor-management learning teams, help institutionalize collaborative practices. Effective communication also provides necessary feedback, supports shared goals, and helps us listen and understand each other.

## Fostering a Culture of Trust Within and Outside a School System

Excerpt from Toronto District School Board research compilation (read the original paper [here](https://drive.google.com/file/d/11Y40JBNlomyY5jN9vJuleWfwjJWP9Mti/view):  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/11Y40JBNlomyY5jN9vJuleWfwjJWP9Mti/view>)

### What is the Relationship between District Effectiveness and Trust?

Since the 1990s, there has been a renewed interest in the role of school districts in educational improvement and reform. In the accountability systems of recent years, it has become increasingly clear that schools are unable to meet these demands without the support and influence of the district. As a result, researchers have attempted to identify characteristics of effective and high-performing districts in the same way as effective schools research has done to identify characteristics of effective schools (Anderson, 2003; Togneri & Anderson, 2003; Trujillo, 2013). The literature on district effectiveness characterizes effective districts as having working relationships with open communication, collaboration, and trust among constituents in the district. As illustrated in the following section, these elements are embedded in the language of effective and improving districts.

Fullan, Bertani, and Quinn (2004) described 10 essential components for district improvement based on their study of school districts undergoing reform. We describe three of these components as they reveal the importance of communication, relationships, and trust in district improvement.

- **Districts need to have a ‘collective moral purpose’** —This means that everyone in the district needs to be responsible for student achievement and have an interest in the success of all schools, not only an individual school. This commitment to a common moral purpose requires trust, whereas competition between schools weakens “interdependence, trust and loyalty” (p. 43).
- **There is a need for ‘productive conflict’** —As Fullan et al. (2004) explain, the changes that come about through district reform are complex and may lead to disagreement among various parties. As part of this process, district leaders need to be able to distinguish between productive and unhealthy conflict. They also need to allow for different points of view and “work through differences” (p. 45). This component implies the need for communication, collaboration, and respect, which have a bearing on trust.
- **There needs to be a ‘demanding culture’** – This means that in order to engage and motivate schools to succeed and work through demanding situations necessary for district reform, there is a need for a culture of trust.

One of the features of strong school districts noted in the literature is the good working relationships with constituents in the district (Leithwood, 2010; Leithwood, 2013). In a paper commissioned by Ontario’s Institute for Education Leadership and Council of Ontario Directors of Education, Leithwood (2013) notes:

The relationships that matter most and that are the focus of development in strong districts lie within the central office and between the central office and its schools, parents, local community groups and the Ministry of Education. Communication throughout the system and within schools is nurtured by structures which encourage collaborative work (p. 20).

Collaboration is a key element for district improvement, as noted by many authors (Anderson, 2003; Bjork & Bond, 2006; Leithwood, 2012; Togneri & Anderson, 2003).

The district-wide emphasis on collaboration and team work in professional learning communities leads districts on a continuous improvement cycle and supports the development of “shared beliefs” and a “commitment to reform” (Anderson, 2003, p. 12). In strong districts, collaboration is an inclusive process that involves many groups of stakeholders across the district, including board members, principals, teachers, and union leaders (Togneri & Anderson, 2003).

To achieve good working relations, stakeholders need to learn to work together in order to improve teaching and learning (Togneri & Anderson, 2003). As Togneri & Anderson (2003) note, in their study of U.S. school districts that made improvements in student achievement:

Collaboration and trust did not simply happen in the districts; rather, they were the result of deliberate and involved processes. Led by their boards and superintendents, the most collaborative districts in the study worked on working together. They engaged in ongoing dialogue, created cross-role leadership structures to facilitate communication among stakeholders, and intentionally sought tools to facilitate collaboration (p. 32).

## Fostering a Culture of Trust Within and Outside a School System

(continued)

Research indicates that collaborative districts have an easier time introducing innovations, have strong positive interactions, and have educational leaders who bring together stakeholders to address issues and challenges within the district. Studies indicate that these collaborative processes increase trust (Togneri & Anderson, 2003).

Furthermore, in research on high-performing districts, collaboration seems to give staff the perception of a “flat” organization where they feel “organizationally close to those working in the central office” (Leithwood, 2010, p. 260). In these districts, there is more communication both vertically and horizontally which can lead to greater collaboration and shared values.

A key variable for district improvement is high quality governance characterized by strong working relationships between board members and educational leaders who foster trust, respect, confidence, support, and open communication (Anderson, 1992; Carol et al., 1986; Goodman, Fulbright, and Zimmerman, 1997, as cited in Land, 2002; the International Association of School Boards, 2000, as cited in Agullard & Goughnour, 2006). Quality governance also includes having good relations between the Board Chair and senior educational leadership, as well as between board members (Land, 2002).

Open communication and trust are also noted as key elements for improving districts. According to Agullard and Goughnour (2006), these elements are essential to create a ‘cohesive theory of action’ for district-wide improvement and for understanding the roles and structures needed to support improvement. To support the district’s improvement efforts, it is also important for central office staff to provide opportunities for input from principals, teachers, and staff on the district’s continuous improvement efforts (Agullard & Goughnour, 2006). As Agullard & Goughnour (2006) point out:

- **Continuous improvement is a dynamic process requiring constant reflection and questioning.** Dialogue among school staff, among central office staff, and between the two provides opportunities to reflect and examine the process and the results of actions. Creating and sustaining a trusting and open relationship between central office and school staff is crucial to establishing open dialogue (p. 11).

There are two other characteristics noted in the literature on strong districts that should be noted. First, the governing board should have a clearly defined policy-making role and hold the educational leadership responsible for administration of schools. The clearly defined roles of the board create a climate of trust (Agullard & Goughnour, 2006; Togneri & Anderson, 2003, p. 33).

Finally, there is some evidence to indicate that high-performing districts have a distributed or shared approach to instructional leadership. This is illustrated in the case of a principal who shared leadership with central office administrators by asking for their expertise and help with consultation, coaching, and mentoring support in classrooms (Eilers & Camacho, 2007, as cited in Leithwood, 2010). Section V [in the compilation] addresses the topic of distributed leadership.

Additional Resources	Pillar	Author/Source	Type
<b>Trust in Schools—A Core Resource for School Reform</b> <a href="https://www.ascd.org/el/articles/trust-in-schools-a-core-resource-for-school-reform">https://www.ascd.org/el/articles/trust-in-schools-a-core-resource-for-school-reform</a>	Trust	Anthony S. Bryk and Barbara Schneider	Article
<b>Districts Advancing Racial Equity (DARE) Tool</b> <a href="https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/RELN_DARE_TOOL.pdf">https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/RELN_DARE_TOOL.pdf</a>	Equity	Learning Policy Institute	Tool
<b>Equity Pause Questions</b> <a href="https://www.publicdesignforequity.org/blog/2020/5/25/equity-pause-questions">https://www.publicdesignforequity.org/blog/2020/5/25/equity-pause-questions</a>	Equity	Public Design for Equity	Guide
<b>Difficult Conversations—Lessons Learned</b> <a href="https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BvKxCL1R6livgi2udLfmqigw0-rGVsgV/view?usp=sharing">https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BvKxCL1R6livgi2udLfmqigw0-rGVsgV/view?usp=sharing</a>	Communications	Sid Haro	Article



## Building Trust

### Five Key Components Commonly Used to Measure Trustworthiness

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#### Benevolence

Having confidence that another party has your best interests at heart and will protect your interests is a key ingredient of trust.

#### Reliability

Reliability refers to the extent to which you can depend upon another party to come through for you, to act consistently, and to follow through.

#### Competence

Similar to reliability, competence has to do with belief in another party's ability to perform the tasks required by their position. For example, if a principal means well but lacks necessary leadership skills, they are not likely to be trusted to do the job.

#### Honesty

A person's integrity, character, and authenticity are all dimensions of trust. The degree to which a person can be counted on to represent situations fairly makes a huge difference in whether they are trusted by others in the school community.

#### Openness

Judgments about openness have to do with how freely another party shares information with others. Guarded communication, for instance, provokes distrust because people wonder what is being withheld and why. Openness is crucial to the development of trust between supervisors and subordinates, particularly in times of increased vulnerability for staff.

Source: Megan Tschannen-Moran and Wayne Hoy's comprehensive review of the literature, 1998.

### Barriers to building and maintaining trust

- Top-down decision-making perceived as arbitrary, misinformed, or not in the best interest of the school
- Ineffective communication
- Lack of follow-through on or support for school improvement efforts and other projects
- Unstable or inadequate school funding
- Failure to remove teachers or principals who are widely viewed as ineffective
- Frequent turnover in school leadership
- High teacher turnover
- Teacher isolation
- Perhaps the greatest obstacle that schools experiencing a lack of trust must overcome is their past. Identifying the specific causes of mistrust in the school and making a sincere commitment to address them is the first and probably most important step.

Source: Cori Brewster and Jennifer Railsback, *Building Relationships for School Improvement: Implications for Principals and Teachers* (Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 2003).

## Leading Collaborative Professionalism

Andy Hargreaves and Michael T. O'Connor

### How Should We Collaborate?

People cannot always mix things up by themselves. They need deliberate designs to help them do that—without sacrificing and, indeed, also actively enhancing the quest to build deeper and stronger relationships of trust, support and solidarity throughout the school, network or system.

One way to think about all this is in terms of high and low emphases on trust in working relationships on the one hand, and structure, tools and precision in work organization, on the other. These are represented in the chart below.



Adapted from Andy Hargreaves and Michael T. O'Connor, "Leading Collaborative Professionalism," *Centre for Strategic Education Seminar Series 274*, April 2018. [http://www.andyhargreaves.com/uploads/5/2/9/2/5292616/seminar\\_series\\_274-april2018.pdf](http://www.andyhargreaves.com/uploads/5/2/9/2/5292616/seminar_series_274-april2018.pdf)

### Quadrants of Collaboration:

#### No Collaboration

» Low trust, low precision

No collaboration is a culture of teaching that has to be left behind wherever it can. It insulates teachers from ideas and makes them anxious about themselves and envious or suspicious of others. There are no clear frameworks for meeting, planning or decision-making, or ways of sharing and giving feedback on practice. Improvement stalls, teachers get overwhelmed and lose heart, quality deteriorates, and many teachers leave.

#### Contrived Collegiality

» Low trust, high precision

Contrived collegiality is top-down and enforces teamwork to implement requirements set by others. Contrived collegiality fails to maintain motivation or anything more than superficial compliance. It is high threat, low yield and also leads to teachers being lost to the school or the profession.

#### Informal Collaboration

» High trust, low precision

Informal collaboration builds strong and enduring relationships, supports professional conversation and maintains teacher motivation. However, it tends to persist only where teachers have a strong affinity for each other and their values and styles, and it has difficulty translating promising conversations into positive action.

#### Collaborative Professionalism

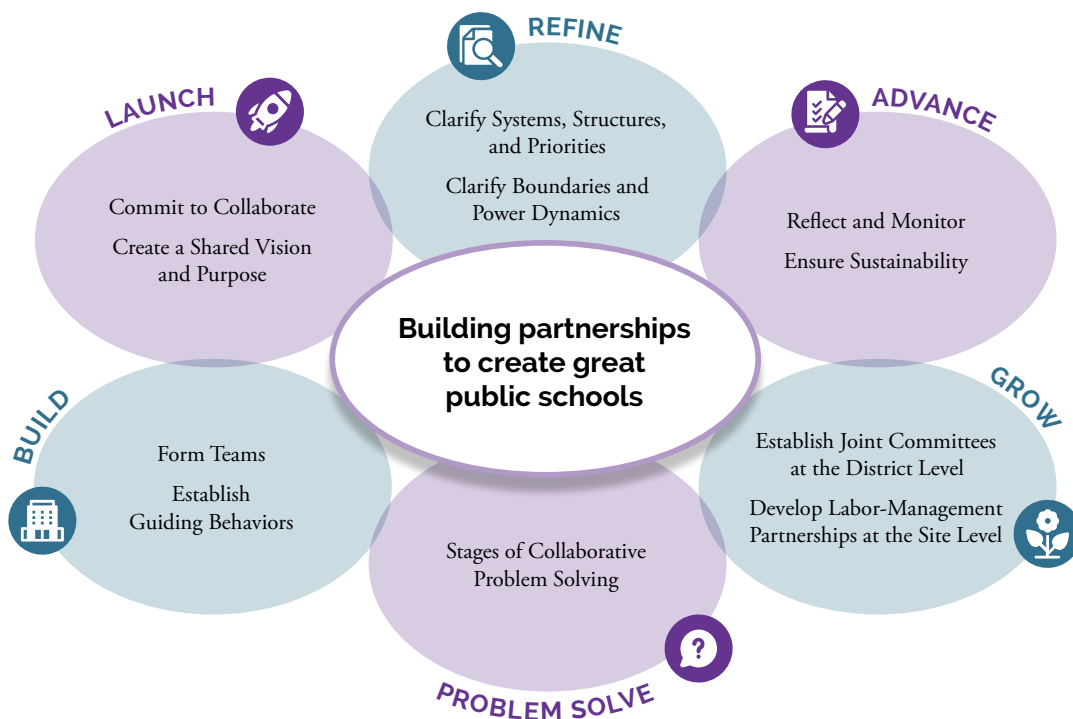
» High trust, high precision

Collaborative professionalism is the golden cell of professional collaboration, where teachers have strong relationships, trust each other and feel free to take risks and make mistakes. There are also tools, structures and protocols of meeting, coaching, feedback, planning and review that support practical action and continuous improvement of the work undertaken together.



## The Six Elements of Partnership

**The Elements of Partnership graphic describes key stages of establishing, deepening, and institutionalizing labor-management partnership.** The CA LMI Resource Guidebook is organized around the six elements. Each element has sub-components that allow labor-management teams and leaders to explore key aspects of shared work and engage in group discussions that lead to common understanding and shared investment. Building partnerships is a process not a sequential set of prescribed steps. Each team needs to adapt the work to its local context and make its own definition of a labor-management initiative. This is not about establishing a CA LMI committee in your district; rather, this should be viewed as developing an organizational culture that promotes labor-management partnership and supports colleagues to do their best work with shared goals through the foundational pillars of collaboration, trust, equity, and communication. CA LMI is your learning partner.



- 1. LAUNCH.** The launch element is about building a shared understanding of collaboration, collaborative professionalism, and the value of partnership. Teams explore the research supporting the benefits of labor-management partnership and build a commitment to work together to move across the partnership continuum and implement a shared vision.
- 2. BUILD.** This element focuses on establishing a structure and operating norms for labor and management to regularly meet, build foundational pillars, and engage in reflective discussions of problem solving and improvement. Teams are encouraged to create a district-level learning team and establish group norms that support collaborative professionalism.
- 3. REFINE.** Deepening the work of partnership requires an examination of power dynamics within school systems and across key stakeholders and the intentionality to address it. This element focuses on the connection between collaboration and equity and the clarity required for effective collaborative professionalism. It also encourages an examination into decision-making; whether there is clarity and transparency around decision-making processes and, if not, ways to think about building an updated, more engaging and equitable system.
- 4. PROBLEM SOLVE.** The stages of collaborative problem solving are the focus of this key element. The Stages of Collaborative Problem Solving tool is an action framework for teams to reflect and act upon key issues from a labor-management perspective while keeping equity at the center. The goal is to create practices that build trust and make collaborative professionalism a way of doing business.
- 5. GROW.** The growth element is about deepening the work across the system to build coherence, shared ownership, and accountability. Expanding the work of collaborative problem solving and partnership requires that site leaders are engaged and that central office departments are working with joint labor-management committees to focus on priority topics and shared goals.
- 6. ADVANCE.** Building on the initial elements, this stage focuses on sustainability and supporting a continually learning team and organization. Creating safe spaces for organizational reflection and monitoring, and data collection using shared tools across the organization can be institutionalized through process, policy, and contract language.

## This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no text or other markings on the paper.



# ELEMENT 1

## Launch

In the Launch stage, teams develop a shared understanding of collaboration, collaborative professionalism, and the value of partnership. Teams explore the research supporting the benefits of labor-management partnership and build commitment to working together in collaborative professionalism.

### Contents:

<b>1.A.—Commit to Collaborate .....</b>	<b>19–30</b>
<b>1.B.—Create a Shared Vision and Purpose .....</b>	<b>31–39</b>

“

**The deep shift is a process shift of the way you work together. The culture of working together—risk taking, truth telling, openness, and so forth. You can't learn that in a seminar. You must learn that in action research working and listening to each other in a healing way.**

—Dr. W. Patrick Dolan  
Labor-management leader and author  
of *Restructuring Our Schools*

”

## 1.A. COMMIT TO COLLABORATE

A critical first step in building or strengthening labor-management partnerships is to make an intentional commitment to work together differently. This means recognizing that the status quo can be changed and improved upon. While each labor-management partnership is unique, this often results in management listening more to understand issues and experiences in the district, and for union leaders to engage in and take ownership of efforts to improve the district and student outcomes.

### Why?

- Collaboration is impactful. It brings greater job satisfaction to staff and better outcomes for students.
- Outcomes for high-poverty districts are even greater.
- Everyone has the opportunity to be visionary and a creator and everyone is responsible for the outcome.
- Outcomes are achieved when there is coherence and everyone is focused on shared goals.

### How?

- Focus on building an environment that prioritizes trusting relationships among people and the quality of the work.
- Start where you are and keep working toward the environment you envision.
- Inspire the creative engagement of all staff by rethinking the status quo with a focus on equity and voice.



### Insights from the CA LMI team

- » Professional collaboration requires both precision (coherence and clarity on direction and purpose) and trust (collaborative experiences where we earn and build trust).
- » Employing all three frames of unionism—industrial, professional, and social justice—makes school systems more impactful.
- » Partnership is a journey not a destination. If you stay with it, there will be progress and diversions, and then progress again.

### Connections to California Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (CPSEL)

#### Standard 2: Instructional leadership

- » Element 2–A Professional learning culture: Leaders promote a culture in which staff engage in individual and collective professional learning that results in their continuous improvement and high performance.
- » Element 2A–4 Strengthen staff trust, shared responsibility, and leadership by instituting structures and processes that promote collaborative inquiry and problem solving.

#### Standard 3: Management and learning environment

- » Element 3C Climate: Leaders facilitate safe, fair, and respectful environments that meet the intellectual, linguistic, cultural, social-emotional, and physical needs of each learner.

## 1.A. Resource Overview and Implementation Suggestions

Two resources to help you get started: 1) a collaboration continuum that goes from adversarial to productive partnership, and 2) Andy Hargreaves's simple chart that captures the components of collaborative professionalism (trust and precision) and clarifies less-effective collaboration. They are great tools to thoughtfully assess your existing relationships and work toward collaborative professionalism.

In describing this new partnership dynamic, we often share the Three Frames of Unionism tools that help school staff think more broadly about how everyone can participate in the building and maintaining of great schools. There are concrete examples of what that new relationship can look like to share with your team and imagine for yourselves.

When convincing reluctant colleagues to embrace this new method of thinking, you can point to the strong and promising research base for labor-management collaboration and partnership. First and foremost, there is increased staff retention and student achievement with even greater positive impacts in high-poverty districts.<sup>1</sup> Not surprisingly, research shows that districts with strong labor-management collaboration are better able to develop and implement innovative strategies for teaching and learning.<sup>2</sup>

1. John E. McCarthy and Saul A. Rubinstein, "National Study on Union-Management Partnerships and Educator Collaboration in US Public Schools," 2017. <https://cdefoundation.org/staging/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Cornell-Rutgers-Working-Paper-10-13-17.pdf>

2. Ibid.

Guiding Questions	Progress Points
What are the strengths of our existing relationships? What does successful collaboration look like for us?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We speak respectfully to each other.</li> <li>We meet as a labor-management team, though we are still trying to identify action steps.</li> </ul>
How can we build a commitment to making progress on the partnership continuum when we are not in a place of respect and collaboration?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a shared and acknowledged commitment by the group to move forward.</li> <li>Leaders meet individually on a regular schedule to build personal connections.</li> </ul>
How can we engage our unions and management as institutions more directly in solving problems in addition to engaging individuals?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All district committees and work groups that include diverse membership are acknowledged by unions and management.</li> </ul>
<b>Trust:</b> What are the historical relationships among the labor-management team members? Do they stand on solid footing now or are there relationships to repair?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All parties acknowledge historic relationship challenges.</li> <li>All parties have stated a desire to invest in building improved relationships grounded in shared values.</li> </ul>
<b>Equity:</b> Has the labor-management team welcomed representatives from all labor and management groups?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a shared understanding that successful partnership lifts up and engages the diversity of voices working for the district.</li> </ul>
<b>Communication:</b> How are members notified of meetings? Are notifications timely? How can the responsibilities of communication be shared among group members? Does the group take the time to check for understanding at the meetings?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a sustained commitment to and process for sharing information and checking for understanding.</li> </ul>

### Resources and tools

- Labor-Management Partnership Continuum
- What Partnership Is and Is Not
- Benefits of Labor-Management Partnership
- Cultural Attributes of Partnership
- Three Frames of Unionism
- Quadrants of Collaboration

### Research

- A Snapshot
- National Study on Union-Management Partnerships and Educator Collaboration



## 1.A. Labor-Management Partnership Continuum



## What leaders should expect from labor-management partnerships

Insight from ABC Unified School District labor-management team

### The labor-management partnering process **IS**:

- Finding at least one thing in common to work on together
- Seeking ways to jointly accomplish that goal
- A vehicle for bringing together the key workplace stakeholders
- Built on shared ownership

### The labor-management partnering process **IS NOT**:

- Denial of identity or personal power of either party
- Absence of differences, disagreements, or conflict
- A substitute for collective bargaining
- Just the act of working together
- The act of doing everything together
- Forced cooperation
- An answer for all ills

## 1.A. Benefits of Labor-Management Partnership



**Who Benefits from Labor-Management Partnerships**

IMPROVEMENTS	BENEFITS MANAGEMENT	BENEFITS UNION
IMPROVED PROBLEM-SOLVING CAPABILITIES leading to improved conflict resolution	✓	✓
FEWER ARBITRATIONS due to above plus more effective grievance processes	✓	✓
IMPROVED OUTCOMES AND GREATER STAFF BUY-IN due to more frontline staff involvement in shaping decisions	✓	✓
IMPROVED STAFF SATISFACTION	✓	✓
IMPROVED PATIENT/RESIDENT SATISFACTION	✓	✓
MORE EFFICIENT, HIGHER-QUALITY SERVICES due to redesigned work processes, performance improvement	✓	
ADDITIONAL BARGAINING UNIT POSITIONS due to redesigned jobs and new roles		✓
CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT aided by information about industry trends and best practices	✓	

Source: SEIU 1199SEIU/League Labor Management Project (health care industry), "Why Partner?"  
<https://www.labormanagementinitiatives.org/why-partner/>

## 1.A. Perspectives on Partnership and Collaboration

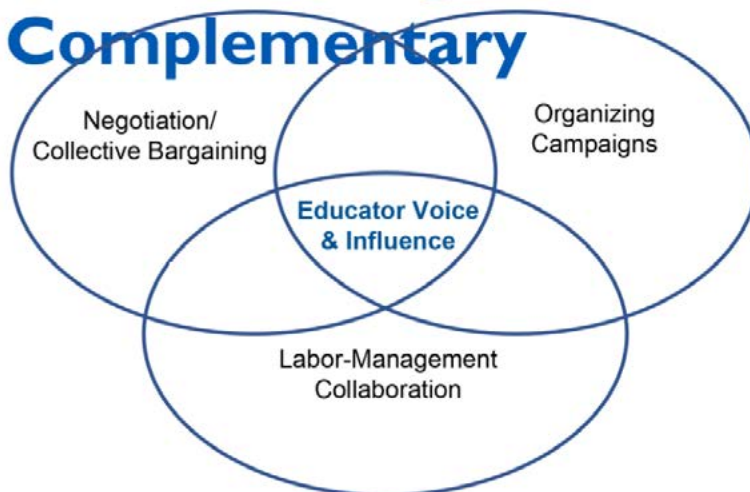
Excerpt from “National Labor-Management Partnership: 2018 Call to Action.”

Shared decision-making does not imply one group relinquishing power and authority to another, and not all decisions in an education system are appropriate to be shared. For example, certain personnel and budgetary decisions will always reside in administration, while governance decisions will reside among the school board who is accountable to the public that elected them, and decisions about pedagogy will continue to be made by classroom educators. However, stretching the boundaries of which district- and school-level decisions can be made jointly, particularly around issues such as instructional practices, mentoring, and student performance, results in positive outcomes for school climate, student achievement, and teacher retention—outcomes valued by all education stakeholders.

What is new about this Call to Action is the commitment from each partner organization to intentionally foster and support lasting structures for collaboration at all levels, so it becomes a part of how we all operate and is sustained at a systemic level, beyond any individual’s tenure. The collaborative partnerships we seek will create structures for all stakeholders to contribute expertise toward specific shared goals, appropriate to their roles in the education system.



## These Strategies Can Be Complementary



These strategies can be used alone, or together, depending on what you want to accomplish, and blended approaches can be very useful in increasing and amplifying educator voice.



Source: “National Labor-Management Partnership: 2018 Call to Action”  
[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1f5YxSx\\_JiQghqpJ0UNLr\\_m5N4BEtSfe/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1f5YxSx_JiQghqpJ0UNLr_m5N4BEtSfe/view)

## 1.A. Integrating the Three Frames of Comprehensive Unionism

Adapted from Jo Anderson, “A Vision of Comprehensive Unionism,” Consortium for Educational Change, 2018.  
<https://www.cecweb.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/A-Vision-for-Comprehensive-Unionism-Final-Draft.pdf>

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## 1.A. Constructing “Comprehensive Unionism” out of Three Frames

Adapted from “MTUL Cohort Draft 5.0,” Consortium for Educational Change, May 2019.

### Industrial Unionism

“Collective power to meet bread and butter needs and ensure fairness from management”

### Professional Unionism

“Assuming responsibility for the quality of the profession”

### Social Justice Unionism

“Equity for our students through active engagement in the community”

## Orientation

- Emphasizes separation of management and union roles in defining members’ work. “Boards make policy, administrators lead, teachers teach.”
- The role of the union is to advocate for its members rights, focusing on working conditions, wages and benefits.

- Emphasizes building professional learning communities and building the craft and the profession of teaching.
- The Union promotes and protects high quality professional skills, resists threats to the profession and asserts member leadership and engagement in decisions that impact the teaching & learning conditions.

- Emphasizes alliances with parents and the community to organize for social justice to help all children succeed – schools and the conditions around schools must both change to improve educational outcomes.
- Race and class challenges and socio-economic segregation must be addressed if achievement gaps are to be narrowed.

## View of Management

- Assumes labor-management relations are hostile and adversarial. Defends member rights & responds to grievances.
- Fights for member priorities and standard of living in the budget. Organize members as an independent force.

- Values labor-management collaboration and partnership to improve and preserve public education and the profession.
- Emphasizes programs and priorities to improve education quality and student achievement in the public interest

- Management and labor are partners in engaging families, community and ethnic groups to build support for public education.
- Advocate together for bonds/parcel taxes, grants, foundation support, and to resist inequitable solutions based on race & class.

## Role of Parents

- The Union reaches out to Parents when engaged in bargaining crisis or labor/mgmt. conflict.
- Limit parent intrusions into the classroom to protect teacher autonomy.

- The Union works with parents to improve individual parent support for their child’s learning and work as partners with the education professionals.

- The Union reaches out to parent and community allies in strategic alliances to improve the quality of teaching, teacher cultural competency and increase opportunities for all students to be successful.

## Bargaining

- Limit scope of bargaining to bread and butter issues of salary, hours, and “working conditions.”
- Views the Contract as way to institutionalize all changes.

- Broad scope and interest-based bargaining are a way to address teaching quality and support issues.
- Agreements are also sought outside the contract.
- Contracts are a way to codify and sustain change.

- Infuse bargaining with concerns that address race, class, democracy, empowerment and equity issues.
- Change can only be institutionalized and sustained by organizing rank-and- file members and the community.

## 1.A. Constructing “Comprehensive Unionism” out of Three Frames

Industrial Unionism	Professional Unionism	Social Justice Unionism
<b>Decision-Making</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management prerogatives respected on a school and district level.</li> <li>• Teachers grieve management decisions through their union.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expands member decision-making and instructional leadership at school and district level. Joint decision-making expands member and union ownership.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Democratic input by all stakeholders creates processes for institutionalized administrator, member, parent, and student empowerment.</li> </ul>

### Teaching and the Achievement Gap

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers and Support Professionals have limited ability to control conditions that cause the gap in student achievement.</li> <li>• Efforts to close the achievement gap must not be based on unreasonable expectations and the union's role is to ensure that training and accountability measures don't contribute to an unsustainable working &amp; learning environment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional quality in education is critical to closing the achievement gap. It is possible to define and measure quality teaching and supports. The union's role is to make sure good methods and tools are implemented with fidelity.</li> <li>• Union takes a leadership role in improving the quality of teaching &amp; learning and professional development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Belief in “effort-based intelligence”--all students can learn if adequate resources are equitably distributed and available.</li> <li>• Cultural competency/proficiency for teachers to reach all students.</li> <li>• School district funding, equitable distribution of accomplished teachers and school resources are priorities.</li> </ul>
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### Teaching Working Conditions

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The union works to improve conditions of teaching (Class size, adequate text books and supplies, hours, etc.)</li> <li>• Union emphasizes protection of members' rights – files grievances to resolve conflicts.</li> <li>• Seniority provisions are the best protection against employer favoritism.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The union is willing to take control of the improvement of teaching, support for teacher and support personnel effectiveness.</li> <li>• Alternatives to seniority-based transfer, assignment and layoff procedures are developed by the union to balance needs of younger and older teachers and the program needs of the educational enterprise.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assignment of teachers and support personnel to schools ensures high-quality, experienced members in hard-to-staff schools.</li> <li>• The union supports preferential teaching and learning conditions (e.g. lower class sizes) for high poverty schools.</li> <li>• Seniority-based Reductions-in-Force will be modified by the union so as not to disproportionately impact high-poverty, high-turnover schools.</li> </ul>
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### Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment of Student Learning

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary role of union is to improve wages, benefits, retirement, and equal treatment for all members.</li> <li>• Curriculum, professional development, assessment and grading policy are the responsibility of the district management.</li> <li>• Teachers are responsible for teaching and students are responsible for learning.</li> <li>• Teachers must not be evaluated primarily based on student test scores because that unfairly and inaccurately credits teachers for low performance that has other causes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Union promotes additional responsibility and pay for teacher instructional leaders.</li> <li>• Union brings the teachers' voice to the design, implementation and evaluation of curriculum, assessment and instruction.</li> <li>• The role of student test scores and other factors in teacher evaluation is negotiated and monitored by the union.</li> <li>• Union accepts necessary role of student achievement/learning in teacher and school accountability, because that is how public schools are judged.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Union safeguards teachers' role in promoting critical thinking, critical pedagogy, and a broad curriculum not aimed primarily at standardized tests.</li> <li>• Teachers encouraged to make curriculum relevant to students' lives and to incorporate student's lives into learning – cultural competence.</li> <li>• Union advocates for a “Broader Bolder Approach” to building a movement to improve the social context for schooling – health care, jobs, housing, etc.</li> </ul>
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# THE BENEFITS OF COLLABORATION: A SNAPSHOT

## COLLABORATION MITIGATES THE NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF POVERTY

### MORE STUDENTS ACHIEVE

When there is greater collaboration in schools, more students perform at or above grade level standards.

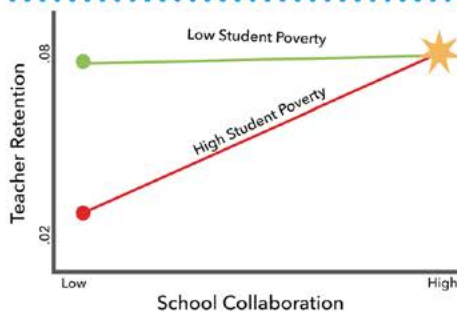


**+4.5%**

MATH

**+12.5%**

ENGLISH  
LANGUAGE  
ARTS



### MORE TEACHERS STICK AROUND

When collaboration is low, teacher retention is 3.5x lower in high-poverty schools than in low-poverty schools. But, when collaboration is high, there is no statistical difference in teacher retention between high-poverty and low-poverty schools.

## COLLABORATION INCREASES EDUCATOR EMPOWERMENT



Improved  
Goal Alignment



Increased Educator  
Confidence



Association Rep and  
Principal Seen As  
Professional Resources

## THE ROLE OF THE ASSOCIATION IS TRANSFORMED

COMMUNICATING  
ABOUT SCHOOL  
IMPROVEMENT

ENSURING  
EDUCATOR VOICE IN  
EDUCATION QUALITY

COMMUNICATING  
ABOUT GRIEVANCE  
ISSUES

ENSURING  
SHARED  
DECISION-  
MAKING

Building representatives see their roles shift from primarily transactional, to more balanced and transformational roles.

In collaborative environments, the association/union's natural network facilitates sharing of innovative practices across schools and districts.



(Infographic based on research by McCarthy and Rubinstein, 2017)



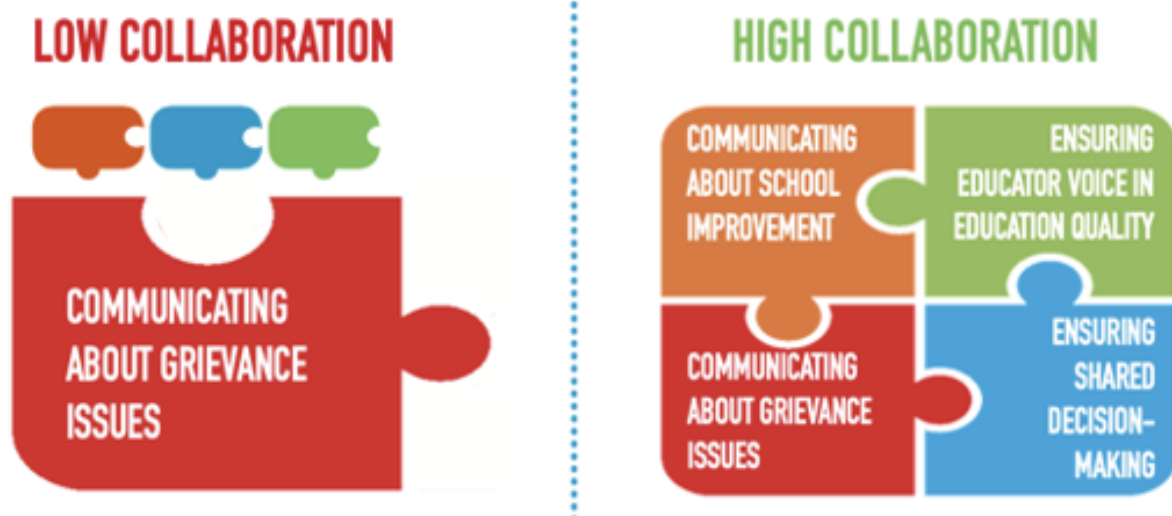
## 1.A. Transformed Role of the Association/Union

Excerpt from *Collaborating for Student Success* (NEA workbook, 2019).

One interesting (and somewhat surprising) benefit of collaboration is that it transforms the role of the education association/union representative in ways that benefit everyone involved. Rubinstein and McCarthy found that in schools with strong, long-standing partnerships and high levels of collaboration, the association/union representatives take on unique roles and responsibilities that help improve teaching and student learning. In such schools, the association/union representative's role shifts from more transactional (primarily about contractual issues and grievances) to more balanced and transformational. In this new role, the association/union representative works with the principal to foster collaboration and to increase educator empowerment on issues related to school improvement and education quality.

### WITH COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

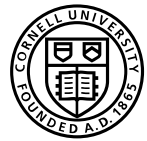
Research shows that collaborative environments shift Association representatives' perception of their roles from primarily transactional to more balanced and transformational. (McCarthy and Rubinstein, 2017)



## 1.A. National Study on Union-Management Partnerships and Educator Collaboration in U.S. Public Schools

Adapted from John E. McCarthy and Saul A. Rubenstein, “Collaborative School Leadership Initiative” working paper, October 2017.

- » John E. McCarthy, Cornell University —[jem543@cornell.edu](mailto:jem543@cornell.edu)
- » Saul A. Rubenstein, Rutgers University —[saul.rubinstein@rutgers.edu](mailto:saul.rubinstein@rutgers.edu)



Cornell University



RUTGERS

The six-page working paper can be found at:



[cdef.ink/CR\\_Nat\\_Study](https://cdef.ink/CR_Nat_Study)

Over the past 16 years, federal efforts to improve public education have focused on market reforms (charter schools and voucher programs). To date, there is little evidence that these reforms have produced the promised benefits. However, for the past 10 years, we have been studying a different approach to improving and reforming public education—one based on building strong relationships among teachers’ unions and school administrations, and developing collaborative institutions in schools and school districts focused on improving teaching and learning. We have been conducting a national study on union-management partnerships and educator collaboration in public schools across the country, which includes over 400 schools in 21 school districts in six states: California, Illinois, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, and New Jersey.

We focus on school and district decision-making and problem solving, particularly as they apply to the relationship among administrators, teachers, and their unions. We are interested in how collaborative processes at the school level—specifically shared decision-making; goal alignment; and teacher discretion, voice, and psychological safety<sup>1</sup>—impact student performance, teacher turnover, and engagement, and the extent to which teachers view their principals and union leaders as educational resources. In addition, we study how union-management partnerships in school districts shape school culture. Our findings reveal that union-management partnerships help to catalyze productive collaborative behaviors that benefit students and educators alike.

<sup>1</sup> Psychological safety is the extent to which one perceives that he or she can be open and question policies or decisions without fear of reprisal.

### Summary of Findings:

- » School-level collaboration **improves student performance** (ELA and math), even after we control for poverty.
- » School-level collaboration **reduces voluntary turnover and increases school commitment.** (These effects are particularly strong for high-poverty schools.)
- » Highly collaborative schools and strong union-leader networks **increase cross-school knowledge sharing.**
- » Formal union-management partnerships at the district-level seem to be a **catalyst for building highly collaborative schools**, as we find that district partnerships are positively associated with school collaboration.
- » School representatives in high-partnership districts are more likely to **view collaboration-building as central** to their union roles and responsibilities.

In addition, we also found that collaboration, including shared decision-making, goal alignment, teacher discretion, voice and psychological safety, are all positively associated with teachers’ perceptions of:

- » Individual teacher and collective faculty effectiveness;
- » Principal resourcefulness;
- » Union representative resourcefulness.

## 1.A. National Study on Union-Management Partnerships and Educator Collaboration in U.S. Public Schools *(continued)*

### Partnership quality

The relationship between the union and management. High-quality partnerships are demonstrated by shared decision-making, collaboration, and mutual respect between formal union leaders and administrators.

### Cultural attributes

Attribute	District* culture attribute description	School** culture attribute description
Peer collaboration	The amount and quality of collaboration among administrators within a district. It encompasses information sharing, social support, and the extent to which administrators successfully work together to accomplish goals.	The amount and quality of collaboration among teachers and faculty members within a school. It encompasses information sharing, social support, and the extent to which faculty and teachers successfully work together to accomplish goals.
Discretion	The amount of autonomy afforded to school administrators within a district. In high employee discretion settings, administrators have the latitude to make school-level decisions independently.	The amount of autonomy afforded to teachers and faculty within a school. In high employee discretion settings, teachers have the latitude to make classroom-level decisions independently.
Goal alignment	The extent to which administrators work toward common goals. High goal alignment is demonstrated by a common purpose and shared priorities.	The extent to which teachers and faculty members are working toward common goals. High goal alignment is demonstrated by a common purpose and shared priorities.
Psychological safety	The extent to which school administrators are comfortable voicing their concerns and sharing their opinions. Administrators who experience psychological safety believe that they will not be harshly judged for making mistakes or voicing concerns about district policies. Psychologically safe environments allow for respectful discourse that includes all viewpoints.	The extent to which teachers and faculty are comfortable voicing their concerns and sharing their opinions. Teachers and faculty who experience psychological safety believe they will not be harshly judged for making mistakes or voicing concerns about school policies. Psychologically safe environments allow for respectful discourse that includes all viewpoints.
Shared decisions	The extent to which school administrators, district administrators, and the superintendent collaborate on important decisions. In environments high in shared decision-making, the superintendent and district administrators regularly consult with school administrators for input on significant issues.	The extent to which school management and teachers and faculty collaborate on important decisions. In environments high in shared decision-making, school administrators regularly consult with teachers and faculty for input on significant issues.

\* District refers to administrators at the site and district level.

\*\* School refers to nonadministrative staff across the organization.

## 1.B. CREATE A SHARED VISION AND PURPOSE

An essential element of launching a labor-management initiative is creating a shared purpose, a collective vision for what is possible. It is the North Star for a labor-management team's collaborative work and drives the priorities and activities. It sets the expectation that the team's work is owned and implemented collectively by all team members. When teams do this, participants see themselves in the work, and they feel ownership and accountable for the outcome. Working together to develop a shared vision also builds trust among team members and fosters a culture of inclusivity and respect for each other's opinions and perspectives.

To be meaningful, the vision and purpose is based on the passions that inspire the labor-management team members to work in education, or as Simon Sinek calls it, the “why,” or the noble purpose that motivates each of us.

It is important to note that the vision and purpose are not action steps themselves. They are the guideposts for the activities that the labor-management team designs and the inspiration that drives participation.

### Why?

- Teams with shared purpose generate collective impact and results.
- Shared vision and purpose are foundational to building trust.
- There is transparency about the big picture, and everyone feels invested.
- Everyone becomes an ambassador and accountable for success.

### How?

- Create a safe space for people to be honest and share their personal stories.
- Share the personal stories that motivate you.
- Develop shared core beliefs and a vision based on what matters to you, your team, and your community.
- Inspire everyone on the team to be a leader and invested in the success of this work.



### Insights from the CA LMI team

- » This work is about systems change and continuous improvement; it does not live just in the human resources department in school systems.

### Connections to California Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (CPSEL)

#### Standard 1: Development and Implementation of a Shared Vision

- » Element 1B–1 Embrace diverse perspectives and craft consensus about the vision and goals.

#### Standard 2: Instructional Leadership

- » Element 2A Professional learning culture: Leaders promote a culture in which staff engage in individual and collective professional learning that results in their continuous improvement and high performance.
- » Element 2A–4 Strengthen staff trust, shared responsibility, and leadership by instituting structures and processes that promote collaborative inquiry and problem solving.

#### Standard 3: Management and Learning Environment

- » Element 3C Climate: Leaders facilitate safe, fair, and respectful environments that meet the intellectual, linguistic, cultural, social-emotional, and physical needs of each learner.

#### Standard 5: Ethics and Integrity

- » Element 5B Leaders guide and support personal and collective actions that use relevant evidence and available research to make fair and ethical decisions.
- » Element 5C–3 Encourage and inspire others to higher levels of performance, commitment, and motivation by modeling transparent and accountable behavior.

## 1.B. CREATE A SHARED VISION AND PURPOSE

In the world of change making, shared vision is a core component of collective impact and a critical element for teams of people tackling complex problems. The road to action starts with a shared understanding of what's important and where the team is headed. Michael Fullan, an expert in whole system change in education and the director of Global Leadership, New Pedagogies for Deep Learning, offers implementation strategies that are a good example of change work starting with a shared understanding of values and goals. He highlights that, once everyone shares the same vision, people can bring their individual creativity and skills to building a plan to achieve it. This is the beginning of the coherence framework. It is also seen in community movements for change. The work that underlies mobilizing is exploring the passions and interests of diverse people and consolidating them into a shared statement of purpose or vision. How might teams launch the conversation that creates the unifying statement or list of beliefs that emotionally calls colleagues to action? How can it happen so that it doesn't feel like another irrelevant activity that sits on the shelf?

**Leaders must believe that 1) the exercise is meaningful, 2) it will help their team build honest and trusting relationships, and 3) the purpose developed will be used to focus the team and guide decisions.** Leaders must be invested in sharing their personal stories and listening to and understanding the stories of others. By sharing stories, it is possible to see where visions overlap and understand the breadth of the challenge from new and different perspectives. Then a vision that resonates for everyone can be created.

To begin, ask team members to think about their motivation for being in the world of education. There are two great leaders in the field to lean on. The first is Simon Sinek. He is well-known for his books and international speaking on tying business success to the importance of “why.” More recently, he has advocated for the renaming of a shared mission or vision statement with identifying a *Just Cause*. You can share either of his YouTube videos (see the Additional Resources section of this guidebook) as a conversation starter. Then capture what is important to you and your teammates and draft your guiding values or *Just Cause* from those meaningful sharings.

Another powerful resource is Harvard professor Marshall Ganz. His worksheet “What Is Public Narrative: Self, Us & Now” can help teams develop a common, connecting purpose.

- **The Story of Now:** What urgent challenge do you hope to inspire others to take action on?
- **The Story of Us:** What values, experiences, or aspirations of your community—in this case, your teammates—will you appeal to when you call on them to join you in action?
- **The Story of Self:** Why were you called to motivate others to join you in this action?

Leadership is an important theme for both Sinek and Ganz (see the Additional Resources section for videos and an article about this). This is not leadership in the hierarchical sense, but rather, each member of the team is a leader, and their responsibility is to support the vision or Just Cause and motivate others to be part of the work. This may be a very different mindset for educators and school personnel. If so, make sure that everyone shares this definition and then be prepared to build trust and confidence among team members that this is the definition of leadership that matters. The California Professional Standards for Education Leaders (CPSEL) are a good reminder that leadership is about building a collaborative culture and promoting leadership in others. Also included in this section are examples of school district labor-management team mission and vision statements from the Mountain View, Alisal, and Dinuba districts. There are two examples of belief statements: one from ABC Unified, where the beliefs are central to their expected behaviors, and the second from the Monterey County Office of Education, where the shared beliefs form the foundation for the County Office Learning Team's Theory of Change planning tool.



## 1.B. CREATE A SHARED VISION AND PURPOSE

Guiding Questions	Progress Points
How can we learn what is motivating and inspiring to others on the team?	People on the team have shared their personal “why” story and a story of “us” and <i>Just Cause</i> became connected to the vision and purpose.
What do we need to do to make this experience meaningful and not a superficial repeat of previous good intentions?	The vision and beliefs are easily retrieved by all members of the team. The vision and beliefs are referred to when the team loses focus.
<b>Trust:</b> What do we need to do to create a space where team members feel safe to share their honest feelings and stories?	Team- and trust-building exercises open the door to personal stories.
<b>Equity:</b> How will you reflect the diversity of the community within your organization?	The vision and belief statements reflect the breadth of the community.
<b>Communication:</b> Why, how, and when will we promote the vision and purpose to our members and constituents?	Other members in the organization are aware of the vision and purpose and feel connected to it. Other places in the organization are sharing personal stories to build trust.

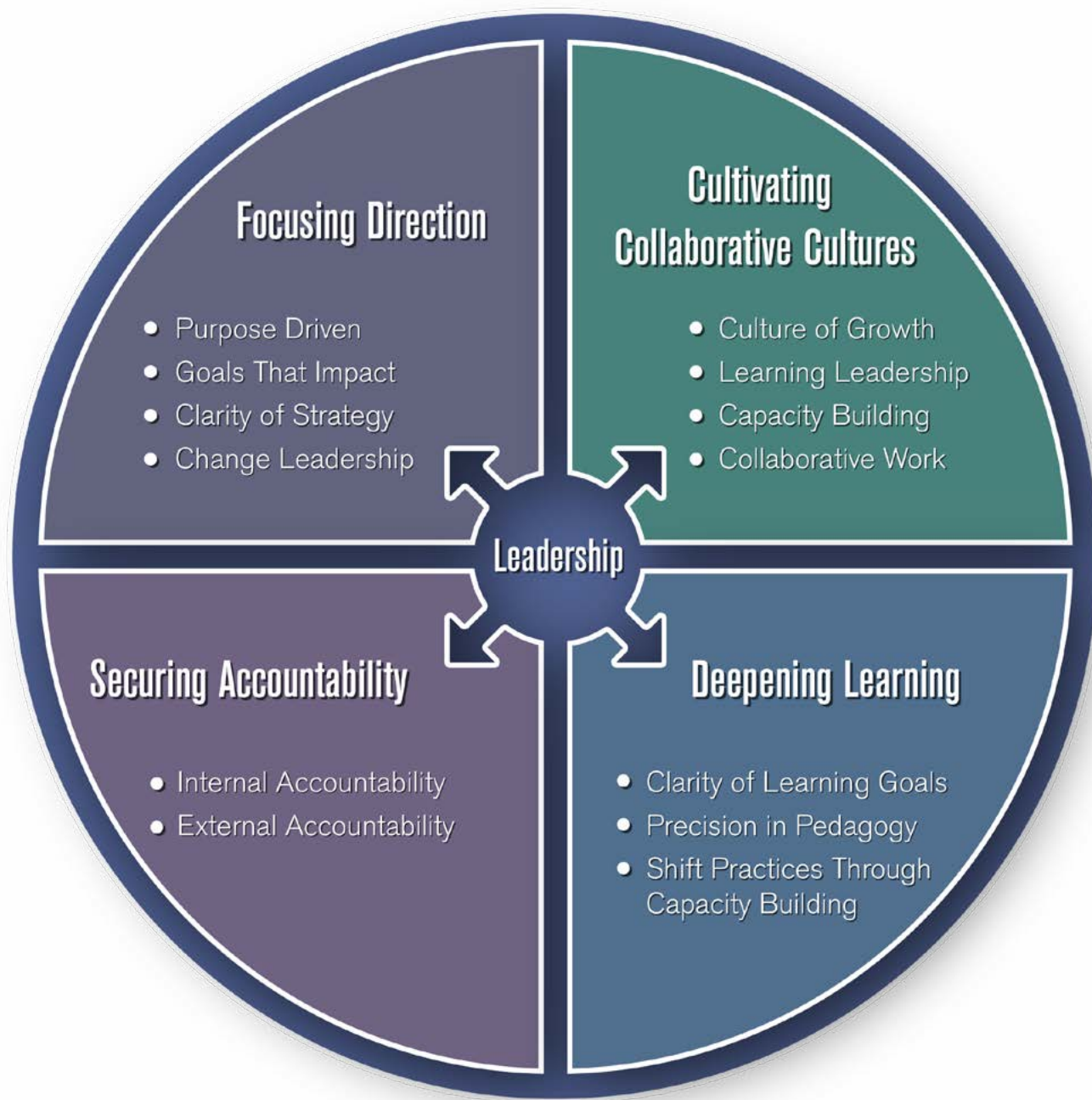
### Resources and tools

- Coherence Framework: Focusing Direction
- Coherence Framework Progressions
- ABCT and ABCUSD’s Partnership Between Administration and Labor (PAL)
- Monterey County Office of Education, Theory of Change
- Examples of Vision and Purpose



## 1.B. Coherence Framework: Focusing Direction

Michael Fullan, Joanne Quinn, and Eleanor Adam, “Coherence—The Right Drivers in Action for Schools, Districts, and Systems,” in *Motion Leadership* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, 2016).



Michael Fullan, “Coherence Framework Extended,” *Motion Leadership*, 2016. All four quadrants of the coherence progressions and questions are linked here: <https://michaelfullan.ca/coherence-the-right-drivers-in-action-for-schools-districts-and-systems/coherence-framework-extended/>



1.B. Coherence Progression: From Thinking to Doing

Adapted from Michael Fullan, Joanne Quinn, and Eleanor Adam, *The Taking Action Guide to Building Coherence in Schools, Districts, and Systems* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, 2015).

Coherence progression components		Emerging	Accelerating	Mastering	Opportunity
Focusing Direction	A. Shared purpose drives action.				
	B. A small number of goals tied to student learning drives decisions.				
	C. A clear strategy for achieving the goals is known by all.				
	D. Change knowledge is used to move the district forward.				

“

People don't trust you until they know your story. The most effective rebels and change makers are great storytellers. They share what's at stake, paint a picture of what could be, make the status quo look unappealing, and show how a proposed idea can work, even while pointing out the risks. They also tell insightful personal stories. Why? Before people will trust you or your idea, they want to know why you believe what you believe.

”

—Carmen Medina,  
Author, *Rebels at Work*

## 1.B. Coherence Progression: Focusing Direction

	Emerging	Accelerating	Mastering
<b>Shared purpose drives action.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A stated purpose or focus for the organization exists in formal documents but is not widely shared and does not drive decisions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The stated purpose and focus are clearly and formally articulated, and groups are beginning to articulate this focus in their work. The purpose and focus are beginning to drive decisions but not consistently.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The purpose and focus are clearly articulated and shared by all levels of the organization. There is strong commitment to the purpose, and it drives decisions at all levels of the school/district.</li> </ul>
<b>A small number of goals tied to student learning drives decisions.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A small number of goals are stated but may be unclear, and there are a number of competing priorities.</li> <li>The school/district may be feeling overloaded from too many initiatives or priorities.</li> <li>Fragmentation may be felt when the goals do not seem to be connected in a meaningful way.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A small number of goals are stated and understood by some, but deep understanding and action is inconsistent across the school/ district.</li> <li>The goals drive some decisions but inconsistently.</li> <li>There is a strategy to reduce the number of competing priorities and eliminate distractors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A small number of goals clearly focused on improving learning are well articulated and implemented by leaders, teachers, and staff at all levels of the system.</li> <li>Decisions are directly aligned to the stated goals.</li> <li>A vigilant process is in place to remove distractors, base decisions on data, and remain consistent year to year.</li> </ul>
<b>A clear strategy for achieving the goals is known by all.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The strategy for achieving goals lacks clarity and precision. A few decision-makers understand the strategy, but it is not widely understood at all levels.</li> <li>A clear link between decisions on the allocation of resources and the priority goals is not evident.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The strategy for achieving the priority goals is stated but led by a small number of leaders.</li> <li>Ongoing opportunities for interaction and engagement with doing the work are needed so that clarity and commitment are developed across the school or district.</li> <li>Decisions on the allocation of resources are linked to priorities but not consistently.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The strategy for achieving the goals is well defined and can be clearly articulated by all educators at every level of the school/district.</li> <li>Leaders recognize that it is more important to learn from doing the work and adjusting strategy than having a lengthy front-end process.</li> <li>Decisions on the allocation of resources are driven by shared strategy and goals.</li> </ul>
<b>Change knowledge is used to move the district forward.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leaders see their role as managing the change process one interaction at a time. They rely on formal roles and structures.</li> <li>Collaboration among leaders and teachers is limited to formal structures.</li> <li>Deep, trusting relationships are inconsistent.</li> <li>There is an effort to build internal capacity, but a reliance on external experts and packaged solutions continues.</li> <li>There are few or inconsistent structures and processes for building vertical and horizontal relationships and learning across the school/district.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leaders are beginning to see their role as developing others and creating structures and processes for interaction. However, opportunities to develop new leaders, both formal and informal, are not always evident.</li> <li>Collaboration and trust are emerging within groups but are inconsistent across the school/ district.</li> <li>Capacity building is recognized as a lever for change, and efforts to build the collective capacity of groups is emerging.</li> <li>There are some structures and processes in place to foster relationships and learning vertically within schools/districts and horizontally across roles within schools and districts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong leadership with a bias for action exists at all levels of the school/district.</li> <li>Leaders are intentionally developed at all levels.</li> <li>A culture of collaboration with deep trust and risk taking has been fostered at all levels to promote innovation and shifts in practice.</li> <li>Capacity building is a key lever for building confidence and competence and pervades the culture.</li> <li>The culture uses the group to change the group by fostering strong vertical and horizontal relationships and learning opportunities.</li> </ul>

Michael Fullan, Joanne Quinn, and Eleanor Adam, *The Taking Action Guide to Building Coherence in Schools, Districts, and Systems* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, 2015).

## 1.B. ABCFT and ABCUSD's Partnership Between Administration and Labor (PAL)

ABC Unified School District

### Guiding principles



All students can succeed, and we will not accept any excuse that prevents that from happening. We will work together to promote student success.



All needed support will be made available to schools to ensure every student succeeds. We will work together to ensure that happens.



The top 5% of teachers in our profession should teach our students. We will work together to hire, train, and retain these professionals.



All employees contribute to student success.



All negotiations support conditions that sustain successful teaching and student learning. This is the *main thing*!

## WE WON'T LET EACH OTHER FAIL.

## 1.B. Theory of Change: Labor-Management Partnerships

Monterey County Office of Education (MCOE)

Beliefs	Resources	Activities	Outputs	Impact
The assumptions that underlie our work	What we draw upon to do our work	What we do or deliver	What immediately happens from our implementation	What benefits and changes we expect over time
<p>Both students and employees are more likely to succeed when labor-management relations are healthy, diverse, and inclusive.</p> <p>Employing all three frames of unionism—industrial, professional, and social justice—makes us more impactful</p> <p>Healthy organizations use professional collaboration to problem solve and adapt successfully.</p> <p>Professional collaboration requires both precision (coherence and clarity on direction and purpose) and trust (collaborative experiences where we earn and build trust).</p> <p>Organizational culture does not change by mandate; it requires consistently applied behaviors and actions that are modeled and reinforced by leaders at all levels.</p>	<p><b>Human</b> A committed staff</p> <p><b>Financial</b></p> <p><b>Organizational</b></p> <p><b>Community</b></p>	<p>MCOE learning team meetings to set organizational direction and monitor MCOE progress</p> <p>Professional development and training to build the capacity of MCOE staff to change organizational culture in line with labor-management collaboration</p> <p>Facilitated use of the Three-Box Framework for collaborative problem solving throughout MCOE, focused on refinement, prioritization, and innovation</p> <p>LMI Summer Institutes and regional (countywide) convenings to deepen and disseminate professional learning in MCOE</p> <p>Integration of educational services to assist with CA LMI promotion and implementation both internally within MCOE and externally with partnering districts in the county</p>	<p>Establishment of a multistakeholder forum for organizationwide leadership decisions</p> <p>Identification of leaders and influencers throughout MCOE</p> <p>Training and support for this diverse set of leaders and influencers</p> <p>Clarity of direction and purpose (staff who understand the “why” of MCOE priorities)</p> <p>Coherence and alignment of expectations (staff who coconstruct the “what” of implementation)</p> <p>Increased opportunities for leadership development (staff who own the “how” of implementation)</p> <p>Increased active presence of MCOE in county- and statewide educational gatherings</p>	<p><b>Short (Year 1)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Improved employee job satisfaction, sense of efficacy, and perceptions of MCOE direction</li> <li>» More efficient and beneficial MCOE team meetings</li> </ul> <p><b>Medium (Years 2–3)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Reduced staff absenteeism</li> <li>» Improved intra-MCOE communication (sharing of information and data)</li> <li>» Well-established norms of internal accountability</li> <li>» Increases in school districts reporting satisfaction with county-provided services</li> </ul> <p><b>Long-term (Years 4–5)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Increased staff retention (less turnover)</li> <li>» Increased applications for employment within MCOE</li> <li>» Distributed leadership structures that empower teams throughout MCOE</li> <li>» Improved program/service implementation leading to better student/staff outcomes</li> </ul>

NPO Solutions (2019)

## 1.B. Examples of Vision/Purpose



### Mountain View

"The Mountain View Partnership for Learning Team will foster strong, positive relationships among all employees where collaboration, transparency and trust will be seen as the norm. This will be accomplished by putting structures in place to address concerns and tackle issues together in order to benefit the entire Mountain View community."



### Alisal

"The Alisal Labor Management Accord (ALMA) Team, composed of District Staff, focuses on collaboration and communication by all stakeholders to create a culture of "we" that will teach the whole child and close the achievement gap for our students. The ALMA Team will model and support a culture of collaboration where all stakeholders are a part of supporting [Alisal Unified School District] AUSD initiatives that will lead to continuous improvement in our district as a system."



### Dinuba

District vision: "To end generational poverty through education."  
—Labor-management team purpose: "Cultivating trust and collaboration as labor and management teams."

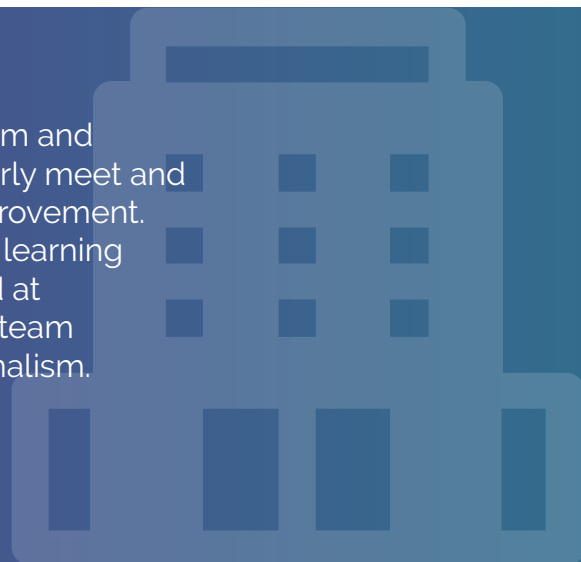




# ELEMENT 2

## Build

This element focuses on launching a labor-management team and establishing a structure for labor and management to regularly meet and engage in reflective discussions of problem solving and improvement. Teams are encouraged to start by developing a district-level learning team, though labor-management teams can also be created at school sites and throughout the district. Once identified, the team should establish norms that support collaborative professionalism.



### Contents:

<b>2.A.—Form Teams</b> .....	<b>43–47</b>
<b>2.B.—Establish Guiding Behaviors</b> .....	<b>48–56</b>

“

**If there is more truth in the  
hallways than in meetings,  
you have a problem.**

—Ed Catmull  
Co-founder of Pixar and  
former president of  
the Walt Disney company

”

## 2.A. FORM TEAMS

### What does a labor-management team look like?

To start, a district learning team (DLT) should be created with broad participation from across the organization, including the superintendent, leadership from classified and certificated labor unions, and key district management. In some cases school board members are also included in the DLT; however, it is important that board members focus on their policy roles as outlined by CSBA and not get enmeshed in the work of management and implementation. In addition to a district-level labor-management team, similar teams may be formed at the individual site level (see Element 6.B. for additional details). Labor-management collaboration goals and strategies may also be incorporated into learning communities and other district or school teams. Establishing multiple teams can generate an ecosystem of labor-management partnership in which teams with more specific focuses (such as site- or grade-specific teams) are informing those with a broader or policy-level focus, such as the DLT. It is common for districts and school sites to build a variety of teams to work on a particular issue, but those initiatives are rarely viewed as a labor-management activity. Think about how these work groups can be supported by and connected to labor-management collaboration.

Recognize that no one loses power or authority in a labor-management partnership. When launching a labor-management initiative, constituents should ask, “What’s in it for me?” In addition to expanding and improving communication channels among team members and the organizations they represent, here are examples of specific benefits of building a robust labor-management team:

- **District administrators** benefit when decision-making includes a broader, more diverse group of participants, especially a labor-management learning team. When problem solving and decision-making are shared and discussed with this broader group, it makes rollout of initiatives more effective, elevates topics from the learning team into the organization, and conveys greater organizational support for complex or potentially difficult decisions. It also lays the foundation for shared responsibility and accountability for implementation.
- **Teacher (certificated) association and union leaders** gain more opportunities to provide input on district-level decisions and implementation strategies, elevating educator voices, and increasing their understanding of the context and rationale for district-level decisions.
- **Classified employee association and union leaders** gain more opportunities to be involved in district-level decision-making, elevating the experiences of their members, and providing useful insights into implementation considerations from the staff perspective. Classified employees also gain a greater understanding of the overall district operation.
- **School board leaders** can gain a clearer understanding of the district context and the perspectives of key stakeholder groups. They can help make labor-management partnership sustainable by using their policy- and goal-setting role to prioritize building collaborative culture and climate within the school system and translating the actions of the leadership team into policy.

### An additional benefit of starting with a broad-sector team is the diversity it brings.

The life and education experiences are typically not the same for managers and certificated and classified staff. Further, staff, who reside in the district, can help shed light on the parent, family, and community perspectives. Classified staff, in particular, often have long-standing relationships with the community.

## 2.A. FORM TEAMS *(continued)*

### Why?

- The work of school districts is complex. More diverse perspectives at the leadership table help identify root cause issues and bring forward a greater breadth of solutions.
- To tackle the large goal of organizational culture change, it is best to include leaders who have influence and who can help promote the work of the district and labor-management team.

### How?

- The team should be representative of the board of education/trustees, superintendent, all unions and employee organizations, and members of the cabinet to launch a labor-management collaboration effort.
- The district-level team should be large enough to include representation from all facets of the organization and have enough members that if one or two people are unable to attend a meeting, the group has enough participation to continue.
- Meetings should be scheduled regularly throughout the year.



### Insights from the CA LMI team

- » Many teams choose to create their own names for their labor-management team such as the Solutions Team. We encourage teams to personalize this work. Get creative and develop terminology that is meaningful to you.
- » If an administrative association exists in the district, it is a good practice to include their leadership in the district learning team from the start. If they are excluded, principals often feel left out.
- » Consider building upon or adapting successful organizational strategies that are already in place, such as meeting norms or existing joint committees. Alternatively, be respectful but purposeful when integrating new norms and practices into existing groups.

### Connections to California Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (CPSEL)

#### Standard 1: Development and Implementation of a Shared Vision

- » Element 1C–1 Include all stakeholders in a process of continuous improvement (reflection, revision, and modification) based on the systematic review of evidence and progress.

#### Standard 2: Instructional Leadership

- » Element 2A Professional Learning Culture: Leaders promote a culture in which staff engage in individual and collective professional learning that results in their continuous improvement and high performance.
- » Element 2A–4 Strengthen staff trust, shared responsibility, and leadership by instituting structures and processes that promote collaborative inquiry and problem solving.

#### Standard 3: Management and Learning Environment

- » Element 3C–1 Strengthen school climate through participation, engagement, connection, and a sense of belonging among all students and staff.

#### Standard 5: Ethics and Integrity

- » Element 5B Leaders guide and support personal and collective actions that use relevant evidence and available research to make fair and ethical decisions.

## 2.A. Resource Overview and Implementation Suggestions

**Creating a diverse team is the first step in building intentionality into your practice.** Random acts lead to random outcomes, but work that is focused and intentional will more likely result in the desired outcomes. Be thoughtful and strategic in your team development. Does it include leadership from all labor groups within the district? Is there appropriate representation from the school board? Is there adequate representation from the cabinet and the unions so that the work of the labor-management team can be embedded in the work of the district and the unions and no group can point a finger and say they weren't included?

**Does the proposed team reflect diverse perspectives and experiences?** Consider the ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic makeup of the district, the community, and the staff and determine if those voices are adequately included in the team. If not, what will be done to address the gap? Keep the overall team size manageable while including each stakeholder group. Consider what strategies, tools, and ideas can be adopted that ensure that the work is shared with others and inclusion goals are met.

Included in this section is a diagram of a district labor-management structure that includes a learning team at the district level, school teams at school-site levels, and professional learning teams within sites. Consider using this diagram with your learning team as a prototype when designing your district labor-management structure. Start small and realistically, and accomplish something before setting another goal. It is always effective and a great trust builder to report to constituents that something that was planned was accomplished!

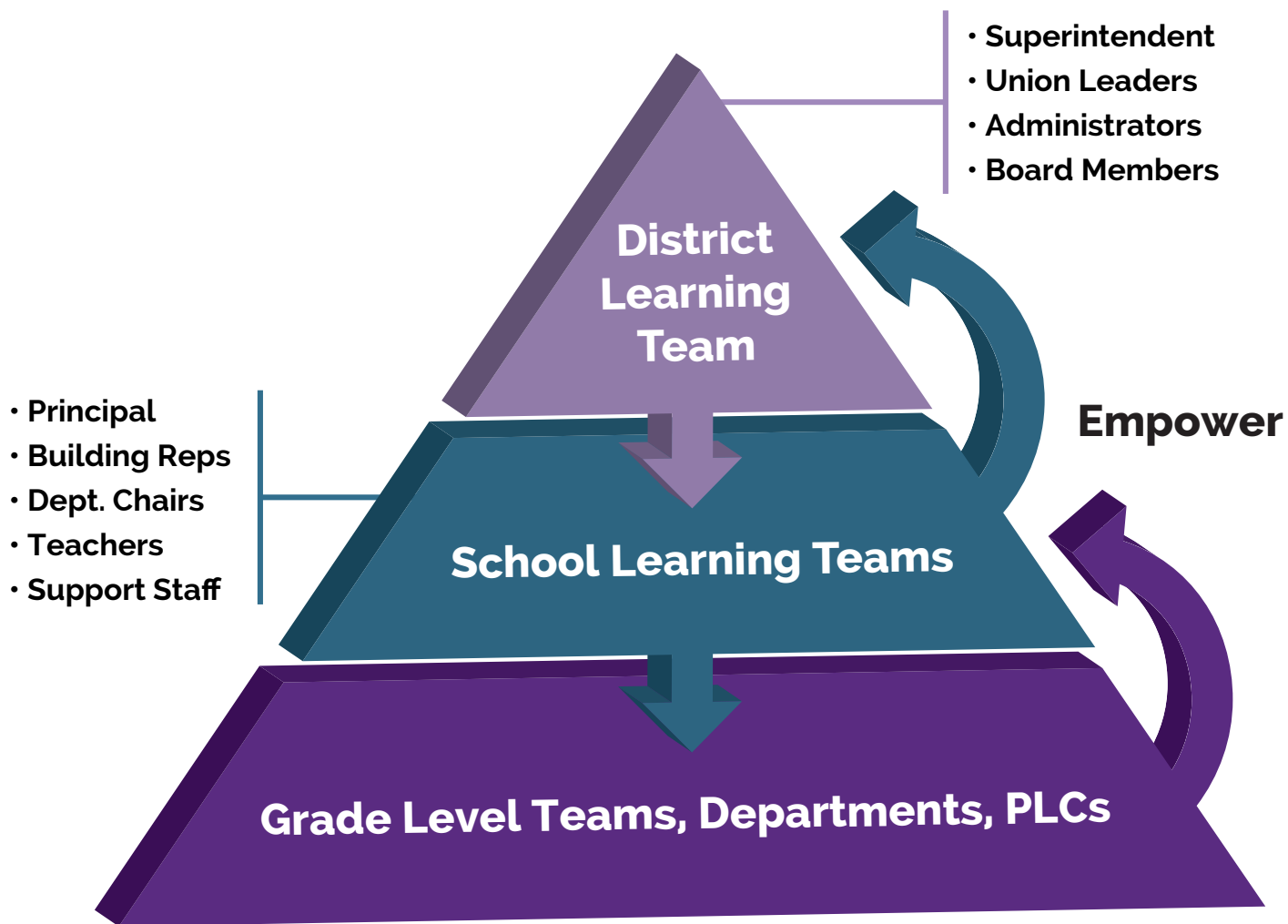
Guiding Questions	Progress Points
Have you identified all the ways that your team reflects the leadership within your district and considered whether this is adequate?	Your team includes all bargaining units, a member of the school board, and district management.
<b>Trust:</b> How were your team members identified and asked to participate? Who are the organizationally selected representatives of leadership, and have they been invited to the team?	Your district learning team includes the representatives selected by the unions, a board member or members selected by the school board, and all members of the cabinet.
<b>Equity:</b> Does your team adequately reflect the diversity of your community? Staff?	There are members on your team who reflect the racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity of the staff, students, and families.
<b>Communication:</b> How have you shared about the creation of your labor-management team? Have you emphasized the importance of diversity and equity? Have you been clear about why these individuals are participating and how they will interact with the district, community, and staff?	A joint announcement about the formation of the district learning team and its purpose was released by all members of the new learning team and was shared with district staff and stakeholder groups.

### Resources and tools

- CEC's Collaborative Leadership Structures
- Collaborative Structures
- CEC's Leadership Structure: District Learning Team

## 2.A. Collaborative Leadership Structures

### Implementing Continuous Improvement in a Labor-Management Context



\*Professional Learning Communities



## 2.A. Collaborative Leadership Structures

Adapted from the Consortium for Educational Change

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### District Learning Team

#### Purpose

The district learning team (DLT), comprised of representatives of district management and union leaders, focuses on listening and learning together. The DLT reflects on the feedback from sites and joint committees to improve the effectiveness of teaching, support services, and student learning. The DLT provides opportunities to model and support a culture of collaboration in which all stakeholders are engaged in building a system that is focused on continuous improvement.

#### Guiding principles

- Model and support a culture of collaboration.
- Encourage active engagement of unions, district, and school communities.
- Identify and diagnose needs.
- Form project-based working committees to address district-level projects.
- Commission, empower, and support School Learning Teams (SLTs).
- Track and monitor overall progress and document lessons learned.
- Create accountability and transparency through communications.

#### Composition

- The team represents district and school administrators, classified and certificated unions, and a board liaison or liaisons.
- A district administrator and a union leader may serve as cochairs.
- Members of the DLT are jointly nominated by the DLT cochairs, or a system is defined by labor and management to populate the DLT as a representative group.
- Team members are representative of the district and school community.
- District representation should include representatives from the departments of curriculum and instruction, human resources, and/or student support services.
- Union representation may include executive committee members, negotiations committee members, and other committees focused on improving professional practice.
- School-level representation may include principals, assistant principals, teachers, union leaders, and support professionals.

#### Function

- Establishes a shared labor-management vision focused on creating a school system rather than a system of schools
- Builds systemwide capacity focused on listening and learning together—a culture of “we”
- Helps set district direction to empower students through learning
- Identifies and diagnoses needs and targeted supports
- Tracks and monitors progress—focused on “How are we doing?” and “How do we know?”
- Broadcasts results systemwide about accomplishments, challenges, and opportunities for improvement
- Monitors and advises SLTs on project progress and collaboration skills
- Communicates and broadcasts to the internal and external communities what is being learned in the system
- Does not take the place of the collective bargaining process

## 2.B. ESTABLISH GUIDING BEHAVIORS

As an important initial collaborative activity, teams are encouraged to develop a set of guiding behaviors or norms to establish parameters for meetings. When the newly launched team creates them, the group establishes what is necessary for building trust and psychological safety. Further, when the norms are actively referred to and collaborative culture is a focus, the likelihood of the team's success increases. These guiding behaviors should be referenced regularly (for example, at the start of each meeting) and team members should hold themselves and each other accountable for following the guiding norms/behaviors.

### Why?

- Having norms can increase the likelihood of achieving trust and precision.
- Developing norms together increases joint accountability and commitment.
- Regularly revisiting norms helps ensure they are impacting group behavior and culture.

### How?

- Review examples of guiding behaviors and norms from other teams (several examples are embedded below).
- Reflect on particularly effective meetings and what aspects contributed to their success.



### Insights from the CA LMI team

- » Organizational culture does not change by mandate; it requires consistently applied behaviors and actions that are modeled and reinforced by leaders at all levels. A positive environment founded on respect, openness, and shared learning generates opportunities to work together to transform systems.
- » Teams may want to print team norms/behaviors on their agenda documents to reinforce desired norms and help ensure the team regularly reflects on their behaviors.

### Connections to California Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (CPSEL)

#### Standard 1: Development and Implementation of a Shared Vision

- » Element 1C Leaders guide and monitor decisions, actions, and outcomes using the shared vision and goals.

#### Standard 2: Instructional Leadership

- » Element 2A–4 Strengthen staff trust, shared responsibility, and leadership by instituting structures and processes that promote collaborative inquiry and problem solving.

#### Standard 5: Ethics and Integrity

- » Element 5B Leaders guide and support personal and collective actions that use relevant evidence and available research to make fair and ethical decisions.
- » Element 5C–1 Communicate expectations and support for professional behavior that reflects ethics, justice, and integrity.

## 2.B. ESTABLISH GUIDING BEHAVIORS *(continued)*

**It is good practice early in the work of labor-management teams to engage the participants in developing protocols for meetings.** Protocols are intended to encourage participation from all attendees and set the expectations for how people will treat each other. It is not unlike creating the rules or behavior expectations for a classroom. Discuss with the group what needs to be done to make the adoption of the norms meaningful.

**Included in this section are several examples of guiding behaviors** used by CA LMI teams that can be used as conversation starters, especially if the language and examples resonate with your team. Consider developing a plan for how the guiding behaviors will be used and how the team will hold each other accountable. For example, norms might be posted in the meeting room and everyone asked to reflect upon them before each meeting starts, or they can be included on agendas. Additionally, think about norms or principles that can help you get things moving when the team is just launching and there aren't long-standing relationships or trust to build upon. It is often helpful to adopt meeting responsibilities, such as facilitator, note taker, and time keeper, that are rotated among team members at each meeting. This kind of advanced and detailed planning can keep meeting agendas moving and make everyone feel invested.

**Every activity is an opportunity for trust building.** When launching a new joint activity, set small goals and meet them. Keep scheduled meetings. Send timely meeting announcements or minutes. When there is no follow-through or there is a failure to implement meaningfully, it becomes a missed opportunity for increasing trust and often results in damage to fragile relationships. To avoid misunderstandings, before each meeting ends, be sure there is shared understanding about any protocols set, plans made, or actions taken. As a reminder, labor-management teams work best when everyone feels ownership. Rather than parking all organizational tasks in Human Resources, share tasks and build equity. Consider providing training on meeting facilitation, note taking, or other skills that help build the capacity of the whole group. Remember that transparency and communication are key.

Finally, have agreement on how decisions are made. The next section digs deeply into this topic.

Guiding Questions	Progress Points
How might your team norms/behaviors be used outside of a labor-management team setting to create a collaborative culture?	Individual team members use norms/behaviors in other district/site meetings to model for others in the organization.
<b>Trust:</b> Do norms already exist? Did the team consider them, and how was that addressed? How do the views of staff who express distrust in the organization get addressed in the meeting norms?	Norms/behaviors are regularly addressed and modified by the group if necessary to improve effectiveness.
<b>Equity:</b> How will your norms/behaviors promote diverse participation and minority perspectives?	Every team member has had the opportunity to constructively participate in the formation of the guiding norms/behaviors before their adoption.
<b>Communication:</b> How will you share the guiding norms/behaviors? Will the guiding norms/behaviors be shared with the organization, and if so, how?	Norms/behaviors are shared and accessible to every member of your district.

### Resources and tools

- “The Seven Norms of Collaborative Work”
- Monterey County Office of Education: Guiding Behaviors
- West Contra Costa Solutions Team Norms
- “Coherence Progression: Cultivating Collaborative Cultures”

## 2.B. The Seven Norms of Collaborative Work

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### Pausing

Pausing before responding or asking a question allows time for thinking and enhances dialogue, discussion, and decision-making.

### Paraphrasing

Using a paraphrase starter that is comfortable for you: “So . . .” or “As you are . . .” or “You’re thinking . . .” and following the starter with a paraphrase assists members of the group to hear and understand each other as they formulate decisions.

### Probing

Using gentle, open-ended probes or inquiries such as, “Please say more . . .” or “I’m curious about . . .” or “I’d like to hear more about . . .” or “Then, are you saying . . .?” increases the clarity and precision of the group’s thinking.

### Putting ideas on the table

Ideas are the heart of a meaningful dialogue. Label the intention of your comments. For example, you might say, “Here is one idea . . .” or “One thought I have is . . .” or “Here is a possible approach . . .”

### Paying attention to self and others

Meaningful dialogue is facilitated when each group member is conscious of self and of others and is aware of not only what they are saying but how it is said and how others are responding. This includes paying attention to learning styles when planning for, facilitating, and participating in group meetings. Responding to others in their own language forms is one manifestation of this norm.

### Presuming positive presuppositions

Assuming that others’ intentions are positive promotes and facilitates meaningful dialogue and eliminates unintentional put-downs. Using positive presuppositions in your speech is one manifestation of this norm.

### Pursuing a balance between advocacy and inquiry

Pursuing and maintaining a balance between advocating a position and inquiring about one’s own and others’ positions assists the group to become a learning organization.

Adapted from Bill Baker, “The Seven Norms of Collaborative Work,” in William Robert Garmston and Bruce Wellman, *Developing and Facilitating Collaborative Groups* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2016).

## 2.B. Collaborative Professionalism: How We Will Work Together

Monterey County Office of Education (MCOE)

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### Guiding behaviors

Be soft on the people, hard on the issues.

Don't be afraid to bring up issues whether they  
may divide us.

Listen, listen, listen.

Get to the point, strive for clarity, check for  
understanding.

Don't react with judgment.

Participate with mutual respect.

One voice at a time.

Make no personal attributions.

Be in the moment; use technology appropriately.

Develop shared talking points at the end of each  
meeting.

Develop protocols for joint communications.

Assign an outside note taker to capture essential  
information and create a record.

Be clear about discussion parameters.

We are here to serve students and make MCOE  
the best place to work.

Keep a solutions mindset.

## 2.B. Collaborative Professionalism: How We Will Work Together

West Contra Costa Unified Solutions Team

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### Ground rules

1. Be soft on the people, hard on the issues.
2. Don't be afraid of bringing up the issues that may or may not divide us.
3. Listen, listen, listen.
4. Get to the point.
5. Don't react judgmentally.
6. Mutual respect. Don't be dismissive.
7. One voice at a time. Allow people to finish what they are saying.
8. No personal attributions. When you leave the meeting, do not attribute a comment to any particular member.
9. Cell phones off or on vibrate. Leave the room if you have to make a call. Don't text or email during the meeting.
10. Membership: Each bargaining unit may have two members. There will be no alternates.
11. Quorum: One person from each bargaining unit is necessary to have a meeting. Let people know prior to the meeting if you will not be there or need to leave early so that we can adjust accordingly. No decisions may be made without a quorum. However, the group may decide to discuss a particular issue without a quorum.
12. Reopening decisions: When the group has made a decision, it can be reopened in the following way: The person wishing to reopen must bring information that he or she believes is a) new, and b) the information changes the complexion of the issue. The entire group will discuss and decide by a 75% vote whether the request meets the two criteria and thus warrants reopening the issue for discussion.
13. Communication and Confidentiality: At the end of each meeting, we will mutually agree on talking points to take out to our constituents.
14. The facilitator will take and distribute notes. Everyone will have the chance to review them. The final agreed-upon version will be the official notes of the meeting. If we want to talk about something that we do not want in the notes, or don't want notes in detail, we will just say so and it can be left out. Otherwise we will include what we decide, the reasons for the decision, and supporting notes about the discussion.
15. The facilitator will draft a Joint Communication, which will be sent to all employees after review and approval by a task force. The HR Department will send out the Joint Communication when it is ready.
16. Anyone is empowered to call a break/time-out.



## 2.B. Coherence Progression: From Thinking to Doing

Adapted from Michael Fullan, Joanne Quinn, and Eleanor Adam, *The Taking Action Guide to Building Coherence in Schools, Districts, and Systems* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, 2015).

Coherence progression components		Emerging	Accelerating	Mastering	Opportunity
Collaborative cultures	A. A growth mindset underlies the culture.				
	B. Leaders model learning themselves and shape a culture of learning.				
	C. Collective capacity building is fostered above individual development.				
	D. Structures and processes support intentional collaboration.				

“

In organizations, real power and energy is generated through relationships. The patterns of relationships and the capacities to form them are more important than tasks, functions, roles, and positions.

—Margaret Wheatley  
Author, teacher, and speaker

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## 2.B. Coherence Progression: Cultivating Collaborative Cultures

	Emerging	Accelerating	Mastering
<b>A growth mindset underlies the culture.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A comprehensive internal leadership development strategy is not in place. Leaders build their capacity individually through courses, workshops, and conferences and less frequently in collaboration with others.</li> <li>There is a reliance on experts to fix the problem or for prepackaged solutions.</li> <li>There is a reliance on external hires for leadership and key roles rather than a focus on building internal capacity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An intentional strategy for developing internal leadership is emerging.</li> <li>There is a commitment to move from individual development to collaborative learning.</li> <li>Talent is being noticed and nurtured, but strategies may not yet be consistent across the entire school/district.</li> <li>Capacity to lead internally driven solutions is growing.</li> <li>The reliance on external hires, programs, or experts to fix the problem and prepackaged solutions is decreasing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leaders possess a growth mindset that builds capacity in themselves and others. A comprehensive strategy is in place to develop the next generation of leaders from within.</li> <li>The organization views problems and challenges as an opportunity to grow capacity. They see internal expertise as the driver of solutions and innovation in policy and practice and have ways to identify and mobilize that talent.</li> <li>Rich and diverse external resources are used as inputs to their internally driven solution-finding processes.</li> </ul>
<b>Leaders model learning themselves and shape a culture of learning.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leaders support and send others to learning sessions but rarely participate as learners themselves.</li> <li>Leaders are beginning to articulate learning as a priority but are unclear or inconsistent with the allocation of resources.</li> <li>Trust may be developing but is not consistent across the school/district.</li> <li>The structures and processes that exist such as Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and coaches may not be well coordinated or targeted to the priorities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leaders participate as lead learners and are beginning to make learning for everyone a priority at the district/school.</li> <li>Leaders are beginning to identify and develop other leaders at all levels.</li> <li>Leaders are shaping the culture by developing trusting relationships, but these do not exist with all groups.</li> <li>Structures and processes to support meaningful collaborative work are more common but are inconsistent across the school/district.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leaders model learning by participating as learners and by leading robust capacity building in the school/district.</li> <li>They make learning a priority and actively foster leadership at all levels.</li> <li>Leaders shape culture by building trust and relationships both vertically and horizontally.</li> <li>Leaders create structures and processes for collaborative work and support cycles of learning and application.</li> <li>They provide resources strategically to propel what matters.</li> </ul>
<b>Collective capacity building is fostered above individual development.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional learning opportunities exist but often focus on individual needs and are viewed as more of an event than a sustained process.</li> <li>Inquiry practices are beginning to be used but inconsistently across the school/district.</li> <li>The level of trust is growing but there remain some topics that are avoided and an unwillingness to be sharing practices such as peer observation and feedback.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A culture of learning and collaborative inquiry exists where teachers and leaders reflect on, review, and adjust their teaching and leadership practices.</li> <li>Learning experiences are designed using effective practices that foster collaboration and application in each role.</li> <li>Trust is growing, and practices such as observation and feedback are becoming more transparent.</li> <li>These practices are evident but not yet consistent at all levels of the school/district.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A powerful culture of learning pervades the school/district as the way we do things here.</li> <li>Learning collaboratively is the norm. Strong trust exists and supports innovation and risk taking.</li> <li>Learning opportunities are rich and diverse with an emphasis on collaborative learning. Opportunities to apply the learning in each role are supported consistently.</li> <li>Successes are celebrated and shared, and challenges are seen as opportunities for deeper learning.</li> </ul>
<b>Structures and processes support intentional collaboration.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are few resources such as coaches, mentors, or teacher leaders to support implementation.</li> <li>These supports are not consistently available or focused.</li> <li>Pockets of collaboration for learning exist, but it is not the norm.</li> <li>Collaborative practices such as PLCs are not linked to data and use of learning goals for students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Structures and processes exist to develop collaborative learning and collective capacity but are inconsistently used across the school/district. Mechanisms such as coaches, networks, and communities of practice exist but are not yet focused, connected, or consistently used across the school/district.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professional learning models include structures and processes to foster collaborative learning that builds collective capacity. "Learning from the work" involves cycles of application and collaborative inquiry within and across the school and district. Mechanisms such as coaches, learning networks, and communities of practice consistently support horizontal and vertical development tied to goals.</li> </ul>

Adapted from Michael Fullan, Joanne Quinn, and Eleanor Adam, *The Taking Action Guide to Building Coherence in Schools, Districts, and Systems* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, 2015).

## 2.B. Fostering a Culture of Trust Within and Outside a School System

### Characteristics of a Culture of Trust

#### 1. Shared values

Values which are practiced at work but meaningful to employees outside of work.

#### 2. A shared mission or goal

Employees' commitment to communal goals, and not simply personal/independent goals.

#### 3. Open and authentic leadership

A propensity of a leader to demonstrate trust, among other values, towards employees.

#### 4. A culture of consensus not force

Employees willingly contribute to shared missions or goals if there is a culture of trust, otherwise, employees may feel pressures or coerced to do so.

#### 5. A feeling of enjoying work

A culture of trust is fostered if employees feel relaxed and sense that mistakes and failure are acceptable.

#### 6. An atmosphere of fun and enjoyment

A workplace where employees can have fun, be themselves, and are open to pushing intellectual (i.e. ideas, concepts) boundaries.

#### 7. A desire to learn, not blame

Fault associated with mistakes and failure does not nurture openness, trust, and ongoing development among employees.

#### 8. Honest and authentic conversations

A culture of trust is fostered where there is sincere communication and information is not withheld across horizontal and vertical relationships.

Source: Sally Bibb and Jeremy Kourdi, *Trust Matters: For Organizational and Personal Success* (New York: Pelgrave MacMillan, 2004).

<http://cdef.in/FosteringTrust>



“

**Collaboration is a key element for district improvement . . . The most collaborative districts in the study worked on working together. They engaged in ongoing dialogue, created cross-role leadership structures to facilitate communication among stakeholders, and intentionally sought tools to facilitate collaboration.**

—Togneri & Anderson, 2003

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## 2.B. Building Trust

### Five key components commonly used to measure trustworthiness

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#### Benevolence

Having confidence that another party has your best interests at heart and will protect your interests is a key ingredient of trust.

#### Reliability

Reliability refers to the extent to which you can depend upon another party to come through for you, to act consistently, and to follow through.

#### Competence

Similar to reliability, competence has to do with the belief in another party's ability to perform the tasks required by their position. For example, if a principal means well but lacks necessary leadership skills, he or she is not likely to be trusted to do the job.

#### Honesty

A person's integrity, character, and authenticity are all dimensions of trust. The degree to which a person can be counted on to represent situations fairly makes a huge difference in whether or not they are trusted by others in the school community.

#### Openness

Judgments about openness have to do with how freely another party shares information with others. Guarded communication, for instance, provokes distrust because people wonder what is being withheld and why. Openness is crucial to the development of trust between supervisors and subordinates, particularly in times of increased vulnerability for staff.

Source: Megan Tschannen-Moran and Wayne Hoy's comprehensive review of the literature, 1998.

## Barriers to building and maintaining trust

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- Top-down decision-making that is perceived as arbitrary, misinformed, or not in the best interest of the school
- Ineffective communication
- Lack of follow-through on or support for school improvement efforts and other projects
- Unstable or inadequate school funding
- Failure to remove teachers or principals who are widely viewed to be ineffective
- Frequent turnover in school leadership
- High teacher turnover
- Teacher isolation
- Perhaps the greatest obstacle that schools experiencing a lack of trust must overcome is their past. Identifying the specific causes of mistrust in the school and making a sincere commitment to address them is the first and probably most important step.

Source: Cori Brewster and Jennifer Railsback, *Building Trusting Relationships for School Improvement: Implications for Principals and Teachers* (Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 2003).

[illegible]





# ELEMENT 3

## Refine

There are two things that deserve considerable attention because they often derail efforts in a district or school : 1) ever-present but ignored power dynamics and 2) lack of clarity and transparency about roles, responsibilities, priorities, communication, and decision-making processes. In this section, there will be ideas for how to refine your implementation efforts to address these issues directly.



### Contents:

- 3.A.—Clarify Systems, Structures, and Priorities .....61–71**
- 3.B.—Clarify Boundaries and Power Dynamics .....72–79**

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**The data are very clear that vulnerability is inextricably connected to intimacy, trust, love, belonging, courage. So, how do we create workplaces and schools and communities where armor is neither required nor rewarded.**

—Brené Brown

American researcher, storyteller, professor,  
lecturer, author, and podcast host

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### 3.A. CLARIFY SYSTEMS, STRUCTURES, AND PRIORITIES

**In this section, we will explore “system awareness,” making choices about where decisions are made and by whom, how issues are prioritized, and ways that information is shared, all in support of becoming a more transparent, equitable, and collaborative organization focused on student learning.**

School districts are historic and hierarchical places. They are governed by federal, state, county, and local laws and policies. It can be easy to lose track of why decisions were made at the board level, the superintendent level, or the site level, and not question it. Sometimes districts and people get caught up in the comfort of “We’ve always done it this way.” When building or reenergizing a labor-management partnership, one way to build trust and effectiveness is to reexamine where decisions are made and consider moving them closer to the source of the work. Moving decision-making closer to its impact can be more efficient, connects decision-making directly to the relevant data, and spreads investment and accountability more broadly in the organization. When making changes to how or where decisions are made, be mindful that it impacts the people who were formerly tasked with those responsibilities. Change is never easy, and the more respectful and considerate the transition is, the easier the adaptation to the change. However, keep in mind the need for coherence as site autonomy is increased.

Be clear about where decision-making happens and what role colleagues, staff, or community members have been asked to play in the process. Frustration often bubbles up in a school or department when people are asked for input or instructed to do something by administration but there is no clarity about why decisions are being made, the purpose of the request, or the level of effort necessary for the response. Sharing more details about why a request is being made, the scope of the request, where decisions are being made, and what will be done with the information helps build trust in a system and opens communication. This applies to the collection of data in staff and family surveys, review of the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) or other planning tools, and actions taken by district and school committees.

Information sharing is a complex topic. Instead of thinking, “What limited information can we release?” ask, “What information is essential not to share?” People will believe they have been trusted to be part of the information circle, and it will give more value to what is truly confidential and build trust in the system.

Finally, it is useful to reference your mission and vision, existing strategic and education plans, LCAP, and state and board policies to refine the work at hand. Every project, initiative, and decision should be aligned with those guiding documents and help you move toward your goals. Sharing that alignment regularly with everyone in the organization helps focus people’s energy on the work, not individuals, helps build shared investment in the common goals, and offers clarity about priorities and decisions. This builds trust when the district follows through with its commitments and stays focused on priorities established by the board, informed by the community, and focused on equity.



#### Insights from the CA LMI team

- » Both students and employees are more likely to succeed when labor-management relations are healthy, diverse, and inclusive. We believe all viewpoints matter and that all voices have value. Management should create more opportunities to listen to the voices of staff, and unions should embrace their role in driving improvement.
- » Including the voices of typically marginalized staff and stakeholders creates a diversity of perspectives that improves decision-making and effectiveness. Systems that allow for insight from teachers and support staff to impact decision-making lead to more equitable outcomes for all.
- » The less you know, the more you suspect! Make communications and transparency a priority.

### 3.A. CLARIFY SYSTEMS, STRUCTURES, AND PRIORITIES *(continued)*

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#### Why?

- Goodwill can be gained and trust built when meaningful input is requested from others in the organization and the information is used in the manner promoted.
- Public education systems are complex and historic. It is useful to inventory administrative processes and structures to assess their ongoing value and make adjustments to match current organizational structures and needs.
- Clarification ensures that labor-management teamwork relates to and is embedded within the broader district and community systems. It enables labor-management teams to effectively work toward needed systemic and structural changes.
- Understanding deeper organizational issues can help identify the right drivers for student improvement and staff growth.

#### How?

- Connect the labor-management teamwork to the district plans, including the LCAP as well as site and other relevant system plans (e.g., local government agency plans).
- With each new opportunity or project, consider where decision-making is taking place and make modifications, where possible, to move decision-making, or portions of decision-making, closer to the work.
- Consider how labor-management committees and work groups participate with existing structures.

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#### Connections to California Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (CPSEL)

##### Standard 1: Development and Implementation of a Shared Vision

- » Element 1B–3 Build shared accountability by distributing leadership roles and responsibilities among staff and community.

##### Standard 2: Instructional Leadership

- » Element 2C–1 Define clear purposes, goals, and working agreements for collecting and sharing information about professional practice and student outcomes.

##### Standard 3: Management and Learning Environment

- » Element 3B–3 Set clear working agreements that support sharing problems, practices, and results within a safe and supportive environment.

##### Standard 5: Ethics and Integrity

- » Element 5C Leaders recognize and use their professional influence with staff and community to develop a climate of trust, mutual respect, and honest communication necessary to consistently make fair and equitable decisions on behalf of all students.

### 3.A. Resource Overview and Implementation Suggestions

**The tools in this section emphasize the importance of clarity in the process.** When working with these tools, consider concepts such as purpose, priorities, and shared decisions. In addition, thinking about people and relationships helps clarify focus and intent. Shaping systems and structures takes time and a diversity of voices. Keep the focus on students and support staff to engage in a continuous learning dialogue.

The first resource in this section is additional insights around collaborative professionalism. The second is a tool from Michael Fullan that identifies environmental characteristics that either promote success or create barriers to outcomes, “The Right Drivers for Whole System Success.” Restructuring the district’s processes with the intention of supporting the Right Drivers will inspire individual satisfaction and collaborative environments. It is good content for a labor-management conversation. Next is the Coherence Framework: Deepening Learning, which will help embed effective pedagogy in the work of labor-management partnerships. An additional framework for that is “Design Principles for Schools: Putting the Science of Learning and Development into Action.” The linked Executive Summary will help teams think about the range of opportunities they have for working together to transform education.

Guiding Questions	Progress Points
How does your team set its priorities, and how are they connected to current district initiatives (LCAP, strategic plan, district mission, etc.)?	District priorities are jointly developed by gathering information from site leaders, district leaders, and labor leaders.
Are there opportunities for labor leaders to join existing committees or work groups?	District committees and work groups have opportunities to include labor leaders.
<b>Trust:</b> Do your decision-making systems and processes support shared voices and psychological safety?	Jointly developed systems/processes have built-in opportunities for leaders to safely discuss challenging subjects.
<b>Equity:</b> How does your team incorporate ideas from typically marginalized staff, including issues of position, race, and background?	Decision-making processes have been revised to include traditionally marginalized voices, such as classified staff. Individuals beyond the usual participants are represented.
<b>Communication:</b> How does your team allow for greater transparency around the actions and role of the labor-management team? Is there a process to share information and jointly build agendas?	There is a wide understanding among staff about the role and activities of the labor-management team. The labor-management team regularly shares the work of the team on a joint platform (website, Google drive, newsletters, etc.).

#### Resources and tools

- Moving from Professional Collaboration to Collaborative Professionalism
- “The Right Drivers for Whole System Success”
- Coherence Framework: Deepening Learning
- Design Principles for Schools’ Effective Team Assessment

### 3.A. Moving From Professional Collaboration to Collaborative Professionalism

Andy Hargreaves and Michael T. O’Conner

From		To
Talk or action	<input type="checkbox"/>	Talk and action
Narrow achievement goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	Learning with meaning and purpose
Episodic meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>	Embedded cultures
Administratively imposed	<input type="checkbox"/>	Teacher (staff) led
Comfortable or contrived	<input type="checkbox"/>	Genuine and respectful
Conversation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dialogue
For students	<input type="checkbox"/>	With students

Adapted from Andy Hargreaves and Michael T. O’Conner, *Collaborative Professionalism: When Teaching Together Means Learning for All* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, 2018).

- » The joint work of collaborative professionalism is embedded in the culture and life of the school.
- » Educators care for each other as fellow professionals as they pursue their challenging work.
- » They collaborate in ways that are responsive to and inclusive of the culture of their students, themselves, the community, and society.

### 3.A. The Right Drivers for Whole System Success

by Michael Fullan

The four right drivers, in combination – what I have called ‘the human paradigm’, constitute the proposed new model for governing the future of education (see Figure 1). My conception of a driver is a force that attracts power and generates motion on a continuous basis. The four drivers in question are not traveling down a divided highway. Instead, they form a constellation of stars that give each other energy and purpose. They represent a single, integrated model that generates continuous development.

The four new wrong drivers are not completely wrong. It is just that if left alone they take us in a negative direction. Let’s name them and give them nicknames (in parentheses).

1. Academics Obsession (selfish)
2. Machine Intelligence (careless)
3. Austerity (ruthless), and
4. Fragmentation (inertia)

They have been operating for 40 years, and with ever-growing intensity. Together they are the ‘bloodless paradigm’, lacking care, empathy, and civic awareness – the things that make us humans. The new right drivers, by contrast, capture and propel the human spirit. Again these are offered with nicknames.

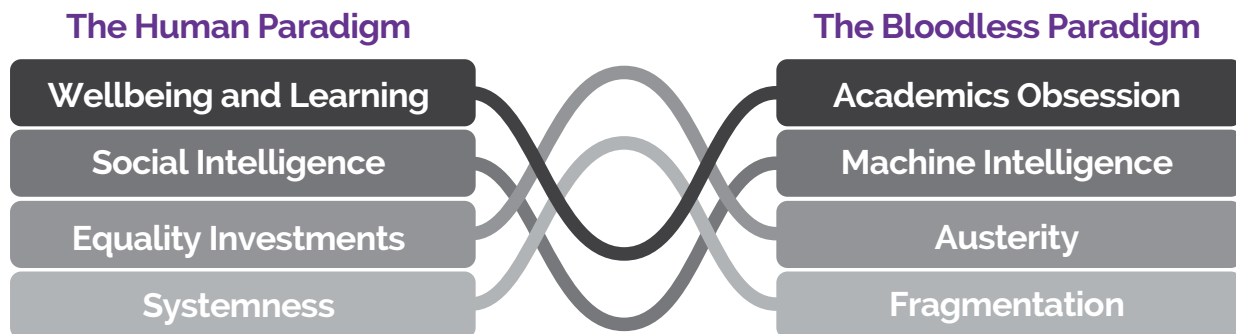
1. Wellbeing and Learning (essence)
2. Social Intelligence (limitless)
3. Equality Investments (dignity), and
4. Systemness (wholeness).

They are the human paradigm and presently constitute a work in progress. We have barely begun to tap their potential. A fascinating analysis of the evolution of America, from the late 1800s to the present, was recently released by sociologist Robert Putnam with Shaylyn Garrett (2020). Their book is titled *The Upswing: How America Came Together a Century Ago and How We Can Do It Again*. Using thematic evidence about economics, politics, society and culture, the authors make the case that the US has gone through periods of

- ‘I-ness’ (self-centredness) – 1870s to 1890s
- ‘We-ness’ (concern for others) – 1900 to 1970s and back to the present period of
- Excessive ‘I-ness’ – late 1970s to the present.

Reading the tea leaves, Putnam and Garrett speculate that 2021 onward could be another ‘We’ period. In many ways the prospect of the right drivers in combination makes such a positive case. So, what are the new more promising right drivers for system change?

**Figure 1: The Drivers**



The Right Drivers for Whole System Success  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/19iZ6sLTdoUssz9tPngV3kOWCUwNbYF0r/view>



### 3.A. Coherence Progression: From Thinking to Doing

Adapted from Michael Fullan, Joanne Quinn, and Eleanor Adam, *The Taking Action Guide to Building Coherence in Schools, Districts, and Systems* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, 2015).

Coherence progression components		Emerging	Accelerating	Mastering	Opportunity
Deepening learning	A. Learning goals are clear to everyone and drive instruction.				
	B. A set of effective pedagogical practices are known and used by educators.				
	C. Robust processes, such as collaborative inquiry and examining student work, are used regularly to improve practice.				

“

The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place.

—George Bernard Shaw  
Author

”

### 3.A. Coherence Progression: Deepening Learning

	Emerging	Accelerating	Mastering
<b>Learning goals are clear to everyone and drive instruction.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The learning goals for students are unclear or conflicting. For example, the relationship between core curriculum standards and deep learning competencies are unspecified.</li> <li>Some goals to improve precision in pedagogy have been identified but are not clearly articulated or understood.</li> <li>The strategy for improvement is unclear, implemented inconsistently, or underresourced.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning goals are being articulated, and the link between deep learning competencies and core curriculum standards is being made more visible.</li> <li>A small number of goals to improve precision in pedagogy is clearly articulated.</li> <li>A strategy for improvement is clear to leaders but not well understood at all levels or implemented with consistency.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning goals for deep learning competencies and requirements of core curriculum standards are clearly articulated and integrated.</li> <li>A small number of goals to improve precision in pedagogy is clearly articulated.</li> <li>A strategy for improvement is clear, well understood, and being implemented consistently and with impact.</li> </ul>
<b>A set of effective pedagogical practices are known and used by all educators.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A comprehensive framework for learning that identifies goals and high-yield pedagogies is in the beginning stages of development but is not understood widely or used consistently to guide learning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A comprehensive framework for learning that identifies goals and high-yield pedagogies is articulated but is not yet consistently used across the school or district to design and assess effective learning experiences.</li> <li>A strategy for fostering deep learning accelerated by digital is being developed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A comprehensive framework for learning that identifies goals and high-yield pedagogies is understood by all and used consistently across the school or district to design and assess effective learning experiences.</li> <li>A clear strategy for fostering deep learning accelerated by digital is being implemented in a culture of trust and risk taking.</li> </ul>
<b>Robust processes, such as collaborative inquiry and examining student work, are used regularly to improve practice.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The work of coaches, teacher leaders, and support personnel is left to the local unit and not explicitly tied to the learning goals or priorities.</li> <li>Deep collaborative practices, such as collaborative inquiry and protocols for examining student work, may be used by some teachers or some schools, but there is no consistency of practice or support.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school or district provides some resources and expertise for collaborative learning structures.</li> <li>The work of coaches, teacher leaders, and support personnel is coordinated but not consistently across the school or district.</li> <li>Deep collaborative practices, such as collaborative inquiry and protocols for examining student work, are being used with greater frequency but inconsistently across the school or district.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school or district provides resources and expertise for collaborative learning structures to thrive.</li> <li>The work of coaches, teacher leaders, and support personnel is well coordinated by the school or district to maximize impact and achieve the student learning goals.</li> <li>Deep collaborative practices, such as collaborative inquiry and protocols for examining student work, are used consistently across the school or district.</li> <li>Collaborative inquiry is used to monitor progress on impacting learning at all levels.</li> </ul>

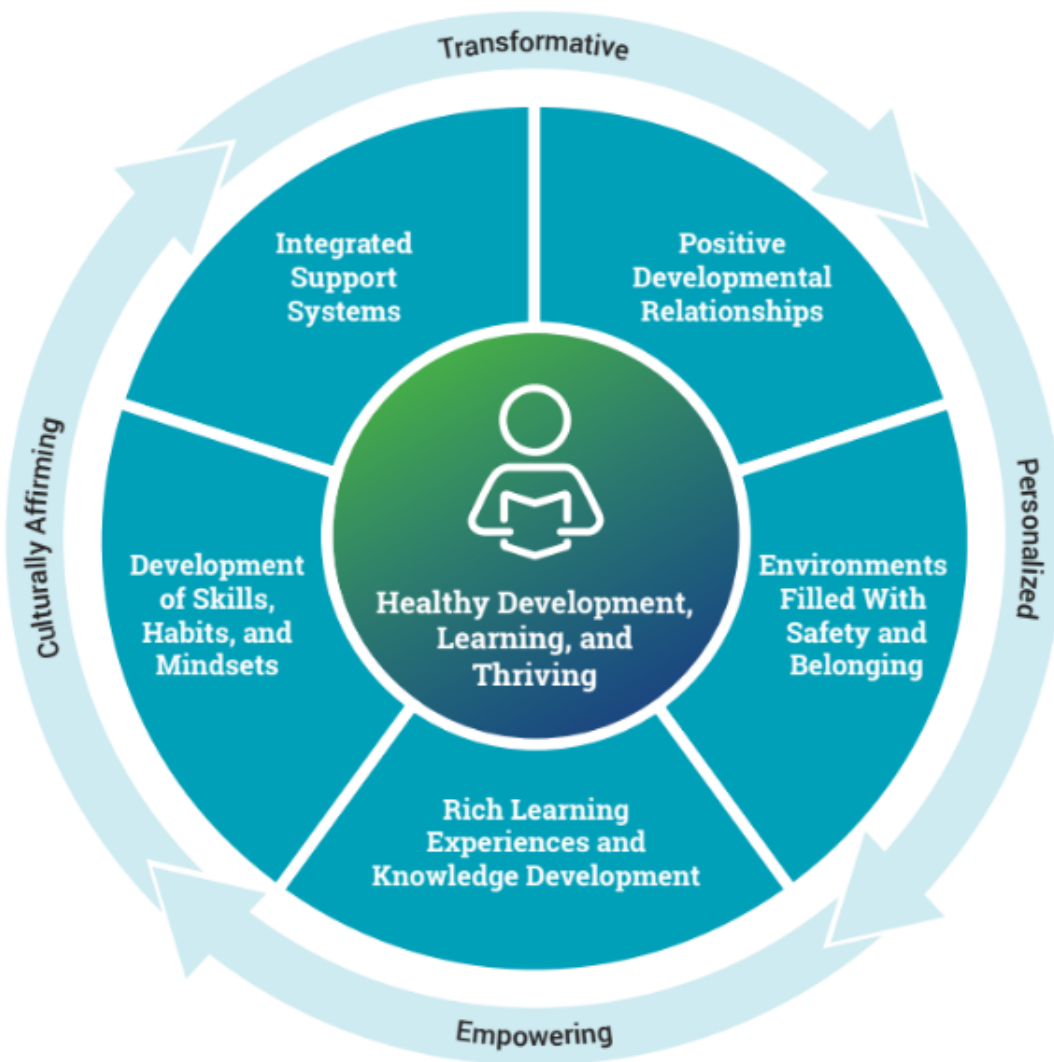
Adapted from Michael Fullan, Joanne Quinn, and Eleanor Adam, *The Taking Action Guide to Building Coherence in Schools, Districts, and Systems* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, 2015).

### 3.A. Design Principles for Schools: Putting the Science of Learning and Development into Action

Learning Policy Institute and Turnaround for Children, in partnership with the Forum for Youth Investment and in association with the SoLD Alliance, September 2021.

School and learning design initiatives such as the one described below should be jointly undertaken through a collaborative labor-management process. Implementing and contextualizing these types of transformative approaches, including community schools models, are far more likely to be successful if they are jointly designed by labor and management.

#### Guiding Principles for Equitable Whole Child Design



Source:  
Design Principles for Schools  
<https://k12.designprinciples.org/>

### 3.A. Community Schools Playbook

<https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/community-schools-playbook>

#### What are community schools?

Community schools are public schools that partner with families and community organizations to provide well-rounded educational opportunities and supports for students' school success. Like every good school, community schools must be built on a foundation of powerful teaching that includes challenging academic content and supports students' mastery of 21st-century skills and competencies. What makes community schools unique is the combination of four key pillars (or features) that together create the conditions necessary for students to thrive. The pillars are 1) integrated student supports, 2) expanded and enriched learning time and opportunities, 3) active family and community engagement, and 4) collaborative leadership and practices.



Additional information on implementation can be found in *Social Justice, Humanitas Academy* (Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute, May 2021).

[https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/SEL\\_CaseStudies\\_Humanitas\\_REPORT.pdf](https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/SEL_CaseStudies_Humanitas_REPORT.pdf)

### 3.A. Effective Team Assessment

Adapted from the Consortium for Educational Change

#### Team assessment tools

Instructions: Rate your team on each of the following nine dimensions, using a scale of one to seven, to indicate your assessment of your team and the way it functions. Circle the number on each scale that you feel is most descriptive of your team.

#### 1. Goals and objectives

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There is a lack of commonly understood goals and objectives.						The team members understand and agree on goals and objectives.

#### 2. Utilization of resources

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
All resources of team members are not fully recognized and/or utilized.						The resources of all team members are fully recognized and utilized.

#### 3. Trust and conflict resolution

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There is little trust among team members, and conflict is evident.						There is a high degree of trust among team members, and conflict is dealt with openly and worked through.

#### 4. Leadership

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
One person dominates, and team leadership roles are not carried out or shared.						There is full participation in leadership; leadership roles are shared by team members.

#### 5. Control and procedures

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There is little control, and there is a lack of procedure to guide team functioning.						There are effective procedures to guide team functioning; team members support these procedures and regulate themselves.

### 3.A. Effective Team Assessment

Adapted from the Consortium for Educational Change

#### Team assessment tools

Instructions: Rate your team on each of the following dimensions, using a scale of one to seven, to indicate your assessment of your team and the way it functions. Circle the number on each scale that you feel is most descriptive of your team.

#### 6. Interpersonal communications

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Communication among team members is closed and guarded.				Communication among team members is open and participative.		

#### 7. Problem solving/decision-making

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The team has no agreed-upon approaches to problem solving and decision-making.				The team has well-established and agreed-upon approaches to problem solving and decision-making.		

#### 8. Experimentation/creativity

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The team is rigid and does not experiment with how things are done.				The team experiments with different ways of doing things and is creative in its approach.		

#### 9. Evaluation

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The team never evaluates its functioning or processes.				The team often evaluates its functioning and processes.		

## 3.B. CLARIFY BOUNDARIES AND POWER DYNAMICS

**At every meeting, people bring many things to the table, including personal skills and strengths.** It is useful to consider those attributes, and there are many personality inventory tools teams can use to discover more about each other and create opportunities to build trust and an effective team. Members of the team, like students in a school, are composed of all kinds of learners and information processors. The more familiar the team becomes, the more the team will acknowledge the learning or decision-making needs of each other, and the group will hopefully become more accommodating and adaptive. This kind of sensitivity to the personal skills and attributes of oneself and team members is referred to as “personal awareness.”

But there are also environmental and systemic factors that influence how people interact with each other, referred to as “system awareness.” One example is power dynamics, the formal and informal power that people bring because of who they are racially or financially, the job they hold, or the organizational position they occupy. There are numerous examples of unequal power dynamics within a school district, especially when you consider the number of supervisors hiring, evaluating, and terminating staff. There can also be power dynamics within management teams and unions based upon the varying degrees of authority individuals hold.

But there are a variety of issues and power dynamics that often impact participation and psychological safety. Racial and socioeconomic inequities may make some people feel less welcome to share their opinions, while others occupy a dominant role. To create the trusting environment that will lead to professional collaboration, everyone has, and believes they have, the same opportunity to participate. Establishing and using meeting norms can help level the meeting environment and address the power dynamics. Discussing power dynamics with your team is also a healthy way to create shared understanding. In any event, it is imperative that leaders pay attention to power dynamics.

Lastly, there is a personal awareness issue that also can reduce participation. This is the issue of inference, when we make assumptions about the motivations behind people’s words. Too frequently, meetings jump to quick resolutions of issues without ensuring that there is truly shared understanding among the group. When people are used to assumptions being made about motivations or concurrence, it disincentivizes participation. The result for the team is that you only scratch the surface of the issue and don’t build the buy-in for organizational commitment to the change you are seeking to achieve.

Labor-management teams should discuss power dynamics and strive for a shared understanding of how these dynamics manifest within the district. Keep in mind that there are formal and informal leaders at every level of the organization.

### Why?

- Power is often at the root of conflict, and a better understanding of power dynamics can help teams better understand and address conflict.
- Clarifying power dynamics can provide helpful context for future collaborative problem solving.

### How?

- Make the issue of power dynamics visible and overt.
- Clarify power that comes with a title as well as informal power and influence.
- Adopt guiding behaviors and meeting norms that equalize power and encourage participation from all.
- Ensure decision-making processes are transparent and clearly understood by the group.



### Insights from the CA LMI team

- » Actively encourage inquiry-led discussions and active listening.
- » Keep the importance of building psychological safety at the forefront.
- » Identify a neutral space to meet.



### 3.B. CLARIFY BOUNDARIES AND POWER DYNAMICS *(continued)*

#### Connections to California Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (CPSEL)

##### Standard 2: Instructional Leadership

- » Element 2A–3 Capitalize on diverse experience and abilities of staff to plan, implement, and assess professional learning.
- » Element 2A–4 Strengthen staff trust, shared responsibility, and leadership by instituting structures and processes that promote collaborative inquiry and problem solving.

##### Standard 3: Management and Learning Environment

- » Element 3B–3 Set clear working agreements that support sharing problems, practices, and results within a safe and supportive environment.

- » Element 3C Leaders facilitate safe, fair, and respectful environments that meet the intellectual, linguistic, cultural, social-emotional, and physical needs of each learner.

##### Standard 5: Ethics and Integrity

- » Element 5A–2 Reflect on areas for improvement and take responsibility for change and growth.
- » Element 5B–3 Identify personal and institutional biases and remove barriers that derive from economic, social-emotional, racial, linguistic, physical, gender, or other sources of educational disadvantage or discrimination.

### Resource Overview and Implementation Suggestions

The first resource in this section is a great tool to help clarify decision-making processes. The 7 Point Decision-Making Continuum can be used at all levels of the organization. We’ve also had leaders tell us they use it at home! There are two resources about power dynamics included in this guidebook. The first is from Dr. W. Patrick Dolan and is called the “Six Boundaries of a School System.” It specifically describes the relationships that exist in a school district and is also a good discussion tool for building shared understanding of the inherent dynamics within a district and how it impacts the collaborative work of the labor-management team. The following resource is a general article about power dynamics titled “Power Dynamics: The Hidden Element to Effective Meetings.” It provides a clear definition of power dynamics, is easy to read, and is a great discussion tool for building shared understanding of power dynamics.

The final tools in this section are for understanding self-awareness and system awareness. A group discussion of the Ladder of Inference is a reminder for building one’s personal awareness around not drawing conclusions about the motivations or intentions of others and for encouraging leaders to elevate curiosity and shared understanding in their own meeting spaces.

Guiding Questions	Progress Points
How might we create an environment where clear, honest discussions about power dynamics can take place?	Adopted meeting behaviors apply to all participants, and everyone participates in enforcing them.
How does your team regularly check in on inferences and assumptions that get in the way of open and honest conversations?	The team is intentional about building a culture of curiosity by adopting meeting norms that promote questions for understanding and by modeling curiosity.
<b>Trust:</b> What can be done to support staff to feel more comfortable speaking openly?	Leaders and staff model behavior that addresses power differentials and welcomes diverse voices.
<b>Equity:</b> To what extent is the team hearing and incorporating insight from marginalized individuals and groups who are most impacted by decisions made?	Everyone has participated in training to build awareness and empathy across racial, ethnic, and gender lines.
<b>Communication:</b> How might the team messaging clarify our decision-making process, including who made the decision?	Clear communication encouraging diverse voices and opinions has been shared widely. Joint communications are visible from labor-management teams. Important decision-making points are made transparent to all stakeholders.

#### Resources and tools

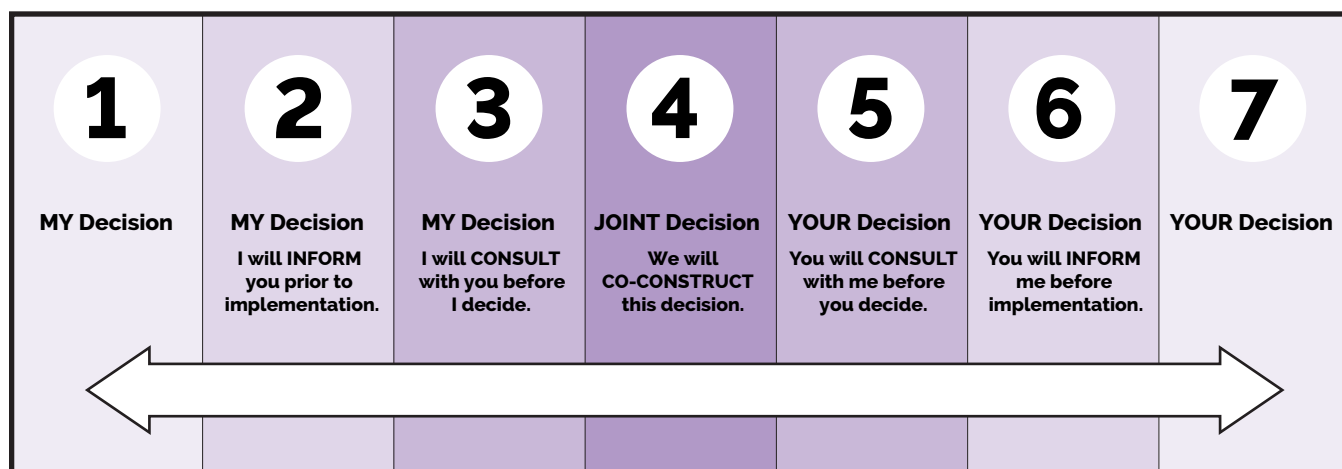
- 7 Point Decision-Making Continuum
- “The Six Boundaries of a School System”
- “Power Dynamics: The Hidden Element of Effective Meetings”
- The Ladder of Inference
- Six Conditions for Systems Change

### 3.B. Decision-Making: Deciding How to Decide

There are many ways to go about making a decision. Since a team is a collaborative effort, decision-making in the team also needs to be collaborative. The key to good collaborative decision-making is for the team to be explicit about its decision-making process—selecting the right decision-making process for the need.

Collaborative decision-making is highly effective when:

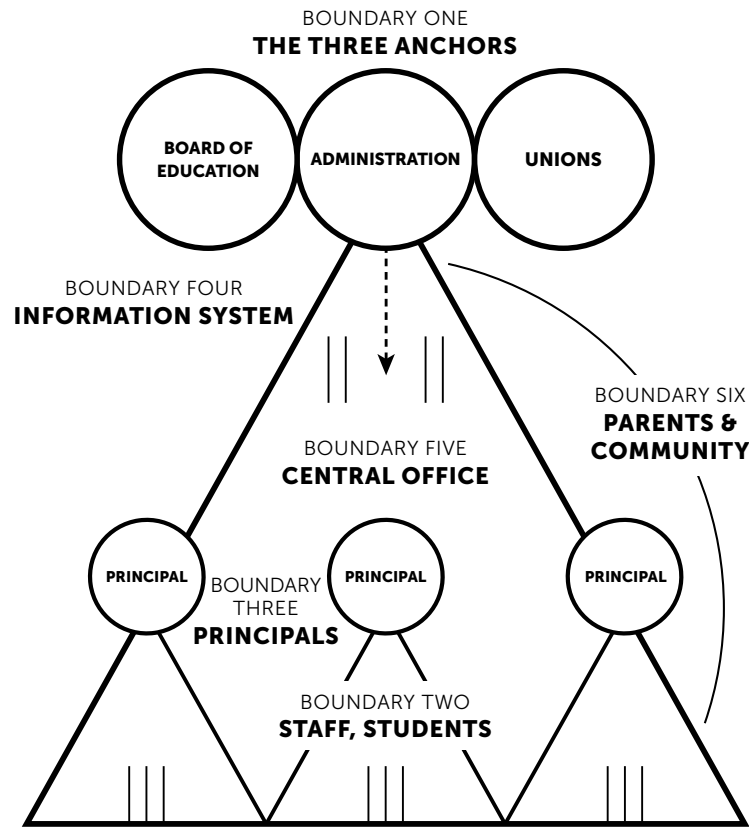
- Decisions require diverse, creative ideas.
- Many perspectives are needed to understand the issue or problem.
- A fundamental or significant change is likely.
- Many people or groups share the same problem and will be affected by the decision.
- The group will determine the best decision-making option for each situation.
- The group members will support the decisions made by the group.



Select the link below for an overview of the [7 Point Decision-Making Continuum](http://youtu.be/r1jtpnqJUms) by Dr. W. Patrick Dolan: <http://youtu.be/r1jtpnqJUms>.

## The Six Boundaries of a School System: Assessing Our Work

Adapted from *Restructuring Our Schools: A Primer on Systemic Change* by Dr. W. Patrick Dolan



The Six Boundaries: W. Patrick Dolan



Videos



### The 6 Boundaries of a School System

[turnweb.org/dolan-6-boundaries](http://turnweb.org/dolan-6-boundaries)

Dr. W. Patrick Dolan, a longtime consultant for the Consortium for Educational Change (CEC), provides an orientation to CEC's framework for organizational development and systems change. Dolan creates a "visual map" of the school system to depict the roles and relationships of the 6 Boundaries of a School System.



### Building Collaborative Structures: A Systems Approach

[turnweb.org/dolan-building-collaborative-structures](http://turnweb.org/dolan-building-collaborative-structures)

An analysis of the 6 Boundaries of a School System provides useful data to assist schools and districts in building and aligning collaborative leadership structures system-wide. Dr. Patrick Dolan provides an overview of how to establish an organizational change process in school systems.

Six Boundaries of a School System is linked [here](http://turnweb.org/dolan-6-boundaries).  
<https://www.cecweb.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Boundary-Audit-Rubric.pdf>

### 3.B. Power Dynamics: The Hidden Element to Effective Meetings

By Kelly Bates, IISC President, and IISC Senior Associates Cynthia Silva Parker and Curtis Ogden, Interaction Institute for Social Change, July 11, 2018

Many articles have been devoted to running effective meetings that build collaboration among teams, yet many fail to discuss the hidden element that can destroy a meeting almost without fail.

**Power dynamics** — the ways in which power works in a setting — can either sink a meeting and negatively impact relationships for years, or produce more shared power and capacity to get things done. A lot of the difference comes down to how we attend to power dynamics in meetings, how well we plan our meetings, how well we determine what happens within and outside of meetings, and how well we facilitate in the moment.



In every organization, there are people who hold formal power and informal power. Formal power is attributed to someone by virtue of their title or position in the organization. People carry informal power if they have influence over others or their organization, either because of their experience, force of personality or persuasion, unearned privilege, or because they have strong relationships with decision-makers and peers. Power is also deeply influenced by diversity and equity dynamics. In most Western societies today, many decisions in organizations are still controlled by people with certain backgrounds: over 40, male, white/European, heterosexual, and middle class and wealthy people. Many feel empowered to lead, speak, and make decisions by virtue of the standing society gives to them on the basis of their background. They get a lot of practice leading and people are acculturated to following and respecting them.

Power — the capacity to get things done — is neither positive nor negative in and of itself. It's all about how we construct, reconstruct, and practice power. Individuals can exercise their power in healthy ways if they stay focused on making space for others and growing power to achieve positive outcomes by building “power with” others. Individuals and groups can exercise their power in unhealthy ways if they are focused on establishing “power over” others or concentrating power in a few.

<https://interactioninstitute.org/power-dynamics-the-hidden-element-to-effective-meetings/#:~:text=Every%20meeting%20is%20a%20chance,that%20come%20along%20with%20it.>

## 3.B. Power Dynamics: The Hidden Element to Effective Meetings

*(continued)*

**At IISC we have made some key observations about power in meetings:**

1. Power dynamics are always present in meetings whether we see them or not.
2. Every meeting is a chance to build a group's power and transform power dynamics. It's important to design and facilitate meetings to create opportunities for power to be shared and openly discussed.
3. Meeting designers and facilitators must attend to formal and informal power and the dynamics that come along with it.
4. Meeting facilitators should be mindful of and acknowledge their own power and enact it in a way that builds the power of the group.
5. Every element of meetings needs preparation to make power and decision-making transparent. Consider questions like: Who is at the meeting and who is not? Why or why not? What's on the agenda and what's not on the table for discussion that should be? Who will be making the decisions that flow from what will be discussed (both in the room and beyond)? Who plays which roles and why? What work will happen outside of the meeting? What information from the meeting should be shared and with whom?





## 3.B. Power Dynamics: The Hidden Element to Effective Meetings

*(continued)*

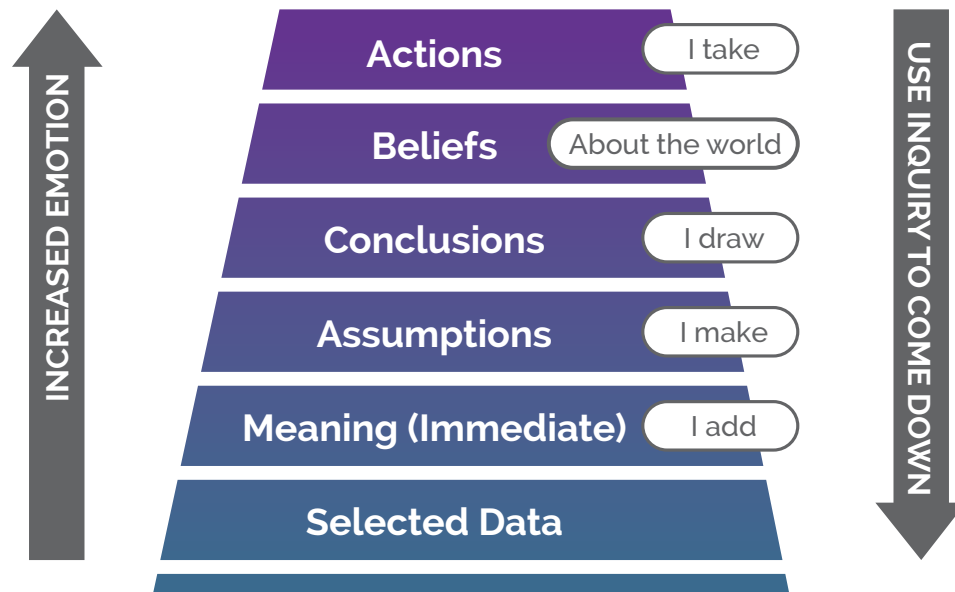
So, what are some ways to attend to power dynamics in meetings?

- **Assume power dynamics are always present in meetings.** Design your meeting agenda to include multiple voices and perspectives. Lightly encourage people to step forward to lead and participate, especially if they have less power in the organization either because of role, positional status, race, gender, or other factors. Encourage people with traditional forms of formal power to do more listening than speaking.
- **Build a culture of collaboration in meetings.** Think of meetings as an opportunity for a team to build relationships, learn leadership, design good processes, and counteract unhealthy uses of power. Design your meetings for relationships, joy, and creativity. Good things will follow! Always build an agenda that allows people to first interact on a human basis, such as starting with opportunities for people to do a “check-in” to share how their day or week is going or to learn more about each other on a personal level. Ask people a question that surfaces their personal and professional purpose. Encourage honesty, vulnerability, and calling people “in”, instead of calling people “out”. Spread a little business love around the room, creating openings for people to feel heard and noticed, and to experience a sense of belonging and interconnectedness.
- **Openly discuss power in meetings.** Discuss openly with your team the question, what would be the benefits to our group if we shared power? Remind them that power is not a finite pie; rather, it can be infinite, expanded, and shared among people and leaders. Prompt them to explore how they can share “power with” each other instead of “power over.” Make a list of meeting agreements the group will use to share power. Ask people to monitor the agreements and be brave enough to intervene if people are not practicing them. Make a list of “power over” moves, so people learn the behaviors that reinforce dominant voices and power and exclude others. Have people take mental note of who is speaking the most and who is not. Make sure your discussions of power go beyond yourselves as colleagues to the people or communities you serve. How are they “at the table?” How are their priorities, assets, and skills driving the discussion?
- **Remember that power is a social construct.** We can design spaces where individuals and groups experience their own and others’ power differently. Be proactive about ways to amplify the power of people who are typically at the margins of the conversation. Challenge the group to pay at least as much attention to the expertise that comes from lived experience (say, of poverty) as from formal theories and data. Flip questions on their head by asking “why not do things differently?” instead of “how can we work within given boundaries?” Ensure that people who are affected by the issues you’re working on are at the center of the conversation and have meaningful roles in the work over time (inside meetings and beyond).
- **Use your role intentionally and thoughtfully if you’re the meeting facilitator.** Don’t dominate the discussion. Don’t come up with all the ideas. Stay as impartial as possible, even though you can never truly be completely neutral. If you want to contribute an idea or experience, tell the group you are switching from facilitator role to express your view as an individual and then step back into your facilitator role. Examine who gets to facilitate meetings and who doesn’t. Meeting facilitators can change the outcome of the meeting just by how they design and run it. Rotating facilitation and supporting people to learn how to facilitate and run meetings distributes power and makes meetings more dynamic.

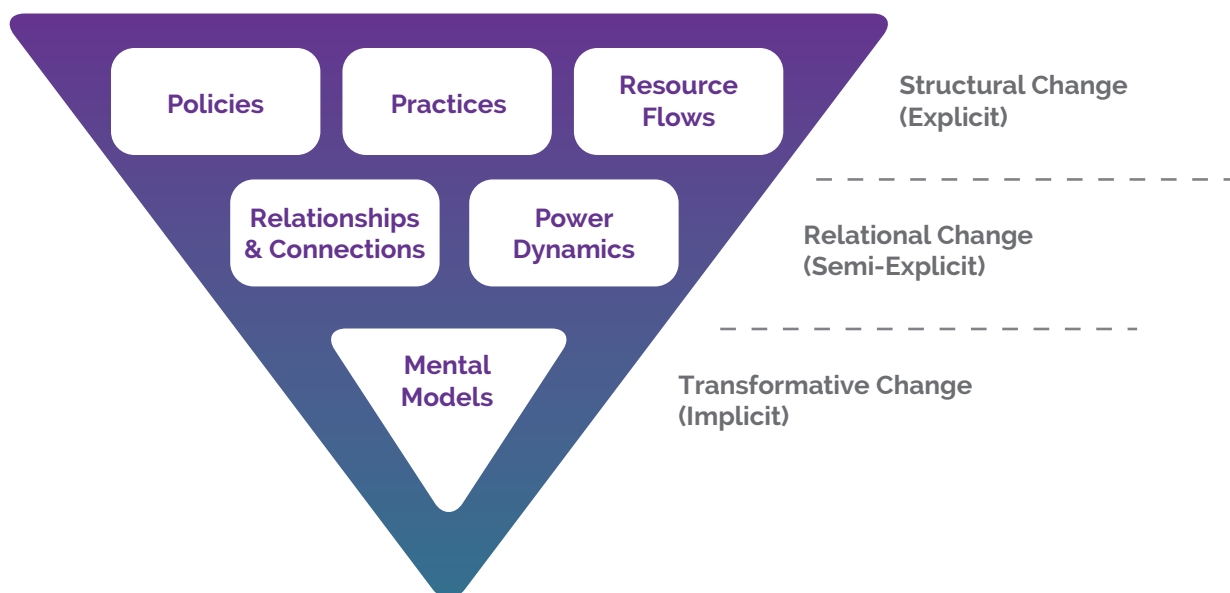
The skills of meeting facilitation with a lens to share power are teachable and replicable. At IISC, we share some of those skills through training and consulting. We have learned that meetings that are both well facilitated and that attend to power dynamics can transform groups into highly functioning teams with deeper purpose and intention for social change.

### 3.B. The Ladder of Inference

The Ladder of Inference was first put forward by organizational psychologist Chris Argyris and used by Peter Senge in *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization* (New York: Penguin Random House, 2006). This is adapted from the original.



### Six Conditions of Transformative Change



[https://www.fsg.org/publications/water\\_of\\_systems\\_change](https://www.fsg.org/publications/water_of_systems_change)  
 John Kania, Mark Kramer, and Peter Senge, *The Water of Systems Change* (Boston: FSG, May 2018).

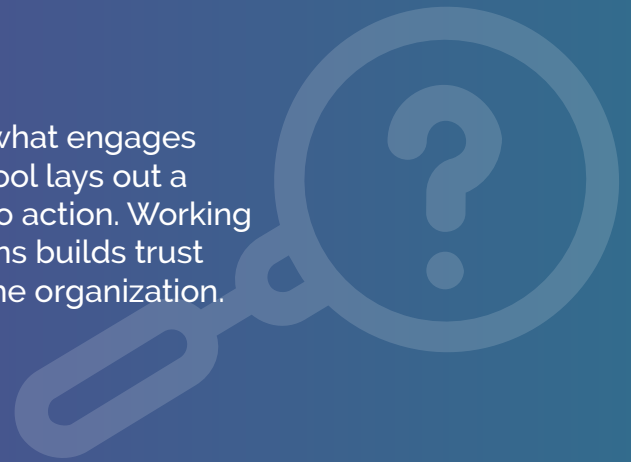




# ELEMENT 4

## Problem Solve

After laying the proper foundation, problem solving is what engages people. The Stages of Collaborative Problem Solving tool lays out a process for teams to take their ideas from thoughts into action. Working together and actually developing collaborative solutions builds trust and can spread collaborative professionalism across the organization.



### Contents:

**Stages of Collaborative Problem Solving ..... 83–90**

“

Good schools depend heavily on cooperative endeavors. Relational trust is the connective tissue that binds individuals together to advance the education and welfare of students. Improving schools requires us to think harder about how best to organize the work of adults and students so that this connective tissue remains healthy and strong.

—Anthony Bryk  
Education researcher and author

”

## A Guide to Building a System of Collaborative Problem Solving

**This is a unique moment in time.** The pandemic has caused educators to work in new ways and presented opportunities to rethink our education system. It has starkly revealed systemic inequities that we knew existed but had not fully acknowledged in how we operated. Most of us have been humbled by the fact that we want to change how we do things but are overwhelmed by the tasks. Or perhaps we haven't known where or how to start, or how to move our big ideas to implementation.

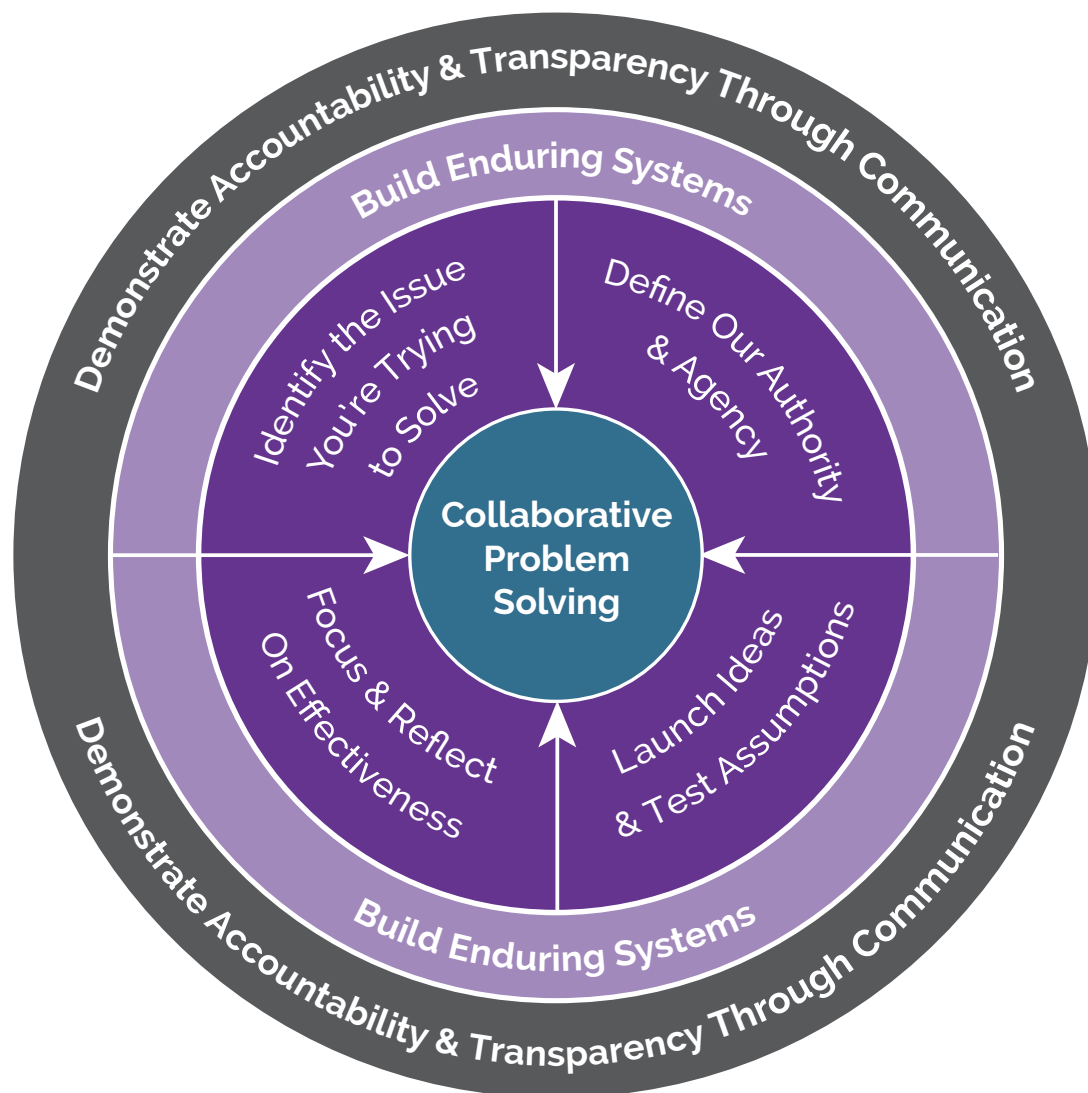
If the above describes you and your education community, this simple guide for building a system for adaptive problem solving is for you. If you can, start by identifying the problem you are seeking to solve. But often you aren't at the beginning when you realize you need (or are required) to make change. Most likely, you will have to figure out where you are in the process to make the change you want to accomplish.

This guide is different than others you may have seen. The steps will be familiar and consistent with planning tools and continual quality improvement. You will see things that remind you of the LCAP process and, at the same time, are recognizable as Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) activities. Each of these stages incorporates a labor-management lens that will lead to improved transparency, communication, equity, and trust throughout your organization or labor-management team.

**Let's explore the four stages of collaborative problem solving as well as two intersecting system elements: communication and sustainability.** First we identify "Big Ideas" that we associate with each stage of the work. Then we offer questions for teams to consider that focus on the Big Ideas. Finally, we offer questions that individuals can use within their teams. There are countless questions that could be used to move the work forward at each step, and you should feel comfortable and empowered to develop questions that could move your team.

## A Guide to Building a System of Collaborative Problem Solving

We see each of the six stages below as a unique moment in the movement of your work as a leader or catalyst and in your work as a member of a team or group. Each stage can, and should, be revisited as frequently as necessary to do the work of collaborative problem solving. Stages connect to statewide standards as indicated below. Each of the four center stages can be enhanced by connecting them to the two system elements of communications and sustainability.



California Professional Standards (California Department of Education)

Connection to California Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (CPSEL)

Connection to California Academic Standards

- » (MPS) = Math Practice Standard
- » (SEP) = Science and Engineering Practice
- » (ELA) = English/Language Arts, Speaking, and Listening Standard

## Stage 1: Identify the Issue You Are Trying to Solve/Resolve

**Stage 1 is about identifying priorities and making strategic choices about what to focus on.** This stage is also an opportunity to rethink how priorities are set and by whom. CA LMI is mindful of the need for more inclusion of different voices and a diversity of perspectives as well as the need for focusing on issues that are truly relevant. This may mean breaking up a large goal into smaller pieces, which may be easier to implement. As such, this phase can be a helpful way to set the stage for a richer kind of collaborative conversation and one with a better chance of making an impact.



### Big Ideas

- » Be strategic, intentional, and coherent about priorities.
- » Clarify what makes our priorities relevant and impactful.
- » Ensure that our priorities reflect the diversity of our community.
- » Align allocation of resources (human and fiscal) with priorities.
- » Decide whether this is a systemic issue (root cause) or a symptom of a problem or issue.

## Guiding Questions

### For teams

- How many existing priorities reflect “You must do this” versus “This is a priority because it will have a significant impact on students and/or staff”?
- Can we remove items from our priority list and reduce stress if we communicate better across the organization or school?
- Do our priorities build on something that is already known or understood within the organization?
- Do these priorities reflect concerns and content that will directly impact most or many people in the organization?
- Do these priorities align with the goals and priorities of our strategic plan, LCAP, and other preexisting planning tools, or should something be changed?
- How much diversity of perspective was present during discussion of priorities? Did this generate many different ideas and opinions?
- Were the groups/stakeholders who will be impacted by these priorities represented in the process and discussions that establish them (including classified staff, students, parents, etc.)?
- Is there capacity and buy-in to move this work forward?
- Has the group considered the equity issues that may be connected to the topic?

### For individual leaders

- Where do I see the greatest need for change?
- Where do I see easily accomplished work and opportunity for impact?
- Do I think the existing priorities will lead to the greatest impact? If not, is it possible to pivot to more impactful priorities or reduce the priority of some existing work without derailing it?
- What data or information is missing from the conversation? How can I move it into the conversation?
- Is an equity lens applied to this or most decision-making? Who else is an equity-focused member of the team to collaborate with?
- Have I made the case to include typically marginalized voices (position, race, and background)?

## Connections to California Educational Standards (CPSEL)

### Standard 1: Development and Implementation of a Shared Vision

- » Element 1B–1 Embrace diverse perspectives and craft consensus about the vision and goals.
- » Element 1B–2 Communicate the vision so that the staff and school community understand it and use it for decision-making.

### Standard 4: Family and Community Engagement

- » Element 4B–1 Incorporate information about family and community expectations and needs into decision-making and activities.

### Standard 6: External Context and Policy

- » Element 6A–5 Work with local leaders to assess, analyze, and anticipate emerging trends and initiatives and their impact on education.

**SEP 1:** Ask questions and define problems.

**MPS 4:** Attend to precision.

## Stage 2: Define Our Authority and Agency

**Stage 2 is the time to be precise and clarify what we are doing collaboratively.** Our discussions must consider both the scope (how big and bold) and urgency (how fast and far-reaching) of our proposed actions. This stage is also a time to normalize collaboration, establishing norms for how the group will operate and defining expectations for working together. Because there is hierarchy in our organizations—sometimes mandated by law, sometimes by tradition—this is a good place to consider whether some decisions can be shared or transferred to others. In any event, be clear about which opportunities are for decision-making and which opportunities are for input. Regardless, some team members will need reassurance that their voice matters as well as clear opportunities to provide suggestions and input at this stage. In sum, Stage 2 is the foundation for group interactions and buy-in and the development of new leaders.



### Big Ideas

- » Balance the need for decisiveness with the need for inclusion and accountability.
- » Clarify authority and urgency to act.
- » Acknowledge and address power dynamics—the importance of leveling the playing field for all.
- » Lift up new voices and perspectives.

## Guiding Questions

### For teams

- Is it clear what is within our group's or team's purview to decide upon? Do we understand where we have autonomy and/or discretion?
- Is there an articulable rationale for where decisions are being made? Are there opportunities for distributing decision-making across the organization?
- Who else needs to be involved or informed in this decision?
- Have we created conditions that encourage input from everyone on the team?
- Is there sufficient psychological safety to ensure that people speak up and voice their ideas and opinions regardless of positional authority?
- Have we established norms for collaboration that promote both trust and precision in team settings?

### For individual leaders

- Have we empowered someone to facilitate and uphold norms for collaboration?
- Are there voices missing from the table?
- How can I increase the visibility and trust of missing voices?
- How can I build relations with those in power and those not in power so other voices can carry more weight?
- How can I help my union/management team feel more comfortable becoming more transparent?
- How can I help my union/management team share power?
- How can I help generate support for the work even if I did not support this priority or focus?

## Connections to California Educational Standards (CPSEL)

### Standard 1: Development and Implementation of a Shared Vision

- » Element 1A–3 Address achievement and opportunity disparities between groups, with attention to those with special needs; cultural, racial, and linguistic differences; and disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds.
- » Element 1B–3 Build shared accountability to achieve the vision by distributing leadership roles and responsibilities among staff and community.
- » Element 3B–3 Set clear working agreements that support sharing problems, practices, and results within a safe and supportive environment.

- » Element 4B–3 Treat all stakeholder groups with fairness and respect, and work to bring consensus on key issues that affect student learning and well-being.
- » **ELA.SL1:** Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- » Identify personal and institutional biases and remove barriers that derive from economic, social-emotional, racial, linguistic, cultural, physical, gender-based, or other sources of educational disadvantage.



## Stage 3: Launch Ideas and Test Assumptions

**Stage 3 is about implementing a plan or carrying out the work in front of you.** Because our work is complex, it is necessarily adaptive. No plans are carried out exactly as envisioned. Therefore, Stage 3 requires consideration of delegation and trust that your colleagues will implement plans as best they can, taking into account their own situation and dynamic work environment. As such, Stage 3 challenges us to consider how best to use the natural differences of local context to test and experiment with our ideas and assumptions about our work. Multiple similar experiments provide the basis for us to learn from different implementation pathways and solutions. Simple work plans can help with clarifying tasks, pacing work, and assessing outcomes.



### Big Ideas

- » Trust people to do the work.
- » Acknowledge that there are multiple ways to do the work.
- » Accept the difference between fidelity to process versus fidelity to outcome.
- » Build upon and acknowledge what already exists in proposing a new course of action.

## Guiding Questions

### For teams

- Are there clear roles, responsibilities, and timelines to guide delegation of work?
- Have we acknowledged and informed the team that implementation can and should adapt to local context?
- Have we considered opportunities for testing multiple, related ideas in lieu of a one-size-fits-all type of implementation?
- Are the desired outcomes clear? Does everyone understand how we are defining success?
- To what extent has doing the work nurtured and fostered trust among team members?
- Have we used this moment to generate curiosity about solving problems?
- Have we used this moment to show coherence between doing the work and modeling good learning practices?
- How might we align this process with our LCAP development, SPSA, or other site-planning tools?
- Have we identified barriers to access or other equity considerations?
- Who will be advantaged by our decisions or actions?

- Who will be disadvantaged or unintentionally harmed by our decisions or actions?
- What perspectives informed our decisions?
- What perspectives may be missing from our decision-making process?

### For individual leaders

- How can I model delegation and distributed leadership?
- Am I able to see or acknowledge how work plans can and should be adaptive?
- How might I encourage others to experiment with similar (but different) approaches to implementation?
- How can I model and communicate curiosity and an experimental mindset?
- How might I facilitate discussions about outcomes and success metrics to clarify expectations and enhance team building?
- What can I do to nurture and foster trust among team members as part of implementation?
- Am I modeling ownership of my work?

## Connections to California Educational Standards

### Standard 1: Development and Implementation of a Shared Vision

- » Element 1A.2 Cultivate multiple learning opportunities and support systems that build on assets and address needs.

### Standard 2: Instructional Leadership

- » Element 2A.4 Strengthen staff trust, shared responsibility, and leadership by instituting structures and processes that promote collaborative inquiry and problem solving.

**SEP 3:** Plan and carry out investigations.

**MPS 1:** Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.

**MPS 6:** Use appropriate tools strategically.

## Stage 4: Focus and Reflect on Effectiveness

**Stage 4 is about reflecting on our progress and taking time to learn from the work we have implemented.** In the process of focusing on effectiveness, we have opportunities to both hone our precision (what we are collaborating on) and build trust (how we collaborate) through group and team discussions. If we have given our projects and initiatives the time they need to be meaningful, and we have been inclusive in seeking comments and observations, we will have a rich store of data to reflect upon in a spirit of inquiry and collaborative learning. Both the process of these reflections and their content are meaningful as we distill the lessons learned that serve us now and into the future. Throughout, we have strengthened shared accountability with objective tools to track our work as well as the psychological safety to avoid blame or judgment.



### BIG IDEAS

- » Hone precision while building trust.
- » Be curious not judgmental.
- » Focus on outcomes not outputs.
- » Reframe the assessment mindset as suggestion for change not judgment of the present.

## Guiding Questions

### For teams

- How might we cultivate a culture of curiosity and inquiry rather than judgment and reaction?
- Are we focused on effectiveness (doing the right things) or efficiency (doing things right)?
- Have we considered the impact of the work (on students and families) above and beyond its immediate result?
- Have we structured reflection to allow time and space for the lessons learned to emerge?
- Have we considered how communication of goals, training and planning with staff affected our outcomes?
- Are there minor adjustments or refinements we can make?
- What are the implications of our reflection for district/school goals or vision? Which aspects of reflection need to be part of longer-term sustainability discussions?
- Have we considered equity impacts in our implementation?

### For individual leaders

- How can I model curiosity and inquiry as part of my leadership style/approach? How might I encourage more curiosity and inquiry in team or group interactions?
- Have I created or used opportunities for team/group discussions to consider outcomes and impact rather than the immediate output?
- How might I provide examples of the difference between efficiency and effectiveness that are relevant to my team or group?
- What are the best levers or opportunities for lifting up discussions about impact on end users (i.e., children, youth, and families)?
- Have I created or used opportunities for team/group interaction to reflect on lessons learned? To plan forward based on data and reflection?
- Have I supported a quality rollout and implementation of the work?

## Connections to California Educational Standards (CPSEL)

### Standard 1: Development and Implementation of a Shared Vision

- » Element 1C.1 Include all stakeholders in a process of continuous improvement (reflection, revision, and modification) based on the systematic review of evidence and progress.

### Standard 2: Instructional Leadership

- » Element 2C.2 Guide staff and the community in regular disaggregation and analysis of local and state student assessment results and program data.
- » Element 2C.3 Use information from a variety of sources to guide program and professional learning planning, implementation, and revisions.

### Standard 2: Ethics and Integrity

- » Element 5C.2 Use a variety of strategies to lead others in safely examining personal assumptions and respectfully challenge beliefs that negatively affect improving teaching and learning for all students.

**SEP 4:** Analyze and interpret data.

**SEP 7:** Engage in argument from evidence.

**MPS 3:** Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others.

## Demonstrate Accountability and Transparency Through Communication

The ways we communicate should reinforce the overarching need for authentic, ongoing collaboration that helps build trust and supports equity. **Therefore, this section is centered on using communication tools and strategies to demonstrate accountability and build trust within and across work teams and collaborative groups.** We consciously prioritize messages and choose forums to showcase our learning about effectiveness so that other groups, and the organization as a whole, are influenced by and benefit from our experience. We look to an interactive dialogue and exchange of ideas, mindful of the need for encouraging respect and guarding the psychological safety of participants. We embrace the fact that communication is the glue that both informs and nurtures professional working relationships.



### Big Ideas

- » Shift from one-way to multidimensional communication.
- » Elevate communication as an essential element of collaboration; improving communication is central to power sharing.
- » Prevent communication from becoming a proxy for inequity and mistrust.
- » Sustain transparency with frequent regular communications on multiple platforms.

## Guiding Questions

### For teams

- Are we prepared to showcase our results and reflections, even if they are not flattering?
- Which audiences would benefit from seeing our process and results and hearing our reflections?
- Can we prioritize our learning (and who is presenting) to meet the needs of different audiences and/or stakeholders?
- How might our communication style or presentation encourage dialogue and discussion versus simply being a presentation of findings?
- How can we transform from a “need to know” culture to a “we are all in this together” culture?
- To what extent has our communication strategy enhanced the credibility of our team or approach? The psychological safety of teams?
- Are we thoughtful about our words and questions, making sure that we ask the questions we truly want to know the answers to and using words that are engaging and understandable to all stakeholders?
- Have we made our equity considerations transparent?

### For individual leaders

- Does our communication reinforce a collaborative mindset?
- How can I contribute to building a culture of greater transparency?
- Am I stepping into or away from the statements of others?
- How can I help build communication highways instead of posting communication bulletins?
- How might I ensure that my team or group has a meaningful discussion about the multiple audiences that might benefit from hearing about our work?
- Have I identified the best forums and opportunities for presenting our learning and experience?
- Have I facilitated discussions on priorities in light of our experience and learning?
- Can I explain how and why priorities changed or were refined?
- How can I help the organization manage being vulnerable? Build a culture of respectful and civil dialogue? Create a culture of psychological safety?

## Connections to California Educational Standards (CPSEL)

### Standard 3: Management and Learning Environment

- » Element 3D.4 Engage staff in professional learning and formative assessments with specific feedback for continuous growth.

### Standard 4: Family and Community Engagement

- » Element 4A.4 Solicit input from and communicate regularly with all parents and families in ways that are accessible and understandable.

SEP 8: Obtain, evaluate, and communicate information.

ELA.SL.2: Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

ELA.SL.4 3: Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

## Build Enduring Systems

**This section is where we consider the implications of our collaborative learning for systemwide changes.** We consciously step back from the specifics of our work and ask how best to use our learning to improve the systems in which we operate. These could involve relatively small but important changes in how we work together as well as revisions to organizational policies that have long histories. We ask how we might scale or replicate the best learning throughout our organization. Most importantly, we ask ourselves how best to refine or revamp what and how we work together to better meet the needs of our core constituency—public school students and families and the people who make it happen: our staff.



### Big Ideas

- » Understand that simple process changes can have big impact.
- » Connect initiatives and plans through alignment to mission and vision.
- » Consider dissemination and replication of efforts.
- » Return to the mission if lost; remember, it's about the students!

## Guiding Questions

### For teams

- What small practice (or modification) might your team promote that would have a big impact?
  - How we structure meeting agendas
  - How we document team decisions
  - How we train and develop staff
- Are there lessons from our implementation that have implications for the larger organization?
- Is there a best practice that can be generalized?
- Does our experience warrant a change or refinement of policy? How does this align with board policy? With contractual agreements?
- How do we modify our interactions with one another going forward to build trust in the system?
- How have we addressed a clear need of students or families? A need of educators directly interacting with students and families?
- Have we built the infrastructure to document decisions made during the process to ensure shared agreement, prevent misunderstandings, and train others?
- Is there a transition plan to engage new leaders in continuing the work?

### For individual leaders

- What can I do to train others in the new practices being adopted?
- How can I communicate support for the new or modified practice?
- What connections can I make or what ideas do I have for aligning the practice with existing practices or policies?
- Can I show how a change will benefit both students and families and the staff tasked with serving students and families?
- Have I made these connections clear to others in the organization, particularly those with decision-making power?
- How might I advocate for a specific policy change that could be adopted across the organization and sustain new ways of operating?
- How can I help depersonalize practices so they become part of our systems (or ways of operating) and less conflated with individuals or subsets of the organization?
- Have I done what is possible and necessary to sustain useful practices?

## Connections to California Educational Standards (CPSEL)

### Standard 5: Ethics and Integrity

- » Element 5A.2 Reflect on areas for improvement and take responsibility for change and growth.
- » Element 5A.4 Continuously improve cultural proficiency skills and competency in curriculum, instruction, and assessment for all learners.
- Element 5A.5 Sustain personal motivation, commitment, energy, and health by balancing professional and personal responsibilities.

**MPS 7:** Look for and make use of structure.

**MPS 8:** Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning.

**SEP 6:** Construct explanations and design solutions.

[illegible]



# ELEMENT 5

## Grow

One meaningful activity of the district labor-management team is to expand its activities to other parts of the organization. Deepening the work across the system builds coherence, shared ownership, and accountability, leading to systemwide collaborative culture and work practices.

### Contents:

<b>5.A.—Establish Joint Committees at the District Level.....</b>	<b>95–100</b>
<b>5.B.—Develop Labor-Management Partnership at the Site Level.....</b>	<b>101–108</b>

“

**The most valuable resource that  
all educators have is each other.  
Without collaboration, our growth is  
limited to our own perspectives.**

—Robert John Meehan  
Educator, author, and poet

”



## 5.A. ESTABLISH JOINT COMMITTEES AT THE DISTRICT LEVEL

**When the district learning team (DLT) is ready to begin a district project or expand beyond their own members, a great strategy is to establish additional diverse committees with labor and management representation.** Joint committees are typically focused on specific areas of work, such as technology, special education, early childhood learning, health benefits, etc. The establishment of joint committees within a labor-management initiative provides several benefits. They help alleviate the pressure and workload of the DLT and allow for productive work to take place outside of main DLT meetings. Members of these additional teams often come from school sites, district departments, midlevel management, and union members, but unlike other committees created by the district to implement a project, this group is selected collectively by the DLT and is publicly recognized as such. Having these additional committees leads to broader organizational practice and investment in partnership. It also increases leadership opportunities, which promotes a more dispersed leadership structure and contributes to the long-term sustainability of labor-management collaboration activities throughout the district.

Conversations that take place in a joint committee setting, where members are focused on both trust building and precision (collaborative professionalism), are well-suited to collaborative problem solving around complex issues as well as difficult and sensitive topics. Joint committees also promote a sense of trust and transparency across the organization, as unions and their members are brought into discussions earlier and gain a more in-depth understanding of the issues. Many districts created committees to address the myriad issues that arose during the pandemic, ranging from remote learning to technology access, food delivery, and staff support. Districts with labor-management collaboration experience reported that they felt better equipped to collaboratively solve problems and then write the contract agreements to implement new work expectations.

See Julia E. Koppich, "Grappling with Covid's Impact on Education: Labor and Management Confront the Crisis" (CA LMI report, May 2021).



### Insights from the CA LMI team

- » Joint committees benefit from leaders in the DLT (and all levels) modeling collaborative practices.
- » Teams are not usually starting from a blank slate. For example, some existing committees may only need the addition of a labor voice. Be aware of the potentially challenging dynamics when modifying existing team membership; particular attention should be given to assuring trust, communication, and transparency among team members.
- » Start small and build as you go. Consider the DLT's capacity and effectiveness at training and supporting new groups before taking on a large expansion. If existing labor-management committees are operating well, such as a health benefits committee, build on the success of that work if it is jointly perceived as effective.
- » Utilizing the Seven-Point Decision-Making Continuum tool is helpful for joint committees to be clear about their role.

## 5.A. ESTABLISH JOINT COMMITTEES AT THE DISTRICT LEVEL

(continued)

The resources below include information on how to build joint committees, how to transition an existing committee into a labor-management committee, and how to connect their activities to existing teams as well as examples of successful collaborative work.

### Why?

- Gives the district learning team (DLT) the capacity to implement the ideas they are developing
- Creates additional leadership opportunities throughout the district
- Creates additional spaces for collaborative problem solving where people can be more candid and open about feedback
- Brings unions into discussion and decision-making earlier, which can result in fewer surprises and reduced concerns about decisions happening behind closed doors.
- Spreads collaborative professionalism and builds an organizational culture of trust and collaboration

### How?

- Build committees with clear expectations and lines of authority to implement key ideas or projects identified by the district learning team.
- Train committees on labor-management norms, collaborative practices, and processes.
- Assess trust and psychological safety in the organization and work to improve if necessary.
- Build coherence by connecting with existing collaborative efforts and shared goals.
- Ensure that the DLT is prepared to act upon the work accomplished by the new joint committees, supporting them when they struggle and celebrating accomplishments.

### Connections to California Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (CPSEL)

#### Standard 1: Development and Implementation of a Shared Vision

- » Element 1B–3 Build shared accountability to achieve the vision by distributing leadership roles and responsibilities among staff and community.

#### Standard 2: Instructional Leadership

- » Element 2A Leaders promote a culture in which staff engages in individual and collective professional learning that results in their continuous improvement and high performance.

#### Standard 3: Management and Learning Environment

- » Element 3B–4 Engage stakeholders in using problem-solving and decision-making processes and distributed leadership to develop, monitor, evaluate, and revise plans and programs.

“

The two words *information* and *communication* are often used interchangeably, but they signify quite different things. Information is giving out; communication is getting through.

—Sydney J. Harris,  
Journalist

”

## 5.A. Resource Overview and Implementation Suggestions

Labor-management partnerships can be created in any department or division of the district. For example, there could be a labor-management committee focused on meeting the nutritional needs of students that includes the food service manager, purchasing staff, cooks, and servers as well as maintenance staff, special education aides, and teachers. A committee focused on special education could include teachers, paraeducators, bus drivers, school psychologists, and facilities staff all connected to union and management leaders.

Below is an example of institutionalized committees and work groups within ABC Unified School District. The structure includes a district learning team named the Partnership Between Administration and Labor (PAL) composed of district and union leaders. There are joint district-level working committees as well as focus groups and task forces.

It is not necessary to create a full organizational structure at the moment an additional committee or work group is launched, but the ABC Unified structure provides an example of what a mature system looks like. In addition to the PAL, there is a PAL2, which has a similar structure with administration and classified unions.

Guiding Questions	Progress Points
How have you determined that you are ready to include more people in the work of the district learning team? Is there agreement that you are ready to move forward, and have you clearly articulated the scope and responsibilities? Where is the capacity to engage in this new work? Does the district learning team have the capacity to respond to the new committee appropriately and in a timely way?	The district learning team used collaborative problem-solving processes (such as the Three-Box Framework) to identify a manageable piece of work to grow collaborative problem solving in the district. There is a clearly defined project, a time frame for action, and a plan to free up time for members to engage in the work.
Which district or district learning team goal is the new project aligned to support?	The joint committee's scope of work is clearly understood, and its connection to strategic goals is well defined.
<b>Trust:</b> Does the joint committee have the proper culture to engage in meaningful work?	There was intentionality, time, and space for the joint committee to focus on trust building before launching into the project and throughout the process.
<b>Equity:</b> In what ways are the district management and union leaders empowering and engaging diverse voices from across the district to participate in shared work through joint committees?	There are new members, unique perspectives, and participants beyond those already involved in district initiatives on joint committees.
<b>Communication:</b> How have the district learning team, management team, and union leaders shared information across their organizations about the expanded collaborative work?	Communications provide updates on the efforts and outcomes of joint committees so ongoing work is transparent and recognized. When possible, staff, parents, and community members are able to add their insights to the committee efforts.

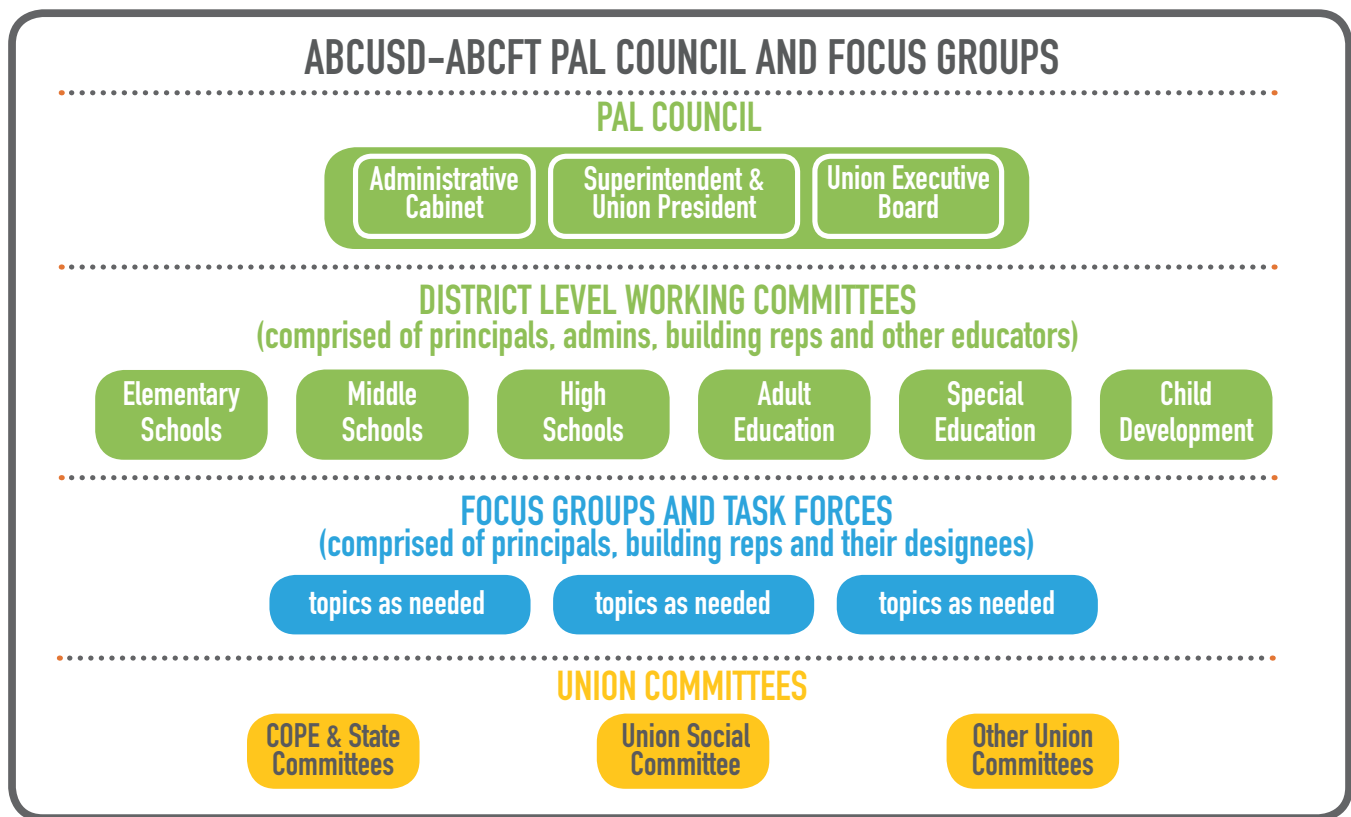
### Resources and tools

- ABCUSD–ABCFT Collaborative Structures (Excerpt from “Collaborating for Student Success” NEA workbook, 2019)
- Excerpts from *The ABC's of Partnership: Improving Special Education*

## 5.A. ABCUSD–ABCFT Collaborative Structures

Excerpt from the “Collaborating for Student Success” (NEA workbook, 2019).

As an example, the following graphics show the framework for district-level collaboration in the ABC Unified School District, located about 25 miles southeast of Los Angeles. The ABC Unified School District and its union, the ABC Federation of Teachers, have been pioneers in collaborative education partnerships, and their successes have provided much research data. They call their collaboration PAL: Partnership Between Administration and Labor. It has withstood several superintendent and union president changes over the years because the collaboration structures are codified into lasting agreements and because the partnership fostered such a culture of working together that the education association/union members, administration, and school board intentionally seek out collaboratively minded individuals when hiring or electing their leaders.

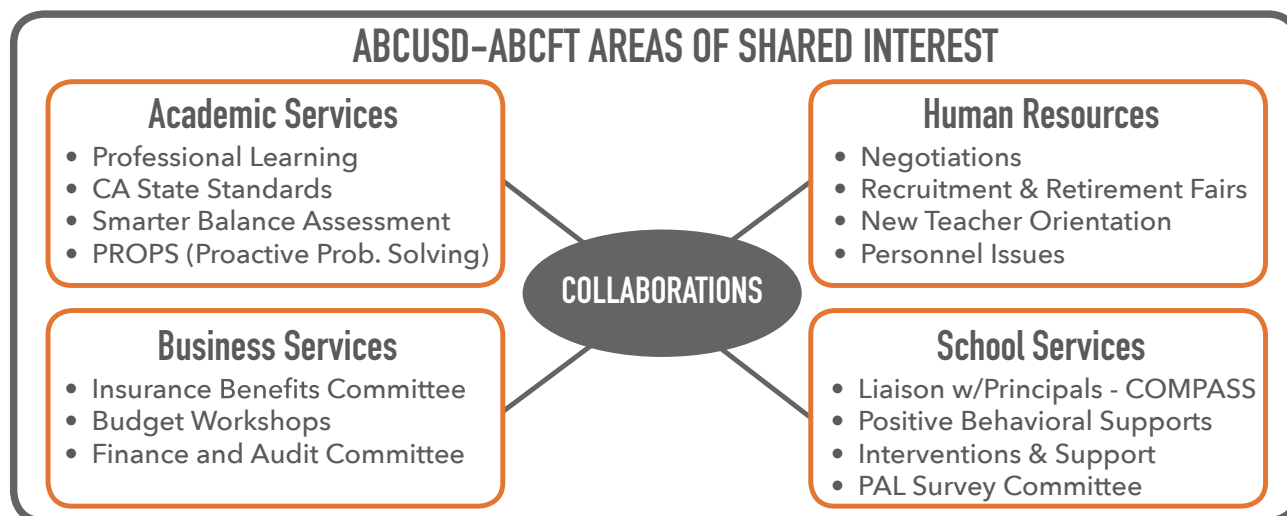


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The ABC partnership calls their district learning team structure the PAL Council. It is made up of the superintendent and her administrative cabinet, and the union president and his executive board. The PAL Council established district-level working committees on six key focus areas within their academic services: elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, adult education, special education, and child development. Additional district-level committees on a variety of topics are created as needed.

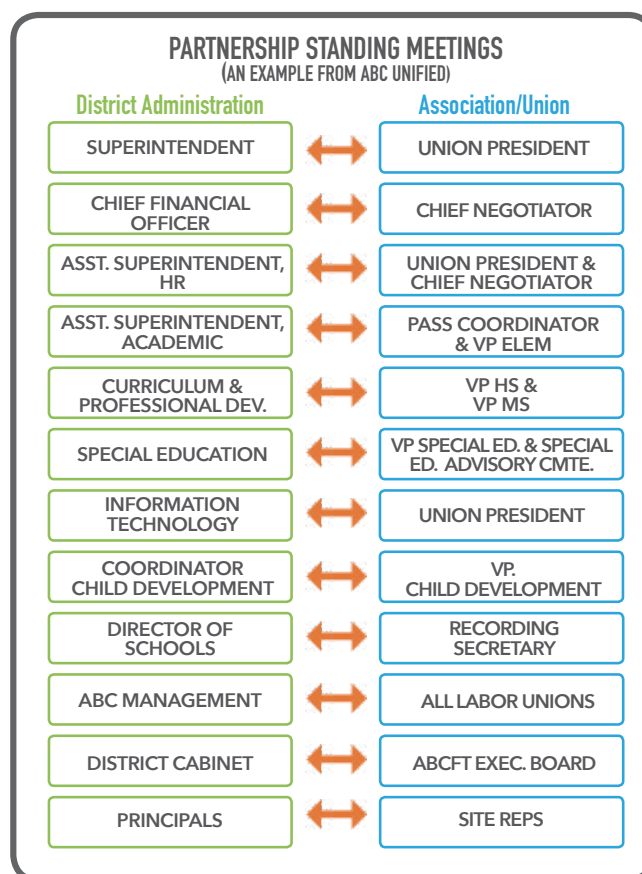
## 5.A. ABCUSD–ABCFT Collaborative Structures *(continued)*

Excerpt from the “Collaborating for Student Success” (NEA workbook, 2019).



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The partners have agreed to routinely collaborate on several large areas of shared interest, including academic services, business services, human resources, and school services. In addition, ABC’s PAL includes a set of standing meetings between role-alike individuals across labor and management. The superintendent and union president meet weekly. The ABC Federation of Teachers organized its executive board roles to match those of the district superintendent’s cabinet, so it is clear who the union counterpart is for each key administrator in the district. These individuals meet regularly. Between their meetings, the union leaders gather input from the building representatives and other educator-leaders, so they are knowledgeable about the opinions and experiences of the workforce and can have productive, timely conversations.



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## 5.A. Improving Special Education

Excerpt from *The ABC's of Partnership*

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In addition to the overall partnership that has grown in the ABC District, a more specific collaboration has developed between administrators and special education teachers.

Proactive Problem Solvers—known as PROPS—is a consortium of special education team members, including representatives from the union's special education advisory committee and the district administration. The consortium works together to address schools' special education issues before they escalate into larger problems.

Superintendent [Mary] Sieu describes PROPS as “a forum for issues to be aired out, as opposed to moving directly to grievance or negotiations.

The PROPS committee, which formed in 2008, meets once a month, and focuses on solutions to staffing problems, professional development and other ways to support special education teachers.

The committee looks to solve problems and think up “out of the box” ideas that shape the department's future. PROPS plans for possible challenges and meets them “head first” before they become serious problems. The uniqueness of the committee lies in the fact that the teachers in the special education department now have an equal voice along with their administrators as they work together to solve problems that the department faces.

“When we get together, we leave the titles at the door, roll up our sleeves, and honestly tackle the issues together. We speak to the ‘elephants’ but avoid blame,” says Dawn Heeren, ABCFT's vice president for special education.

The first areas the new committee tackled were special education caseloads and class size, which were the issues at the crux of the grievance that led to the committee's formation. This was a difficult challenge that involved looking at the causes of the problem and not just at past practices. Both sides agreed to set aside the “blame game” and look at how to “just fix it.” The result of this newly developed collaboration was evident when the very next school year started much more smoothly than in years past. In light of such a successful start, the PROPS committee decided to take on the challenge of student achievement.

To help facilitate this, the committee decided to participate in ABC's innovation project (see Element 6 [of *The ABC's of Partnership*]). By focusing on student behavior, the team felt that there would be an improvement in students' academic performance as well.

This collaborative team continues to tackle communication issues, morale, assignments, space for unit members to work, curriculum, intervention, procedural issues, and even budget challenges. Now, the district looks to PROPS to work out issues and make them a “win-win.”

**“There is no more us or them. There is just *we*,” says Pinky Uppal, who cochairs the committee. “It is just how we do business now.”**



## 5.B. DEVELOP LABOR-MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP AT THE SITE LEVEL

**In addition to the district-focused work groups and committees described previously, an essential place to grow labor-management collaboration is at the school-site level.**

School sites often use committees or teams to design curriculum, build budgets, design plans for student achievement, and assess student performance. Frequently these teams include mandated members representing designated constituent groups, including administrators, teachers, classified staff, and parents. Building on these existing committees and teams to ensure full labor-management representation can be an efficient way to expand this type of collaboration to school sites.

As labor-management teams form at the school-site level, the district team should develop a plan for training and supporting the site-level teams to develop and adapt guiding behaviors and norms using those developed by the district-level team as an example. School sites may encounter challenges in forming a school learning team (SLT), such as compensating classified staff whose hours may not align with the school day and ensuring administrators and teachers have sufficient time to participate in the team. But those challenges are worth resolving when it leads to school administrators and union leaders working more effectively together to engage diverse voices, data, and ideas. And, as highlighted by the CPSEL, these collaborative behaviors give clarity on how to implement the big ideas of the CPSEL and help adults model the expectations of student learning.

### Why?

- Building collaborative problem-solving skills at the school site will contribute to districtwide culture change and furthers coherence across the system.
- Students benefit when the adults they interact with model trust, equity, and communication.
- The benefits of a collaborative culture are experienced at the site level too, including shared learning and problem solving, trust and psychological safety, increased transparency, and diverse participation.

### How?

- Consider rolling out to cohorts of schools who volunteer to participate versus an all-sites approach based on the size of the district. Starting small and building champions for the work can further the effort.
- Communicate the vision, goals, and expectations for the district labor-management initiative. It is powerful when the superintendent and union presidents are visible together at school sites promoting partnership, collaboration, and shared goals.
- Train people across the system on the elements of partnership: including frameworks, resources, and intentionality.
- When launching a school learning team, it is important to ensure that the conditions of trust, equity, and communication are in place or that there is a plan for building these capacities. Make discussions of trust and power dynamics explicit.
- The district-level team must walk the walk and talk the talk and engage in the work together with school sites and others across the district. The district-level team must act upon the work accomplished by the school-site teams, support them when they struggle, and celebrate accomplishments.



### Insights from the CA LMI team

- » Building school-site teams is a powerful way to build coherence and communication across the district, especially when the school site is engaged in meaningful reflective practice and the district includes that data in decision-making.
- » While there is a tendency to want to expand the work to school sites quickly, the key district-level union and management leaders should have a clear strategy and sufficient levels of trust to model partnership before expanding the effort.
- » As in building district-level joint committees, we are not usually beginning with a blank slate. For example, some existing school-site committees may only need the addition of a designated labor voice. Be aware of the potentially challenging dynamics when modifying existing team membership; particular attention should be given to ensuring trust, communication, and transparency among team members.



## 5.B. DEVELOP PARTNERSHIPS AT THE SITE LEVEL *(continued)*

### Connections to California Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (CPSEL)

- » **Standard 2: Instructional Leadership**
  - » Element 2A Leaders promote a culture in which staff engages in individual and collective professional learning that results in their continuous improvement and high performance.
  - » Element 2A–4 Strengthen staff trust, shared responsibility, and leadership by instituting structures and processes that promote collaborative inquiry and problem solving.
- » **Standard 3: Management and Learning Environment**
  - » Element 3D Leaders align fiscal and human resources and manage policies and contractual agreements that build a protective learning environment.
- » **Standard 5: Ethics and Integrity**
  - » Element 5B Leaders guide and support personal and collective actions that use relevant evidence and available research to make fair and ethical decisions.

## 5.B. Resource Overview and Implementation Suggestions

The resources in this section include materials from ABC Unified and the National Education Association (NEA). Teams are encouraged to modify, change, and build upon every tool in this guidebook.

Be cognizant of the fact that there will continue to be differences of opinion between union and management leaders at the district and site level. It is hard work getting to the place where diverse perspectives and experiences are welcomed and valued. Specifically, leaders must model and help build the capacity of schools to have the trust and collaborative investment to plan collaboratively through times of agreement and disagreement. The goal is to weather rough seas but continue to work on shared objectives because everyone feels valued and heard.

Please note that the NEA workbook uses the term *leadership team*, while we use the term *learning team*. These generally have the same meaning here. Many teams choose to create their own names for their labor-management teams such as the West Contra Costa Solutions Team. We encourage teams to personalize this work. Get creative and develop terminology that is meaningful to you.

### Resources and tools

- Excerpts from *The ABC's of Partnership: The Changing Roles of the Site Representative and Administrator*
- Excerpts from Collaborating for Student Success, NEA 2019
- Identify Collaborative Teams and Functions
- Collaborative Structure Worksheet
- Culture of Collaboration Resource Guide, CEC's Leadership Structures, School Learning Team
- The Site-Leadership Team: Assessing Our Work

## 5.B. Resource Overview and Implementation Suggestions *(continued)*

Guiding Questions	Progress Points
How might your labor-management team develop a vision, strategy, and milestones for a districtwide rollout?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a written plan that identifies participating schools, articulates expectations or project goals for the new teams, and maps out a strategy for training and capacity building at the new sites.</li> <li>• School sites have labor-management teams.</li> </ul>
<p>What is the plan for building the capacity of new school-level labor-management teams?</p> <p>How might school-site teams be trained and coached to implement their labor-management partnerships? How might you check in regularly on progress?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members of the school-site labor-management teams have been trained in labor-management collaboration skills, and an assessment or feedback from the site teams informs the district team about effectiveness and issues.</li> </ul>
<b>Trust:</b> How does your district labor-management team provide tools and resources for school-site partnerships to have difficult conversations?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training has been planned and provided in collaboration with the district learning teams and site learning teams.</li> <li>• Confidential anonymous school climate surveys are used to monitor levels of trust and psychological safety.</li> </ul>
<b>Equity:</b> How might school-site partnerships approach issues of equity at the school-site level?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school has adopted a guiding process that helps frame all decisions from an equity lens and its impact on students and/or staff.</li> <li>• All staff are familiar with shared tools and frameworks for approaching issues of equity.</li> <li>• A more representative group of stakeholders is engaged in decision-making and leadership.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Communication:</b> What structures and norms might your site labor-management teams have to communicate their joint work to staff, students, and parents?</p> <p>How should school-site partnerships communicate with the district-level team?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff, both administrative and union, have a shared story about what is happening at the school and in the district to promote a collaborative culture.</li> <li>• Communications and promising practices are shared across sites and with the district learning team.</li> </ul>

## 5.B. Leadership Structures—School Learning Team

Consortium for Educational Change

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### Purpose

The school learning team establishes and communicates a shared school vision engaging broad and deep participation from stakeholder groups to carry out and realize the school's vision. The school learning team sets the direction and pace for the school, consistent with school and district goals, and communicates progress to staff, parents, and the school community.

### Guiding principles

- Commit to, and model, a culture of collaboration.
- View themselves as a listening/learning team focused on “we.”
- Seek active engagement of all members and design systems for involving the school community (teachers, staff, parents, and community).
- Commit to interest-based problem-solving approaches.

### Composition

The school learning team is selected by peer groups and is composed of:

- Principal and administration
- Representatives from grade level and content areas
- Union representatives
- Professional support staff

### Function

- Establishes clear and compelling learning expectations for students
- Aligns curriculum, instruction, and assessments to support teachers in empowering students through learning
- Collects, analyzes, and uses data on learning and assessment
- Establishes vertical and horizontal structures to listen, learn, and share progress, opportunities, and challenges with the district learning team and collaborative learning teams
- Communicates the learning, opportunities, and challenges to the entire school community
- Identifies the conditions for a school environment focused on student learning
- Implements strategies that support students, staff, and families

## 5.B. Two Examples of Supporting Site Staff

An excerpt from *The ABC's of Partnership*

District and union leaders in the ABC District say the most difficult partnerships to build and maintain are those between principals and site representatives at the school level. As [former president of ABC's teachers' union Laura] Rico said, collaboration can't be forced from the top down to the schools. But union and district leaders can model partnership and encourage management and labor at schools to work more cooperatively. [Joanne] Devlin adds that successful partnerships at the school level appear very similar to strong district-level partnerships—the parties communicate regularly and have adopted similar beliefs and behaviors.

### The changing roles of the site representative and administrator

Site reps are elected by the staff at their schools, handle their traditional duties, and defend their contract and their members. But once in place, they are also trained by ABCFT [Federation of Teachers] to consider partnership with their administrators a key aspect of their position. In fact, in its recently revised training program held at the start of each year, ABCFT makes it clear that site reps are expected to meet regularly with their principals and engage in “fierce conversations” in an effort to improve learning at the schools.

New principals are introduced to the collaborative labor-management partnership as part of their two-year leadership training. Their program is called COMPASS, which stands for Coaching Our Management in Peer Administrative Support System. “Sharing leadership is not easy for many principals,” admits Crechena Wise, principal at Tetzlaff Accelerated Learning Academy. “It’s so much easier to just do it yourself,” she says. “But it’s when we share the job that we are all held accountable.” An important point to consider: Conflicts can arise when a site rep—a teacher—is expected to work as a partner with the principal who conducts his or her evaluation. When working as partners to resolve issues or develop school improvement strategies, consider yourself equals. Outside of the partnership, the manager-subordinate relationship stands.

### An example from San Juan Unified

San Juan Unified developed optional faculty representative/administrator training sessions for principals and union site representatives. The sessions were codesigned by the district, administrators' association, and teachers' union with the goal of improving communication and collaboration. The sessions are designed so that faculty representatives and administrators at school sites can attend the training together. The trainings are held at the central office, and meals and continuing education credits are included. Below is an excerpt from communications to site leaders.

“Are you interested in improving your working relationship between Site Administrators and SJTA [Teachers' Association] Faculty Reps and finding new ways to work together? If so, we would like to invite you to a training series developed jointly by the SJTA, SJPEC [Professional Education Coalition] and the District. We believe in working collaboratively and have the research to show that improved working relationships between faculty reps and administrators improves student learning. Discussions will focus on moving from adversaries to a problem solving team. Skill building activities will lead to understanding and practicing inquiry language, problem solving and conflict management strategies.”

## 5.B. Identify Collaborative Teams and Functions

Excerpt from *Collaborating for Student Success* (NEA workbook, 2019).

Creating standing meetings between association/union leaders and district administrators responsible for multiple aspects of educators' lives is a good starting point because it helps ensure that communication flows freely. These meetings complement the collaboration occurring in the DLT, SLT, and committees. Where possible, contract or agreements can be established to codify these communications.

### School Leadership Team

The School Leadership Team (SLT) is comprised of the school principal and assistant principal or other administration leaders, representatives from grade levels and content areas, association/union representatives and professional support staff. In some cases, it also includes students, parents, and community members. The SLT identifies school environment and student learning goals and implements strategies that support students, staff, and families. The SLT is the agent for school change. It collects and analyzes student learning data, aligns curriculum and instruction to student learning goals, and establishes methods to share progress with other stakeholders, including the DLT. It provides support to the school-level working committees, who are actively building solutions to issues raised by educators at the school.

In particular, the SLT:

- Establishes and communicates a shared school vision
- Engages broad and deep participation from stakeholder groups to solve problems, develop strategies, and carry out and realize goals
- Sets the direction for the school, consistent with school and district goals, and communicates progress
- Learns about collaboration's benefits, structures, and processes
- Identifies projects and priorities to bring about school success
- Forms project-based working committees to address the priorities of the school-level stakeholders and to oversee implementation of district-level policies and programs at the school
- Increases school employee participation in committees and on school improvement projects
- Monitors and advises committees on project progress and collaboration skills



**“Collaboration is not just compromising by agreeing to some middle points between two positions, but expanding possibilities by adding other parties with different perspectives who can help find new and creative solutions.”**

- Marietta, D'Entremont and Kaur (2017): *Improving Education Together: A Guide to Labor Management Community Collaboration*

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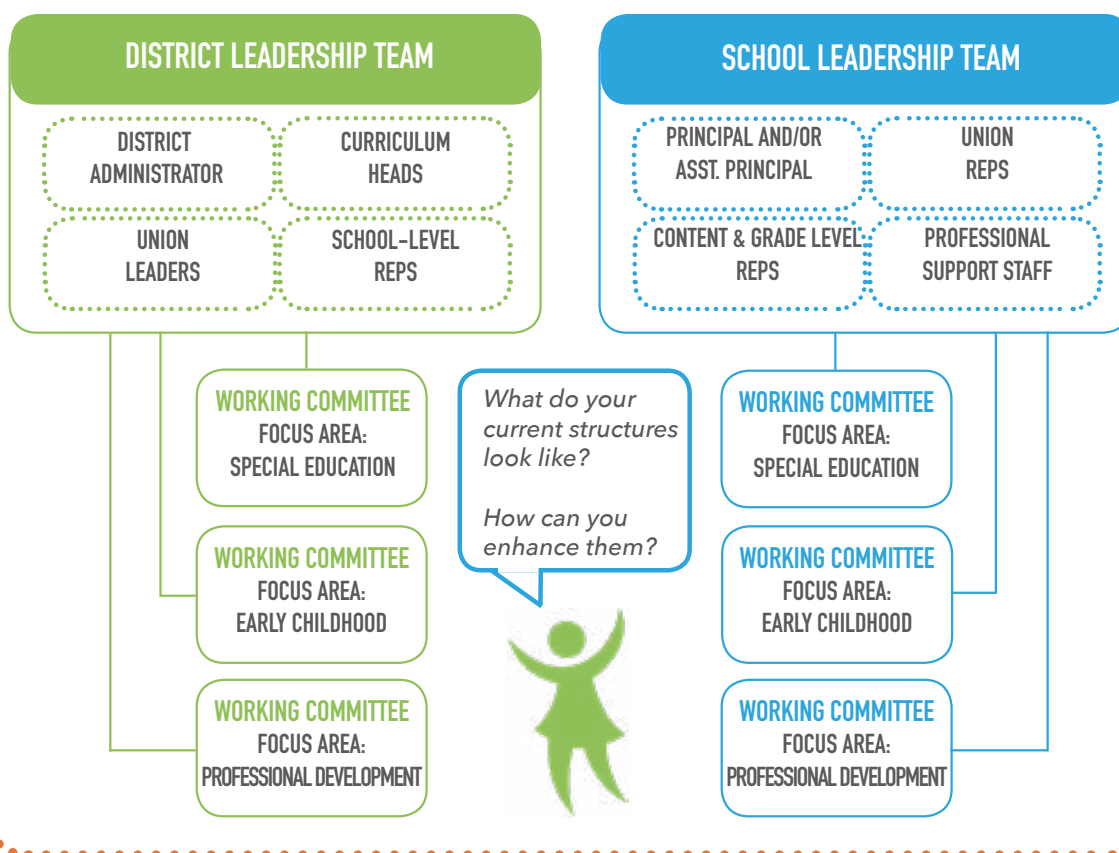
# COLLABORATIVE STRUCTURE WORKSHEET

## PURPOSE

Strong partnerships create space and opportunity for collaborative work to occur. This tool helps you identify the existing structures, such as teams and committees, in your system that support collaborative practices, analyze if these structures are sufficient to meet your goals, and consider additional structures that you and your partners may want to create.

## PART 1 INSTRUCTIONS:

A sample organizational chart of collaborative structures is shown below. Use this to draw a chart of your existing structures, then consider what additional teams or committees you might want to establish. On the following page, make your own chart, with placeholders for desired/future teams and committees.



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## The Site Leadership Team: Assessing Our Work

Consortium for Educational Change

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1nCfwXI3hUR2K0aQlgyyD89fcow89RKF4/view?usp=sharing>

### Leadership Team Resources

<b>School:</b>		<b>Date:</b>
<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Questions</b>	<b>Indicators</b>
<b>Selection of site leadership team (SLT) members</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How were SLT members selected?</li> <li>What criteria were used in selecting SLT members?</li> <li>Length of time linked to SLT membership?</li> </ul>	
<b>Focus of work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is the work of the SLT?</li> <li>How much of the work is operational? How much is instructional? Who establishes the SLT agendas?</li> <li>What goals are established?</li> </ul>	
<b>How it works</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How often does the SLT meet? How long are the meetings?</li> <li>What expectations are in place for SLT meetings? Members?</li> <li>How are goals determined?</li> </ul>	
<b>Relationship with professional learning communities (PLCs)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is the relationship of SLTs to PLCs and/or grade level/subject area teams?</li> <li>What communication expectations are in place to/from PLCs and/or grade level/subject area teams?</li> <li>Are minutes kept of PLC meetings?</li> <li>Who are these minutes shared with? How is relevant information shared with the SLT? The administration? The faculty?</li> </ul>	
<b>Relationship with administration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is the role of the administration with the SLT?</li> <li>How often does the administration meet with the faculty?</li> <li>How often does the administration meet with union representatives? What is the purpose of these meetings?</li> </ul>	
<b>Relationship with faculty</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What information is generally shared with the faculty?</li> <li>How is information shared with the faculty?</li> </ul>	
<b>District learning team</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What information is shared with the DLT? How is that information shared?</li> <li>How is this information used to support the work of staff?</li> <li>How is this information used to enhance supports for students?</li> </ul>	
<b>Opportunities for Improvement</b>		



[illegible]



# ELEMENT 6

## Advance

Building on Elements 1–5, this stage focuses on the labor-management team becoming a continually learning team and growing the district into a sustainable, professionally collaborative organization. This section is devoted to creating enduring policies and protocols for organizational reflection and monitoring, data collection, and continuous improvement grounded in trust, equity, and communication. In this section, it is important to acknowledge the importance of reflection on both the implementation process and the project outcomes. Leaders must also institutionalize collaborative culture and ensure it is sustainable and not primarily based on the relationships of a small group of current leaders.

### Contents:

<b>6.A.—Reflect and Monitor .....</b>	<b>113–118</b>
<b>6.B.—Ensure Sustainability .....</b>	<b>119–124</b>

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The world doesn't change one person at a time. It changes when networks of relationships form among people who share a common cause and vision of what's possible. This is good news for those of us intent on creating a positive future. Rather than worry about critical mass, our work is to foster critical connections. We don't need to convince large numbers of people to change; instead, we need to connect with kindred spirits. Through these relationships, we will develop the new knowledge, practices, courage and commitment that lead to broad-based change.

—Margaret J. Wheatley  
Author, teacher, and speaker

”

## 6.A. REFLECT AND MONITOR

**Labor-management teams can be strengthened and their effectiveness optimized by engaging in a continual process of check-ins and reflection.** In addition to measuring progress on what the team is working on (i.e., particular initiatives or projects), this should include reflection on how the team is working together (i.e., group dynamics, communication, level of trust).

These activities can help provide affirmation of the ways in which labor-management partnership is working well while recognizing that there are always opportunities to improve and strengthen collaboration. Similarly, these tools can help teams engage in ongoing, collaborative assessments of existing programs, policies, and priorities.

This work connects to both the Collaborative Cultures and Securing Accountability sections of the Coherence Framework. In particular, through reflection on and monitoring of collaborative efforts, labor-management teams can support a shared growth mindset, continually improve their results, and approach underperformance as an opportunity for growth.

### Why?

- Continually improve on collaborative work and relationships so leaders and teams become adept at collaborative professionalism, individually and collectively.
- Create safe spaces for honest conversations about facts not people.
- Strengthen group dynamics and ways of working together while improving overall effectiveness in achieving progress on shared priorities.
- Recognize the progress and success of collaborative effort.

### How?

- Review and discuss data on outcomes (not outputs) related to shared goals and priorities.
- Use tools such as the Three-Box Framework and After Action Review to reflect as a team and identify ways to improve results and implementation.



### Insights from the CA LMI team

- » Reflect and discuss your guiding behaviors document regularly. Some teams put this on their agenda documents.
- » Take the time to step out if there is a need to refocus on trust, confidentiality, communication, or other underlying obstacles.
- » Collaborative Professionalism requires both trust and precision. Clarity on process and transparency in decision-making builds trust.

### Connections to California Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (CPSEL)

#### Standard 1: Development and Implementation of a Shared Vision

- » Element 1C–1 Include all stakeholders in a process of continuous improvement (reflection, revision, and modification) based on the systematic review of evidence and progress.
- » Element 1C–2 Use evidence (including, but not limited to, student achievement, attendance, behavior and school climate data, research, and best practices) to shape and revise plans, programs, and activities that advance the vision.

#### Standard 2: Instructional Leadership

- » Element 2A–4 Strengthen staff trust, shared responsibility, and leadership by instituting structures and processes that promote collaborative inquiry and problem solving.
- » Element 2C Leaders develop and use assessment and accountability systems to monitor, improve, and extend educator practice, program outcomes, and student learning.

#### Standard 3: Management and Learning Environment

- » Element 3B–3 Set clear working agreements that support sharing problems, practices, and results within a safe and supportive environment.

- » Element 3B–4 Engage stakeholders in using problem solving and decision-making processes and distributed leadership to develop, monitor, evaluate, and revise plans and programs.

#### Standard 5: Ethics and integrity

- » Element 5A Leaders act upon a personal code of ethics that requires continuous reflection and learning.
- » Element 5A–2 Reflect on areas for improvement and take responsibility for change and growth.
- » Element 5B Leaders guide and support personal and collective actions that use relevant evidence and available research to make fair and ethical decisions.
- » Element 5C Leaders recognize and use their professional influence with staff and the community to develop a climate of trust, mutual respect, and honest communication necessary to consistently make fair and equitable decisions on behalf of all students.

## 6.A. Resource Overview and Implementation Suggestions

This section includes three tools that can be helpful to guide the work of teams.

The Three-Box Framework is a simple activity of organizing existing work into conceptual boxes of elements to keep (build upon what works) or discard because they are not effective (abandon what is in the way), and a third box for new ideas. Labor-management teams can tackle big issues using the boxes one at a time or identify an issue to focus on more deeply using all three boxes. The multipage Three-Box Framework tool is linked on the next page.

The After Action Review is another simple tool that helps focus attention on whether the activity or program actually had the outcomes that were intended. It provides questions to guide the discussion about what to do with the actual outcome. This tool and the Three-Box Framework build from a positive asset perspective by asking teams to reflect on what is working and grow from there.

The third tool is part of the Coherence Framework. This section is focused on how a team improves its shared accountability. It is a useful group assessment tool. In addition to discussing where the team's current operations align on the continuum, it is important to determine where the team is interested in growing its capacity and set targets to achieve that.

Guiding Questions	Progress Points
Are plans and goals reasonable for the time frame and if not, how can they be adjusted?	Benchmarks and goals are reviewed regularly. Processes and programs are modified when needed based upon the data and collaborative analysis that includes labor and management.
How will you connect various initiatives to build coherence?	Union and management teams are aware of and supportive of all collaborative work in the district. There is regular planning and discussion about coordinating and deepening coherence across multiple activities and initiatives.
<b>Trust:</b> Do labor-management team members express honest assessments that get to the heart of the issues? How is that demonstrated?	The labor-management team members continue to work on shared goals even while navigating contentious issues or difficult labor negotiations. Team members have the psychological safety to engage in tough conversations about important issues that impact students and staff, including power dynamics and racial inequities.
<b>Equity:</b> Is there clarity about and agreement on the definition of diversity? How were diverse voices identified and encouraged to give honest feedback?	Information/data used to assess progress comes from more diverse voices and are taken seriously in the analysis. Processes for collaborative inquiry include a wide range of perspectives.
<b>Communication:</b> How is the labor-management team communicating values, activities, and progress to the organization? Is it adequate? Is communication sent from the team? How are team members communicating with their constituencies?	People in the organization regularly use shared language, tools, and skills promoted by the labor-management team. Communications come from both joint labor-management communications and separately from the union and management.

### Resources and tools

- Three-Box Framework
- After Action Review
- Coherence Progression: Securing Accountability

## 6.A. Tools for Reflective Improvement

### The Three-Box Framework, by Vijay Govindarajan

A CA LMI-adapted tool is linked [here](#).



**Box 1**  
**Build Upon What Works**



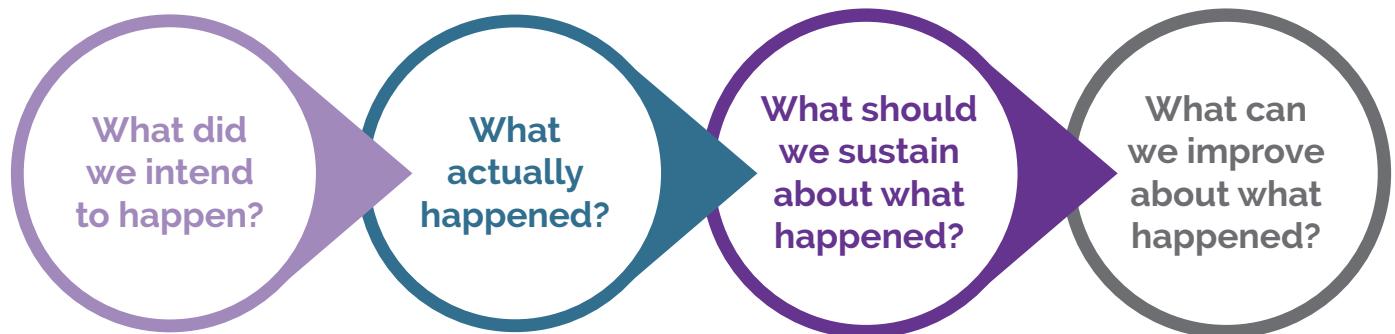
**Box 2**  
**Abandon What is in the Way**



**Box 3**  
**Create the Future**

The Three-Box Solution  
[3boxsolution.com](http://3boxsolution.com)

### After Action Review by Devin Vodicka



Looking Back to Step Forward: After Action Reviews  
<https://learnercenteredleadership.org/2020/08/09/looking-back-to-step-forward-after-action-reviews/>

## 6.A. Coherence Progression

Coherence Progression Components		Emerging	Accelerating	Mastering	Opportunity
Securing Accountability	A. Continually improving results				
	B. Underperformance as an opportunity for growth not blame				
	C. Using external accountability transparently to benchmark progress				





## 6.A. Coherence Progression: Securing Accountability

	Emerging	Accelerating	Mastering
<b>Educators take responsibility for continually improving results.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school or district is beginning to shift from conditions of control and external accountability to increasing internal accountability by building capacity.</li> <li>Mechanisms to build precision in pedagogy are beginning but are not comprehensive.</li> <li>Processes such as examination of student work and collaborative inquiry are used by some educators but not consistently in the school or district.</li> <li>Structures and processes for using data to improve learning are used but not consistently.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school or district intentionally develops conditions to increase internal accountability by building capacity.</li> <li>Mechanisms to build capacity in pedagogy are used frequently but not consistently across the school or district.</li> <li>Processes such as examination of student work and collaborative inquiry have been introduced but are not used consistently.</li> <li>Structures and processes for using data to improve learning are in place but not yet used consistently at all levels.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school or district develops conditions that maximize internal accountability by building capacity.</li> <li>Mechanisms to build capacity of precision in pedagogy are comprehensive and used consistently.</li> <li>Processes such as examination of student work and collaborative inquiry are used to ensure consistency of quality practices across the school or district.</li> <li>Structures and processes for using data to improve learning are used consistently at all levels and monitored for impact.</li> </ul>
<b>Underperformance is an opportunity for growth not blame.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing monitoring of the performance of the system, including direct intervention in cases of persistent underperformance, may be viewed as negative by the system.</li> <li>Quick-fix strategies, such as school closures, terminations, and external prepackaged solutions, are favored.</li> <li>Performance processes emphasize evaluation with little focus on strategies for building capacity.</li> <li>Interventions, through programs such as turnaround schools, are seen as imposed and punishments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing monitoring of the performance of the system, including direct interventions in cases of persistent underperformance, is viewed as an opportunity for growth.</li> <li>Interventions such as turnaround schools and performance appraisal systems are developed as a partnership to support improvement.</li> <li>Reliance on buying programs, solutions, and external experts is decreasing as internal capacity develops.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing monitoring of the performance of the system, including direct intervention in cases of persistent underperformance, is an opportunity for growth.</li> <li>Performance processes are undertaken by respected peers and leaders and developed with teacher leaders so that the quality of teaching becomes a collective responsibility.</li> <li>Interventions for underperforming schools are developed as a partnership and focus on capacity building not buying short-term solutions.</li> </ul>

Adapted from Michael Fullan, Joanne Quinn, and Eleanor Adam, *The Taking Action Guide to Building Coherence in Schools, Districts, and Systems* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, 2015).  
<https://michaelfullan.ca/books/taking-action-guide/the-taking-action-guide-to-building-coherence-in-schools-districts-and-systems/>

### 6.A. Coherence Progression: Securing Accountability *(continued)*

	Emerging	Accelerating	Mastering
Using external accountability transparently to benchmark progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Standards and expectations for learning, teaching, and leadership are becoming clearer but are not understood or shared by the schools or district.</li> <li>A culture of competition, not collaboration, is evident.</li> <li>The school or district overemphasizes negative strategies, such as performance appraisal and public ranking of data as incentives for improving performance, rather than using capacity building as the driver for improvement.</li> <li>Trust is not strong, and intervention is viewed as a negative.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school or district has established standards and expectations for learning, teaching, and leadership, but they may not be understood and used consistently.</li> <li>The school or district is moving toward using more capacity-building strategies, such as viewing performance appraisal as a vehicle for growth rather than an evaluation.</li> <li>Data are used more transparently and incorporate measures of organizational health as well as student performance, but the process may not yet be trusted by everyone or used consistently.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school or district establishes and promotes professional standards and practices, including performance appraisal.</li> <li>Data are used transparently and with expertise to improve the learning process at all levels.</li> <li>Measures of organizational health, student performance, and well-being are monitored. Indicators of organizational health include staff retention rates, leadership turnover rates, teacher absenteeism rates, number of crisis-related incidents, degree of collaboration, and levels of trust. Indicators of student performance and well-being include performance data as well as students' sense of control over their destiny and engagement in learning.</li> </ul>

Adapted from Michael Fullan, Joanne Quinn, and Eleanor Adam, *The Taking Action Guide to Building Coherence in Schools, Districts, and Systems* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, 2015).  
<https://michaelfullan.ca/books/taking-action-guide/the-taking-action-guide-to-building-coherence-in-schools-districts-and-systems/>

“

**The product of true labor-management cooperation is not civility; it is educational improvement. Collaboration is not an end in itself. Labor-management collaboration is successful when it produces agreements that make education better.**

—Julia E. Koppich and Charles Taylor Kerchner  
 “Negotiating What Matters Most,” *Education Week*

”

## 6.B. ENSURE SUSTAINABILITY

**Sustaining labor-management partnerships requires intentionality and dedicated effort, starting with the original participants.**

However, sustainability can only be achieved if systems are in place that will last beyond the current leaders engaged in the partnership-building process. Key strategies for sustaining collaborative practices include embedding and institutionalizing collaborative labor-management teams in district operations and adopting their processes as district policy. In addition, expanding labor-management collaboration across the organization, including at the site level, and supporting the creation of labor-management learning teams throughout the district can build momentum, develop collaborative leaders across the organization, and support enduring organizational culture change.

### Why?

- Institutionalize labor-management partnership work to ensure that it is not just based on relationships of a few current leaders.
- Affirm and broaden support for labor-management collaboration among the board, district and union leaders, staff members, and community.
- Sustain continued labor-management partnership practices through leadership transitions.

### How?

- Adopt policies and negotiate contract language that memorialize the work of the labor-management partnership. Position student achievement as a central focus of labor-management collaboration.
- Expand the labor-management work beyond the founding committee and communicate expectations to all committees and across the organization.
- Adopt practices that embed collaboration and sustainability strategies in everyday operations.
- Incorporate labor-management collaboration principles into professional development and training for all staff.
- Build labor-management champions throughout the organization by being transparent and sharing information about the work, the progress, and the challenges.



### Insights from the CA LMI team

- » Be inclusive and transparent. Encourage all members of the district labor-management team to promote the vision, the work, and the outcomes with their coworkers and constituents.
- » Hire management personnel with a personal commitment to and track record for leading collaborative processes, with a focus on trust, equity, and communications.
- » Train staff in the tools and processes of labor-management partnership, distributive leadership, and collaboration.
- » Include collaborative culture standards in position descriptions and in performance assessments. Using the CPSEL to elevate collaboration for all staff is an effective way to clarify expectations.
- » The school board has a critical role in hiring a superintendent who has a track record and interest in building labor-management partnerships. Once in place the board should include an evaluation component for the superintendent based on metrics for building a collaborative culture. The board should regularly put on the agenda and discuss sustaining collaborative culture across the district, including resourcing professional development to support it.

### Connections to California Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (CPSEL)

#### Standard 1: Development and Implementation of a Shared Vision

- » Element 1B–3 Build shared accountability to achieve the vision by distributing leadership roles and responsibilities among staff and community.

#### Standard 2: Instructional Leadership

- » Element 2A Leaders promote a culture in which staff engages in individual and collective professional learning that results in their continuous improvement and high performance.
- » Element 2A–4 Strengthen staff trust, shared responsibility, and

leadership by instituting structures and processes that promote collaborative inquiry and problem solving.

#### Standard 3: Management and Learning Environment

- » Element 3B–3 Set clear working agreements that support sharing problems, practices, and results within a safe and supportive environment.
- » Element 3B–4 Engage stakeholders in using problem solving and decision-making processes and distributed leadership to develop, monitor, evaluate, and revise plans and programs.

## 6.B. Resource Overview and Implementation Suggestions

Look for opportunities across the work of the organization, and embed partnership and collaborative processes into planning, process, and policy documents whenever possible. Collaborative processes that are clearly identified as connected to the priority of building collaborative cultures at every level help create clear messaging and direction. Two contract examples in this section help provide ideas for describing both the intent and structure for partnership. An additional tool, the Inventory of Committees and Structures, helps teams to reduce redundancy and the proliferation of committees often made up of the same individuals. Mapping out existing committees and structures can offer the opportunity to streamline and consolidate efforts. Clarity on the purpose and role of each committee and structure can help develop organizational coherence.

Guiding Questions	Progress Points
What practices can be shared across the organization that prioritize collaboration and partnership?	Staff development is created with labor and management input, and staff is trained in the tools and processes of labor-management partnership, distributive leadership, and collaboration.
Which district labor-management partnership priorities are reflected in your budget and Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP)? Which are not?	District funds and plans are incorporated into the LCAP and have a dedicated budget line item that allows for staff training and reflection to support partnership.
How have onetime or ongoing funds been used for professional development in support of labor-management collaboration?	The district labor-management partnership participates in CA LMI trainings and convenings supported by funds from the district budget.
<b>Trust:</b> How does your team thoughtfully consider sustaining trust within your labor-management team? How do your board, cabinet, leadership teams, and union leadership teams foster trust?	Professional development includes training all staff in trust-building activities. Staff meetings regularly visit the issue and monitor the level of trust among teams. Staff climate surveys gather data on the level of trust among staff.
<b>Equity:</b> How might your labor-management team take up issues of equity to ensure every individual in the workplace has the specific support they need to succeed and grow?	District and school-site policies and administrative regulations echo the equity principles practiced by your labor-management team.
<b>Communication:</b> How might your team institutionalize your joint communication protocols and increase transparency?	Easily accessible places exist for storing all the information about labor-management work. This should include the vision, professional development tools, project implementation tools, project decisions, self-assessment information, celebrations of accomplishments and work to be done, minutes, and strategic and work plans.

### Resources and tools

- Excerpt from the Contract Agreement Between San Juan Unified and San Juan Teachers Association, Article 24: Creating and Sustaining a Collaborative Culture
- Contract Agreement Between Montgomery County Education Association and Board of Education of Montgomery County, Rockville, Maryland, for the School Years 2018–2020
- Leadership Structures: Reviewing Purpose and Voice

## 6.B. Collective Bargaining Contract Between San Juan Unified School District and San Juan Teachers Association, 2019–2021, Article 24

**A note about the following example contract language from San Juan, California, and Montgomery County, Maryland:**

The contract language shown from these two agreements is not meant to be used as a cut-and-paste approach or to necessarily represent best practices that would apply to your specific situation. We show these two examples to give labor-management teams some ideas that they might contextualize and learn from as ways in which various education systems have codified and institutionalized their labor-management partnerships. Developing board policy or contract language is not an early stage endeavor. Building trust and developing real labor-management partnerships takes more than a policy or getting something in the contract. However, these examples should give you some ideas of what highly developed systems are doing to institutionalize their partnerships.

### Excerpt from Article 24: Creating and Sustaining a Collaborative Culture

#### 24.01 Statement of Intent

The District and Association agree to take responsibility and be held accountable for the improvement of the quality of teaching and learning which represents an expanded role in public education. It is in the best interest of the San Juan Schools that the District and the Association cooperatively engage in activities and communication which demonstrate mutual respect for all stakeholders and results in the improvement of student achievement through the development of common goals, a cooperative, trusting environment, and teamwork. It is the belief that actively and constructively involving all relevant stakeholders contributes significantly toward achieving these goals. Shared responsibility and accountability for results are at the core of a continuous improvement model. Joint responsibility for student success means that educators share in celebrating what works and share in identifying together areas that are not working and are in need of improvement.

#### 24.02 Recognition of Mutual Accountability

24.02.1 Recognizing the importance of mutual collaboration, the District and the Association acknowledge that they are both responsible for sustaining a culture to support the continuous improvement model. The District and the Association must continually meet, articulate core values, reinforce the vision, and demonstrate their commitment to a new way of doing business. The parties also acknowledge that they must strive to model collaboration for district leaders, district departments, school sites, leadership teams, site departments and teachers. The continuous improvement process requires that the District and the Association support the needs of students, those who work in the classrooms and school administrators by providing the resources required for the planning, critiquing, and assessment of the work of teaching and learning. It is the shared responsibility of the District and the Association to build the capacity of each school to function as a learning community in which professional development is job-embedded and is supported with sufficient time and resources.



## 6.B. Contract Agreement Between Montgomery County Education Association (MCEA) and Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), Rockville, Maryland, for the School Years 2018–2020

(pages 12–21)

### Excerpt from Article 6: Collaboration

#### A. Introduction

MCPS is committed to creating organizational structures and processes that solidify the collaborative relationship between MCPS and the teachers' representative organization, MCEA, so that all parties will work together to do what is best for students. We define collaboration as a process in which partners work together in a meaningful way and within a time frame that provides a real opportunity to shape results. The purpose of the process is to work together respectfully to resolve problems, address common issues, and identify opportunities for improvement. To be successful, the collaborative process must be taken seriously and be valued by both parties. The process must be given the time, personal involvement and commitment, hard work, and dedication that are required to be successful. The partners will identify and define issues of common concern, propose and evaluate solutions, and agree on recommendations.

**B. The Board of Education and the superintendent agree to meet with the Association's Board of Directors at mutually agreed upon times to discuss matters of interest and concern.** The Association's Board of Directors will submit items to be included on the agenda five working days prior to the meeting. The Association's Board of Directors will meet with the superintendent at least once a month during the term of this agreement to review and discuss matters of mutual concern and administration of this Agreement

#### C. Organizational Culture of Respect

The parties are committed to fostering an organizational culture of respect throughout the school system (see Appendix B [of the agreement] for the entire document). This culture is built on the belief that all employees are essential for the school system to attain equity and excellence for all students. To accomplish this there must be a SYSTEMWIDE commitment to foster this organizational culture of respect and there must be accountability at all levels of the organization. The parties recognize this collective bargaining relationship is essential to enhance this culture. The organizational culture of respect is based on the following principles:

- Trust in each other and the process
- Use of collaborative and interest-based processes
- Recognition of every employee's contributions
- High expectations for all staff and students that are reasonable, clear, and transparent
- Open, honest contributions without fear of retribution
- Open and effective communication
- Respect for various points of view
- Civility in all our interactions
- Team-building and working together as teams

The parties will work together to ensure all employees understand that in order to create this culture, all parties must take responsibility for their own behavior and follow these principles. Managers and supervisors must model this behavior, and all employees are expected to exhibit this behavior at all times.

One way to ensure this culture exists throughout MCPS is through the full implementation of the Teachers Professional Growth System. Professional development plans and employee recognition are important components of this system. In addition, all employees are expected to provide and receive feedback constructively and respectfully. There will be a commitment to resolving issues and problems at the lowest level possible without applying blame.

## 6.B. Contract Agreement Between Montgomery County Education Association (MCEA) and Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), Rockville, Maryland, for the School Years 2018–2020

(pages 12–21, *continued*)

### D. Commitment to Equitable Practices in the Workplace

The Board of Education and the Association are committed to equitable practices for the achievement of all students. Our commitment to equitable practices and diversity is reflected in the school system's core values and beliefs. In order to be successful, the parties expect all staff to respect individual and group differences and to recognize that diverse opinions, perspectives, experiences, and backgrounds help MCPS attain the high expectations we have for all students.

It is our shared responsibility to assume that each student and adult has unlimited potential and has the ability to achieve at high levels. Equitable practices require the commitment to high expectations for all students and employees and the provision of supports that build capacity to meet the diversity of their needs. All employees are committed to cultural competence and positive relationships with all students, staff, parents, and community members, regardless of race, ethnicity, or background.

### E. Collaboration among the Leadership of MCEA, Other MCPS Unions, and MCPS Leadership

1. The parties are committed to working collaboratively with representatives of the other employee organizations in a variety of structures and processes that have been created to address the priorities of MCPS. They include the following:
  - a. Associations/Deputy Superintendents/Chief Operating Officer (ADC)—A joint committee that provides for regular, ongoing discussions and decision making on matters germane to the employee organizations and management. The membership of ADC includes the president and executive director of each of the employee organizations, the deputy superintendent, and the chief operating officer. The charge of the ADC shall include but not be limited to the following:
    - Discussing matters of mutual interest or concern
    - Identifying opportunities to address shared interests
    - Developing guidelines and processes for implementing collaboration throughout the school system
    - Creating an organizational expectation for collaboration
    - Identifying supports and resources to sustain collaboration
    - Serving as a coordinating body and resource to facilitate the use of collaboration throughout MCPS
    - Reviewing and assessing the effectiveness of collaboration between MCPS and the associations
    - Determining how to align the three professional growth systems
    - Resolving problems arising from the interpretation or implementation of collaborative decisions
    - Supporting the implementation of the Organizational Culture of Respect throughout the system
    - Identifying how decisions that are made with other employee organizations will impact unit members and how all parties will be involved in these decisions so that the impact of any decision will be known before the decision is made
    - Discussing decisions that impact the members of multiple associations
    - Working together to identify opportunities and initiatives to improve the wellness of MCPS employees
    - Arranging for online publication of Time Impact Statements

## 6.B. Inventory of Current Committees and Structures

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District/School:	Date:	Team Members:	
Current Committee or Structure	Purpose	Stakeholders	Opportunities for Improvement



[illegible]





# RESOURCES

Resources, tools, and links for each Element and additional resources for labor-management partnership work.

**Contents:**

About CDE Foundation .....	129
Resources and tools.....	130–132
Videos .....	133–134



“

**For me, whether we win or lose, every match is giving me a lot of information about how to improve.**

—Unai Emery  
Spanish football coach

”

## About the CDE Foundation

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**The Californians Dedicated to Education Foundation (CDE Foundation)** works as a trusted partner with state education leaders and entities to create, find resources, and implement solutions that result in a strong and valued public education system that serves every student in California. Agility and creativity drive the organization's ability to navigate change on behalf of a statewide community of people and organizations while it supports capacity-building efforts at the California Department of Education (CDE). The CDE Foundation implements the following programs: the California Labor Management Initiative (CA LMI), the California STEAM Symposium, the California Teacher Residency Lab, and District Innovation and Leadership in Early Education (DIAL EE).

The CDE Foundation is anchored by a small professional staff, a highly engaged board of directors, a complement of highly skilled and effective consultants, strong partnerships with the CDE and other education coalition members, foundations, and corporations, and a network of individuals, educational institutions, and nonprofits across the state who share our commitment to public education and California's students.

We are proud to partner with our closest collaborator, the CDE. As the fiscal manager for CDE, we manage private donations to invest directly in a public education system that serves nearly 6.2 million students. Our team supports the CDE mission to provide a world-class education for all students, from early childhood to adulthood. The CDE serves our state by innovating and collaborating with educators, schools, parents, and community partners. As a team, we prepare students to live, work, and thrive in a multicultural, multilingual, and highly connected world.

State Superintendent Tony Thurmond and his team have set forward a bold vision, and we are honored to work with and support them. As a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the CDE Foundation partnered with the CDE to manage the California Bridging the Digital Divide Fund, through which \$18.4 million, plus in-kind donations, were used to equip students with computing devices and connectivity. We are administering more than \$1.5 million in grants that support new racial justice initiatives at CDE that will support capacity-building within school districts to assess and address implicit bias. We believe the CDE Foundation has a responsibility to address structural racism in the education system, engage in ongoing learning and listening as an organization, and authentically partner with districts, counties, nonprofits, and partners across the state.

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## Additional Resources

Additional Resource	Author	Type
<b>1.A. Commit to Collaborate</b>		
<a href="#"><u>California Professional Standards for Education Leaders (CPSEL)</u></a>	Commission on Teacher Credentialing and California Department of Education ( <i>WestEd</i> , 2014)	Tool
<a href="#"><u>Dinuba's Journey: From Conflict to Cooperation</u></a>	Dr. Julia E. Koppich ( <i>CA LMI Spotlight</i> , October 9, 2020)	Spotlight study
<a href="#"><u>Learning Is the Work</u></a>	Michael Fullan, Santiago Rincón-Gallardo, and Mary Jean Gallagher (Michaelfullan.ca, June 3, 2019)	Report
<a href="#"><u>Teachers Unions and Management Partnerships</u></a>	Saul A. Rubinstein and John E. McCarthy (Center for American Progress, March 25, 2014).	Report
<a href="#"><u>National Study on Union-Management Partnerships and Educator Collaboration in US Public Schools</u></a>	John E. McCarthy and Saul A. Rubinstein, October 2017	Research study
<a href="#"><u>Delran Township School District Case Study: Collaboration in a Crisis</u></a>	National Education Association/Center for Enterprise Strategy, 2020	Case study
<a href="#"><u>Case Study: Impact of the CEC Labor Management Partnership in Santa Clara California</u></a>	Catalyst for Educational Change/APA Consulting, October 2020	Case study
<a href="#"><u>Collaborative Professionalism: When Teaching Together Means Learning for All</u></a>	Andy Hargreaves and Michael T. O'Connor (Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, 2018)	Book
<a href="#"><u>From Combat to Collaboration: The Labor-Management Partnership Process in San José Unified School District</u></a>	California Collaborative on District Reform, December 2017	Case study
<a href="#"><u>Partnerships in Education: How Labor-Management Collaboration Is Transforming Public Schools</u></a>	American Rights at Work Education Fund, May 2011	Case study
<b>1.B. Create a Shared Vision and Purpose</b>		
<a href="#"><u>Simon Sinek: Be the Leader You Wish You Had</u></a>	Simon Sinek, author and motivational speaker	Video
<a href="#"><u>Start with Why—How Great Leaders Inspire Action</u></a>	Simon Sinek, TEDx Puget Sound	Video
<a href="#"><u>Just Cause: The Five Practices</u></a>	Simon Sinek	Video
<a href="#"><u>What Is Public Narrative: Self, Us &amp; Now</u></a>	Marshall Ganz, Rita T. Hauser Senior Lecturer in Leadership, Organizing and Civil Society at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, 2013	Video
<a href="#"><u>Collective Impact</u></a>	John Kania and Marc Kramer, "Essentials of Social Innovation: Collective Impact," <i>Stanford Social Innovation Review</i> , Winter 2011	Article
<a href="#"><u>Equity Mindedness</u></a>	Center for Urban Education, University of Southern California	Tool

## Additional Resources

Additional Resource	Author	Type
<b>2.A. Form Teams</b>		
<a href="#"><u>Building Collaborative Structures: A Systems Approach</u></a>	Consortium for Educational Change/TURN	Video
<a href="#"><u>The Importance of Relationships in Educational Reform</u></a>	Kara S. Finnigan, associate professor at the Warner School of Education at the University of Rochester, and Alan J. Daly, professor and chair of education studies at the University of California, San Diego, July 7, 2014	Excerpt/discussion tool
<a href="#"><u>Building Many Stories into Collective Impact</u></a>	Sheri Brady ( <i>Stanford Social Innovation Review</i> , October 2015)	Article
<b>2.B. Establish Guiding Behaviors</b>		
<a href="#"><u>The Leadership Compass Self-Assessment</u></a>	Be the Change Consulting	Tool kit
<a href="#"><u>CA LMI—Building Trust for Strong Collaborative Relationships</u></a>	CA LMI 2018 Summer Institute	Video
<a href="#"><u>3 Steps to Accelerate the Speed of Trust</u></a>	Stephen M. R. Covey, 2019	Video
<a href="#"><u>Collaborating at the Speed of Trust</u></a>	Stephen M. R. Covey, 2017	Video
<b>3.A. Clarify Systems, Structures, and Priorities</b>		
<a href="#"><u>Systems Thinking: Shifting the Burden</u></a>	CA LMI	Infographic
<a href="#"><u>How to Successfully Navigate Power Dynamics at Work</u></a>	Kat Boogaard, September 3, 2019	Article
<a href="#"><u>Rebels at Work</u></a>	Lois Kelley and Carmen Medina	Blog and book
<b>3.B. Clarify Boundaries and Power Dynamics</b>		
<a href="#"><u>Leadership Teams: 5 Essential Elements</u></a>	Simon Breakspear, researcher, advisor, and speaker on educational leadership, policy, and change	Tool
<a href="#"><u>The Right Drivers for Whole System Success</u></a>	Michael Fullan, Global Leadership Director, New Pedagogies for Learning, Center for Strategic Education, February 12, 2021	Report
<a href="#"><u>Enacting Continuous Improvement—Overview of Key Concepts</u></a>	Getting Down to Facts II, Policy Analysis for California Education, Improvement Collective, <i>WestEd</i> , September 2018	Concept overview





## Additional Resources

Additional Resource	Author	Type
<b>5.A. Establish Joint Committees</b>		
<a href="#"><u>Building Impact: A Closer Look at Local Cross-Sector Collaborations for Education</u></a>	Carolyn J. Riehl, Jeffrey R. Henig, Jessica R. Wolff, and Michael A. Rebell (Wallace Foundation, December 2019)	Report/case study
<a href="#"><u>The Power of Cross-Sector Collaboration</u></a>	Jill Anderson ( <i>Harvard Graduate School of Education</i> , June 4, 2020)	Report
<a href="#"><u>Labor-Management-Community Collaboration in Springfield Public Schools</u></a>	<i>Rennie Center for Education Research and Policy</i> , Spring 2012	Case study
<b>5.B. Establish Labor-Management Partnerships at the Site Level</b>		
<a href="#"><u>2020 Summit Workshop—Mountain View School Mountain View District Story</u></a>	CA LMI	Video
<a href="#"><u>CA LMI—2017 Summer Institute Breakout Session with Michael Fullan</u></a>	CA LMI	Video
<b>6.A. Reflect and Monitor</b>		
<a href="#"><u>Continuous Improvement: Building System Capacity to Learn (Policy Analysis for California Education brief)</u></a>	Alicia Grunow and Heather J. Hough ( <i>Getting Down to Facts II</i> , September 2018)	Research brief
<a href="#"><u>Leveraging Time for School Equity: Indicators to Measure More and Better Learning Time</u></a>	Jaime L. Del Razo, Marissa Saunders, Michelle Renée, Ruth M. López, and Kerri Ullucci ( <i>Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University</i> , 2014)	Report

## Videos

Title	Description
<a href="#">Advancing Labor-Management Collaboration and Partnerships</a>	An interactive set of modules developed for CCEE that provides videos and tools for teams and individual leaders to explore labor-management partnerships. Modules include the Three Pillars of Collaboration, Collaborative Professionalism, and Collaborative Problem Solving. The materials feature insight from labor-management teams across California.
<a href="#">CA LMI—School Climate and Collaboration: A Path to Whole Child and Whole School Success</a>	Hear Dr. Pedro Noguera, dean, USC Rossier School of Education, and other leaders in education speak on the role of collaboration on school climate and the success of students.
<a href="#">CA LMI—Valuing Our Classified School Staff</a>	Hear why classified school staff are a key part of successful labor-management partnerships and why collaboration in schools should include classifieds at the table.
<a href="#">CA LMI—Building Trust for Strong Collaborative Relationships</a>	This video describes the importance of building trust to labor-management collaboration. The role of trust was an important theme at CA LMI's 2018 Summer Institute.
<a href="#">CA LMI—Professor Saul Rubinstein, Rutgers University</a>	Dr. Rubinstein discusses research on the impact of labor-management collaboration on student learning. The research is based on the idea that effective, sustainable organizational change requires input and buy-in from multiple stakeholders and explores how supportive collaborative processes can be created and maintained.
<a href="#">CA LMI—The Power of Collaboration in Labor-Management Relationships</a>	This video demonstrates the importance of the work happening through CA LMI. CA LMI's 2018 Summer Institute was an opportunity for school district teams from across California to come together to work on building collaborative relationships between labor and management.
<a href="#">CA LMI 2020 Virtual Summit—Pre Summit Webinar</a>	This video provides an introduction to labor-management collaborative partnerships for improving teaching and learning, and meeting the needs of the whole child. This webinar was designed for new teams, new staff of existing labor-management teams, or those wanting a refresher. The presenters are Mary McDonald and Ann Cummins-Bogan from the Consortium for Educational Change.
<b>From the Virtual Summit, June 23-24, 2020</b>	
<a href="#">CA LMI Virtual Summit—Welcome from State Leaders</a>	Hear from state leaders across California welcoming more than 500 local education leaders to the 2020 California Labor Management Initiative's Virtual Summit.
<a href="#">CA LMI Virtual Summit—Practitioners Panel</a>	Labor and management leaders in a variety of organizational roles from across the state discuss their current efforts in adapting to the COVID-19 crisis at the local level. The discussion touched on how they are deepening their labor-management partnerships while innovating and adapting as they plan to reopen their school systems.
<a href="#">CA LMI Virtual Summit—Video Recap</a>	The California Labor Management Virtual Summit was attended by more than 500 education leaders from across the state. Watch the Day One recap here.



## Videos

Title	Description
<b>From the Virtual Summit, June 23–24, 2020</b> <i>(continued)</i>	
<a href="#">CA LMI 2020 Virtual Summit—Keynote Pedro Noguera</a>	Join us in hearing the keynote address by Dr. Pedro Noguera for the 2020 CA LMI Virtual Summit. A respected expert in the socioemotional needs of students, families, and staff, Dr. Noguera has compiled his research, which is critical for developing tactics to navigate the realities of the COVID-19 pandemic and the safe reopening of schools.
<a href="#">2020 Virtual Summit—Dinuba Unified District Story</a>	Dinuba Unified is a rural district in the Central Valley whose student population is 34% English Learner and 84% free/reduced lunch. Dinuba shared their labor-management partnership from the adversarial beginning of their engagement with CA LMI five years ago to their organizational culture change using collaborative practices. The team discussed what they are currently doing to address the COVID-19 pandemic and school reopening as well as their collaborative mission to end generational poverty through education.
<a href="#">2020 Summit Workshop—Mountain View School District Story</a>	Mountain View Elementary School District has 6,300 students, with 94% free/reduced meals and 55% English learners. Located in Los Angeles County, the district has participated with CA LMI for two years. The speakers shared their labor-management collaboration strategies and practices, including how their partnership has impacted their COVID-19 closure and reopening efforts.
<a href="#">2020 Summit Workshop—Elk Grove Unified School District Story</a>	Elk Grove Unified is the fifth-largest school district in California, with 55% free/reduced lunch. EGUSD is in Sacramento County and started participating with CA LMI in 2015. Their labor-management team discussed their extensive efforts to build labor-management partnerships and focus on staff and student relationships through Outward Mindset trainings for all employees.
<a href="#">2020 Summit Workshop—ABC Unified District Story</a>	ABC Unified is a national leader in labor-management partnership. Since a divisive strike more than 20 years ago, the labor-management team at ABC has built one of the most studied and comprehensive systems for partnership and collaboration. The ABC team talked about their system, their transition since the March closings, and their extensive planning framework for reopening. ABC Unified is a 20,000-student district in Los Angeles County.
<a href="#">2020 Summit Workshop—Self-Compassion</a>	This workshop offered new insight into ways to strengthen labor-management relationships by addressing educator compassion fatigue, educational inequities, and encouraging self-care and self-compassion.
<a href="#">2020 Summit Workshop—Interdisciplinary, Problem Based Learning</a>	Explore strategies to design learning experiences that incorporate literacy skills, critical thinking, and topics relevant to students' lives outside school. Face-to-face, distance learning, and a hybrid approach are considerations in lesson design and pedagogical approaches.
<a href="#">2020 Summit Workshop—School Planning, Equity &amp; SEL Strategies for Reopening</a>	Reopening schools following the pandemic in the fall takes imagination, creativity, collaboration, and, most of all, flexibility. Given the number of unknowns, schools must be agile yet prepared for worst-case scenarios. This workshop highlighted key questions and considerations for school leaders as they think about reopening schools amid a global pandemic.
<a href="#">2020 Summit Workshop—Collaborating in a Crisis</a>	This workshop builds on the guidance from the National Labor Management Partnership's "Collaborating in a Crisis" document and offers some steps for how to get started collaborating and addressing the issues of most urgency to your district and communities related to the safe reopening of school buildings.
<a href="#">2020 Summit Workshop—Three Box Framework</a>	This workshop provides tools to ensure productive collaborative planning of parent support as part of COVID-19 response. The Three-Box Framework and accompanying tools for structuring effective labor-management collaboration are introduced through the lens of building strategies and explore how best to develop intentional strategies for helping parents and families support learning at home.
<a href="#">Moving from Crisis to Opportunity: A presentation by Simon Breakspear</a>	Simon Breakspear shares insights about how schools can respond and learn from the pandemic experience, and what education might look like on the other side. Amid all the tension and unknowns, leaders need to explore the opportunities for innovation and transformation that are emerging from the COVID-19 crisis.

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For more information, visit [cdefoundation.org](https://cdefoundation.org).