

## Chapter 5 Resources

School and district teams can use the following questions and activities to put the concepts from this chapter into action. Teams should retain artifacts resulting from these exercises to inform later work.

### Collaborative Inquiry

Consider the following questions, then discuss your answers as a team.

- Besides the idea of systems being pulled into alignment by the gravity of impacts, what analogy might help us and others understand elements of complex environments?
- Why do we think past change initiatives may not have stuck or reached their potential?
- How would you describe the difference between driving change backward and pushing plan implementation first?
- If a teacher stated, “I can’t do impacts because I have so much content to cover,” how might you respond?
- Which systems would you prioritize for our first implication deep dives? What other systems would follow?

### Collaborative Activities

The following activities will help you and your team operationalize the ideas from this chapter. Each activity builds on the one before it, so we recommend completing them in the order shown. Be sure to review the instructions in advance and gather any needed materials, such as markers and chart paper.

#### *Diving Into Implications*

As this chapter described, an implication deep dive gives groups a great way to engage in strategic thinking; also, groups can use the output of their deep dive (the resulting worksheet, page 4 of this reproducible) to frame future strategic thinking and actions. The following deep dive process should take no longer than forty-five minutes. After the first deep dive, experienced groups can complete deep dives more quickly, especially when they focus on generating ideas (as opposed to getting caught up in the minute details). Consider the following steps.

1. Create groups of no more than four.
2. Ask each group to choose a system. A system is a working structure within educational organizations for which we use a specific term: *assessment, grading, reporting, communication, recruitment, leadership, professional learning, appraisal, culture*, and so on.
3. Ask each group to discuss the system and make sure that the members have a shared understanding about what that system involves.
4. Have the groups read the premise and ponder it quietly for a minute or two. The premise could also be projected for the whole group so that everyone can read it individually.
5. Distribute the worksheet for this activity (page 4 of this reproducible). Ask the groups to start brainstorming and building a list of implications that impacts have on that system. At this stage, groups simply look to briefly capture each idea—without worrying about writing complete sentences.

6. Have them consolidate, sort, prioritize, and group these ideas and create short statements that represent the main ideas. They may group several implications and create a single insight statement for them. The goal is to arrive at a smaller number of statements that articulate the way in which the premise should affect that system.
7. Groups should come together to review, discuss, and agree on the implications articulated.

### ***Creating the Desired Learning Environment***

As stated in the chapter, we need to understand the change we seek before we try to select any programs. We have done this with impacts, but we also need to do this for the learning environment itself. What type of learning environment will best support students and teachers in achieving our highest goals for learning?

This activity has groups list the qualities of the shifts they believe will support their strategic direction. Again, staying out of the distracting details is important at this stage. A process like this can easily be muddied by side commentary, personal anecdotes, and so on. Skillful facilitation is a must. Consider the following steps.

1. Make sure the members involved in this activity are familiar with the organization's impacts and strategic direction. The greater their engagement in these, the more the members will align their vision of a desired future learning environment to them.
2. Divide the members into groups of no more than four people.
3. Ask groups to share what they think focusing on impacts and elevating them alongside academic goals mean in general terms.
4. Ask groups to envision the type of learning environment that they would expect to see when the organization has successfully achieved its strategic learning goals. What would that desired and necessary future environment look like? What would they hear? What would they feel?
5. Groups should record their "future observations" on pieces of poster paper. They should avoid inert language and focus on observable factors.
6. After twenty minutes or so of brainstorming, post all the pieces of poster paper around the room. Simply ask people to do a gallery walk and put a mark beside the observations they feel are important and representative of that desired future environment.
7. Bring these common and endorsed observations back to the larger group. Perhaps cut them out from the posters and physically group like observations. Groups could sort them into student actions and educator actions, for example.
8. Once they have done a rough sorting, ask the group to develop a brief characteristic statement that represents the core of the observation or group of observations. What principles might drive the design and maintenance of such an environment?

The following chart shows sample results of this activity. These results would inform the next step of choosing the programmatic approaches (or elements of these approaches) the organization may want to use to build this desired future learning environment.

Observations	Characteristics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students moving about the building and interacting with different adults</li> <li>• Students accessing materials (markers, sticky notes, cardboard, and tape) to generate and share ideas with others</li> <li>• Some students working alone and some working with a group</li> <li>• Impact tools and strategies posted or readily available</li> <li>• Pieces of projects and prototypes everywhere</li> <li>• Students seeking and recording feedback from adults and peers</li> <li>• Time set aside for students to contribute artifacts to their portfolios, self-assess, and write reflections</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The schedule allows for all students and adults to pursue projects.</li> <li>• There is a high level of self-directed learning.</li> <li>• Innovation and collaboration (different groupings) are central.</li> <li>• Students understand and use design processes.</li> <li>• Feedback is regular, recorded, and acted on.</li> <li>• Student self-assessment is valued.</li> </ul>

### Implication Deep Dive Worksheet

**Premise:** Our goal is to help students achieve impacts by elevating them alongside academic learning goals and embedding them in our definition of successful learning. What implications does that have for our educational systems?

System	Implications This means _____.	Insights and Understandings
<b>Grading</b>		
<b>Reporting</b>		
<b>Board Reporting</b>		
<b>Professional Learning</b>		
<b>Other</b>		