Board Retreat

March 10, 2023

WELCOME

As you consider the strategic plan, what value would you like to see represented, lived or embodied?

Our Promise

Every student in Highline Public Schools is known by **name**, **strength** and **need**, and graduates prepared for the **future they choose.**

Listening Tour Feedback

We have many things to be proud of in Highline. Some of our strengths include:

- Students report being known by name and having at least one meaningful relationship with an adult at their school.

- Students can articulate their strengths and feel their strengths are acknowledged by adults.

- Families express a deep sense of gratitude and growing satisfaction with Highline.

- Staff and board members share a deep dedication to the communities they serve and to equitable practice and policy.

Listening Tour Feedback

The listening tour also highlighted areas where we need to improve. In Highline, we must:

- Ensure every student feels safe and welcome at school and address bullying.

- Provide academic experiences that stretch and challenge students and prepare them for future success.

- Improve policies, practices and programs to provide consistent support to students receiving special education services.

- Strengthen the partnership between schools and central office in support of students.

- Recommit to the Highline Promise to achieve equity and focus our efforts on the strategic plan goals.

- Offer equitable opportunities to students across schools.

CULTURE OF BELONGING

Ensuring a respectful and compassionate culture where all feel safe, valued, and welcomed.

Our Promise: Every student is known by name, strength and need, and graduates prepared for the future they choose.

STUDENT LEARNING

Providing equitable academic experiences and opportunities that stretch, engage, and challenge students.

Our Promise: Every student is known by name, strength and need, and graduates prepared for the future they choose.

BILINGUAL & BILITERATE

Preparing students to graduate bilingual and biliterate.

Our Promise: Every student is known by name, strength and need, and graduates prepared for the future they choose.

FUTURE READY

Preparing all students with the life skills and experiences they need to be ready for the future they choose.

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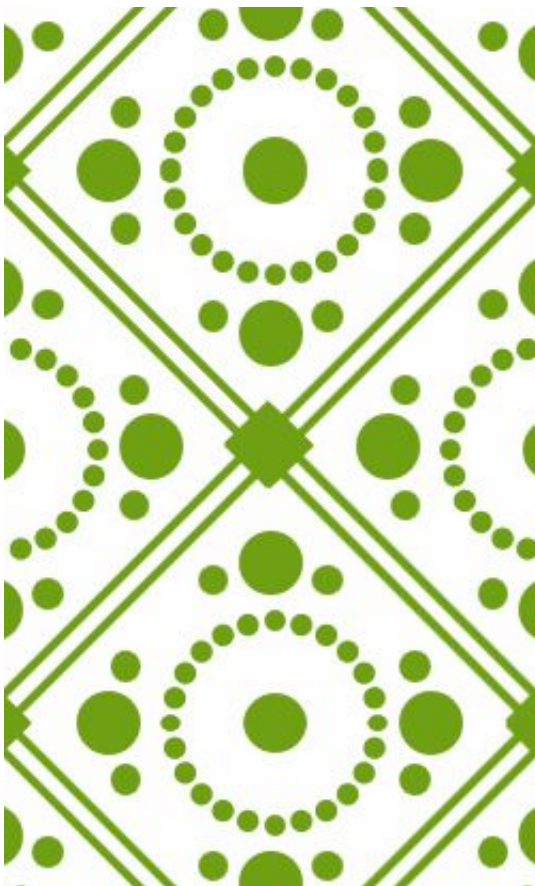
FREEDOM DREAMING

"Freedom dreaming is imagining worlds that are just, representing people's full humanity, centering people left on the edges, thriving in solidarity with folx from different identities who have struggled together for justice, and knowing that dreams are just around the corner with the might of people power "~Dr. Bettina Love

FREEDOM DREAMING IN ACTION

I'd Like You To Imagine That It Is 2043 And Education In Highline Reflects the Aspirations of Our Promise that Every Student in Highline Public Schools is Known by Name, Strength and Need, and Graduates Prepared for the Future They Choose.

When we split into groups, each group will review and respond to the prompts and then share out with the larger group for additional feedback.

FREEDOM DREAMING GOALS:

Imagine that it is 2043 - what needs to take place for these goals to be true….

Culture of Belonging: Creating school cultures where students, families, and staff experience a sense of belonging and well-being.

Student Learning: Ensuring academic experiences that result in better outcomes for students.

Bilingual and Biliterate: Students will graduate bilingual and biliterate (multilingual and multiliterate).

Future Ready: Preparing our students for the future they choose.

FREEDOM DREAMING

What would a school that has achieved these goals look like, feel like, and sound like?

What needs to take place for these goals to be achieved? What actions would you have taken in your role specifically?

# **Feedback Review**

- Briefly review the ThoughtExchange materials individually
- Break into 5 groups and answer the following questions for each goal:
  - What jumped out at you?
  - What resonated with you?
  - What themes did you see?
- Share reflections with the full group
- Reflection:
  - What connections/common themes did you see across the ThoughtExchanges and Freedom Dreaming feedback?

Strategic Plan Next Steps

Anticipated Timeline:

- Introduction of Goals: March 29
- Strategic Plan Advisory Groups: March-April 2023
- Action on Goals: April 19
- Development of Metrics and Implementation plans: March-June 2023
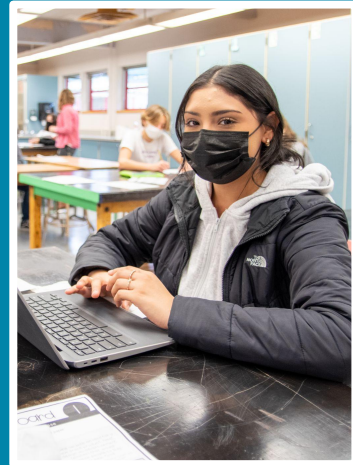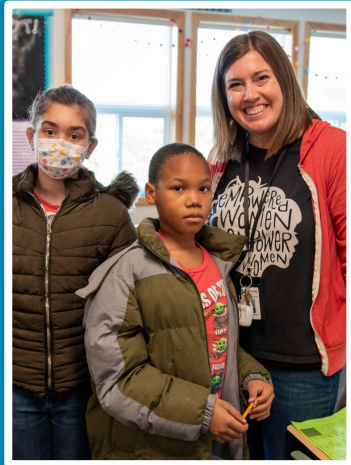
Debrief of the 3/1 work session on the Workforce Turnover Report

Street Data:
a Next-Generation Model for Equity, Pedagogy, & School Transformation
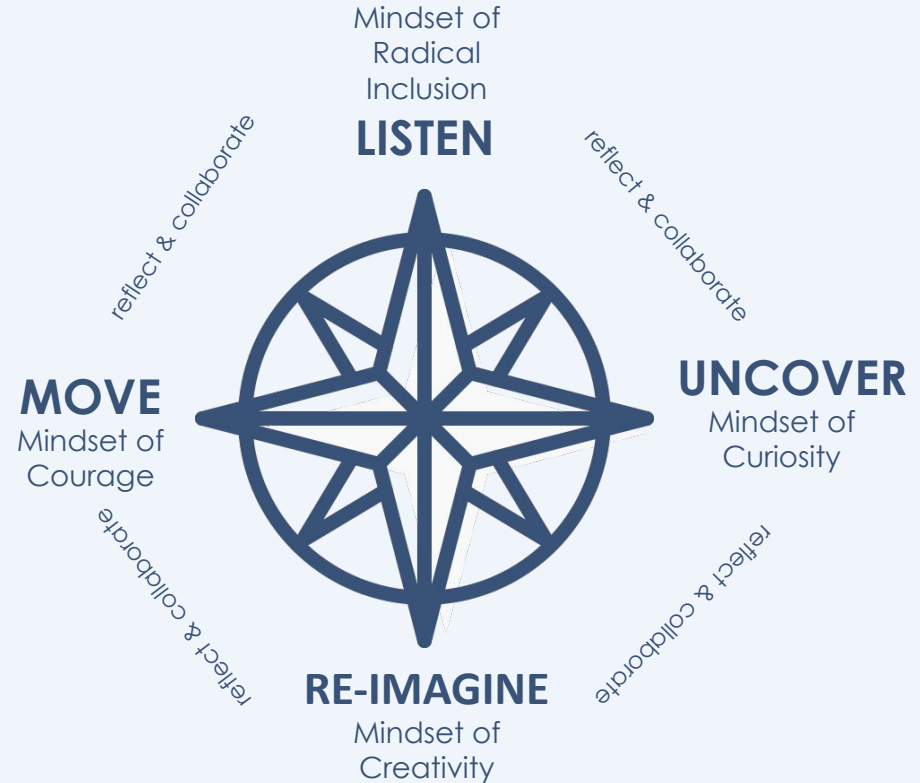
Chapter 8:
Part IV, Transform the Culture

Let's take a few moment to review chapter 8 (pp. 169 -194).

…we're trying to disrupt the discourse and the legacy of our entire society so we can do almost anything…We have the permission to be transformational. We have the permission to do something different. We have the permission to listen to kids and to respond to them.

Equity Transformation Cycle

We are striving to address deep-seated equity challenges that have persisted for decades…we cannot PDSA our way our of these challenges.

Act
Decide what's next. Make changes and start another cycle.

Plan
Describe objective, change being tested, predictions. Needed action steps. Plan for collecting data.

Study
Analyze data. Compare outcomes to predictions. Summarize what you learned.

Do
Run the test. Describe what happens. Collect data.

Mindset of Radical Inclusion
LISTEN

reflect & collaborate

reflect & collaborate

MOVE
Mindset of Courage

UNCOVER
Mindset of Curiosity

reflect & collaborate

reflect & collaborate

RE-IMAGINE
Mindset of Creativity
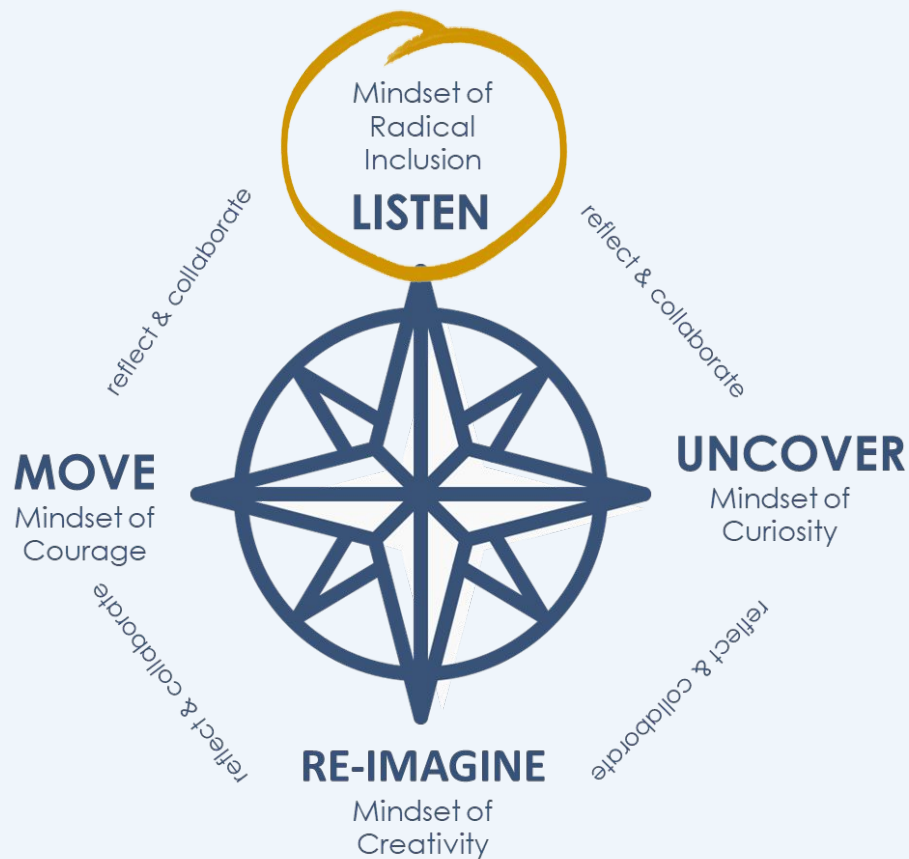
4 Elements that Promote Shame:

- Perfectionism

- Either/Or Thinking

- Power Hoarding

- Defensiveness

Let's work to avoid these as we disrupt the discourse. Let's transform.

Using map level data to focus on a margin and dig deeper.
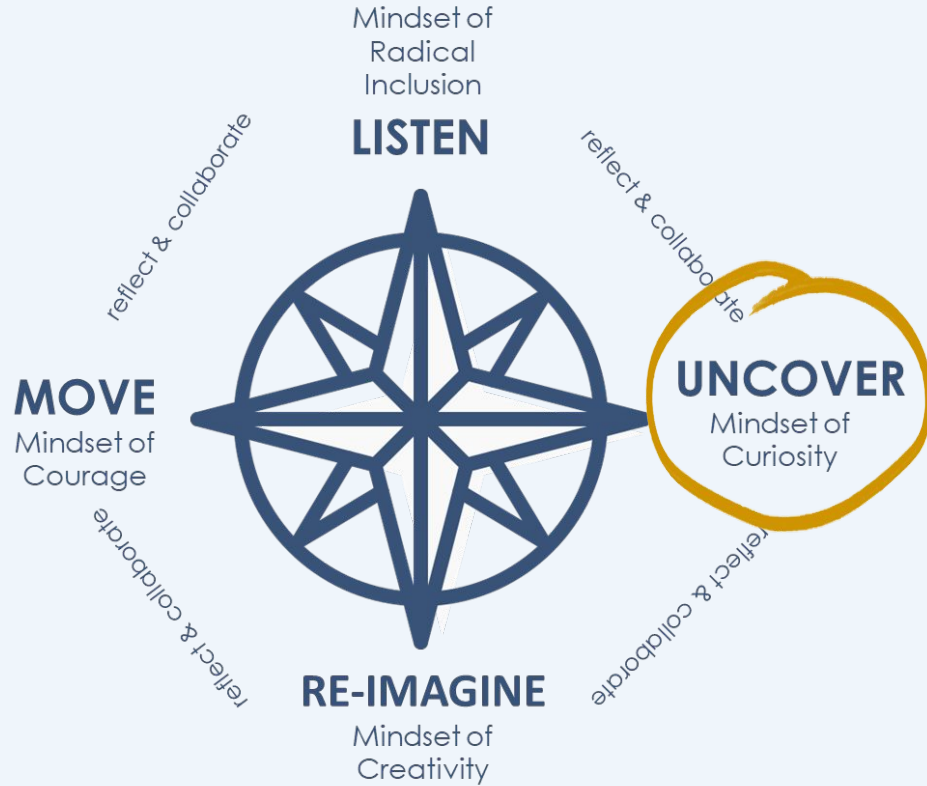
- What map level data do we have?
- What is it showing us about who is in the margins?
- Who do we want to learn more from?

Mindset of
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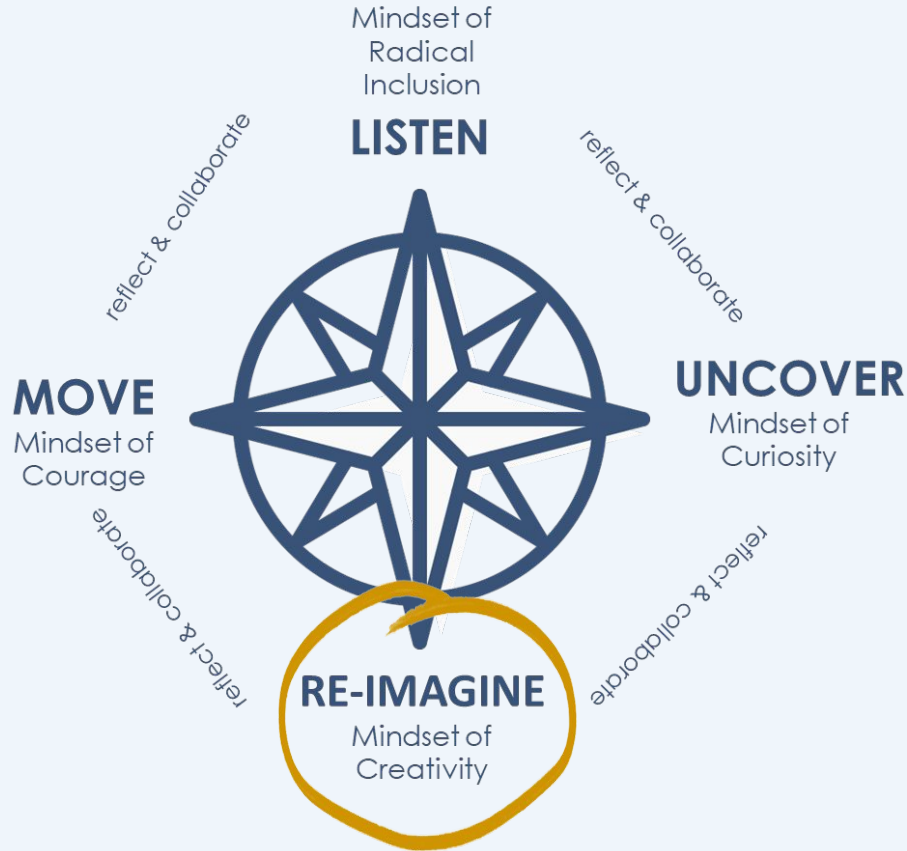
RE-IMAGINE
Mindset of
Creativity

Listen with a Mindset of Radical Inclusion:

- Empathy interview
- Co-gen

Uncover with a Mindset of Curiosity:

- Street Data Analysis

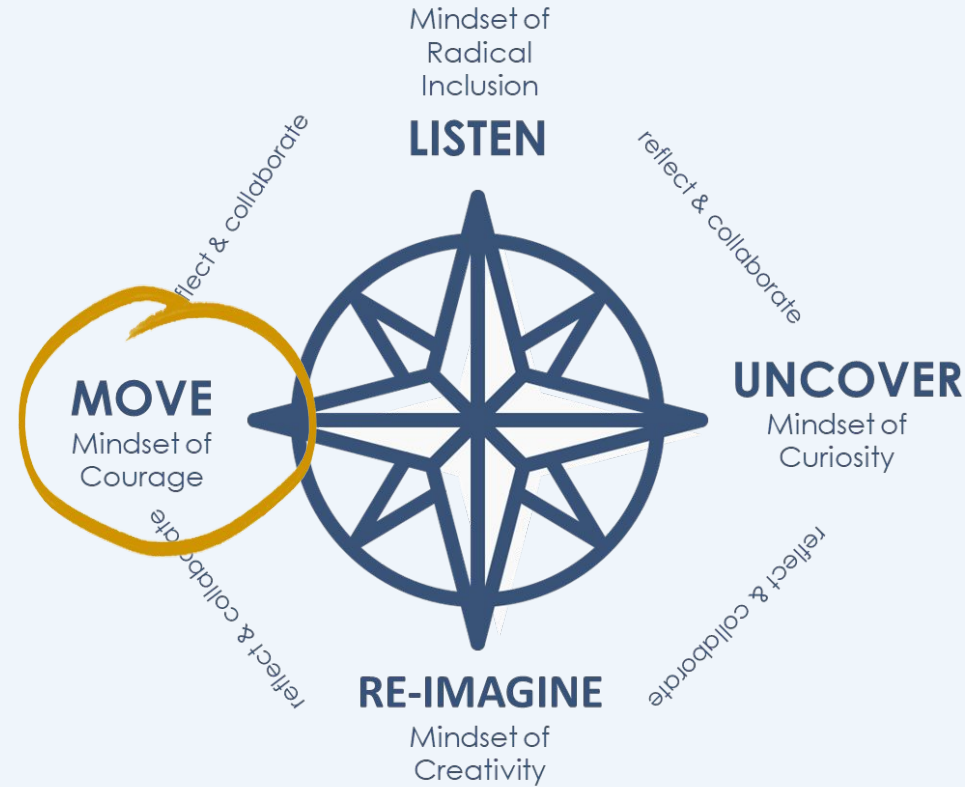- Equity Learning Walks/Instructional Rounds (Students as Colleagues)

Reimagine with a Mindset of Creativity:

- Student-Informed Curriculum
- Student-Driven PD
- Student Design Challenges
- Stu-Led Conferences

Move with a Mindset of Courage

(where the rubber meets the road)

- Safe to fail experiments

10 Tips TO COLLECT STREET DATA

1. **Audio feedback interviews:** Conduct an audio-recorded focus group with students or parents whose voices are typically absent from the decision-making table. Begin by identifying an equity challenge that you want to gain insight around. Invite a small group of stakeholders to engage in thirty to forty-five minutes of discussion. Prepare and ideally share your questions in advance. Afterward, transcribe and edit the data to highlight key themes and comments (more on this in Chapter 8). With participant permission and/or full anonymity, these data can be used at a staff meeting to ground discussions of the equity challenge.

2. **Listening campaigns:** Listening campaigns involve a set of interviews or focus groups from which the listener assembles and organizes anonymous quotes by theme. The data are usually shared back to the community as an opportunity for growth and reflection. Conduct a series of listening sessions to gain insight and empathy toward a group of people at the margins, for example, LGBTQ students, parents of English language learners, or students with learning differences. Be sure to tap a group of at least five stakeholders so that you are able to get a sense of cross-cutting patterns.

3. **Equity participation tracker:** When visiting a classroom, track who is called on to participate by the teacher, who volunteers to speak, and who is receiving positive versus negative feedback (verbal and nonverbal). Break this data down by race, gender, English-language learner status, gender, learning differences, and other factors. This street data tool will help you study the micro-pedagogies of equity.

4. **Ethnographies:** If you are part of a team that meets on an ongo-ing basis, consider doing an in-depth ethnography of a group of students. This deep exploration of a campus subculture—for example a group of high-achieving Indigenous students—will entail interviews, observations, and soliciting written reflections from the learners. Begin by articulating an authentic inquiry question that you will investigate through the process. Obviously, get parent and student permission first.

5. **Fishbowls:** Facilitate a fishbowl dialogue to draw out the experi-ences and perspectives of a group at the margins. The structure is simple: A small group engages in discussion in the middle of the room, while other participants encircle this group and listen intently, jotting down key words and phrases. For example, district staff might facilitate a fishbowl of principals, asking, "What is your daily experience like as school leader? What conditions do you need to be successful? What could we do differently to support you?" Principals can facilitate a fishbowl of teachers, parents, or paraprofessionals. Teachers can facilitate a fishbowl of students. Be sure you have identified a central equity challenge; develop and share the questions beforehand with participants. Panel discussions can serve a similar role. Be willing to listen, even when it's hard to hear.

6. **Home visits:** Home visits are a powerful and underutilized street data tool. Over the years, I have found that many educators are fearful of doing home visits. They're either afraid of high-poverty neighborhoods and communities of color due to unconscious or conscious racism; they're afraid of imposing on families in their private sphere; or both. In the years that led to the founding of June Jordan School for Equity, the school where I was a principal, I had the privilege to do hundreds of home visits as part of a community organizing drive. I always asked the family if they felt comfortable having me in their home or preferred to meet in a community space, like a church hall or café. More often than not, they wanted to host the visit and took pride in welcoming me to their home. I felt deeply honored and, more importantly, gained street-level data on the family and student: their cultural wealth, assets, hopes, dreams, and fears.

7. **Shadow a student:** There is perhaps no better way to empathically understand a student's experience than to put on your tennis shoes and shadow him or her. Put on your comfy shoes and, with permission of course, follow a student through his or her school day. This is particularly impactful if done by a network of leaders and focused on students who are currently outside the sphere of success. My colleague Jennifer Goldstein, a professor of educational leadership at California State University Fullerton, has principal candidates shadow an English learner for a day, with tremendous impact. A principal can also shadow a teacher throughout his or her day, and a district leader would do well to shadow a principal or assistant principal.

8. **Equity-focused classroom scan:** Do a demographic scan of different types of classes on campus—gifted, remedial, honors, academies, career tech, advanced placement, and so forth. Note the distribution of students by race/ethnicity, gender, ELL status, students with special needs, and so forth. With this data in hand, facilitate a leadership team discussion about the current landscape of equity and access at your site, where to go next for street data, and what your equity imperative is to address this.

9. **Structured meeting observations:** Be a fly on the wall in an upcoming team meeting. Take notes on who speaks and who does not, much like the equity participation tracker. Take notes on how the facilitator responds to different participants and whether the emotional valence of the response (positive, negative, neutral) tracks to race, gender, tenure, or other factors. Capture observation notes on the group dynamic—the energy of the room, including the ways in which people build off each other's ideas, respectfully challenge each other, and ask questions to probe one another's thinking.

10. **Student-led community walks:** I have written about community walks for *Edutopia* (Safir, 2017a) and in *The Listening Leader* (Safir, 2017b). They are an invaluable tool for flipping the dash-board and uplifting the expertise of students and parents. To experiment with this strategy, identify social or cultural groups in your community about whom it would benefit educators to gain deeper knowledge. Invite students from those groups to meet with you to design a professional-learning experience for educators, typically comprised of two afternoons: one to read about the community and listen to student presenters and one to follow students through a guided community walk of their neighborhood. Support and empower students to design this experience with any tools at their disposal—PowerPoint slides, panels of community leaders, a lunch hosted by families in the community, an itinerary that includes important sites (markets, churches, community centers, etc.), and people.

SHANE SAFIR
@ShaneSafir

JAMILA DUGAN
@JamilaDugan

Our Data & Assessment Team is Already Collecting Street Data!

- Youth Wisdom Council
- Rebekah, Jenny, Leon from D & A
- Leon facilitated empathy interview
- Jenny took notes/data

Process

1. Explain what street data is/role of listening
2. Name a problem of practice (map level data)
3. Share how we want to show up/framing
4. Let students set norms "Norming for Safety"
5. Students had a say in which questions to respond to
6. Students shared; Leon facilitated
7. Debrief—How did you feel valued & heard?
8. Padlet as a follow up

Why Should You Care?

- When we look at data, often disparities are present (gender, race, special education, etc.)

- As a student, you might know some of the reasons why these disparities exist

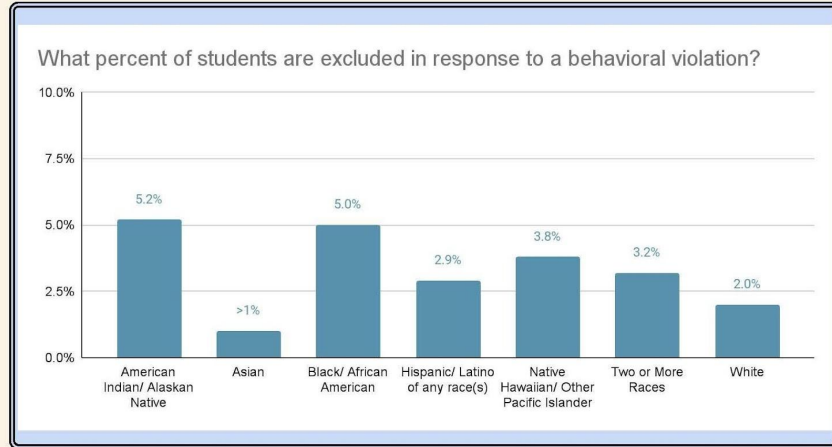- As a student leader, you are in a position to advocate for change

DEEP LISTENING

"Our guiding principle...is *seek root causes over quick fixes*. To embody this principle, we have to learn to slow down and engage in deep listening. Listening deeply and responsively will help us build relational capital and trust and shift the culture as we gather data."

- Street Data (2021)

LOCATE THE MARGINS OF YOUR COMMUNITY	CULTIVATE AWARENESS OF YOUR PERSONAL BIASES	CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE WAY TO CAPTURE STREET DATA	PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO NONVERBAL CUES	REMEMBER YOUR PURPOSE- HEALING PLUS UNDERSTANDING
Whose voices are most unheard and yet potentially most instrumental to solving the equity challenges you face?	Whose voices do you tend to gravitate toward and why? What internal scripts are running in your brain about particular students, groups of students, families, or colleagues?	Know your audience. Listen for emotional peaks, which may be revealed through upticks in volume or shifts in tone and body language.	As you gather street data via listening, develop awareness of your own and other people's tone and nonverbal cues as windows into emotional experience.	Street data gathering process can be healing. It is an opportunity to build trust and relational capital with people at the margins of your community.

Chapter 5, The Listening Leader (2017)

Problem of Practice

→

What percent of students are excluded in response to a behavioral violation?

American Indian/ Alaskan Native: 5.2%	Asian: >1%	Black/ African American: 5.0%	Hispanic/ Latino of any race(s): 2.9%	Native Hawaiian/ Other Pacific Islander: 3.8%	Two or More Races: 3.2%	White: 2.0%

In Washington State, all BIPOC students, excluding Asian, have a higher % of exclusionary consequence.

How we want to show up

Physical Environment
- Remove physical hierarchy
  - way you dress
  - way you ask to be referred to
  - how you're sitting
- Possibly have a safe adult in the space like a sponsor
- Small group
- Bring food/snacks

Emotional Environment
- Discussion has clear purpose provided by moderator
- Moderator is warm, welcoming
- Provides reinforcement or reassurance about safety in discussion
- Is responsive, repeats back their thoughts

Framing the Interview

We are working to center student voices in order to understand what is going well and areas that we can improve your learning experiences. One area that we are focusing on is the **discipline data trends that we see related to students by race groups.**

What you share is a part of our **listening and learning** journey from our most important people in our schools you, the students.

As we collect this information, we will summarize what we learn. Everything shared will be anonymous, and we will **use this information to develop strategies and reflection to narrow the gap.**

We want to establish guidance and some **norms** by asking you what are some conditions during this time that will make you feel safe and open.

Norming for Safety

- Adults share their experiences, something personal, helps to build trust and share something about themself
- Showing the vibe that you really care and want to listen
- Don't be too formal and uptight
- Initiative
- Open to ask whatever we want to ask
- Don't sugarcoat
- Engagement, the energy that an adults gives is what students will give back

Interview Questions

"Empathy interviews, a cornerstone of design thinking, help us listen for how a person feels and perceives the equity challenge we are trying to approach."

In Washington State, all BIPOC students, excluding Asian, have a higher % of exclusionary consequence.

1. Why are relationships with teachers important to the way you show up in class? How do your relationships with your teacher positively or negatively impact behavior in the classroom?

2. How do you think mindset or biases impact the way that schools implement discipline practices? Can you provide any examples?

3. Have you seen or experienced a time where a teacher or staff member wrongfully used power dynamics that led to discipline?

4. Do you feel like you have power in your school? When do you feel this way? When do you not feel this way?

5. Who do see getting in trouble? Do you notice any racial disparities in who receives discipline or consequences?

6. (dashboard artifacts) What do you observe in this data? Does this data align with your own experiences or experiences of peers? Why do you think this pattern is occurring?

7. How would you solve this pattern in discipline disproportionality?

→ Model the Empathy Interview

What now?

Optimistic Closure

"Anything worth doing is worth the collective."
Dr. Bettina L. Love

Reflection:

What is your commitment to the collective to accomplish the strategic plan?