Douglas Education Service District

A New Generation

Doreen Marvin & Sheila King

April 2024

Table of Contents

THE DESIGN PROCESS & THE Douglas ESD CONTEXT

Douglas Education Service District (Douglas ESD) engaged with AESA to lead a design process that would ***engage*** stakeholders inside and outside the agency, ***envision*** a bold New Generation of the agency's development, and lay plans to ***enact*** the first steps toward that New Generation.

Background: Douglas Education Service District

Douglas ESD (Douglas ESD): A New Generation outlines a strategy to enhance its services and impact on member districts and communities. The design is crafted around specific areas of focus to support the overarching specifications outlined for the organization, addressing key aspects such as relationships and partnerships, talent management, and focusing on student growth/achievement and family engagement. Additionally, it emphasizes the need for organizational growth and resilience through structural and process alignment, data-informed decision-making, and investments that foster growth and resilience among students, families, staff, and the organization itself.

The Douglas Education Service District (Douglas ESD) in Roseburg, Oregon, has a rich history of evolving to meet the educational needs of its community within the broader landscape of changes in public education and regional development.

Education service districts (ESDs) in Oregon, including Douglas ESD, were established to provide support services to school districts within their geographical areas, aiming to enhance educational outcomes and offer specialized services that individual districts might struggle to afford on their own. The roots of ESDs trace back to county school offices, which were initially created to offer administrative support and services to local schools.

Over the years, Douglas ESD, like other ESDs, expanded its range of services in response to the evolving needs of its member districts and changes in state and federal education policies. These services included special education, technology support, professional development for teachers, and administrative services such as grant writing and financial management. *The goal has always been to improve educational access and quality for all students, especially those in underserved locations.*

Throughout its history, Douglas ESD has had to navigate shifts in educational priorities, funding mechanisms, and legislative mandates. This includes adapting to the increased emphasis on accountability and standardized testing, integration of technology in education, and the growing recognition of the importance of birth to kindergarten (early intervention and early childhood pre-K school readiness programs) and special needs education.

> *DESD sees family and community as paramount to the growth and achievement of children, youth, students, schools, and districts. As such, DESD views these groups as integral to partnerships, services, and programs. As an organization, the wholistic view is "top of mind."*

Douglas ESD's historical perspective would not be complete without acknowledging its role in fostering community engagement and partnerships. By collaborating with local businesses, community organizations, and higher education institutions, Douglas ESD has worked to create educational pathways that support not only birth through graduation students but also lifelong learners in the education profession. Parents, partners working in community agencies, and superintendents from member districts "rave" about how partnering with Douglas ESD is very valuable and has a level of access that makes the partnerships easy. That is not to say that all partnerships are perfect; rather to say, that Douglas ESD is committed to working through challenges to ensure as much success as possible for children, youth, families, and school districts.

One partner stated, "They never say, no." The facilitators caution that this statement is from only one person. However, Douglas ESD is best served, organizationally, to be sure they have the strategic resources and capacity to serve, partner, develop, and/or implement before saying "yes." This was discussed by staff within the design team as an emerging challenge as the labor pool within the regional catchment area tightens and needs of students expands. *Capacity to deliver without overloading staff is a key to success in this educational context nationally.*

Like many educational institutions, Douglas ESD has faced challenges, including budget constraints, changing demographic needs, and the task of integrating new technologies and teaching methods into the curriculum. Despite these challenges, its history is also marked by achievements in improving educational access, enhancing student performance, and fostering innovative educational solutions.

The history of Douglas Education Service District is a testament to its resilience and commitment to serving the educational needs of the Roseburg region and its surrounding communities. As Douglas ESD looks to the future, it will likely continue to adapt to the changing educational landscape, seeking new ways to meet the needs of its students and member districts while navigating the complexities of modern educational demands and opportunities.

Douglas ESD's member districts are: Camas Valley, Days Creek, Elkton, Glendale, Glide, North Douglas, Oakland, Riddle, Roseburg, South Umpqua, Sutherlin, Winston-Dillard, and Yoncalla. It is also important to note that some programs serving children and communities

stretch beyond the member district boundaries. Throughout this document the writers refer to customers, partners, and communities. These words are meant to be inclusive, unless specifically specified, of families, school personnel, district level personnel, young children, school age children, and agencies.

Annually, Douglas ESD develops a Local Service Plan (LSP) in conjunction with its member districts. This LSP drives many decisions, such as staffing, budgets, and services. The LSP communicates services, the funding streams for such services, costs for said services/programs, and locations for services beyond the member districts. For example, Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education is available in Douglas, Jackson, Josephine, Klamath, and Lake counties.

ESDs in Oregon, including Douglas ESD, receive funding from a combination of sources to support their operations and services. While specific figures and percentages can vary from year to year based on state budgets, legislation, and local agreements, the general funding model for ESDs in Oregon includes:

- State Funding: A significant portion of funding for Douglas ESD comes from the State School Fund (SSF). This funding is allocated based on a formula that considers several factors, including the number of students served and the types of services provided. The exact percentage of state funding in the overall budget can vary, but it typically constitutes a substantial portion of the revenue annually.
- Local Property Taxes
- Service Contracts: Douglas ESD often contracts with member school districts to provide specific services. These services range from special education support to technology and administrative services. The funding from these contracts can be a significant source of revenue, depending on the scope of services and the number of districts served.
- Grants and Federal Funding: Douglas ESD competes for and receives grants from state and federal programs to fund specific projects or initiatives.
- Other Sources: Additional funding may come from other sources, such as fees for services provided to non-member entities.

Douglas ESD's member district with the largest number of students is the Roseburg School District; however, while other school districts may have fewer students, they may have a much larger land footprint. This speaks to the rural nature of some of Douglas ESDs communities and the need for Douglas ESD to balance a variety of contexts and pain points. Furthermore, economic shifts and changes over time have directly impacted the demographics, economics, and social needs of the Douglas ESD member districts.

For example, Roseburg, Oregon, nestled in the heart of the Umpqua River Valley, is a region rich in natural beauty and historical significance. Its picturesque landscapes are

dominated by rolling hills, verdant forests, and the majestic North Umpqua River, creating a serene backdrop for the bustling community and its economic endeavors.

Historically, Roseburg's economy was deeply rooted in the timber industry, with its vast forests providing an abundant resource for logging and wood processing. The area became a pivotal center for the timber trade, with sawmills and lumber companies driving economic growth and shaping the community's identity from the late 19th century onwards. This timber dominance not only brought prosperity but also fostered a deep connection between the residents and their surrounding natural environment, influencing the culture and lifestyle of the region.

Agriculture has also played a significant role in Roseburg's economic tapestry. The fertile soils of the Umpqua Valley, combined with a favorable climate, have supported various crops and livestock over the years. In recent decades, the region has gained recognition for its burgeoning wine industry, with vineyards and wineries dotting the landscape and contributing to a growing agritourism sector. The wine industry's emphasis on quality and sustainability has helped put Roseburg on the map as a destination for wine enthusiasts and eco-conscious travelers alike.

Roseburg's strategic location along the I-5 corridor has facilitated its development as a transportation and commercial hub in Southern Oregon. While the timber and agriculture industries have evolved, the area has diversified its economy to include healthcare, education, and manufacturing sectors. This diversification has helped stabilize the local economy and provide opportunities for innovation and growth. Yet, *there are obvious food deserts across the region, increases in homelessness, and an increase in drug use. In recent years, Douglas ESD's served counties have faced the challenges of adapting its educational system to meet the needs of a changing world and a global pandemic, including addressing technological advancements, environmental sustainability, and economic diversification.* Like many rural areas, it continues to seek a balance between preserving its rich history and natural beauty while preparing students for success in a globalized society.

Douglas ESD has experienced great growth in staff numbers and program services. Some of this growth is a direct result of the COVID pandemic impacts on education and communities and some is a result of innovation and serving districts with new services. This growth has driven the organization to realize its internal pain point of needed documented and improved processes, a plan for succession, consistent decision-making processes, and internal professional learning. Furthermore, with the addition of staff and the increased challenges in communities, creating a culture of customer service and responsiveness was necessary. The leadership of the organization, the Superintendent, has been in her role for about 18 months (about 1 and a half years). While her tenure within the organization is long and her leadership

skills were well known, being in the leader chair and assessing the growth from that perspective revealed a need for change and planning.

Design Process: Why Design?

Design differs from traditional strategic planning in several important ways. First, design asks the question, “What would we have if we could have what we want?” Strategic planning asks, “How do we predict likely trends in the future and prepare ourselves for success?” Second, design assumes that planning begins from a clean sheet – as though the existing organization had been destroyed overnight – and seeks to replace the organization with an exciting vision that can succeed *in the present.* Strategic planning assumes that the current organization will change incrementally for success *in the predicted future.* Third, strategic planning is often a linear thinking and decision process while design relies on *iteration* or repeated cycles of putting ideas forth, reflecting on them, and returning to them repeatedly as the design process advances. Fourth, design emphasizes the need to integrate parts into a coherent whole, while strategic planning sometimes produces confusion about how different goals and actions fit together. The coherent whole aligns the system's function with the system's structure and processes. Finally, design stems from what people want, not what they want to be eliminated. *The design process gives Douglas ESD the license to lead and influence positive change in a post-pandemic environment, fostering abundant thinking and creative solutions to complex challenges facing staff, customers, communities, schools, students, and families alike.*

Douglas ESD engaged in the design process, contracting with the Association of Education Service Agencies (AESA) and two senior consultants. Leaders at Douglas ESD invited a diverse Design Team (listed in the Padlet resource link) to guide the process. The Design Team met from January 2024 through March 2024. The external consultants from AESA, Doreen Marvin and Sheila King, conducted interviews of internal and external shareholders to gather information for all components of the design - specifications, set of interacting challenges, solutions, and the context. The design team included the themes from these interviews and much data as they developed this Douglas ESD New Generation design. Furthermore, the design team met both in person and virtually. The facilitators met with the Superintendent three times to further the robustness of the design plan.

It is important to understand that the design team learned about and focused their work on the parts and dimensions of a system as defined by system scientist Jamshid Gharajedaghi.[1] The design team looked at *function, structure, and processes* as mentioned

[1] Gharajedaghi, J. (2012) Systems thinking: Managing chaos and complexity: A platform for designing business architecture. Burlington, MA: Morgan Kaufmann Publishers.

previously, and they kept the *five dimensions* in the forefront of their work. The dimensions as revealed by Gharajedaghi are drawn from social systems science and provided structure for this design work.

- The **Power** dimension focuses attention on decision making and governance. It is marked by appropriate levels of responsibility and authority along with processes and structures that reinforce the exchange of information necessary for leaders to provide guidance and for staff to execute with confidence.
- The **Wealth** dimension is about throughput processes or how Douglas ESD creates value. V*alue* also extends to include the utility of programs and services for clients and community and the resulting generation and distribution of resources.
- The **Beauty** dimension addresses membership and engagement, the degree to which individuals and organizations seek a relationship with Douglas ESD. The ability to convene diverse groups in collective work, serve both adult and young shareholders, and influence partnerships has long been a strategic resource at Douglas ESD.
- The **Values** dimension (not to be confused with the use of the term *value* in item two above) involves processes for productive conflict management. Some degree of conflict over ends and means is essential to spur innovation and improvement, and it is important for leaders to encourage it. Destructive conflict, on the other hand, leads to stalemate and status quo—clearly an undesirable outcome to be avoided. Clear decision criteria, frequent meetings to address problems early, and explicit communication channels help Douglas ESD leaders to promote the right kind of conflict and avoid the wrong kind. OBJ
- The **Knowledge** dimension draws attention to Douglas ESD's system and practices for learning and control—particularly the organization's use of data to assure that conclusions and predictions are sound enough to guide future action. In addition, this dimension focuses on the continued development of strategic knowledge resources.

Douglas ESD: The New Generation addresses the current *context*, desired *functions* of the agency, preferred *structures*, and *processes* to begin moving the whole system. This 2024 design sets in motion a set of specifications, a structure to support the new processes, new learning, and new reality for their staff, members, and educational community. All their work will serve Douglas ESD with a pathway- creative, data-informed, inclusive- to influence and invest in their shareholders and partners for positive outcomes. This pathway will support what was learned during survey reviews, interviews, focus groups, and data points.

Districts and communities' confidence in DESD is built from a culture that is: ***Caring, Consistent, Connected, Collaborative, and Creative***

Designers bring empathy and creativity to social challenges.[2]

In the first Design Team meeting in January of 2024, members of the team learned about the interviews conducted by the facilitators, and they dug into data. The learning and the subsequent dialogues resulted in a clearer understanding of the current context for Douglas ESD, which is represented in the following context map.

Context Observations and Themes

As the team worked, they identified and discussed a diverse set of trends, factors, needs, challenges, and successes influencing the current context. Several themes emerged from this process. Based on the interviews conducted with various stakeholders involved with Douglas ESD, we can synthesize the main ideas and insights into a cohesive summary. These insights highlight strengths, challenges, and areas for growth within Douglas ESD's operations and its impact on regional education. The interviews feature perspectives from employees, partners, and member districts, providing a well-rounded view of the organization's role in supporting education.

[2] What is Design AIGA. Available at: http://www.aiga.org/why-design/ (Accessed: February 5, 2023).

Strengths and Positive Attributes

- *Innovative Practices and Responsiveness*: Douglas ESD is recognized for its innovative approaches, such as the alternative school and various support services (e.g., behavioral support, technology services, professional learning). Stakeholders appreciate the ESD's responsiveness and its ability to serve as a valuable partner in education.
- *Strong Relationships and Communication*: Many interviewees highlighted the value of their relationships within Douglas ESD, praising specific individuals and teams for their support, communication, and collaboration efforts. For example, the Take Root team, IT services, and leadership figures like Analicia and Brian are mentioned positively for their roles in facilitating effective support and services.
- *Operational Support*: Douglas ESD provides essential operational support, including special education services, financial services, HR, and professional learning opportunities. This support is crucial for the functionality and success of member districts, especially smaller and rural ones.

Challenges and Areas for Improvement

- *Need for Clear Communication and Processes:* There is a call for clearer communication regarding roles, responsibilities, and processes. For instance, clarity about point of contacts, consistent service reviews, and involvement in decision-making processes are areas highlighted for improvement.
- *Resource Allocation and Support Services*: Stakeholders expressed concerns over stretched resources, such as consulting services (OT, PT, ASD consultants) being spread thin. The need for more robust support in areas like curriculum development, early literacy approaches, and professional learning opportunities is evident.
- *Retention and Recruitment*: Challenges with staff retention and recruitment are prominent, especially for specialized positions. This issue is exacerbated in rural districts, where attracting qualified candidates is particularly tough.
- *Special Education and Rising Enrollments:* Despite decreasing birth rates, special education enrollments are rising, attributed to factors like increased poverty, trauma, and behavioral issues. This trend underscores the need for targeted support and interventions.

The design team also looked at the current Douglas ESD and the trajectory of progress over the past years. They created the chart below to show how the Douglas ESD of old was and how it is beginning to emerge in the new context, which brings new challenges and excitement toward their solutions. One will, after understanding the entire desired design, see how this shift is evident in the specifications, structure, processes, and bold steps.

FROM	TOWARD
Unstructured orientation and formal training for new employees	Formalized and planned orientation agency wide and by individual departments
Organizational focus on equity	Organization focused on employee equity and resilience
Multiple points of contact	Streamlined communication and solution orientation through a single point of contact
Followers in salary	Leaders in salary and work environment
Minimal internal professional learning	Dedicated time and space for PD
Community not understanding what is really happening inside schools and education	Community understanding and supporting education
Unknown and undocumented flexible work environment	Known and deserved brand of having a flexible work environment supporting self-care and wellness
Undocumented processes with minimal regular review for efficiency	Intentional consistent reviews of processes and potential efficiencies- # of steps, data to suggest a need for edits, technology upgrades or innovations supports change- and documentation of processes

THE SET OF INTERACTING CHALLENGES

There are many times in our lives or as we are watching a television show or movie, where we can see how one event or interaction is going to impact every other thing for the foreseeable future. For example, if you are planning a long trip, decisions such as what to pack, when to leave, how to travel, and where to stay will impact your comfort, stress level, access to the environment, and overall experience. This experience - good, bad, or indifferent - will connect to and impact (intentionally and unintentionally, positively and negatively) many other aspects of your life (budget, family care, pet care, work responsibilities). These additional aspects also must be taken into consideration. We identify this as *a set of interactions* and *a set of challenges*. The word *challenges* is not used negatively; rather it is used to convey the need to look at the complete set and recognize they all have important merit to the success of the trip.

These challenges and the interaction among all elements create the vision of the Douglas ESD context. In design language, these have been identified as "wicked" problems in the world of organizational development since 1973. Wickedness is used to convey the inadequacy of traditional solutions to chip away at the challenges. John Cammilus, in *Harvard Business Review* noted that:

> *A wicked problem has innumerable causes, is tough to describe, and doesn't have a right answer.... Environmental degradation, terrorism, and poverty—these are classic examples of wicked problems. They're the opposite of hard but ordinary problems, which people can solve in a finite time period by applying standard techniques. Not only do conventional processes fail to tackle wicked problems, but they may exacerbate situations by generating undesirable consequences.*[3]

Douglas ESD is encouraged to review the set of challenges as a cohesive set, with an eye for their interconnectedness and how each one contributes to or detracts from the overall picture. Resist the temptation to simply list these challenges, as it may not reveal solutions or aid in understanding. Instead, focus on the collective set and their interactions. This approach fosters creativity, innovation, and collaboration, ultimately leading to more effective problem-solving.

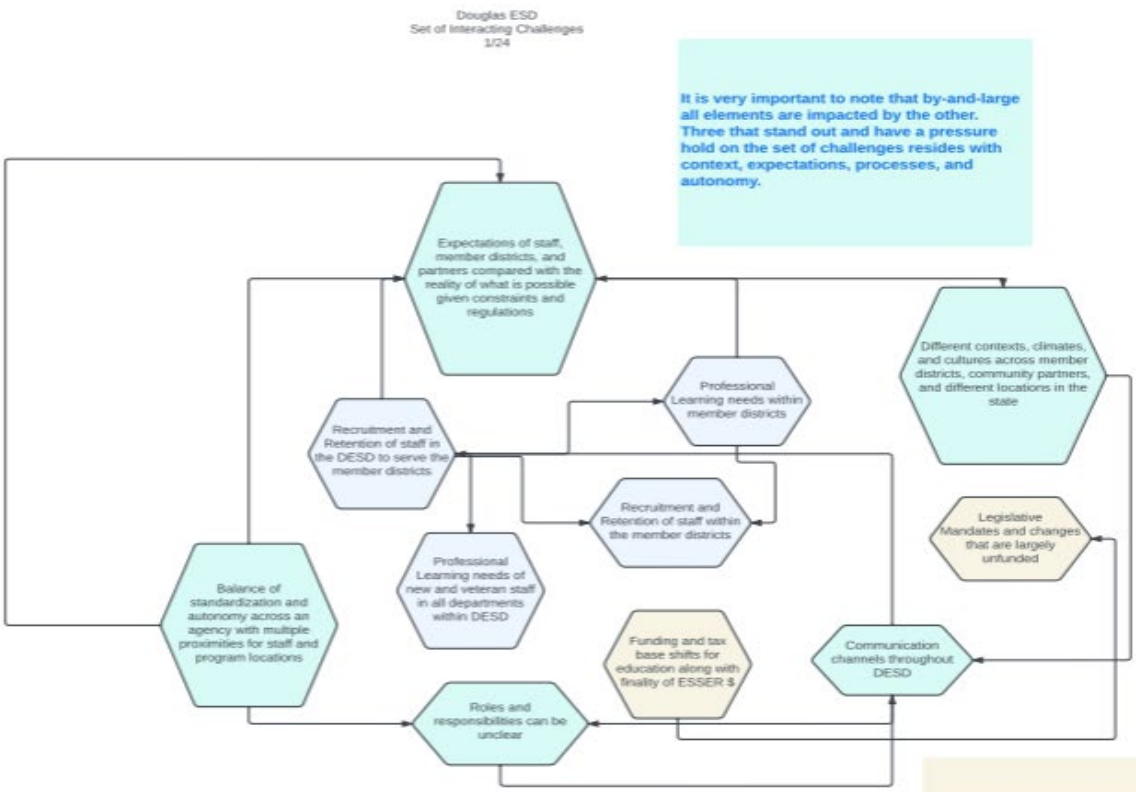
The set of challenges graphic below was developed and finalized with input from the design team, feedback from interviews with internal and external customers, and deep data analysis. It summarizes the interacting challenges facing Douglas ESD (Douglas ESD) highlighting critical areas of concern that are interrelated and impact the organization's ability to effectively

[3] Camillus, C (2008) "Strategy as a wicked Problem," *Harvard Business Review*, May.

serve its member districts. These challenges encompass issues related to staffing, communication, professional learning, context, expectations, autonomy, funding, and legislative mandates. A key insight is that these challenges are not isolated; rather, they are interconnected, with each element influencing the others. Addressing one area of concern often means engaging with several others, highlighting the complexity of the environment in which Douglas ESD operates and the necessity for integrated solutions that consider the system's interconnected nature.

- **Staffing Challenges:** Staffing is at a critical juncture, not just within Douglas ESD and its member districts, but nationally. This situation emphasizes the need for effective communication, professional learning, and clarity of connection to Douglas ESD to mitigate challenges related to context, expectations, processes, and autonomy.
- **Universal Constraints:** Time, money, and people serve as the three universal constraints impacting Douglas ESD. These constraints are foundational issues that underpin and connect all other challenges, highlighting the systemic nature of the challenges faced by Douglas ESD.
- **Expectations vs. Reality:** There is a mismatch between the expectations of staff, member districts, and partners versus the reality of what is possible, given constraints and regulations.
- **Recruitment and Retention:** Both Douglas ESD and its member districts struggle with recruiting and retaining staff, a challenge that is exacerbated by broader national trends.
- **Professional Learning Needs:** There are significant professional learning needs within member districts and for new and veteran staff across all departments within Douglas ESD.
- **Contextual Variability:** Different contexts, climates, and cultures across member districts, community partners, and locations throughout the state create a complex operating environment.
- **Standardization vs. Autonomy:** Finding the right balance between standardization and autonomy is challenging in an agency with multiple staff and program locations.
- **Roles and Responsibilities:** The roles and responsibilities within Douglas ESD can be unclear to external customers, complicating efforts to address other challenges effectively.
- **Funding and Legislative Changes:** Shifts in funding, the tax base for education, the expiration of ESSER funds, and largely unfunded legislative mandates present significant hurdles.
- **Communication Channels:** Effective communication channels throughout Douglas ESD are critical to addressing the above challenges, suggesting that improvements in this area could have wide-ranging benefits.

Since staffing is at a critical juncture within DESD, its member districts, and across the country, communication, professional learning, and clarity of connection to DESDis paramount to diminishing the challenges associated with context, expectations, processes and autonomy. Furthermore, those issues are heightened with every new staff member hired both internally and externally



It is very important to note that by-and-large all elements are impacted by the other. Three that stand out and have a pressure hold on the set of challenges resides with context, expectations, processes, and autonomy.

There are three universal constraints to the system of DESD:
- Time
- Money
- People

The universal constraint of resources impacts and connects to the set of interacting challenges

DATA AND THE STORIES WE WANT TO TELL

The Design Team reviewed and analyzed multiple data sources as part of their design process. As mentioned previously, interviews and focus groups were points of feedback data. The annual survey that Douglas ESD distributes was also included. The team also had access to demographic data, budget data, usage data, district data, and community data points. Four "data stories" were created.

The developed stories detail actions, challenges, intended outcomes, and the potential impact of both action and inaction across different sectors within the educational system. Each story is segmented into various themes focusing on improving educational outcomes, teacher support, special education, organizational effectiveness, and early childhood education. The full set of authentic data stories follows this summary. The data stories support all aspects of the design- context, challenges, vision, action, and outcomes. These stories served as one base for the specifications, bold steps, and design keys.

Different data points, such as "decreasing student enrollment across the region with increasing rates of students with identified special education needs and a flat/stagnant state reimbursement percentage for special education" is one that could be its own set of interacting challenges with its own design from a regional perspective. Douglas ESD may be well poised to facilitate such a process with its member districts and communities. This "wicked problem" is not addressed specifically within the Douglas ESD: A New Generation Design. However, the bold steps address implicated actions that may have an influential impact. Furthermore, the data benchmarks section is inclusive of special education rates.

Challenges and Actions:

- Identifying and addressing the direct needs of classroom teachers and practitioners.
- Enhancing professional learning to meet district priorities and the educational focus.
- Addressing the increasing demands and challenges in special education.
- Ensuring organizational effectiveness and empowerment within the Douglas ESD.
- Bridging the gap between early childhood education (ECE) and K-12 systems to enhance readiness and outcomes.

Intended Outcomes:

- Improved student learning and engagement.
- Increased teacher confidence, retention, and access to relevant professional development.
- Reduced costs through effective educational practices and improved administrative efficiency.

- Strengthened tier one interventions and decreased behavioral issues.
- Enhanced early identification and support for children, reducing special education needs.

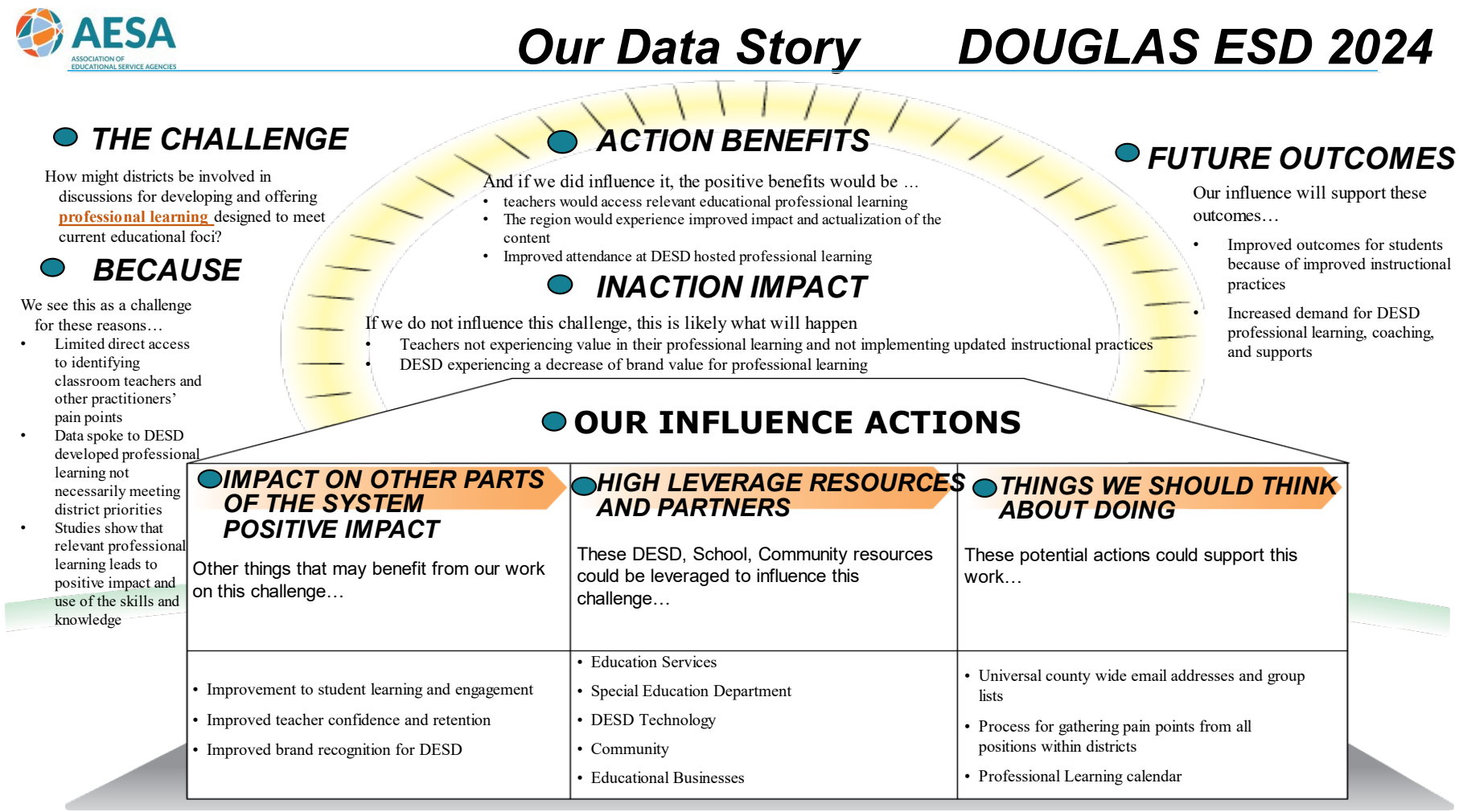
Impact of Inaction:

- Decline in the value and effectiveness of professional learning opportunities.
- Increased teacher burnout and turnover due to lack of support and ineffective practices.
- Negative impacts on student outcomes and classroom environments.
- Economic and educational disparities exacerbated by unaddressed gaps in ECE and K-12 alignment.

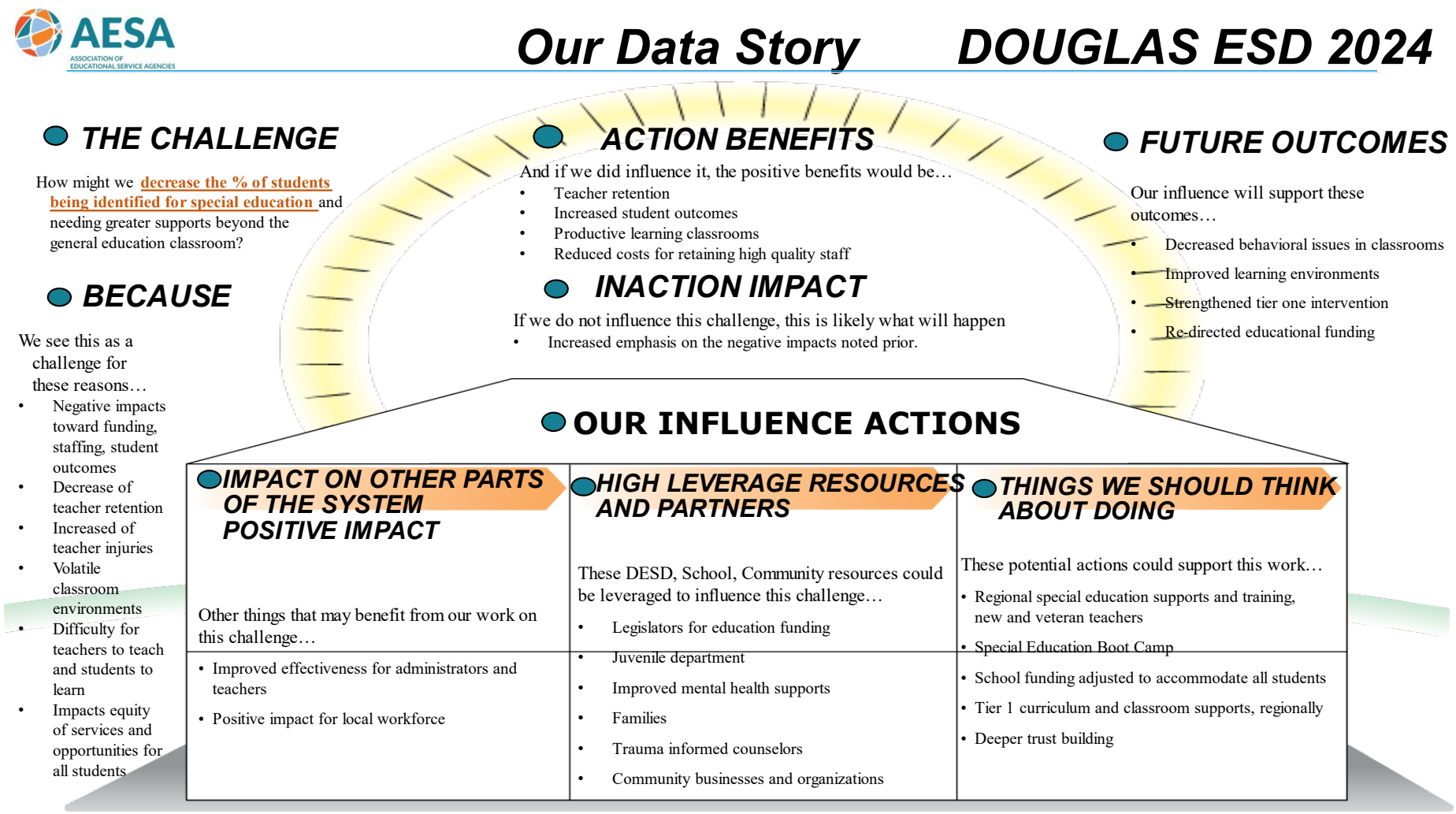
High Leverage Resources and Partners:

- Leveraging technology, community resources, educational businesses, and state officials.
- Collaborative efforts with special education departments, legislators, and mental health support.

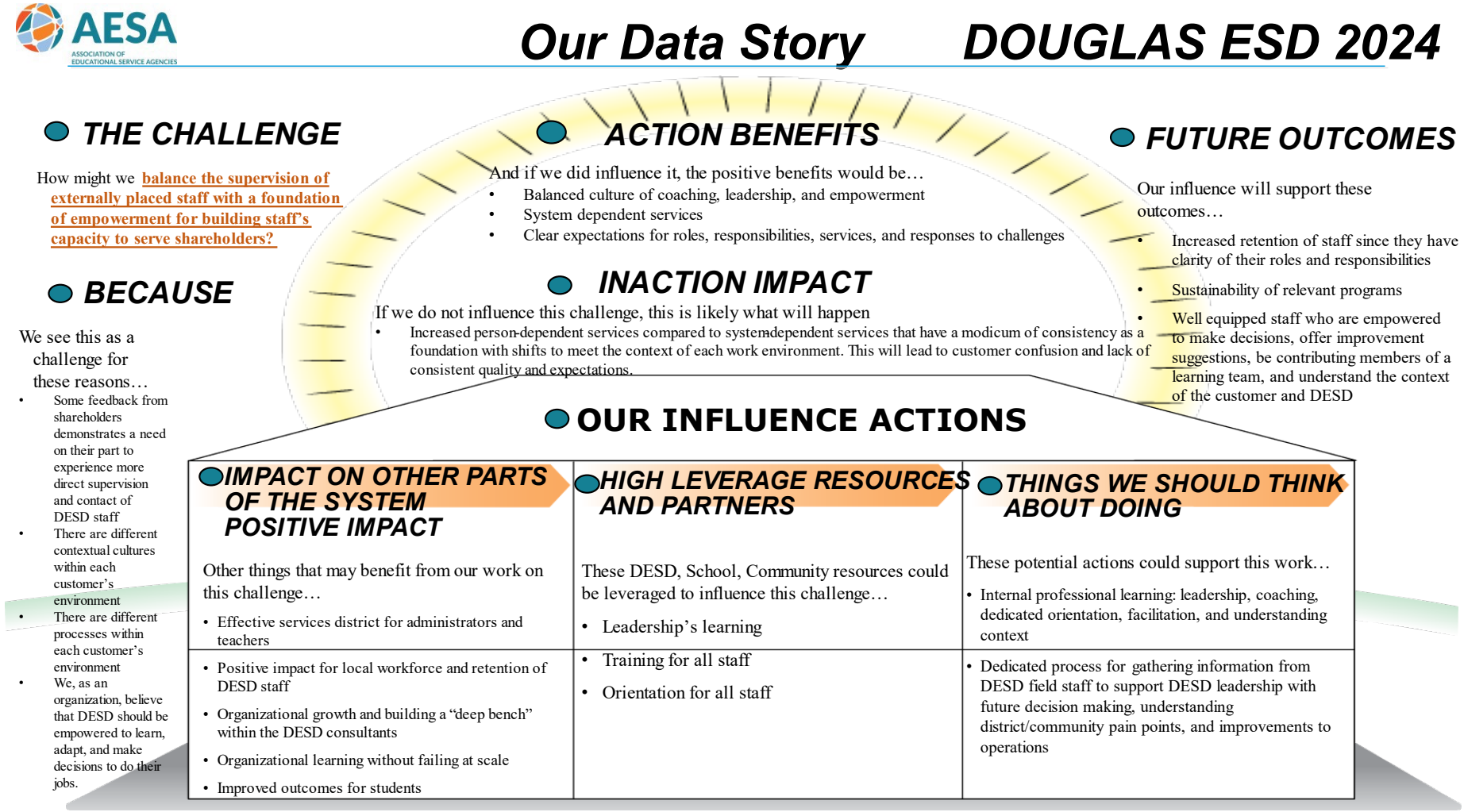
Data Story 1


AESA
ASSOCIATION OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICE AGENCIES
Our Data Story
DOUGLAS ESD 2024
THE CHALLENGE
How might districts be involved in discussions for developing and offering professional learning designed to meet current educational foci?
BECAUSE
We see this as a challenge for these reasons…
• Limited direct access to identifying classroom teachers and other practitioners' pain points
• Data spoke to DESD developed professional learning not necessarily meeting district priorities
• Studies show that relevant professional learning leads to positive impact and use of the skills and knowledge
ACTION BENEFITS
And if we did influence it, the positive benefits would be …
• teachers would access relevant educational professional learning
• The region would experience improved impact and actualization of the content
• Improved attendance at DESD hosted professional learning
INACTION IMPACT
If we do not influence this challenge, this is likely what will happen
• Teachers not experiencing value in their professional learning and not implementing updated instructional practices
• DESD experiencing a decrease of brand value for professional learning
FUTURE OUTCOMES
Our influence will support these outcomes…
• Improved outcomes for students because of improved instructional practices
• Increased demand for DESD professional learning, coaching, and supports
OUR INFLUENCE ACTIONS
IMPACT ON OTHER PARTS OF THE SYSTEM POSITIVE IMPACT
Other things that may benefit from our work on this challenge…
• Improvement to student learning and engagement
• Improved teacher confidence and retention
• Improved brand recognition for DESD
HIGH LEVERAGE RESOURCES AND PARTNERS
These DESD, School, Community resources could be leveraged to influence this challenge…
• Education Services
• Special Education Department
• DESD Technology
• Community
• Educational Businesses
THINGS WE SHOULD THINK ABOUT DOING
These potential actions could support this work…
• Universal county wide email addresses and group lists
• Process for gathering pain points from all positions within districts
• Professional Learning calendar

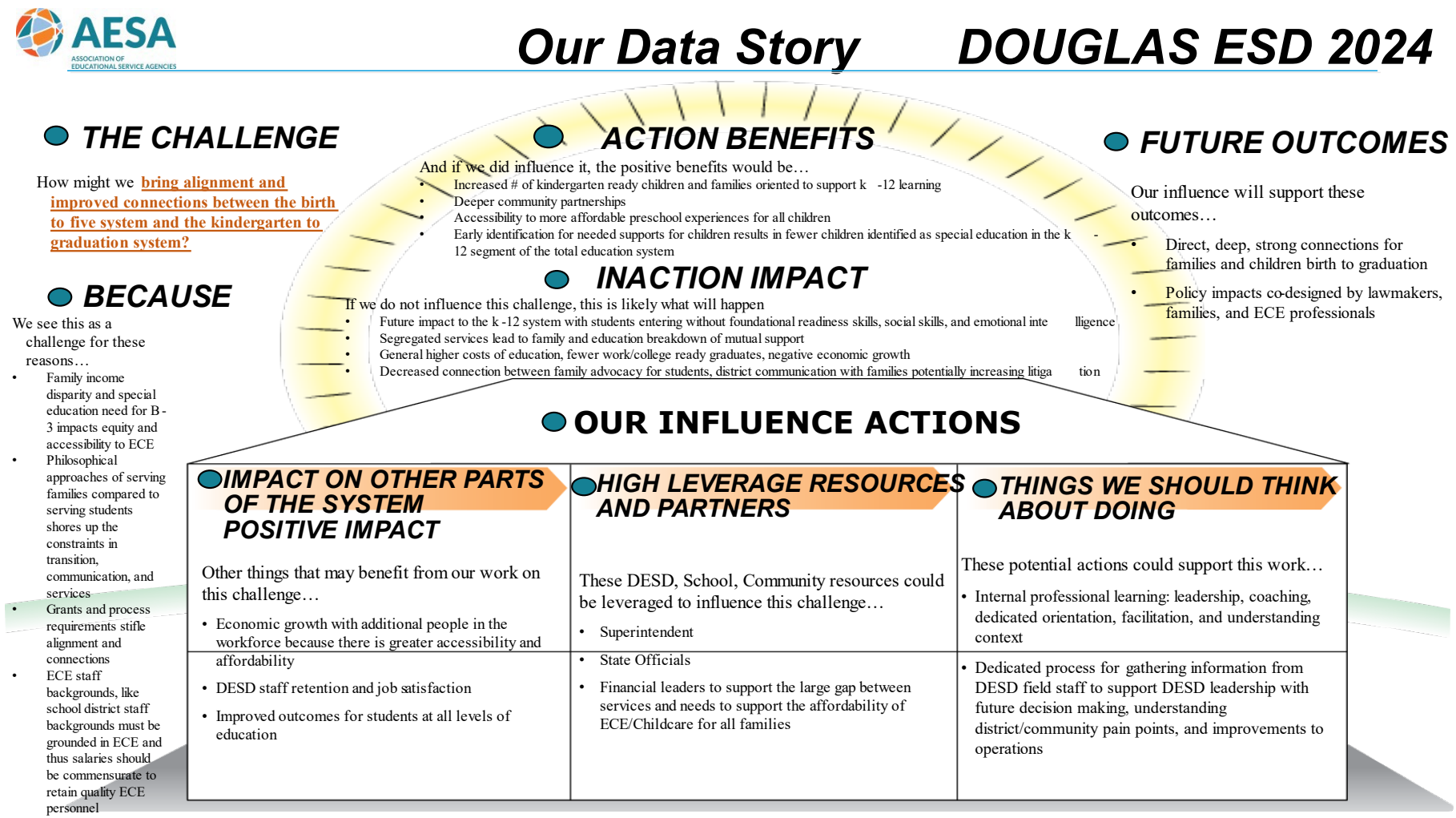
Data Story 2


AESA
ASSOCIATION OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICE AGENCIES
Our Data Story
DOUGLAS ESD 2024
THE CHALLENGE
How might we decrease the % of students being identified for special education and needing greater supports beyond the general education classroom?
BECAUSE
We see this as a challenge for these reasons…
• Negative impacts toward funding, staffing, student outcomes
• Decrease of teacher retention
• Increased of teacher injuries
• Volatile classroom environments
• Difficulty for teachers to teach and students to learn
• Impacts equity of services and opportunities for all students
ACTION BENEFITS
And if we did influence it, the positive benefits would be…
• Teacher retention
• Increased student outcomes
• Productive learning classrooms
• Reduced costs for retaining high quality staff
INACTION IMPACT
If we do not influence this challenge, this is likely what will happen
• Increased emphasis on the negative impacts noted prior.
FUTURE OUTCOMES
Our influence will support these outcomes…
• Decreased behavioral issues in classrooms
• Improved learning environments
• Strengthened tier one intervention
• Re-directed educational funding
OUR INFLUENCE ACTIONS
IMPACT ON OTHER PARTS OF THE SYSTEM POSITIVE IMPACT
Other things that may benefit from our work on this challenge…
• Improved effectiveness for administrators and teachers
• Positive impact for local workforce
HIGH LEVERAGE RESOURCES AND PARTNERS
These DESD, School, Community resources could be leveraged to influence this challenge…
• Legislators for education funding
• Juvenile department
• Improved mental health supports
• Families
• Trauma informed counselors
• Community businesses and organizations
THINGS WE SHOULD THINK ABOUT DOING
These potential actions could support this work…
• Regional special education supports and training, new and veteran teachers
• Special Education Boot Camp
• School funding adjusted to accommodate all students
• Tier 1 curriculum and classroom supports, regionally
• Deeper trust building

Data Story 3


AESA
ASSOCIATION OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICE AGENCIES
Our Data Story DOUGLAS ESD 2024
THE CHALLENGE
How might we balance the supervision of externally placed staff with a foundation of empowerment for building staff's capacity to serve shareholders?
BECAUSE
We see this as a challenge for these reasons…
• Some feedback from shareholders demonstrates a need on their part to experience more direct supervision and contact of DESD staff
• There are different contextual cultures within each customer's environment
• There are different processes within each customer's environment
• We, as an organization, believe that DESD should be empowered to learn, adapt, and make decisions to do their jobs.
ACTION BENEFITS
And if we did influence it, the positive benefits would be…
• Balanced culture of coaching, leadership, and empowerment
• System dependent services
• Clear expectations for roles, responsibilities, services, and responses to challenges
INACTION IMPACT
If we do not influence this challenge, this is likely what will happen
• Increased person-dependent services compared to system-dependent services that have a modicum of consistency as a foundation with shifts to meet the context of each work environment. This will lead to customer confusion and lack of consistent quality and expectations.
FUTURE OUTCOMES
Our influence will support these outcomes…
• Increased retention of staff since they have clarity of their roles and responsibilities
• Sustainability of relevant programs
• Well equipped staff who are empowered to make decisions, offer improvement suggestions, be contributing members of a learning team, and understand the context of the customer and DESD
OUR INFLUENCE ACTIONS
IMPACT ON OTHER PARTS OF THE SYSTEM POSITIVE IMPACT
Other things that may benefit from our work on this challenge…
• Effective services district for administrators and teachers
• Positive impact for local workforce and retention of DESD staff
• Organizational growth and building a "deep bench" within the DESD consultants
• Organizational learning without failing at scale
• Improved outcomes for students
HIGH LEVERAGE RESOURCES AND PARTNERS
These DESD, School, Community resources could be leveraged to influence this challenge…
• Leadership's learning
• Training for all staff
• Orientation for all staff
THINGS WE SHOULD THINK ABOUT DOING
These potential actions could support this work…
• Internal professional learning: leadership, coaching, dedicated orientation, facilitation, and understanding context
• Dedicated process for gathering information from DESD field staff to support DESD leadership with future decision making, understanding district/community pain points, and improvements to operations

Data Story 4


AESA
ASSOCIATION OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICE AGENCIES
Our Data Story
DOUGLAS ESD 2024
THE CHALLENGE
How might we bring alignment and improved connections between the birth to five system and the kindergarten to graduation system?
BECAUSE
We see this as a challenge for these reasons…
• Family income disparity and special education need for B-3 impacts equity and accessibility to ECE
• Philosophical approaches of serving families compared to serving students shores up the constraints in transition, communication, and services
• Grants and process requirements stifle alignment and connections
• ECE staff backgrounds, like school district staff backgrounds must be grounded in ECE and thus salaries should be commensurate to retain quality ECE personnel
ACTION BENEFITS
And if we did influence it, the positive benefits would be…
• Increased # of kindergarten ready children and families oriented to support k -12 learning
• Deeper community partnerships
• Accessibility to more affordable preschool experiences for all children
• Early identification for needed supports for children results in fewer children identified as special education in the k - 12 segment of the total education system
INACTION IMPACT
If we do not influence this challenge, this is likely what will happen
• Future impact to the k-12 system with students entering without foundational readiness skills, social skills, and emotional inte lligence
• Segregated services lead to family and education breakdown of mutual support
• General higher costs of education, fewer work/college ready graduates, negative economic growth
• Decreased connection between family advocacy for students, district communication with families potentially increasing litiga tion
FUTURE OUTCOMES
Our influence will support these outcomes…
• Direct, deep, strong connections for families and children birth to graduation
• Policy impacts co-designed by lawmakers, families, and ECE professionals
OUR INFLUENCE ACTIONS
IMPACT ON OTHER PARTS OF THE SYSTEM POSITIVE IMPACT
Other things that may benefit from our work on this challenge…
• Economic growth with additional people in the workforce because there is greater accessibility and affordability
• DESD staff retention and job satisfaction
• Improved outcomes for students at all levels of education
HIGH LEVERAGE RESOURCES AND PARTNERS
These DESD, School, Community resources could be leveraged to influence this challenge…
• Superintendent
• State Officials
• Financial leaders to support the large gap between services and needs to support the affordability of ECE/Childcare for all families
THINGS WE SHOULD THINK ABOUT DOING
These potential actions could support this work…
• Internal professional learning: leadership, coaching, dedicated orientation, facilitation, and understanding context
• Dedicated process for gathering information from DESD field staff to support DESD leadership with future decision making, understanding district/community pain points, and improvements to operations

INVESTMENTS & INFLUENCERS TO ENCULTURATE Douglas ESD SPECIFICATIONS

As the Design Team's work evolved, it was evident that the agency had four areas of high influence where strategic investments have the potential for making a significant impact for Douglas ESD: A New Generation. Investments of time and focus and making decisions with these areas collectively will lead to long-term resilience and change with positive consequences. The four areas of influence fell into the following investment categories: Student, Staff, Customer and Organizational investments.

Investments and Influencers are meant to guide DESD decisions regarding the resources of Talents, Energies, Attention, Knowledge, and Skills (TEAKS). The question to address is where do we want/need to "spend" our...TEAKS?

Student and Family Growth and Resilience

- Family and child centered well-being supports from early childhood through adulthood
- Clarity of messaging that supports the foundational belief of thriving families, thriving communities, and thriving children and youth
- Collaborative processes across all departments to assure a consistent culture of data acquisition, analysis, action, attitude

Staff Growth and Resilience

- Internal career-connected professional learning based on staff pain points, innovation, and current research
- Specific training and opportunities to support leadership skills
- Dedicated orientations to the Douglas ESD function, structure, processes, and culture balanced with program-specific orientations, mentorship, fellowship, connectedness, and continued learning
- Clearly identified career advancement opportunities, professional learning, and celebrations to support innovation, growth, promotion, and accomplishments
- Connections to the data cycles and decision-making of the organization

Customer Growth and Resilience

- Truly, understanding customer decision criterion and pain points
- Identifying, developing, and implementing innovations and new customer opportunities
- Sunsetting things that no longer serve the customer and/or the organization
- Specific processes for collecting data from external customer-facing staff regarding customer strategy, struggles, and successes

Organizational Growth and Resilience

- Reviews, documentation, and improvements of internal processes- what, how, why, clarity for users, obstacles to access, connections across the delivery platforms
- Dedicated orientations to the Douglas ESD function, structure, processes, and culture balanced with program-specific orientations, mentorship, fellowship, connectedness, and continued learning
- Implementation of a consistently used and analyzed feedback loop within each program or service
- Review opportunities for improving or securing technology-based platforms to support efficiencies in different processes.

These high-influence investment areas also provide Douglas ESD leadership with a way to monitor the ongoing impact of their work using the following ***reflective and strategically aligned questions***. It is recognized that measuring direct correlated impact of the work of an Education Service District is difficult. However, that does not mean that Douglas ESD and its services are not influential in the successes and changes of its partners. This is one reason that a focus on data-information and feedback processes are critical to sharing the story of Douglas ESD and its communities. Furthermore, this focus can give insights to emerging trends. Given the desired and evident need for data-informed processes toward decision making, the underlying current in these questions is "what does the data tell us about…" and "how did we gather the data or what is the feedback saying…"

- **Organizational Investments:** How are we at Douglas ESD serving our customers (*current and future*; *internal and external*) with the right services and products at the right time, in the best manner? What do we need to change or edit? If we exit a service, is it no longer a need or can someone else do it as effectively as us? How might we exit this service responsibly and gracefully or do we need to develop a new business model?
- **Student Investments:** How are our students being served in high-growth environments that offer niche experiences based on premium expectations, and research-based instruction, and are centered on data-identified learner needs? What are we learning about the families in our communities and programs? What are they being successful with and what challenges are they facing?
- **Staff Investments:** How are we supporting and incentivizing the career-connected growth of all staff at Douglas ESD? How are we creating and supporting connectedness in the community for new and returning staff? How are coordinated agency focused orientation and learning sessions impacting staff growth, knowledge, implementation of services, and retention?

- **Customer Investments:** How do we decide upon, experiment with, learn from, design, and implement new products and services to continue to grow our customer base and support communities and partners? What are their decision-making criteria and how do we know that? How are we engaging all partners?
- **Exiting Programs and Services:** Annually, choose several programs or services to review. Consider reviewing at least twenty-five percent, so all are reviewed with this lens within 4 years.
    - Conduct a neutral data review to identify the status of each program or service
        - How is the program or service doing financially?
        - Is it meeting its original intent?
        - What has consumer use looked like over the past few years?
        - Should we keep the program as is, create a new business model, or pivot to another innovation within the program or service?
        - If we did not do this, who would? How critical is this to the members?
        - If others are doing this, why should we continue?
    - How might we responsibly exit the program or service? If we are continuing, how do we manage communication and innovation to keep it relevant?

There is an ART to what we do, and it is hard to teach- how to listen, how to support and coach, how to notice and respond to opportunities, how to stay focused on students when there is so much noise among adults, how to bring people to the table setting to participate equitably- *Design Team Member, Meeting 1*

SPECIFICATIONS

Specifications are key for designers to envision and create the "pathway" to create the product or service. For example, car engineers use design specifications to design a new model of car. Consider how current car designers and engineers brought to the market the new electric and hybrid vehicles, particularly if they were key to the development of gasoline powered cars. BIG SHIFT! in thinking and working! This may prove to be true for Douglas ESD.

For DESD to serve, deliver, intentionally grow, and thrive, specifications for the integrated system of DESD: A New Generation, are imperative and will be a cornerstone for nimbleness, learning, and improving.

The Douglas ESD design team used these specifications, derived from the interviews and data, to drive (*pun intended*) the structure and processes in the New Generation design. These specifications will support the future of Douglas ESD as an innovative and responsive education organization to be a member of, to work at, and with whom to partner. *It is important to note that the specifications license the leadership to change the organizational structure, implement new procedures, and assess all potential and historical programs and services in a communicated and understandable manner.*

The ***specifications should be read as a set*** (not as a prioritized list) whose elements contain interacting, reinforcing, and connecting messages.

The new generation of Douglas ESD will be an organization that supports:

- The collective impact of family connection and engagement as a necessity for thriving children, students, households, schools, and communities.
- A clear and measured regional voice in policymaking and legislation.
- A structure aligned for efficiency, effectiveness, clarity of roles and functions with flexible processes to support the agency's internal operations and external interactions
- A focus on data and context to promote the co-creation, small scale testing, and design of aligned, innovative solutions that focus on supporting capacity development for schools, families, and communities.
- Deliberate and transparent communication resulting in trust, deserved brand reputation, and a clear understanding of the comprehensive set of high-quality services designed to meet the needs of customers.
- Processes to promote strategic decision making that balances innovation, capacity to deliver, regional priorities, relevance, and adaptability.

- Staff with the resources to do their jobs well who continuously develop their knowledge and skills to meet evolving challenges and opportunities in recognition of their role in the organization's success
- A robust system to manage organizational knowledge and standard operating procedures that includes known and repeatable processes, performance data, a means of capturing current knowledge, and a means of sharing and acting on what is known.
- A growth mindset through intentional evidence-based, data-driven, integrated, and evaluative processes regarding the effectiveness and efficiency of programs and services.

Design what you want; Implement what you can when you can.

The future can be influenced and opportunities leveraged toward the design.

-Dr. Susan Leddick

THE SYSTEM OF Douglas ESD: A New Generation

As previously mentioned, a system is made of elements and dimensions that support the *whole*. We know each system has four overarching elements:

- the context within the organization is operating,
- the function of the organization
- the structures that support the function to be effective
- the processes that support the efficiencies and work/product flow to be accomplished.

Up to this point, we have explained the design process, the dimensions, the context, the set of interacting challenges, and the resulting specifications. Let's turn to how the design team journeyed through their work to address function, structure, and processes.

The design team grappled with the question: If you could have what you want, what would you have?

Function

One might see the function of the organization reflected in a description of the organization and the focus of the goals. The function for Douglas ESD is evident in the mission for all of Oregon's ESDs: *To assist school districts and the Department of Education in achieving Oregon's educational goals by providing equitable, high-quality, cost-effective, and locally responsive educational services at a regional level.* Douglas ESD very adeptly serves the greater Douglas County region and delivers service and programs in collaboration with other counties, some as far as 5 hours away.

Structure

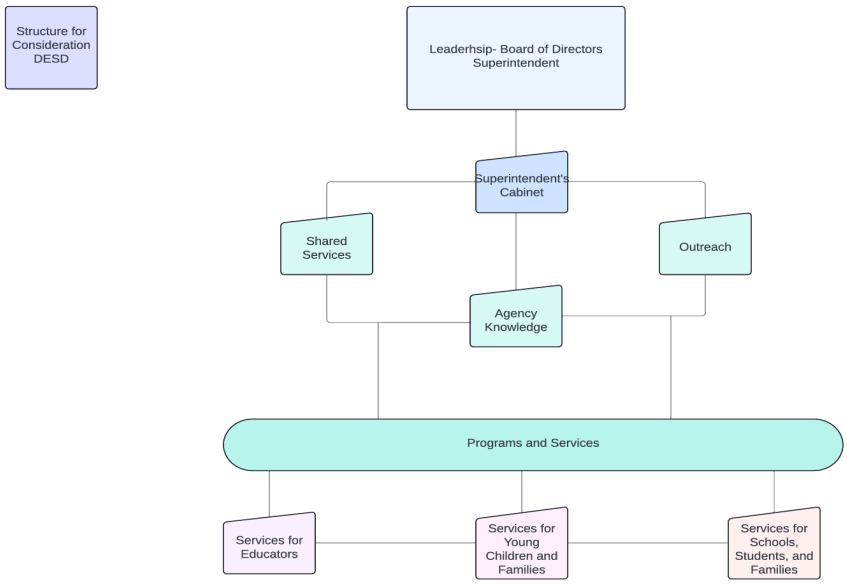
The organization has grown in both size and kind. While some of the growth is contributed to the needs of its customers because of the pandemic, most of it is contributed to intentional decision-making to bring solutions to the pain points of their educational community locally. While the defined organizational chart, depicting reporting and supervision responsibilities, might clarify supervision, it does not represent the organization's actual work. Another organizational chart used within Douglas ESD identifies names and titles of staff with managing and coordinating responsibilities; it does not serve to communicate their work or the services for which they have responsibility. To be clear, they both serve a purpose and can be improved upon to include platforms of work, communication with the customers and communities served, and interaction within Douglas ESD.

Douglas ESD: A New Generation will require new ways to work together across the agency and together with partners. These transitions can be approached gently, over time, and as opportunities come into view- as an employee retires, a new service needs to be delivered, or a

new budget is developed for a new year. The new ways may require role and title changes. For example, the new role of Operations Coordinator is a perfect example of the structure supporting the work and acknowledging the growing complexities of the organization.

The structure of an organization should support how work can be accomplished effectively and efficiently, how natural interactions happen, and how to incentivize collaboration. Based on the Design Team's work, the data reviews, and comments from those interviewed, the following should be considered, tested, and implemented over time.

- **Create a primary single point of contact with Douglas ESD for each member district.** This role is the outreach to the district and:
    - has responsibility for understanding their pain points
    - is a first step to assisting with solutions to a problem
    - connects with Douglas ESD serving that district to understand the integration of solutions that Douglas ESD brings to the district
- **Develop a platform structure for integration across the agency and to ensure a balanced approach to individual and organizational impact**. The platforms should have integrated strategy and tactical meetings and learn about their internal and external communities to assist with leadership, nimbleness, co-creation, and responsiveness. It is important to note that each platform does not necessarily need to have a designated new hired leader, rather it can be helpful to think of the platforms as collaborative work units that meet, plan, share, create, and work together and bring others into their work unit often to bring the right talents and skills together when needed. Refer to the *Growth of Programs* process chart in the addendum to see how this type of structure can incentivize and support collaboration and co-creation using the TEAKS of the organization.



Elements of the Structure for Douglas ESD Consideration

- Leadership
    - Board and Superintendent
    - Leadership Cabinet
        - Superintendent designed
            - Primary Points of Contact
            - Operations Coordinator
            - Members of Shared Services and Programs and Services
- Shared Services- those services that support the internal work of the organization
    - Talent Support and Engagement
    - Technology for effective working environments
    - Operations for daily administrative, locational, logistical, quality, and compliance requirements
    - Financial Stewardship
    - Event and Conference supports
- Agency Knowledge
    - Grants
    - Data housing and analysis
    - Incubation of experiments for innovation
    - Repository for talents and skills within the organization
- Outreach and Partner Relationships
    - Needs Assessments' development
    - Communication and Promotion
    - Repository of Partners and their goals and connections to Douglas ESD and its communities
- Programs and Services
    - Services for Educators
    - Services for Young Children and Families
    - Services for Schools, Students, and Families

Processes

As previously mentioned, measuring direct correlated impact of the work of an Education Service District is difficult. It should be noted that this is a constraint on all education service agencies nationally. However, that does not mean that Douglas ESD and its services are not influential in the successes and changes of its partners. This is one reason that a focus on data-information and feedback processes are critical to sharing the story of Douglas ESD and its communities. Furthermore, this focus can give insights to emerging trends. Given the desired

and evident need for data-informed processes toward decision making, the underlying current is "what does the data tell us about…" and "how did we gather the data or what is the feedback saying…"

Douglas ESD currently does collect multiple data points. The challenge is that there needs to be a standardization of collecting, accessing, analyzing, learning from, and acting upon the information- The Douglas ESD Data Way. One consideration is to:

- Gather data,
- Have a common repository for summaries of department/division/program data
- Quarterly have data days (these might be able to move to 2 times per year as staff become adept at a standard process)

One method to look at data might be a protocol like Describe, Ascribe, Prescribe

- describe the data,
- ascribe correlations/connections,
- identify the "why" of a success, identify the "why of challenges,
- prescribe action

The facilitators of the design process suggest that leadership also consider looking at "Bright Spots" based on the definition of bright spots from the "why of a success" as described by Dan and Chip Heath in their book *Switch*[4] , also told by Dan Heath in this video, *Dan Heath: How to Find Bright Spots*[5]

Just as design itself calls for thinking of both the whole and the parts of the system together, one must look at *Douglas ESD: A New Generation* design the same way. As the design team identified the system for Douglas ESD and the challenge of needing to update and document processes came to light. This was such a pressing issue and identified early in the design discussions, that the facilitators and leadership set aside a day for "process mapping."

To the organization's credit, 40 staff were recruited to participate in 7 different process teams. While this is a large dedication of resources, it was masterfully crafted. Each team was multi-dimensional, in that each team had a variety of people with different roles and responsibilities in the organization. The teams mapped processes for both current and desired ways of doing things. Pictures of the maps designed are included in the addendum of this report.

---

[4] Heath, C., & Heath, D. (2011). *Switch*. Random House Business Books.

[5] Heath, D. (2010, September 15). *How to Find Bright Spots*. YouTube. Retrieved April 8, 2024, from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zbLNOS7MxFc

Teams designed processes in the following areas:

- Employee onboarding
- Contract processes
- CPAN process
- Growth of programs
- Referral process
- Feedback loops
- Travel reimbursement

As teams worked and learned, the excitement was palpable. They began to identify places where efficiencies could be found and where software could be used to their advantage. This learning will serve the organization with, the obvious of, both effectiveness and efficiency. It will further support seamless transitions during periods of succession and new hiring.

BOLD STEPS

The final aspect of the design process is the identification of bold steps to provide a strategy for the organization as it begins the journey toward *Douglas ESD: A New Generation*.

A key to success will be clear and measured communication with intentional and opportunity driven implementation.

The Design Team identified these bold steps thanks to their comprehensive and collective effort to understand their current context and the needs of internal and external stakeholders. In fact, the study and dialogue were so rich and insightful, we also have potential actions with each bold step that are aligned with the investments Douglas ESD wants to make for the Organization, Students, Staff, and Customers. This will undoubtedly support their commitment to delivering on their mission and values, including the ongoing development of an inclusive environment.

Implementation, like design, is an iterative process, and the Executive Leadership team will be responsible for managing how plans are designed and actions are implemented over time. These are the Bold Steps identified by the Douglas ESD Design Team.

- Student Growth/Achievement and Family Engagement
- Talent Management for Douglas ESD and Member Districts
- Agency Structure and Processes
- Relationships and Partnerships

"The difficulty is not on coming up with new ideas, but to undo the old ones"

China Café Fortune Cookie, 1/20/2023

The Bold Steps with Design Keys below will assist Douglas ESD with potential actions.

Bold Steps with Design Keys

Student Growth/Achievement and Family Engagement

Focus on Student Growth and Achievement

- Enhance educational programming for all students, infants, toddlers, and preschoolers served by Douglas ESD through relevant curricular supports and instructional strategies
- Co-create programs with relevant partners focused on learner-centered progress and aligned to identified strategic priorities (e.g., state, district, community, families)
- Highlight and celebrate growth and achievement within the Douglas ESD educational community

Strengthen Family Engagement

- Increase focus on the alignment of and transitions between programs serving all children and students, including early intervention, preschool and school age.
- Review current family support systems, including relationships with partners and organizational capacity, to serve families fully.
- Study feasibility and experiment with the role of a family liaison, including support for required family engagement

Talent Management for Douglas ESD and Member Districts

Organizational Talent

- Orientation and community building are designed to attract and retain top talent while fostering resilience and paving the way for successful succession planning.
    - Design an orientation program for newcomers, introducing them to Douglas ESD and the surrounding areas to promote a strong connection with the workplace and community.
    - Create networking and community-building initiatives to enhance employee engagement and collaboration across the agency.
- Comprehensive, data driven and balanced professional learning plan that addresses the diverse needs of the workforce, from new hires to seasoned staff, utilizing performance insights to tailor initiatives to meet the unique requirements of:
    - New employees: Integrate them into the organization and local community, fostering a sense of belonging.
    - Experienced staff: Offer advanced learning opportunities to further their development and engagement.
    - Specific divisions: Provide division-tailored information and resources to enhance functional expertise.

    - Individual roles: Customize training to the distinct responsibilities of each job position.
    - Program locations: Address the unique needs and challenges of different organizational sites.
- Identify and communicate Douglas ESD performance indicators and professional learning to support:
    - A customer centered orientation/view
    - Facilitation, coaching and instructional supports, assuring unique, value-centered learning environments and experiences
    - Inclusion of family perspectives in learner-centered decision making

School District Talent

- With a focus on attracting, retaining, and fostering resilience in employees, building competencies, and planning for succession, create and offer to member districts a plan that they can adopt or use Douglas ESD to deliver that offers:
    - Induction information and learning
    - Professional learning to support specific content area roles and responsibilities
    - Residencies and on the job training type programs for hard to fill positions

Agency Structure and Processes

Optimize Douglas ESD organizational impact

- Single Point of Contact for Member Districts and Communities
    - Study and design a structure and supporting process that focuses on member districts knowing their point of contact at Douglas ESD for information and solutions.
    - As indicated by the study, implement a structure and supporting process to focus on member districts knowing their point of contact at Douglas ESD for information and solutions.
- Increase visibility and advocacy at the state level on behalf of students, families, schools, and communities.
- Revise existing processes and/or introduce new ones that are adaptable to meet the dynamic needs of both internal operations and external engagements.

Strengthen data informed planning and decision-making protocols aimed at enhancing capacity development for schools, families, and communities.

- Develop, monitor, and assess key benchmarks and indicators

- Institutionalize assessment and continuous improvement processes based on feedback data, experimentation, institutional learning, and available resources
    - Assure communication with member districts, families, and communities through a formal feedback loop for each program and service
- Implement intentional evaluation processes for both new and existing programs and services to ensure relevance and effectiveness
    - Determine exit strategies for programs and services that are no longer relevant or valuable, considering factors such as declining demand or shifting priorities.
    - Develop criteria to assess the value of implementation during the initial phases of new program or service development, ensuring alignment with organizational goals and objectives.
- Explore the potential for new service or business models to enhance value and relevance
    - Engage in experimentation to validate assumptions and devise practical implementation strategies
    - Facilitate collaboration, iterative testing, and innovative solution design

Grants Management

- Review and improve the current processes for grant management including
    - Mapping the current processes, finding efficiencies, experimenting with ideas, implementing successes
    - Studying the feasibility of a staff position who will:
        - Collaborate with departments on grant strategy and partnerships
        - Write, manage, and complete all reporting requirements for agency grants
    - Strategically implement finding from the feasibility study
        - Conduct a 6-month experiment to assess success.
        - Analyze the outcomes comprehensively.
- Implement recommendations for either position termination or process improvements based on the analysis.

Relationships and Partnerships

Clarity of Purpose for Partnerships

- Define partnerships and how they support the work of Douglas ESD.
- Develop a systemic process for identifying and selecting appropriate partners when developing new programs and services

- Evaluate the value of a partnership in any program, assuring all partners are aligned with organizational and program strategy

Data to Benchmark

Across the country, Education Service Agencies like Douglas ESD face the challenge of linking their efforts to tangible improvements in education outcomes and student achievement. Often, the nature of the work is indirect, operating one step removed from the students themselves. While this makes some of the data currently difficult to collect, Douglas ESD could influence county governments and state departments to develop a data collection methodology to include the indicators they have identified.

Despite these challenges, Douglas ESD is committed to a proactive approach in evaluating and learning from key educational and community indicators. Douglas ESD aims to refine and enhance future strategies to support communities, partner organizations, families, and school districts more effectively. By focusing on these indicators, Douglas ESD seeks to bridge the gap between its activities and their impact on education, ensuring that our contributions lead to meaningful, measurable improvements. *Douglas ESD: A New Generation* will be well served to cache 2023-2024 as baseline points and review annually, communicate to all partners, share data stories, and celebrate improvements (Bright Spots.)

Education Indicators

- Staff retention
    - Douglas ESD staff retention
    - Member district staff retention
- Children and Students
    - Demographics for all program areas and subgroups
        - Enrollment
        - Performance and Achievement
        - Graduation Rates for Member Districts
    - Review Douglas ESD services aligned to student growth, instructional practice, and leadership learning

Community Indicators

- Substance abuse
- Stable and attached families
- Poverty rates
- Labor/Employment
    - Students entering the workforce directly from high school
    - Students returning to their home community after college/military

PLANNING FOR IMPLEMENTATION

As a planning method, design gives leaders a long view of the future they and other stakeholders want for the organization, not a future they are doomed to inherit. Excitement around the many possibilities propels the natural human desire to create something worthwhile, which energizes the organization and its members to keep the continuous improvement efforts alive.

This design alone will not move Douglas ESD forward, of course. That will take leadership, thoughtful planning, and hard work. That said, the design plan for Douglas ESD should be utilized by staff, leaders, and Board for planning for the next three to five years. At that point, proactive organizations need to repeat the design process to consider the ever-changing context and reflect on the organization's efforts toward continuous improvement. Annually, a new set of bold steps should be crafted through systematic evaluation processes, adjusting strategic focus areas, as necessary. With a clear design vision and iterative planning processes and implementation efforts aligned to that vision, *Douglas ESD: A New Generation* will become a reality.