



National Equity Project (NEP) “Equity Network Team” Progress Update

District 90 Board of Education Meeting

November 16, 2020

National Equity Project (NEP) Midwest District Network Goals, Year 2

- ▶ Deepen skill in implementing Liberatory Design principles and collaborative inquiry processes to address equity challenges
- ▶ Maximize and benefit from the Network's collective knowledge and learning across districts
- ▶ Center students' voices and experiences in our work, formalize student leadership structures, and implement learning partnerships with students as co-designers
- ▶ Building influence within districts through District Network Teams
- ▶ Develop strategies to influence system level decision making and policy improvements

Equity Network Districts/School Partners

- ▶ Battle Creek (MI) Public Schools
- ▶ Bloomfield Hills (MI) Public Schools
- ▶ Chicago Public Schools Partner Schools:
 - Dunbar, Kanoon, Walter Payton, Walsh
- ▶ Forest Park (IL) District 91
- ▶ Madison (WI) Metropolitan School District
- ▶ Oak Park (IL) District 97
- ▶ River Forest (IL) District 90
- ▶ Rockford (IL) Public Schools

Learning Experiences/Opportunities

NEP Network:

- ▶ Full Network Convenings
- ▶ Role Affinity Meetings
- ▶ Training Webinars
- ▶ Role Mentoring/Coaching

District 90 Equity Network Team:

- ▶ Full Team Meetings
- ▶ Leadership/Planning Meetings

District 90 Equity Network Team Members

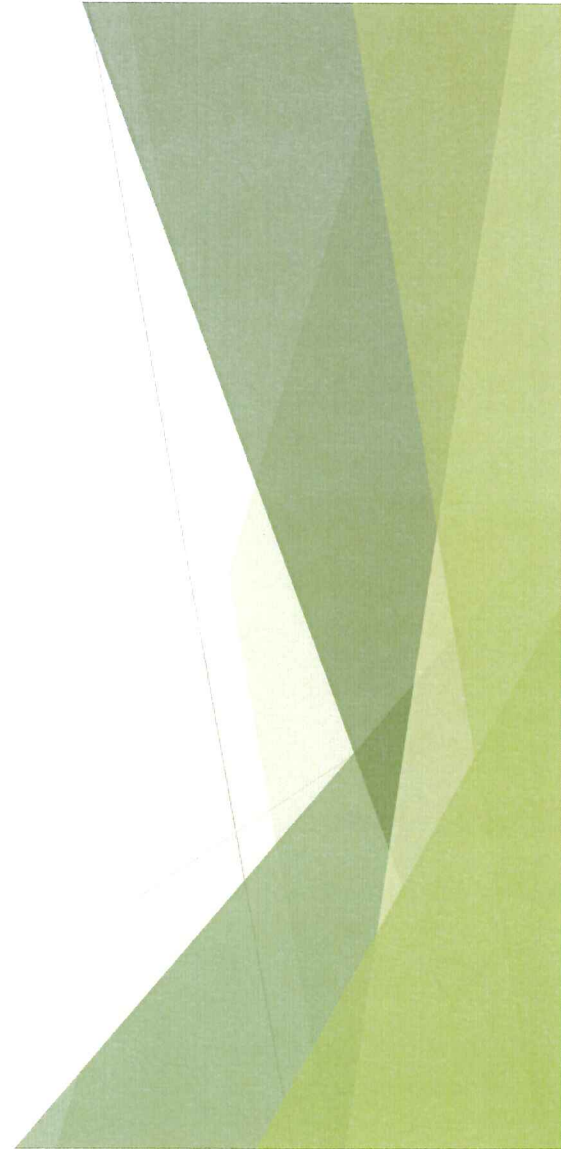
- ▶ Andrea Costin - Willard Elementary Teacher
- ▶ Casey Godfrey - Lincoln Elementary Principal
- ▶ Lindsay Johnson - RMS Art Teacher
- ▶ Doris Huang - Willard Elementary EL Teacher
- ▶ Denise Matthews - Director of Special Education
- ▶ Tristan Rogers - Lincoln Elementary Teacher
- ▶ Stacey Williams - BOE Member
- ▶ Jessica Atkinson - RMS Social Worker
- ▶ Lisa Minish - RMS Orchestra Teacher
- ▶ Tiffanie Torrisi - MTSS/Special Education Facilitator
- ▶ Ed Condon - Superintendent

VERTICAL TEAM STRUCTURE

D90 Equity Network Team - Year 2

Objectives:

- ❑ Finalize consensus around our “greatest equity challenge”
- ❑ Establish student members on our D90 team as co-designers to increase voice
- ❑ Launch programming that fosters expanded relationships among members of our school community (especially student/staff)
 “Co-Pilot/Elevate” (Stanford University, PERTS)
- ❑ Document learning and outcomes to inform iterative “Liberatory Design” inquiry cycle for improvement
- ❑ Expand leadership structure to lessen hierarchical impacts on decision-making



More To Come . . .

Questions?

Thank you!



Midwest District Network: YEAR TWO

What can we learn from this moment of explosive innovation about how to create more liberatory experiences in our districts, schools and classrooms?

What future will we create by the conscious actions we take today?

As we navigate a time of unprecedented global upheaval and disruption of our basic social systems, it is imperative that the coming year is guided by resilient, humanizing, bold and innovative educational leaders (#rebelleaders). The crisis is far from over, but if we lean into learning and acting courageously now, things will never be the same again. Rebel leadership now requires that each of us SEE the system, ENGAGE and ACT differently than we ever have before.

NETWORK ASPIRATION:

Every student emerges from K-12 schooling with strong academic skills, social-emotional wellness and intelligence, a sense of agency and civic responsibility, an awareness and appreciation of their multiple identities and a broader set of competencies that equip them to be healthy, happy contributing adults who can make a positive change in the world.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

What do we understand about how our schools and institutions are (or aren't) creating experiences of belonging for our young people, and what is needed to ensure that our systems support engaging, meaningful, culturally sustaining responsive learning environments in which every child belongs and thrives?

NETWORK DESIGN & GOALS:

Through monthly virtual learning sessions, consultancies and collaborative inquiry, teams will engage in facilitated cross-district learning.

Where we've been...

During Year 1 (2019-2020) of our Network we:

- Formed vertical district design teams and began to learn how to work collaboratively across our roles as central office, site-based, teacher, school board, and student leaders
- Were introduced to *NEP's Leading for Equity Framework* - and learned core practices and mindsets for leading with *Equity, Complexity, Liberatory Design*
- Reviewed data and coalesced around a priority student centered equity challenge in our system
- Began using a Liberatory Design process to learn about this equity challenge; by listening to students, observing, conducting surveys, implementing Co-Pilot/Elevate,

and reflecting with our colleagues and within in our design team

Where we are going...

During Year 2 (2020-2021) of our Network we will:

- Deepen our skill and implementation of Liberatory Design and collaborative inquiry processes to make progress on our student centered Equity Challenges
- Maximize and benefit from the Network’s collective genius and support through public sharing of work and learning across districts
- Center students’ voices and experiences, formalize student leadership structures and implement Learning Partnerships focused on working collaboratively with students as co-designers
- Expand our influence within our districts by engaging our site and district colleagues and teams in collaborative inquiry and learning.
- Develop a strategy for and begin to influence system level decision making and policy changes based on our learning.

Year Two Outcomes

1. Each vertical **District Equity Design Team** will revisit and revise a **Team Charter** that identifies:
 - a. **Specific Student Centered Equity Challenges** that the team is taking leadership for learning about and addressing.
 - b. The % of students, teachers, site and central office leaders that will be actively engaged in the **Liberatory Design Inquiry Cycles** focused on making measurable progress on the prioritized Student Centered Equity Challenge.
 - c. The measurement process they will use, co-designed with students as indicators of increased student belonging, engagement and experience of success
2. Each team will recruit and support the participation of **at least two student leaders** as co-designers on the team.
3. Teams will document **changes made in practices and policies** at the classroom, school, and systems level in support of making progress on the equity challenge and increasing student engagement, belonging, and agency.
4. Teams will **document learning and outcomes** related to increased student engagement, belonging, and agency and progress on equity challenge.

Time Commitment:

Who?	What?	Time?
Full Network	Monthly Virtual Network Convenings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Network Community Building and Public Sharing of Approaches and Learning ● Professional Learning Sessions responsive to Network member needs and requests 	3 hours/month

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Role-Alike Affinity Groups to build leadership capacity and skill 	
District Equity Design Teams	<p>Meet as a vertical team to engage in on-going collaborative inquiry using the Liberatory Design Process and focused on making progress on the team's identified Equity Challenge. District Equity Design teams will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● review quantitative and qualitative data ● reflect on learning ● strategize and plan for engaging more site-level and central office team members in the work ● co-design prototypes and tests of change ● plan for implementation of changes ● measure progress and share results 	Minimum of 2 hours/month
District Equity Design Team "Leads"	Monthly leadership coaching available to build capacity of team leaders to convene and lead the team in focused Liberatory Design and Learning Partnership processes	2 hours/month
Collaborative Inquiry - Liberatory Design Sessions with school and district colleagues.	Network participants meet monthly with collaborators, e.g., teachers engage with their site-level teacher teams; principals meet with teacher partners or other administrators, teachers meet with students, etc.	Minimum 1 hour/month

**We will distribute a draft calendar for you all to respond to before confirming dates.

Network Fees Due to generous funding support from our Foundation Partners, we are able to offer the substantially subsidized cost of \$20,000/per district team, per year. This includes all Network Convenings and 2 hours per month of NEP Coaching Support to teams and individuals.

***Districts will be invoiced for Year 2 Network fee in July 2020.*

National Equity Project: Midwest District Network (Virtual) Engagement Calendar 2020 - 21*

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER
Vertical Design Teams Meet & Co-Pilot/Elevate Student Data Collection Resumes

October 22**	November 18	November 20	December 17	January 20
9:00a - 1:00p CT 10:00a - 2:00p ET	See Below	See Below	10:00a - 12:00p CT 11:00a - 1:00p ET	12:00p - 3:00p CT 1:00p - 4:00p ET
Year 2 Kick-Off!	Role Affinity Principals 10a - 12p CT/11a - 1p ET Superintendents 3p - 5p CT/4p - 6p ET	Role Affinity Central Office 8a - 10a CT/9a - 11a ET Teachers 12p - 2p CT/1p - 3p ET	Webinar	Mid-Year Convening
February 23	February 24	March 18	April 14	May 19
See Below	See Below	10:00a - 12:00p CT 11:00a - 1:00p ET	10:00a - 12:00p CT 11:00a - 1:00p ET	12:00p - 3:00p CT 1:00p - 4:00p ET
Role Affinity Principals 10a - 12p CT/11a - 1p ET Teachers 3p - 5p CT/4p - 6p ET	Role Affinity Central Office 10a - 12p CT/11a - 1p ET Superintendents 3p - 5p CT/4p - 6p ET	Webinar	Webinar	End of Year Convening

**Extended the Year 2 Kick-off from 3 hours to 4 hours

*As in year 1, the design of each convening is subject to shift given your feedback and needs as the year progresses.



LIBERATORY DESIGN MINDSETS

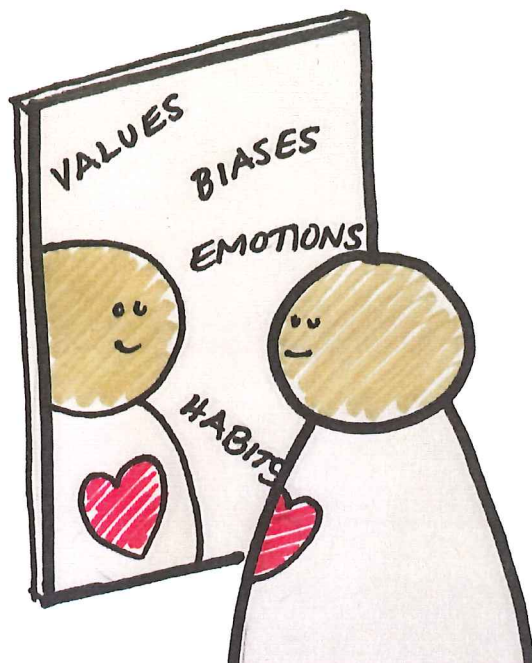
Liberatory Design Mindsets

The Liberatory Design Mindsets are evolutions of the design mindsets commonly used at the Stanford d.school.

They have been enhanced with the explicit intention of building Liberatory Design leaders through a collaboration between the National Equity Project and the Stanford d.school's K12 Lab.

The goal is to develop the Liberatory Design muscles held within us all. As we build our own muscles, it allows others who work with us to develop the **equity-centered creative agency** to solve their own problems in community with others.

Tania Anaissie, Victor Cary, David Clifford, Tom Malarkey, Susie Wise



Practice Self-Awareness

We design from who we are. So we need a clear "mirror" to better see how who we are shapes what we see, how we relate, and how we design.

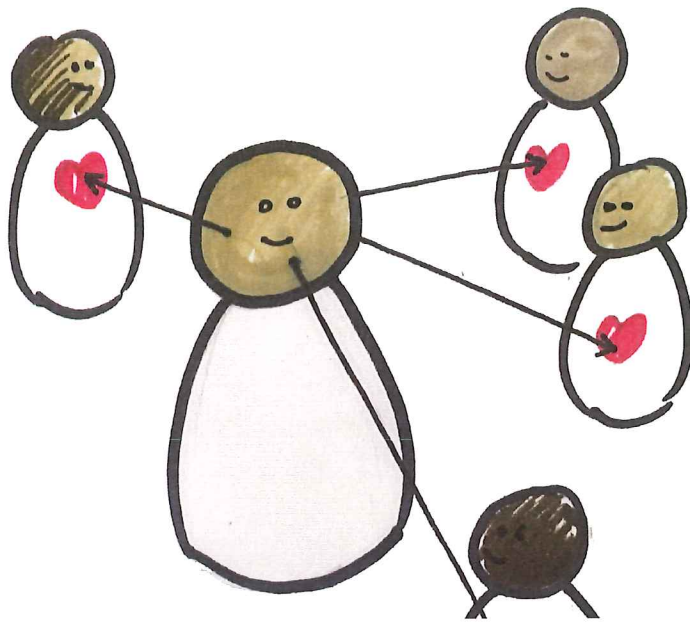
Practice Self-Awareness

Why?

Liberatory Design requires we minimize the harmful effects of our blind spots and maximize the potential for non-oppressive partnerships. Liberatory Design has the potential to change us to the extent we work with humility, curiosity and courage.

How

- Ask yourself, "How am I positioned (relative to privilege and/or oppression) in all aspects of my identities (e.g. race, class, gender, language)?"
- Ask yourself, "How might these identities impact people and our process?"
- Surface what you don't know. Ask yourself, "What is unfamiliar to me here?"
- Challenge your assumptions.
- Expand your equity consciousness by seeking out new information about privilege and oppression.



Focus on Human Values

Seek as many ways as possible to get to know your end users including immersion, observation, and co-design.

Focus on Human Values

Why?

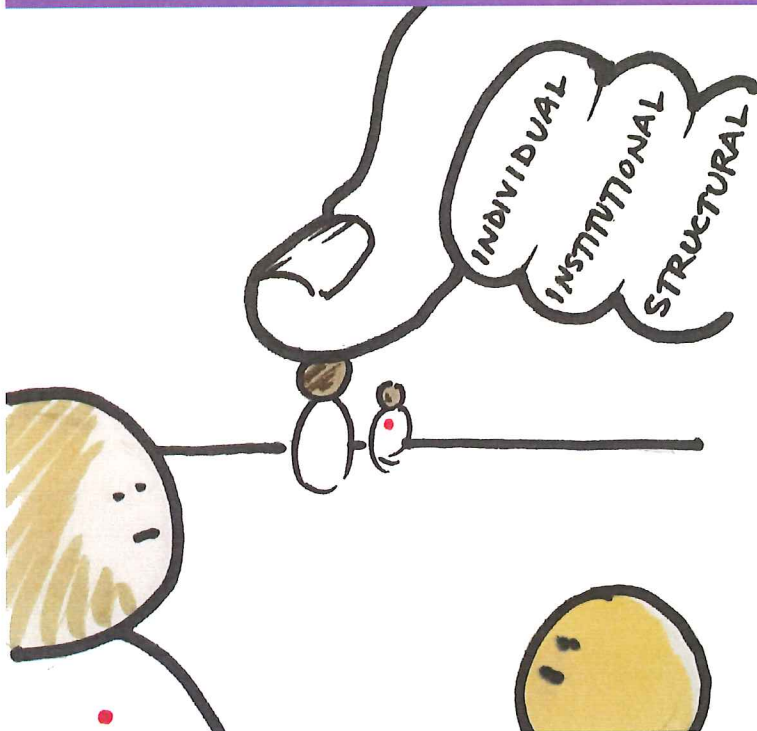
In order to create change that empowers communities from the inside-out, we must place users at the center of all our work. They are the experts on the challenges that face their community.

To do this as designers, we must invest in getting to know the community and honor the stories they share with us.

In addition, we must honor human values on our own design teams and make time for emotions.

How

- Listen from a place of love. Be humble and acknowledge that you are not the expert.
- Honor the stories, experiences, and emotions people share with you.
- Stay connected to the community in all phases of the project.
- Engage in collective sense-making.



Recognize Oppression

Our designs depend on how we frame a challenge. So we need a clear "window" to see how oppression may be at play in our context.

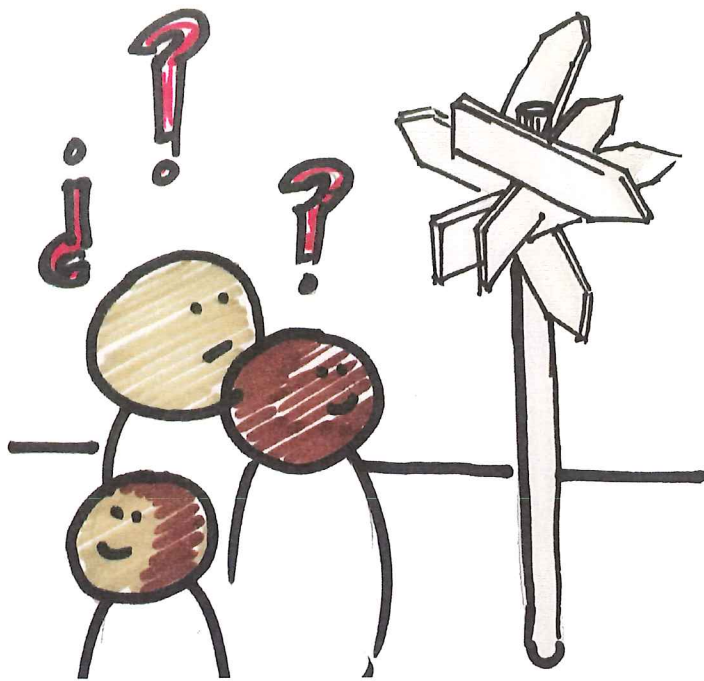
Recognize Oppression

Why?

The people we are designing with and the challenges they face do not sit in a vacuum. If we are able to see root causes and systemic inequities more clearly, our design work has the potential to address deeper needs. Our design process should build our capacity to recognize oppression at play at individual, institutional, and structural levels.

How

- Ask, "What identity-related patterns and inequities are we seeing in this context?"
- Ask, "What barriers are in the way of achieving equitable outcomes?"
- Ask, "What might be some unintended consequences of our designs?"
- Ask, "What is this community's experience with 'design' and how does that affect how we do this work?"
- Ask, "How are relationships and power differentials affecting the truth that is told here?"



Embrace Complexity

When the going gets messy, stay open to possibility. Powerful design emerges from the mess, not from avoiding it.

Embrace Complexity

Why?

Equity challenges, by their nature, are complex, and moments of ambiguity are common when using the design process.

While it can be uncomfortable not knowing what's next or not having a clear answer, jumping to a solution out of discomfort risks defaulting to comfortable or reproductive practices.

Wading through the complexity and ambiguity of this kind of work with patience will allow you to develop more innovative and equitable outcomes.

How

- Acknowledge the confusion and discomfort of the uncertainty present in your work.
- Find ways to care for the team and yourself as you wade through the uncertainty.
- Welcome diversity of discourse even when it can feel complicating.



Seek Liberatory Collaboration

Recognize differences in power and identity. Design "with" instead of "for."

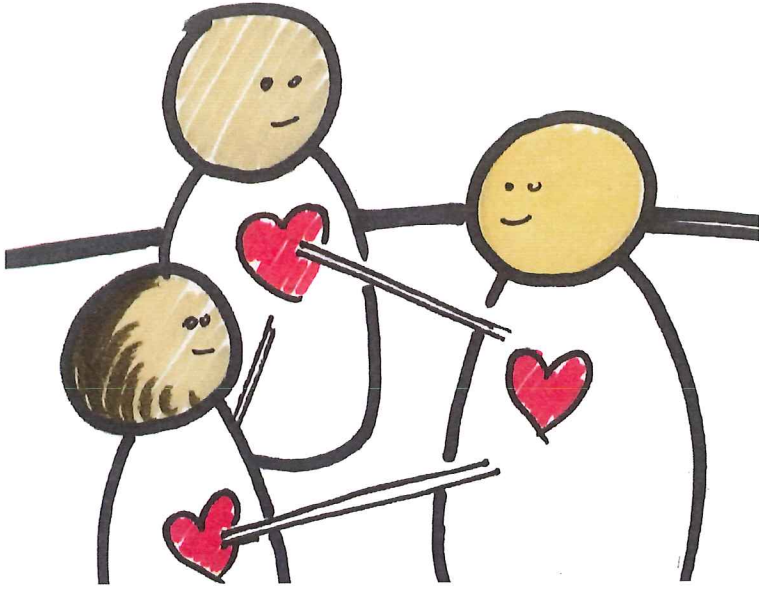
Seek Liberatory Collaboration

Why?

Design work is fraught with power and identity dynamics (e.g. designer as expert, who's generally situated with advantage). To fully realize the liberatory potential of a design process, both for the people we are designing with and for the designer, it's critical to reframe the relationship as one of partnership.

How

- Actively seek diverse identities and skill sets as you build your team.
- Acknowledge and build from the strengths, stories, and skills of each other.
- Set conditions for collective learning, risk-taking, and action.
- When framing the question, "How Might We...?" ensure the "We" is diverse and inclusive.



Build Relational Trust

Intentionally invest in relationships, especially across difference. Honor stories and listen for emotions.

Build Relational Trust

Why?

Relational trust is the glue in equity-centered design work. When working across difference on difficult challenges, teams must invest in developing emotional trust in order to authentically collaborate.

If we are comfortable identifying and processing emotions with our team, we create opportunities for healing and prevent distortion of our work.

How

- Enable personal connections through pair-shares (people share what matters to them).
- Make time and space for people to bring forward their fuller selves and identities.
- Emphasize the importance of non-judgmental listening.
- Hold space for community to reflect, express and process thoughts and emotions.
- Create culture that invites dialogue.



Bias Towards Experimentation

The complexity of oppression requires courageous action. Build to think and learn.

Bias Towards Experimentation

Why?

Oppression thrives on risk-averse behavior. It's important to fail fast. Small changes can have large effects - AND hacking oppression requires longshots. Liberatory Design is an ever-evolving craft that is never "done."

How

- Co-design safe-to-fail experiments to learn more.
- Build trust through experiments increasing in scale or risk over time.
- Build agency and capacity in the community through co-designed and implemented experiments.
- Balance quick action with thoughtful reflection.
- Choose a direction, not a single or final solution.

Share, Don't Sell

Why?

When sharing your work, find ways to invite people in instead of trying to convince them of value. When you share your work humbly, it invites feedback and questions that could advance your work. In addition, it widens your circle of collaborators and invites those people to co-design with you.

Conversely, if we focus on selling or convincing, we are losing opportunities to refine our work and incorporate new perspectives.

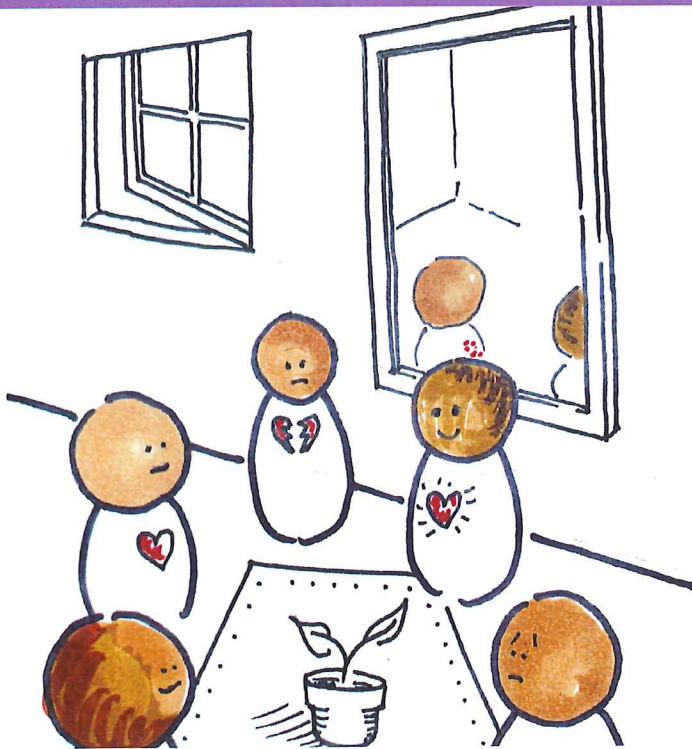
How

- Be transparent about the team's process, mindsets, shared goals, expectations and co-constructed narratives.
- Share as an opportunity to learn and grow.
- Earn trust through actions and not just words.



Share, Don't Sell

Practice transparency of process and non-attachment to ideas.



Attend to Healing

Doing equity work includes on-going healing from the effects of oppression to increase our agency for liberatory design.

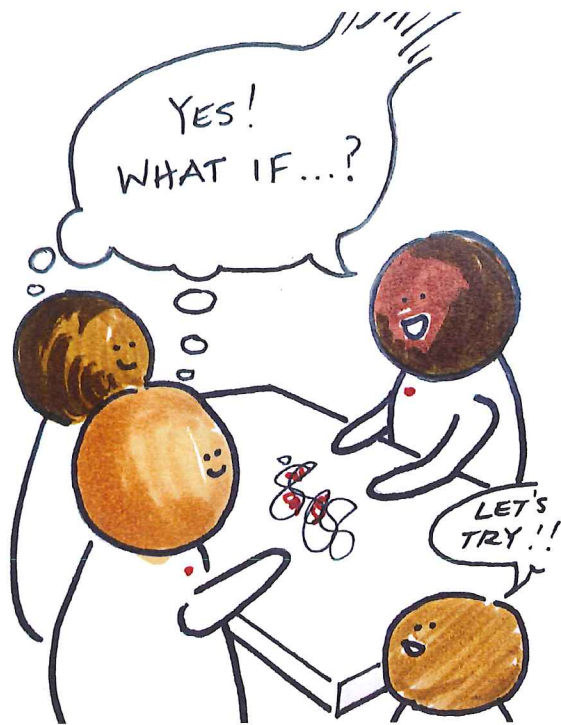
Attend to Healing

Why?

We must attend to healing both from past and current traumas to be able to stay in this work, engender a sense of well-being, collaborate in truly liberatory ways, and build authentic relationships. Status quo culture pressures us to be constantly executing, working through pain and discomfort in order to be efficient and productive. We believe this brings toxicity into teams and fuels inequitable work. We instead believe that healing is a critical element of this work. We also acknowledge that healing is a never-ending state of being and not something to be "resolved."

How

- Establish protocols for how to name when someone is feeling pain or there is opportunity for healing.
- Identify regular methods to practice healing in group and private settings (poetry, check-ins, somatic body work, work retreats, mental health support, etc).
- Include time and space for healing in all project planning timelines.
- Explore existing frameworks for managing conflict equitably, for example restorative justice practices.



Exercise Your Creative Courage

Every human has the capacity to be creative. Before there is confidence, there is the courage required to navigate self-doubt and creative fragility.

Exercise Your Creative Courage

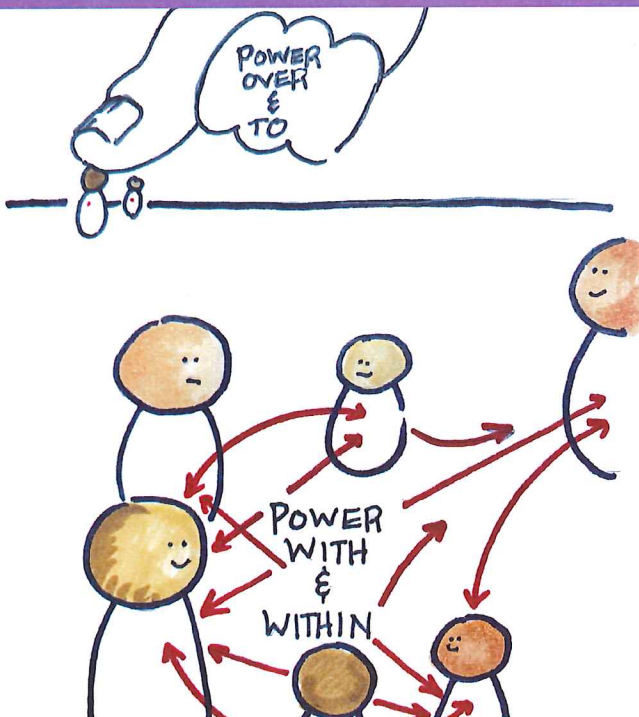
Why?

We believe that everyone is creative. Further, we believe all humans are designers, intentionally or not. Status quo culture tells us only a select few are born creative and others of us are not, nor will ever be.

Creativity is fundamental to equity and liberation. We need to imagine possibilities beyond the confines of dominant culture. And, since joy, connection and healing flow from creative experiences, we must make creative expression part of our collaborative processes.

How

- Collectively define what design or creativity means (looks like, feels like, lives like) to your organization/team.
- Invite wild ideas and celebrate the mistakes that come with actually trying them, publicly.
- Notice and affirm creative moves by your collaborators.
- Leadership models creative approaches to a problem.
- Listen with a curious heart, not critical. The results will astound you.



Catalyze Opportunities to Transform Power

Inequity thrives in situations of power imbalance. Look for ways to transform power to invite and experience liberatory collaboration. Move away from power "over" or "to" and design toward power "with" and "within" to interrupt the reproduction of power dynamics.

Catalyze Opportunities to Transform Power

Why?

Transforming power allows our teams to contribute authentically and challenge inequity when it manifests in the work or on the team. Power structures shape aspects of our identity and role, and our relative positions can often impede collaboration or replicate inequity when not addressed. Opportunities to transform power:

Process:

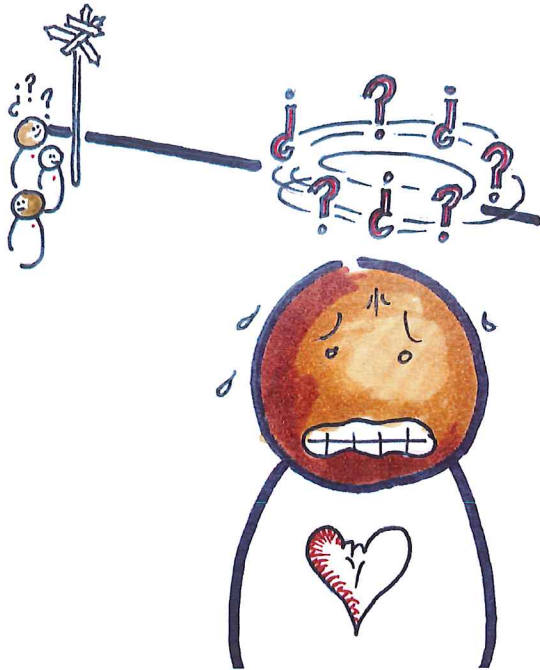
Who's designing (choices around co-design)?
How do we address power within the design group (internal practices)?
How does the design group engages with those impacted (external practices)?

Product:

Do our designs serve to transform power?

How

- Reflect on identities and roles across the team. Discuss potential power imbalances that would occur in various situations. How might they manifest in our processes?
- Build a strategy to transform power in conversations, decision-making, presentations, etc.
- Build shared protocols to name and intercept power imbalances in action as soon as they manifest.
- Notice and discuss power in both it's earned and unearned manifestations based on what our society values.



Work with Our Fear and Discomfort

Fear and discomfort are an anticipated part of this work. This includes feelings related to the situation, as well as what it brings up for you as a designer given who you are. Identifying sources of the fear and discomfort allows us to advance our design work if good or address it if harmful.

Work with Our Fear and Discomfort

Why?

Working in emergent ways on high-stakes challenges of inequity can be stressful. The fear and discomfort we feel is an anticipated part of the Liberatory Design process. It signals to us that there are aspects of our work that are unresolved.

Note, there is a difference between discomfort that arises from the complexity of the challenge and its unknown direction and the discomfort that arises from inequitable dynamics or structures. The first can be a source of growth and creativity while the latter can be destructive and should be addressed. Refer to "Attend to Healing" in that case to release emotions and work towards well-being.

How

- Give space to process and accept that it is present.
- Name the fear or discomfort and discuss what the sources of it might be: lack of clarity? How we're working? A conflict?
- Establish protocols for how to name fear and discomfort and explore their sources as a team.
- Reflect on why it's occurring and if it's a productive moment of fear/ discomfort or if it's becoming unproductive and we need to alleviate it.

Credits + an Invitation

Thank you, team!

Thank you to the wonderful people who put love, brain power, and intention into the making of this card deck (alphabetically):

Tania Anaissie (Content + Visual Design)
Victor Cary (Content)
David Clifford (Content + Illustrations)
Tom Malarkey (Content)
Susie Wise (Content)

We Want to Hear From You

This card deck is a work in progress. This is our first prototype of it, and we'd love to hear your feedback! What do you like about it? What do you wish was different about it? Any new ideas? Do you use it at work? Why or why not?

Email us at liberatorydesign@gmail.com





How can schools support academic success while fostering healthy social and emotional development?

PERTS worked with leading researchers¹ to develop Copilot, an advanced professional learning platform that helps educators create supportive conditions for learning and development. Copilot enables teachers to get rapid feedback from their students about how they are experiencing key classroom learning conditions (see below). It couples that feedback with best-practices for improving those conditions. New evidence suggests that Copilot enables teachers to systematically improve learning conditions and that better learning conditions promote higher and more equitable academic achievement.

- **Over 80% of teachers improved** one or more classroom learning conditions when they leveraged Copilot over multiple cycles of inquiry and action.
- Students who experienced positive learning conditions in a class were **30% more likely to earn an A or B** in that class, and those benefits were pronounced for students of color. For example, Black males who experienced positive learning conditions were almost 2x more likely to earn an A or B than those who did not.
- Better learning conditions also led to better social and emotional learning outcomes. When learning conditions improved, students were 86% more likely to experience a **higher sense of belonging**, 24% more likely to develop a **growth mindset**, and 2x more likely to report they “tried their very best” in class.



What learning conditions do teachers measure and improve with Copilot?

Research is clear:² Students are more motivated—and earn higher grades and test scores—when educators create an environment that helps students: feel valued and respected in the learning environment;³ understand how schoolwork is relevant to their own lives and goals;⁴ and recognize setbacks and constructive feedback as opportunities to grow.⁵ Copilot helps teachers easily measure these conditions, and it provides teachers with just-in-time recommendations for improving them.

In the words of Fremont Unified administrator Josh Maisel, “It’s a great tool. The survey is really asking the right questions and putting data in front of teachers that can be helpful.”

Teachers can improve learning conditions measurably & reliably

The vast majority of teachers who used Copilot over the 2018-19 school year successfully created more supportive conditions for learning—as rated by confidential, validated ratings from their students. By leveraging rapid student feedback and just-in-time best-practice recommendations, 92% of teachers improved at least one learning condition, and 65% successfully improved all measured learning conditions. Done the right way, even the act of collecting student feedback can enhance students’ sense that they are valued by their teachers. In the words of one student, “I think she cares what I think because she is asking us to take this survey about her teaching. If she didn't care what I had to say, she wouldn't be asking us to do this survey.”

When Chris Biddix saw the low test scores of his incoming math class, he decided to use Copilot to improve motivation and boost learning. A 10-minute survey revealed that his students weren’t seeing math as relevant to their lives. Over the next 3 months, he workshopped evidence-based strategies for helping his students see the value in their work, and tracked his progress with pulse surveys. The share of his students who see math as relevant and meaningful grew by 26% points. Their motivation grew, and this class was “beating other classes in unit assessments [even though they started with the lowest math scores.]”
Read more Copilot case studies at perts.net/stories.



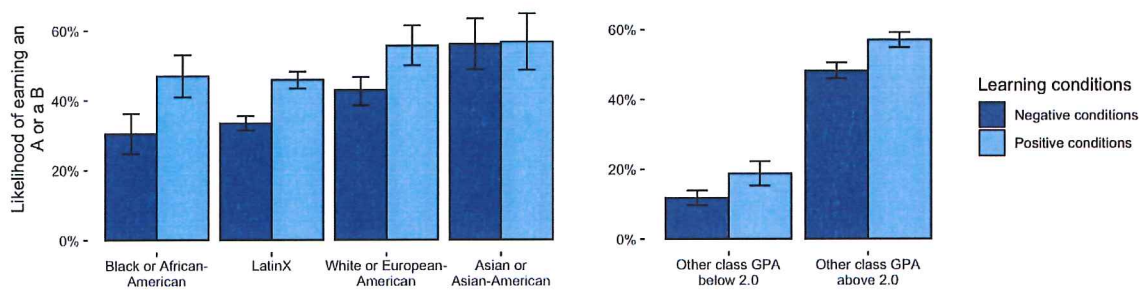
Learning conditions build student motivation, belonging, growth mindset

When teachers improved the learning conditions in their classes, their students became more motivated and more likely to experience good social and emotional outcomes. Students who reported learning conditions as positive in a given week were more than twice as likely to say they tried their very best on their schoolwork “almost all of the time” in that week. When learning conditions improved, students were 24% more likely to increase in growth mindset and 86% more likely to experience a stronger sense of belonging. This is important because research shows that a sense of belonging and growth mindset are both associated with stronger and more equitable achievement.⁹



Learning conditions are strong predictors of academic performance

In a sample of over 1,300 students, students reported on the learning conditions in a core class. These included their perceptions of teacher caring, their conviction that what they were learning was meaningful, and whether they received constructive feedback for learning. We compared students who experienced a class as positive (average “slightly agree” rating and higher) to those who rated it negatively (below “slightly agree”). Those who experienced the conditions as positive were 30% more likely to earn a grade of A or B in that class. This effect was pronounced among members of marginalized groups. For example, Black male students were nearly twice as likely to earn an A or B in a class when they experienced positive learning conditions in that class. This is encouraging evidence that improvements to learning conditions could translate into gains in students’ academic achievement, especially for the students positioned furthest from opportunity.



How can educators leverage Copilot to cultivate student success?

These early results suggest that the Copilot professional learning platform can help educators create more supportive and equitable learning conditions in their classrooms, with potentially powerful benefits to students’ academic achievement and social and emotional development. Even as PERTS continues to study and improve this innovative tool, we are proud to **offer Copilot for free** to all U.S. schools thanks to support from the Raikes, Overdeck, and Gates Foundations. To learn more, email support@perts.net.

About PERTS

The Project for Education Research That Scales (PERTS) is a non-profit research and development institute that translates insights from psychological science into cutting-edge tools, measures, and recommendations that educators anywhere can use to foster healthy and equitable academic engagement and success.



Acknowledgments

We humbly thank our funders and thought partners at the Raikes Foundation, Overdeck Family Foundation, and Gates Foundation, and our esteemed research advisors, Professors Carol Dweck, Camille Farrington, Greg Walton, and Jason Okonofua.

Technical Supplement

For detailed results, sample characteristics, psychometrics, preregistration of key hypotheses, and other methodological information, see the working draft of the technical supplement at perts.net/ep-report-supplement.

Citation

Gripshover, S. & Paunesku, D. (2019). How can schools support academic success while fostering healthy social and emotional development? PERTS, Stanford University.

Endnotes

1. PERTS Copilot measures and recommendations were developed in collaboration with Stanford University Professors Carol Dweck and Greg Walton; University of Chicago Senior Research Associate Camille Farrington; and UC-Berkeley Assistant Professor Jason Okonofua.
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Also see citation in endnote #5 and Farrington citation in endnote #2.