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LEA LEADERSHIP

**Innovation in
State Education Agencies**

Sam Redding
Academic Development Institute

For the Wing Institute

Change Leadership
Innovation in State Education Agencies

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About the Author

SAM REDDING, a former high school teacher and college dean and vice president, since 1984 has served as the Executive Director of the Academic Development Institute (ADI), and since 2005 as director of the Center on Innovation & Improvement. He received the "Those Who Excel" Award from the Illinois State Board of Education in 1990, the Ben Hubbard Leadership Award from Illinois State University in 1994, and the Ernie Wing Award for Excellence in Evidence-Based Education from the California-based Wing Institute in 2012. He has been executive editor of the *School Community Journal* since 1991 and was a senior research associate of the Laboratory for Student Success (LSS) at Temple University from 1995 to 2005 where he led the Lab's work on comprehensive school reform. He has edited four books on family-school relationships, authored a book on school improvement, edited books on statewide systems of support, and written articles and chapters in the areas of school management, school improvement, and factors affecting school learning. Dr. Redding served on the IES expert panel on school turnarounds and coauthored its 2008 report: *Turning Around Chronically Low-Performing Schools*. He was a member the United States delegation and presented on school turnarounds at the Korea Bilateral Seminar on Study Examining Turning Around Low-Performing Schools in Seoul, Korea, in 2012. Dr. Redding has consulted with more than 30 state education agencies on their systems for school improvement. He holds a doctorate in Educational Administration from Illinois State University, master's degrees in both Psychology and English, and is a graduate of Harvard's Institute for Educational Management.

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Abstract

This paper presents a Change Leadership Framework and applies the framework to the role of leadership in a State Education Agency (SEA) in setting the conditions for change to accelerate student learning. These conditions include the way the SEA directs its own change and the way it inspires and leads constructive change in districts and schools. The Change Leadership Framework includes a Change Cycle with four components—Intentionality, Capacity, Implementation, and Productivity. The Cycle revolves around Execution, the role of the Leadership Team (CEO or CSSO and executive staff) as the decision-making catalyst among the four components. The paper emphasizes the importance of (1) strategy-aligned initiatives launched by the Leadership Team; (2) functional, motivational, social, and technical capacities necessary for implementation; (3) consideration for the human dynamics attendant to change; (4) indicators of effective practice to guide implementation, and (5) monitoring effectiveness and productivity.

Prologue

I am blessed with eleven grandchildren, ranging in age from just-turned-four to almost seventeen as I write. The psychologist in me watches this tiny sample of eleven children pass through predictable developmental stages, interact with their peers, teachers, and parents, and exhibit such startling individual differences that I can only marvel that they share bloodlines. The educator in me queries them and their parents to be sure their teachers employ research-based instructional practices, their principals adhere to sound leadership methods, and their schools perform well on standards-based assessments. And, by the way, how are the grandkids doing on these tests? Then the grandfather in me gets teary-eyed when I hear that a teacher has deftly drawn a smile and hand-in-the-air from the shy one, emails a parent to note something special about the studious one, or sparks an interest in the bored one. My heart swells when the second grader's painting is selected for the art show, the sixth grader squeaks out a tune on her viola in the orchestra's winter concert, the ninth grader makes the varsity softball team, or the eleventh grader shaves his head for the big swim meet. How much of schooling, of teaching and learning, is the art of humanistic regard for each child, and how much is the science of pedagogy and organizational management? What impels these kids to do what they do? However we proportion the two—art and science—both enter into the equation of success. We need not choose one over the other, but must encourage the best application of each.

The management guru Peter Drucker, in his 1998 memoir *Adventures of a Bystander*, tells of his two elementary school teachers in Vienna, the sisters Miss Sophy and Miss Elsa. Miss Sophy was a warm, plump, lovable, and imaginative teacher, and children performed to please her. She possessed the innate personal qualities of a caring and inspirational teacher. Miss Elsa was organized, stern, and methodical. She ascertained each student's strengths and weaknesses and demanded much of them to meet her high standards. She was a pedagogue, and students performed because they knew they must. Drucker celebrates the talents and approaches of both Miss Sophy and Miss Elsa, and credits both with teaching him well. In the end, he slightly favors Miss Elsa who, in fact, understood his individual learning needs the most and prodded him to master the areas in which he was weak. Not all teachers possess Miss Sophy's natural gifts, but most teachers can learn to apply Miss Elsa's meticulous methods. The ideal teacher would be a combination of Miss Sophy and Miss Elsa, one supposes, and even the Miss Sophys would benefit from some of Miss Elsa's pedagogical discipline.

As we consider how State Education Agencies lead change that accelerates student learning, we might apply lessons from both Miss Sophy and Miss Elsa. Borrowing from management literature the best scientific methodology for managing change, we will not lose sight of the human elements that inspire people to strive for excellence and the social networks that enable them to work productively together. In fact, there is a science to bringing the best from people, building their capacity for change, providing incentives for them to change, and opening avenues of opportunity that engage them in the work.

Part I

Change Leadership Framework



Introduction

Change. Change. Change. Sometimes we want to throw our hands in the air and shout “Stop!” This is true nowhere more than in education. Barely does one reform wave pass over us than another is cresting. What we thought was best practice yesterday—and invested time and effort into perfecting—is cast aside tomorrow. How do we know when change is necessary? When it will improve our effectiveness? Or when it is an unnecessary distraction?

No doubt change is inevitable, but leaders must be adept at intentionally choosing what change to initiate and anticipating its consequences on the people charged with implementing it. Introducing change into an organization calls for leadership skill and demands analysis of information from within and outside the organization. Change may be the introduction of new practices and processes or the termination of unproductive ones. “Exit definitively or renew obsessively” is how Jim Collins (2009, p. 34) describes an organization’s persistent striving for the optimal mix of productive activity.

Virginia Postrel, in her 1998 book *The Future and its Enemies*, describes two world views, that of the dynamist and that of the stasist. Stasists desire control over change and the maintenance of a steady state. Dynamists know that society doesn’t advance in this manner. Rather, the realms of popular culture, technology, and the marketplace are constantly churning with dynamic change. Postrel portrays the dynamist view as a spreading elm tree with a massive trunk and with limbs, branches, twigs, and leaves shooting out in every direction. The stasist view is like a palm tree—one tall, thin trunk with a few identical fronds sprouting from its top.

In the field of education, we seem to be attempting to create a hybrid of the spreading elm and the spindly palm. Across the country and within each state, public education has a familiar look, with common standards, customary grade-level configurations, credentialing controls, and classrooms that vary little from place to place. The established bureaucracy is the trunk of the palm, allowing the fronds to differentiate themselves only within clearly defined boundaries. On the other hand, education policy touts flexibility, decentralization, variety, choice, and experimentation. The dynamist-stasist tension prevails.

There are reasons for education’s caution as well as for its yearning for constructive change. Because society places an immense responsibility with public education for elevating the life chances of generations of youth, some caution in what schools are allowed to do is in order. The public and its governments must assure that children are not disadvantaged by ill-conceived experimentation. But there is always a need to find better ways to educate children, and better ways are discovered when smart and passionate people are encouraged to break the mold.

“Change before you
have to.”

—Jack Welch



A recent newspaper article claimed that the word “innovation” has lost its meaning due to excessive use in the past decade. The article predicted that a new word, perhaps “inventiveness,” would replace it. Whether we call it innovation or inventiveness, it requires a special kind of leadership to intentionally choose change initiatives, implementation methods, and appropriate monitoring measurements to reduce unproductive stress and assure greater effectiveness.

Chief State School Officers are elected in some states and appointed in others, always bearing an allegiance to those who elect or appoint them. They and their deputies find themselves in a difficult situation. Change is always at their doorstep, pleading to be let in. State budgets for their agencies are stagnant or in decline. Dependence on federal dollars carries mandates for federally determined change. State legislatures and governors make their political mark by “reforming” the education system, and the State Education Agency (SEA) administers the reforms. Local district boards of education, where primary responsibility for schooling lies, tussle with the SEA to maximize the flow of resources and reduce the regulator requirements. Advocacy groups have their own change agendas, each from the perspective of its own cause or special interest. The business community wants a better educated work force, and has its own ideas about what that

means. Parents want what they perceive as best for their own children, and what is perceived as best varies from family to family.

How does the leadership

“Change means that what was before wasn’t perfect. People want things to be better.”

—Esther Dyson



of an SEA intentionally determine and effectively execute change? How does it innovate? How does it change its own practices and processes *and* lead and support change in districts and schools? This paper outlines a Change Leadership Framework and applies it to an SEA. But first, let’s look at how pending change affected the Newline Services Corporation, a fictitious business with believable and varied reactions to something new.

Newline Services Corporation

Business for the Newline Services Corporation was booming, and the company was ready to construct a new office building on a small acreage it owned on the outskirts of the city. Newline engaged the maverick young architect, John Hendricks, to develop the initial concept for the building. Newline’s CEO, Frances Dalwinkle, invited three people to meet with her and the architect: Ben Kowalski, the city building code supervisor; Iris Hernandez, a management consultant; and Cedric Johnson, Newline’s human resources director. With everyone seated around the conference room table, Frances made the proper introductions and then asked John to present his design concepts.

John Hendricks set a rendered drawing of the building on an easel and began to make his pitch. Before he had finished his opening remarks, Ben Kowalski challenged him on three potential violations of city code. Cedric Johnson chimed in to query John on where workgroups would meet and whether their surroundings would be conducive to collaboration. Frances Dalwinkle was eager to get at John’s estimate of the total cost. The meeting, intended to be an exciting event for Newline, degenerated into squabbling disarray.

Iris Hernandez sat quietly until she felt compelled to bring order to the session. “John’s ideas are certainly innovative,” Iris said, “but let’s back up and think about a few things. First, Newline chose John because it wanted an architect who would think outside the box. Second, Frances has given John a total cost figure that he knows he must stay within. Third, we certainly don’t want to violate city code, but we also want to be sure that code isn’t interpreted more stringently than the law and good sense would dictate. Finally, Newline’s business depends upon its personnel being motivated to produce high-quality, collaborative work. Now, given these parameters, can we establish some guiding principles for what we want to accomplish? Can we apply some standards, possibly quantitative measures, that will enable us to gauge our progress as we move forward? Can we proceed with a plan and an understanding that each of you has a perspective worth honoring?”

When an organization innovates, the keepers-of-the-rules stiffen their backs. That is their job. People in the organization wonder if they are prepared for the change, how it will affect their work, and how it will affect their relationships with their colleagues.

It is human nature that people respond in this way. Leaders want to know what the innovation will cost and how it is expected to improve results. These are the questions leaders should ask. Consideration for people's incentives for change, their capacity to succeed with the innovation, and their opportunity to fully engage their talents and ingenuity in the process paves the way for successful implementation. So do scientifically derived management methods that enable leadership to choose innovations wisely and implement them efficiently.

An SEA's work is far more complex than designing a new office building. SEAs carry immense responsibility for setting the conditions for a high quality of education for a diverse population of students throughout the state. Because of the strictures placed upon them by federal and state statutes, mandates, and regulations, SEAs may adopt reactive postures. The divergent interests and legitimate authorities of local districts further complicate SEA action. For SEAs to meet their gargantuan challenges in a shifting landscape, however, a proactive tack is required. SEAs must be able to innovate—to change in constructive ways. To fulfill their purposes within the limits of their resources, they need sound management practices, including processes for implementing innovation. To harness the talents and ingenuity of all their personnel, they must inspire individual striving and collective endeavor. SEAs need change leadership.

Effective change leaders apply scientific methods that account for human motivation, ingenuity, and capacity to intentionally implement innovations that enhance the organization's effectiveness and productivity. That is how an organization, including an SEA, distinguishes itself for quality service in an environment filled with uncertainty, competing interests, and substantial stresses.

Change Leadership

Organizations typically state their purpose and direction with mission statements, core values, goals, and strategies. They chart their continuous improvement with strategic plans that flow from these statements of purpose and direction. This method of organizational advancement is suited for a relatively static environment, but it is sclerotic when it comes to innovation (Hope & Player, 2012). Organizations need change processes to enable them to nimbly innovate, introduce more productive practices and processes, and vigilantly scrutinize current

operations so that unproductive elements can be eliminated.

It is worth noting that innovation primarily means people doing things differently and thinking about their work in a new way. So innovation is change in behavior. Heath and Heath (2010) describe both the psychological and practical groundwork that must be laid by leaders for constructive change.

Many leaders pride themselves on setting high-level direction: *I'll set the vision and stay out of the details.* It's true that a compelling vision is critical. But it's not enough. Big-picture, hands-off leadership isn't likely to work in a change situation, because the hardest part of change—the paralyzing part—is precisely in the details. (p.53)

Improvement, Innovation, and Transformation

Within any organization, standards of practice define what is currently believed to be the most effective and productive way of operating. An organization improves as the gap between actual practice and the standard is reduced. Improvement does not change *how* things are done or *what* is done. Improvement, in this sense, is not change as we define it here. Change comes from innovation that adds new standards of practice or replaces old ones, thus altering what people do and how they think about their work.

Organizational change is commonly classified as first-order change (incremental change in *how* things are done) or second-order change (significant change in *what* the organization does). First-order change is innovation, and second order change is transformation. Transformation is expressed in a restatement of the organization's mission, values, and goals and manifested in substantial structural reconfiguration. More commonly, dynamic organizations improve through a more incremental introduction of innovations. Whatever the magnitude of the change or the reason for it, purposeful change emanates from leadership decisions and is best accomplished within an established process that facilitates agile and informed decisions followed by efficient execution.

Change may be transformational in dramatically altering the purpose and direction of an organization or incremental, with discreet innovations injected into the work stream. Effective change leaders are capable of executing dramatic change when that is necessary, and they routinely introduce

Improvement

Closing the gap between actual practices and standards of practice



Innovation

Changing or terminating standards of practice or introducing new ones



Transformation

Changing mission, values, and goals



innovations that enhance the organization's effectiveness and productivity. Whatever the degree of change, success depends upon the engagement of people, communication of purpose, articulation of short-term wins, and consolidation and institutionalization of the improvements (Kotter, 2012).

Whether change is transformational or innovative, it must be executed systematically, with performance measures for determining progress and making course corrections. These measures and decision points are vested both in the leadership and in the individuals and groups charged with implementing the new or revised practices and processes executed through change initiatives. Redding (2006) outlines the key elements of decision making, including sharing or distributing leadership and access to relevant information through the organization's data systems and links to research and emerging practice.

Computers, databases, software-based management systems, the internet, instructional software, e-mail, and technology-based modes of presentation are tools that make data-based decision making (DBDM) efficient. They help put the right information in the right place at the right time. They are not the information itself, but a means for organizing, presenting, and analyzing the information. (Redding, 2006, p. 39)

Leading change begins with efficient management of information. Organizations today do not lack for the quantity of information, but struggle to bring the right information to the right place at the right time.

Change in Education

The SEA is uniquely positioned to drive and influence local education policy and practice (Rhim & Redding, 2011). It can set high standards, stimulate innovation, and reward accomplishment. To succeed as an impetus for district and school reform, to lead them toward better practice and greater results, the SEA must first direct change within itself.

A review of SEA change agency (Brown, Hess, Lautzenheiser, & Owen, 2011) concluded that SEAs are overly focused on compliance, lack transparency, are hindered by federal funding restrictions, and operate with bureaucratic policies that are obstacles to reform. Effective change leadership in the SEA can combat these anchors of inertia.

For more than a century, reformers have introduced organizational development theories and business methods into the field of education to make the "system" more effective and productive. Scientific management, quality concepts, military-mission strategies and tactics, standards of practice, performance measurement, and implementation science are among the waves of control technologies that their advocates have infused into education with paradigms and terminology often interpreted by practitioners as jarring intrusions to a humanistic and communal undertaking. The invasion has met resistance, to be sure. Thomas Sergiovanni, among others, has been a consistent voice for tempering the reforms focused on systems as opposed to people with a humanistic counterweight.

Value-added leadership as moral reasoning is reflected in the *lifeworld* of schools. Value-added leadership as a strategy for achieving our purposes is reflected in the *systemsworld* of schools. Both worlds are needed for schools to be effective. But... it is the lifeworld that must drive the systemsworld. It is the stuff of culture, the essence of values and beliefs, the expression of needs, purposes, and desires of people and the sources of deep satisfaction in the form of meaning and significance that are experienced by parents, teachers, and students that define the lifeworld of schools. (Sergiovanni, 2005, p. xi)

Advocates for a purer, more informal and relational approach to education no longer prevail except in isolated pockets of independent schools detached from the public school bureaucracy. In most contexts, Sergiovanni's systemsworld is

predominant. As Sergiovanni instructs us, the answer lies in the proper balance between scientific, organizational methodology and consideration for the psychological and sociological underpinnings of schooling. We apply science to create humane organizational conditions that, in fact, contribute to effectiveness and productivity.

Applying science always means introducing measurements. Although measurement is a tool of the systems world, it also facilitates purposeful human interaction. Dean Spitzer (2007) asserts that performance measurement: (1) directs behavior; (2) increases the visibility of performance; (3) focuses attention; (4) clarifies expectations; (5) enables accountability; and (6) improves execution, decision making, and problem solving. Thus, measurement, properly communicated and applied, enables people to work together toward common aims and find greater satisfaction in their work.

The SEA, and the system of districts and schools within its reach, is a large, formal, and bureaucratic structure. The SEA is fertile ground for management practices deemed successful in corporations and other governmental agencies. The people who work in SEAs, however, typically arrive in these positions from districts and schools, with experience and inclinations soaked with the waters of personal engagement with students, teachers, and parents, and respectful of the human motivations that confound the organizers' best-laid plans. Leading constructive change in the SEA, as well as the district or school, requires management expertise leavened with an understanding of what makes people tick.

Change Leaders

Effective change leaders create an organizational change culture. Change leaders build the leadership capabilities of other change agents in the organization. Structures, processes, and contingencies that transcend a leader's individual efforts and tenure with the organization ensure that the organization will sustain a change culture. Organizational structures can facilitate productive work or inhibit it, and change leaders examine current structures and seek ways to alter them to achieve greater productivity. Likewise, processes through which people conduct their work, gauge their effectiveness, and improve their productivity affect their performance. A change culture applies metrics to gauge the effectiveness and productivity of its structures, processes, and practices in order to improve the performance

of individuals, groups, and the organization as a whole.

Change leaders communicate the organization's mission, values, goals, and strategies, and launch change initiatives that emanate from the strategies. Connecting initiatives to established strategies gives personnel a sense of continuity and an understanding of the initiative's purpose in improving upon current practice in pursuit of organizational goals.

Change leaders make judgments about which change to initiate. Their decisions are based on information from within and outside the organization. Amidst a barrage of data on a multitude of variables from a variety of sources, leadership separates the wheat from the chaff, communicates purpose and direction, and bends change to the organization's advantage. Strong organizations maintain a "productive tension between continuity and change" (Collins, 2009, p. 36), refining what works to make it better, eliminating ineffective practices, and introducing promising new ways of doing things.

Change leaders intentionally select innovations and avoid unproductive change. To improve is to change, although change can also be counterproductive. Change leaders guard against needless diversions while not forfeiting great accomplishment for fear of something new.

Change leaders understand and attend to the human dynamics of change. Change leaders anticipate the effects of innovation on people in the organization. For a system to change, the people in the system must change. People are the engines of change, and they are affected by change. The best of plans depend upon people to bring expectations to fruition. Change leaders take into account the knowledge, skills, motivations, and relationships of people. Both the anticipation of change and change itself affect people in many ways, sometimes catapulting them to unimagined levels of achievement, and sometimes immobilizing them with trepidation. Roles and expectations are made clear, and people are given every opportunity to elevate professional practice and produce the desired results.

Effective change leaders determine the pace of change. The pace of change is a function of intensity and duration—the amount of change required for a given interval of time. Pace is often accelerated by a catalytic event (foreseen or suddenly realized) that injects urgency into the change process. Pace is slowed when productivity is high and environmental forces are neutral. The organization's capacity for

altering course, including the readiness of its personnel, affects the appropriateness of the pace at any point in time.

Innovation

An idea spawns a discovery that leads to an invention that, through innovation, is adapted or refined for specific uses or in particular contexts (Manzi, 2012; Gertner, 2012). Innovation proceeds over time and often in incremental steps of improvement. An innovation replaces the standard product, program,

Change Leaders

- create an organizational change culture
- communicate the organization's mission, values, goals, and strategies
- make judgments about which change to initiate
- avoid unproductive change
- launch change initiatives (innovation)
- understand and attend to the human dynamics of change
- determine the pace of change



practice, or process with something better, thus creating a new standard. Gertner (2012) explains that innovation springs from need—a problem to solve; innovation depends upon access to “new knowledge in real time” (p. 152). Innovation requires human capital and tools.

In some contexts, the introduction of an innovation may be carried out with little collateral risk. In education, however, innovation requires stronger evidence of its potential benefits and safeguards against its destructive potentialities. Fixsen and colleagues (2005) embed innovation within six stages of implementation as the phase of refinement of a program or practice that has already demonstrated evidence of its effectiveness. The program or practice is the equivalent, perhaps, of an invention in Manzi's and Gertner's terms. “Each attempted implementation of evidence-based practices and programs presents an opportunity to learn more about the program itself and the conditions under which it can be used with fidelity and good effect” (Fixsen et al., p. 17). “Learning more” is where innovation resides, optimizing the efficacy of an evidence-based

implementation. Thus, innovation in a human service is controlled by high fidelity of implementation and careful consideration of the collateral risk of innovative modifications.

However much the collateral risk of an innovation is circumscribed, it will create ripples of uncertainty among the people affected by it. “Innovation forces change, while humans generally resist change. The pain of the change tends to be visible, while the benefits are usually diffuse and invisible” (Manzi, p. 234). Though unfettered attempts at innovation can be reckless, especially in a human service such as education, overly constricting experimentation can be deadening. Manzi avers that “human social systems...are always difficult to comprehend scientifically, but the innovative parts...especially resist analysis because this is where the interposition of creative human mind and will is most central” (p. 221).

Manzi's prescription for innovation in business settings should be tempered by Fixsen's cautions in human services, but Manzi describes well the experimental nature of innovation:

...innovation appears to be built upon the kind of trial-and-error learning mediated by markets. It requires that we allow people to do stupid things that seem stupid to most informed observers—even though we know that most of these would-be innovators will in fact fail. This is premised on epistemic humility. We should not unduly restrain experimentation, because we are not sure we are right about very much. For such a system to avoid becoming completely undisciplined, however, we must not prop up failed experiments. (p. 224)

In this paper, a cautious approach to innovation is taken, suggesting that an innovation should be introduced into the mainstream of an organization only after establishing its likely effectiveness, appraising its contextual efficacy, determining its collateral risk, and preparing the organization and its people for its adoption. In a human service like education, stupidity is not easily tolerated, as its consequences fall on the people served rather than the innovators.

Innovation depends upon leadership's keen awareness of promising practices emerging from research, the examples of other organizations, and ideas from within the organization itself. Promising practices that are internally generated within units

of the organizations may be broadly applied across the organization.

Limitations of a Framework

A framework outlines key concepts relative to the topic in a general but coherent form, illustrating their relationship to one another. The Change Leadership Framework described below includes many elements that beg for further explanation. The references cited in this paper are a good place to start to learn more, and each goes well beyond the rudimentary presentation here.

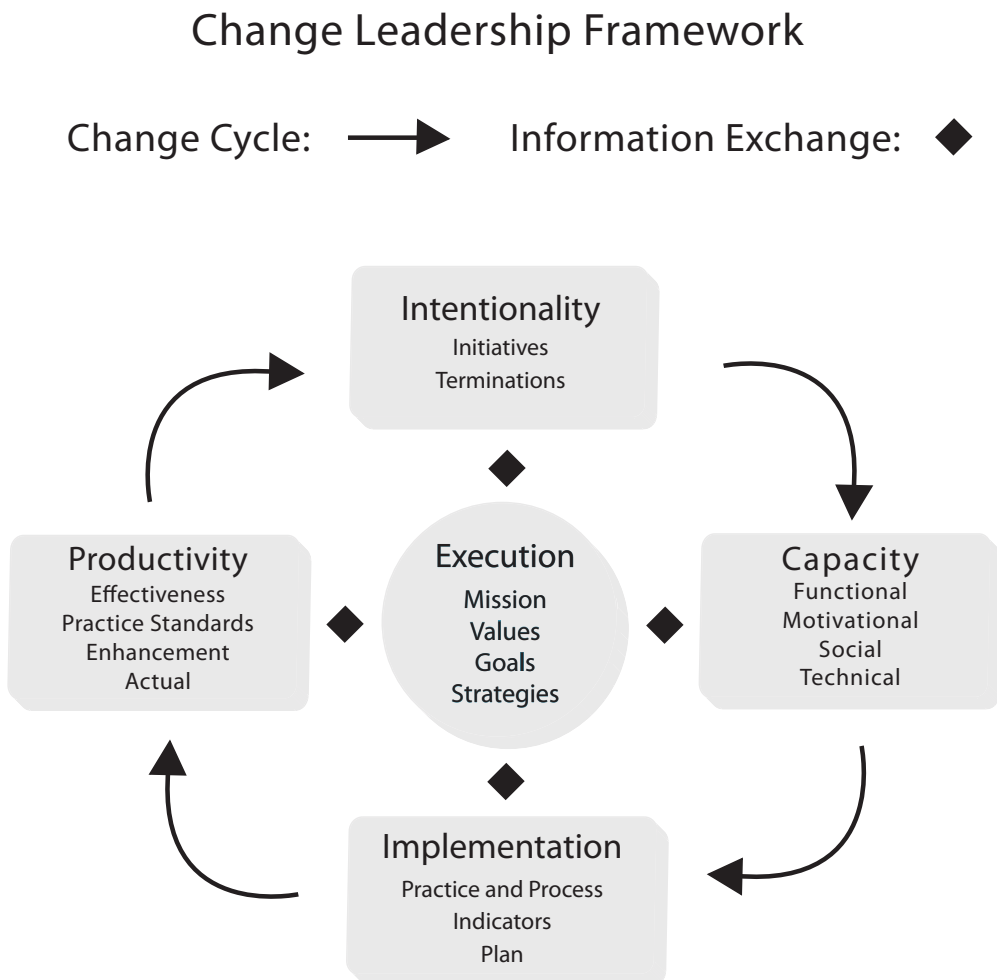
Change Leadership Framework

Figure 1 illustrates a Change Leadership Framework, showing the Change Cycle and the Information Exchange among the components of the Change Cycle. Each component of the Change Cycle is best perceived as a function of leadership. Leadership

sets and communicates the organization’s mission, values, goals, and strategies. Leadership then directs change through the intentional selection of strategy-aligned initiatives (innovations and terminations). Intentionality is the process of screening, organizing, analyzing, and presenting information, including promising practice, from inside and outside the organization. Leadership acts upon the information, executing decisions that result in initiatives, intentionally setting change in motion.

Once an initiative is launched, leadership assesses its impact on the organization’s functional, motivational, social, and technical Capacity and makes the necessary adjustments in organizational structure and personnel to accommodate the change. Management staff then constructs an Implementation Plan based on the initiative design and implements the plan. The Implementation Plan includes measures for the initiative’s intended results and benchmarks to gauge progress. Effectiveness (organizational goal

Figure 1: Change Leadership Framework



attainment) and Productivity (efficient assignment of resources) are constantly monitored.

Interrelationship of the Components of the Change Leadership Framework

The four components of the Change Cycle are interrelated, and Execution signifies leadership's Information Exchange with all four components in making decisions. Analyzing information exchanged with each component in the Cycle, leadership makes decisions that launch change initiatives. These decisions may be prompted by information from any one of the components of the Change Cycle. For example, an analysis of productivity might show that actual productivity is declining. Further analysis might isolate the problem and find deficiencies in functional Capacity—the specific skills of a group of people. The decision to initiate changes in staff training practices to improve people's skills in this group would call for implementing the new practices. The new approach and the reasons for it would need to be communicated and workgroups assembled to collaborate in the project. Then it is noted that the staff training budget for the next fiscal year is likely to be reduced, and the training director is due to retire, so leadership will have to take these factors into account in launching the initiative.

Execution

Communicating purpose, analyzing information, and deciding on the direction and kind of change

Execution is action-oriented decision making by the Leadership Team (CEO and executive team, for example), based on a coordinated Information Exchange, and aligned with organizational strategies, goals, and mission. Most organizations are adept at forming mission statements, although the mission statements are sometimes pro forma regurgi-

tations of trendy jargon with vague and lofty aspirations. A meaningful mission statement uses plain, unpretentious language that inspires people around an understood sense of purpose (Hope & Player, 2012). Goals must be linked to outcome measures that enable the organization to gauge its progress toward them.

Execution

Mission
Values
Goals
Strategies

Organizational values are the toughest meat to chew, but without them the organization lacks defining characteristics that bond people to the mission. In a 2003 interview with Paul Hemp and Thomas A. Stewart (2011), Samuel J. Palmisano, the CEO of IBM, put it this way:

An organic system, which is what a company is, needs to adapt. And we think values—that's what we call them today at IBM, but you can call them "beliefs" or "principles" or "precepts" or even "DNA"—are what enable you to do that. They let you change everything, from your products to your strategies to your business model, but remain true to your essence, your basic mission and identity. (p. 40)

Responsibility for Execution resides in the organization's Leadership Team, charged with catalyzing change and supporting its cascading implementation of initiatives throughout the organization. The Leadership Team coalesces the components of the Change Cycle, drawing information from them to make decisions. The Leadership Team, with the direction of the organizational Leader, develops and thereafter communicates the organization's mission, values, goals, and strategies, casting them within language that paints a picture of the ideal organizational operation and accomplishment. The Leadership Team advances innovation with decisions to launch initiatives aligned with strategies to execute change in the organization.

Execution in change leadership is clearly established in the organizational structure, defined in purpose, and facilitated with technological tools that bring information together for decision making. Gary Cokins (2009) writes: "Organizations complain they are drowning in data but starving for information" (p. xxvii). Cokins traces the evolution of technological tools to inform leadership decisions from the transactional applications that facilitate operations (e.g., accounting, scheduling, resource planning), to "add-on" software that queries and reports from the transactional applications, to decision-support applications (including predictive analytics) that provide decision makers with succinct, pertinent, and timely information (Cokins, 2009). Execution is aided by decision-support technology that connects the Leadership Team with the components of the Change Cycle for an Information Exchange. Information is the input to leadership's decision making, and mission- and goal-aligned strategies and initiatives are the output.

Intentionality

Informing decisions and formulating strategy-aligned initiatives and terminations

Information swirls around an organization, and the Leadership Team must be intentional in sorting through it, making sense of it, and intentionally determining how to respond to it. In the Change Cycle, Intentionality is where information is screened and organized so that leadership can make informed decisions. When the Leadership Team signals change, Intentionality is where the purpose and boundaries of the change are defined.

External influences place new demands on the organization. Internal trends in productivity and effectiveness signal the need for change. Changes within the organization, especially changes in personnel, alter the makeup of the organization itself. Promising practices emerge from within the organization and outside it. Constructive change requires more than implementing new practices into a static organization. The organization itself may infrequently change its mission, goals, and/or strategies. More commonly, the organization's leadership launches strategy-aligned initiatives (innovation or termination) that require a change in personnel practices and processes. Change is both the introduction of new lines of work and the elimination of current practices deemed unproductive.

Intentionality hinges on the Leadership Team's analysis of information generated within the organization and gleaned from the world outside. From inside the organization, leadership looks at data on productivity and effectiveness, anticipated changes in capacity, and the progress of currently executed Implementation Plans. From outside the organization, leadership keeps a keen eye on research and emerging promising practice, shifts in government policy, and changes in the economy. Intentionality requires a broad view of the interplay of the internal and external variables and their effects on the organization's direction. By intentionally directing change, leaders exercise the "will" of the organization, placing it on a proactive course. They ensure that actors in the system understand what they are trying to accomplish and how their daily actions contribute toward that goal.

Intentionality

Initiatives
Terminations

When leaders set and articulate the direction of change, they also communicate the strategies and initiatives through which it will proceed in the organization. Strategies link initiatives to the mission and goals. Initiatives are the instruments by which leadership injects change into the organization. Initiatives address the organizational Capacity (see next component of the Cycle) that must be built in readiness for the initiative.

Initiatives. In most instances, the organization's mission, goals, and strategies remain fairly constant over time. Leadership determines the need for change, makes decisions to execute initiatives, and formulates Initiative Designs in consultation with management. The Initiative Design outlines the initiative's purpose and intended outcomes and addresses general organizational Capacity to implement the initiative. Innovation is injected into the organization's work stream through the launching of initiatives.

Activity Termination. An Activity Termination is a document similar to an Initiative Design that terminates an existing program or activity. The Activity Termination outlines procedures by which the change is to be introduced and implemented.

Capacity

Preparing personnel and structures to successfully implement an initiative

Organizational change is primarily achieved when the Leadership Team's strategy-aligned initiatives are made operational through the implementation of new practices and processes to be performed by personnel and new expectations placed on them for their performance. Between initiative and implementation, however, lies Capacity, a component of the Change Cycle that is often neglected.

The organization's Capacity for change is comprised of its collective functional, motivational, social, and technical capacity. Although each of these forms of Capacity is critical, combined they can accelerate productive change by enhancing people's ability and inclination to change. Assessing and nurturing organizational Capacity is prerequisite to implementing new practices and processes.

Capacity

Functional
Motivational
Social
Technical

The Leadership Team determines current Capacity and builds it in readiness for implementation of initiatives.

Functional capacity. Functional capacity is the collective skills and knowledge of personnel working in the organization. Functional capacity is increased by improving the skills and knowledge of current personnel, which means improving their practice. In some cases, functional capacity is built by adding or replacing personnel to bring new skill sets into the organization. In other cases, people are reassigned to add their personal skills and knowledge to areas where they are most needed. Successful change requires the preparation of current personnel to understand and adopt the new practices, processes, and performance expectations. Effective evaluation of skills and performance is essential in developing functional capacity.

Motivational capacity. "Motivation is the catalyzing ingredient for every successful innovation" (Christensen, Horn, & Johnson, 2008). Even when personnel possess the skills and knowledge that an innovation requires, their best performance depends upon their motivation to adopt the new practice and persevere. The strength of motivation can be measured by a person's willingness to engage in an activity and to persist in it. When confronted with a challenge, a person implicitly calculates the value of the ultimate accomplishment and the likelihood of success (Bandura, 1997; Csikszentmihalyi, 1990, 1993). The likelihood of success is determined by an appraisal of the difficulty of the task and the person's self-perception of his or her ability to succeed. Incentives (rewards and sanctions) elevate the value of the challenge, and creating opportunity by clearing obstacles to success and encouraging individual ingenuity increases the perception that success is achievable.

Social capacity. Social capacity (or social capital) is captured in the trust, communication, cooperation, coordination, and collaboration among personnel working to accomplish a shared mission. A highly functioning organization depends upon the requisite level and kind of human capital, but more is necessary than the accumulation of individual capacities. People must work together, inspired to achieve common goals. Social capacity is affected by the structures within which people work, and structural change is sometimes necessary to accommodate innovation.

Cokins (2009) asserts that "we substantially underestimate the importance of . . . considering and altering people's attitudes and behavior to overcome their natural resistance to change" (p. xxix). Leaders prepare people for change by communicating the purpose and goals of new strategies and initiatives, building the functional capacity to meet the new expectations, inspiring people to own the change, and intentionally constructing the work networks that facilitate collaboration. Chip and Dan Heath (2010) remind us that "what looks like resistance is often a lack of clarity" (p. 17). Leaders reduce resistance by clearly communicating the purpose of change.

Change induces risk, and in a climate of change people step beyond their comfort zones. They become uncertain of their reciprocal relationships with colleagues when roles shift and expectations vary. Trust is the antidote for unhealthy aspects of risk. As James Coleman (1990) notes, trust is critical in situations in which "the risk one takes depends on the performance of another actor" (p. 91). Each person must trust not only the other person's "willingness or intention to keep the trust, but ability to do so" (p. 96). That means that each person must be confident of the other's capacity to meet the new expectations introduced by change.

Social capital flourishes in an environment of trust and reciprocity in which people know what to expect of each other, are confident of each other's abilities, and accept the obligations placed upon them. People are more trusting when they feel privy to the decisions that affect them, understand their roles, and understand the roles of others in the organization. Communication facilitates trust and understanding, and it sets the stage for cooperation among people as they assist each other in performing their separate roles. Coordination assures that the work of individuals and groups is coherent with the work of other individuals and groups. Collaboration joins people in work in pursuit of common aims.

Technical capacity. Technical capacity includes tools (e.g., electronic devices), systems, processes, and protocols that guide and facilitate work. The organization's Capacity to improve depends upon the quality and appropriateness of its technology and the proficiency of personnel in using it. Using technology is a matter of practice, and new technology requires the implementation of new practices. For the Leadership Team, making decisions to

enhance functional, motivational, and social capacity can be guided by technology-aided information. For example, a data-based skill inventory provides information about functional capacity, and social network mapping shows how people are actually connected to each other in their work.

Implementation

Planning the details necessary for successful internalization of an initiative

Implementation is a science of its own, with a body of literature that is worth exploring. See, for example, *Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature* (Fixsen, Naoom, Blasé, Friedman, & Wallace, 2005). Implementation is a process for intentional change designed to improve the effectiveness of individuals, groups, and the organization as a whole. Implementation flows from the leadership's strategy-aligned initiatives and depends upon organizational Capacity for its success. Implementation implies the introduction of an innovation, a different way of doing things. Practice is a way of doing something. Process is an ordered sequence of activities across time, a structure for action (Davenport, 1996).

The setting and context of the people whose practice will be changed must be assessed so that the Implementation Plan is sufficiently targeted to ensure universal assimilation of new practice. The scale of implementation must be understood: the number of people or groups expected to adopt the new practices and processes. The Implementation Plan carries out the strategy-aligned initiatives set forth by the Leadership Team and accounts for the magnitude of implementation that is expected. The Leadership Team establishes strategies, defines initiatives, attends to Capacity in general readiness for implementation, and engages management staff to develop Implementation Plans. Finally, Implementation Plans must be effectively executed and their progress monitored.

Practice. Changing practice means changing what people do. An Implementation Plan is prepared by management for each strategy-aligned initiative determined by leadership to result in improved effectiveness or productivity. That calculation rests upon evidence of the practice's efficacy and an

understanding of the organization's Capacity to adopt the practice. The Implementation Plan specifies the practices that must change or be introduced to execute the initiative, with implementation indicators for guidance. The Implementation Plan prepares personnel for the change, targets the settings in which the change is to occur, and accounts for the scale of the change.

Process. New or changed practice is often facilitated by process descriptions that show an ordered sequence of activities over time (a beginning and an end) for specific and routinely repeated practices. A process description may be as simple as a checklist. Atul Gawande (2009) makes a compelling case for procedural checklists in his bestselling *The Checklist Manifesto: How to Get Things Right*.

Implementation Indicators. Indicators are often thought of as post-performance measures, the blip of data that "indicates" whether an expected outcome is likely to be achieved. Leading and lagging indicators are commonly used by organizations to gauge progress and ultimate outcomes. Lagging indicators are measures of effectiveness, and leading indicators are appraisals for benchmarked progress toward the ultimate measures of effectiveness. An Implementation Plan, however, includes a less-common type of indicator—the "implementation indicator." The implementation indicator is a standard by which one aspect of a practice's implementation can be assessed and a guide to its accomplishment. An implementation indicator, then, is behavioral rather than quantitative. It requires evidence of its implementation but is not, in itself, the evidence. Leading and lagging indicators tell what has been done, and implementation indicators tell what to do.

Implementation Plan. The Implementation Plan, developed by managers and key personnel and approved by the Leadership Team:

- ♦ Describes the initiative, its alignment with strategies, and its intended results;
- ♦ Describes the setting and scale;
- ♦ Presents the case for the necessary change in practice and the intended results;
- ♦ Describes the practices and processes to be implemented;
- ♦ Lists implementation indicators for the practices;
- ♦ Outlines tasks, responsibilities, and timelines;

- ◆ Includes the practice-specific training and coaching that will be provided;
- ◆ Includes outputs, outcomes, benchmarks, and implementation measures;
- ◆ Estimates the cost of implementation.

The setting is the context within which the change in practice and process is intended to occur, including the variety of people with different roles, in different locations, and with different Capacities. Scale is the magnitude of the implementation, the number of people or groups that will be affected. The size of the scale impacts the duration of the Implementation Plan and the resources required to execute it. The plan is executed with clear direction, benchmarked expectations, performance measures, and feedback loops.

To prepare personnel for a change in practice and to enable them to own the change, they must understand the reasons for the change and its expected results. The Leadership Team assesses general Capacity and takes steps to ensure its adequacy before initiatives are made practical in an Implementation Plan. The Implementation Plan includes a “readiness” assessment that aligns general Capacity with the specific requirements of the new practices and outlines the training and coaching necessary to enable personnel to implement the new practices.

Productivity

Predicting the effects of an initiative on cost and effectiveness and tracking outcomes

Productivity is the ultimate measure of organizational performance—the organization’s ability to achieve maximum results with the minimum of resources committed. Results alone demonstrate the organization’s effectiveness in achieving its goals. As goals change, the metrics for determining effectiveness change. Productivity is achieved by mobilizing slack resources, eliminating inefficiencies and redundancies, and adopting more efficacious practices.

Walberg (2011) suggests four ways to improve productivity:

- ◆ Increase effectiveness without increasing costs;

- ◆ Reduce costs without diminishing effectiveness;
- ◆ Increase effectiveness and simultaneously reduce costs; and
- ◆ Introduce transformational innovations.

Effectiveness. Organizational effectiveness is a quantitative measure of the extent to which an organizational goal is achieved. Effectiveness measures may also be applied to specific strategies and initiatives.

Standards of Practice. Standards of practice define expected behaviors and procedures—the best ways of doing things—for each role or function and provide a means to determine organizational and sub-unit levels of quality operation. Each practice standard includes criteria to determine the current level of compliance with the standard. This can be a simple measure, such as a three-point criteria scale (or rubric) that enables respondents to mark Not Currently Met, Partially Met, or Fully Met. Periodic administration of an assessment of standards of practice produces scores that can be aggregated and summarized. Assessing the standards of practice may be accomplished by administering a survey to individuals within divisions and workgroups and then aggregating the data, or by consensus scoring by divisions or workgroups meeting for that purpose. An initiative requires adjustments to the existing standards of practice, as a better way has been introduced.

Productivity Enhancement. Productivity enhancement is an intermediate step in achieving actual productivity. Productivity enhancement looks at standards of practice that are expected to optimize effectiveness. Productivity enhancement is the ratio of two measures: (1) the degree to which the organization meets established standards of practice, and (2) the organization’s (or division or workgroup’s) effectiveness.

Actual Productivity. Actual productivity is the ratio of benefit to cost. The benefit is expressed in measures of effectiveness. Actual productivity looks at the organizational costs assigned to achieve the outcome, or the ratio of effectiveness to cost. Two ways to improve actual productivity are to bring practices closer to their standards and to change the standards themselves.

Part II

The State Education Agency



Catalyzing Change

The SEA is tasked with many responsibilities, including administering programs authorized or funded by state and federal governments and monitoring district and school compliance with regulations. But SEAs also catalyze innovative practice within the SEA itself and in districts and schools. The SEA’s core mission is to ensure that all students in the state receive a high-quality education that prepares them for success. The SEA pursues that mission by establishing conditions that enable and encourage districts and schools to continuously and sometimes rapidly improve student learning.

The Chief State School Officer (CSSO) in the state and the CSSO’s key administrators form the critical Leadership Team, guided by the State Board of Education. This group leads change, making decisions based on reliable and timely information. The Leadership Team directs change in the SEA itself (including its regional extensions and external partners) and also establishes the conditions by which change is directed by districts and schools.

In the field of education, improvement (change) processes typically track three metrics. First, student learning is measured against standards (e.g., performance on standards-based assessments and graduation rates) to determine the “outcomes” of schooling. Second, standards of professional practice (the essential “inputs” of schooling) provide guideposts for assessing people’s ability to impact student outcomes. Third, the improvement process itself is evaluated to determine its effectiveness and efficiency in improving professional practice and student outcomes. The metrics, then, aid in controlling, guiding, and measuring what adults do that affects what students learn.

Accountability and support frameworks provide metrics for determining a school’s performance and apply incentives (pressures and rewards) to encourage people to strive for greater results. As more is expected of schools in terms of student outcomes, more assistance in improving professional practice is due them. The demands of accountability are balanced by assistance for districts and schools in meeting expectations. Effective state systems apply the levers of incentives, opportunity, and capacity to enable and encourage people to change. As described by Rhim, Hassel, and Redding (2008),

Building on the work of Bryk, Shipps, Hill, and Lake (1998) on school decentralization, Hill and Celio (1998), in their examination of efforts to “fix” urban schools, we propose that successful systemic reform requires three key components: incentives, capacity, and opportunities. Incentives are inducements designed to motivate personnel to change or improve behavior that influences education outcomes. Capacity entails the school’s ability to respond to incentives in ways that improve outcomes and includes

“He that will not apply new remedies must expect new evils; for time is the greatest innovator.”

—Francis Bacon



investment in new ideas, instructional methods, and human capacity. Opportunity represents the environment in which schools operate, particularly policies that enable schools to operate successfully absent “rules that limit and routinize instruction” and limit allocation of staff and money (Hill & Celio, 1998, p. 75). Our review of the literature on the state’s role in school improvement and restructuring revealed that these components provide a helpful conceptual framework when contemplating creating effective state support systems. (p. 26)

In the Change Leadership Framework, we subsume incentives and opportunity under motivational Capacity.

When “accountability” and “support” are used to define separate SEA structures and processes, a misconception ensues. The term “SEA Differentiated System of Recognition, Accountability, and Support” (SRAS) was introduced in late 2011 by the U.S. Department of Education in its guidance to States for requesting flexibility under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). In theory, the SRAS is a unified system in which various outcome measures (accountability) are integral to determining the kind, level, intensity, and duration of support that the state provides for a given district or school. But an examination of outcomes tells only part

of the story; analysis of the inputs, especially the professional practices of personnel, is necessary to efficiently target (differentiate) the supports and interventions and effect the changes in professional practice that will improve outcomes.

“People don’t resist change. They resist being changed!”
—Peter Senge

of the story; analysis of the inputs, especially the professional practices of personnel, is necessary to efficiently target (differentiate) the supports and interventions and effect the changes in professional practice that will improve outcomes.

SEA Differentiated System of Recognition, Accountability, and Support (SRAS)

States’ current efforts to design and provide their SRAS build from two decades of the standards and accountability movement and prioritize new directions for high expectations, greater autonomy and variability in charting the course, and more definition in what constitutes recognition, support, and intervention. In the past, accountability and support

were often viewed as two separate functions within an SEA. Accountability included content standards, state assessments, outcome targets, and performance sanctions. Systems of support encompassed the state’s services (with its partners) to assist districts and schools in improving their performance relative to the accountability measures. An effective SRAS unites accountability, support, and recognition into one coherent system, differentiated to match the context, needs, and current levels of operational quality and performance outcomes of each district and school.

For the past decade, districts and schools have been classified by the number of years they have met or failed to meet performance targets. The U.S. Department of Education has replaced these categories with formulas for identifying Priority Schools (lowest performing) and Focus Schools (schools with the largest achievement gaps). In addition, some schools are recognized as Reward Schools—high-performing and high-progress. Districts may be grouped according to the number and proportion of their schools that fall into these categories, as well as by the overall performance of the district. It should be noted that more than three-quarters of the schools in any state are not included in the categories of Priority Schools, Focus Schools, or Reward Schools, and yet they fall within the SEA’s scope of responsibility.

A central premise of the new classifications of schools based on their performance is that the Reward Schools will spawn innovative and effective practices that can be taken to scale in other schools. Likewise, the lessons learned from the schools making significant progress can be applied in targeting support for Priority and Focus schools. Thus a state laboratory is constructed, and the SEA leads change by identifying innovative and effective practice and taking the practice to scale.

In keeping with the direction of the U.S. Department of Education, the SEA’s SRAS may be described as consisting of:

- ◆ Accountability
 - college- and career-ready standards and assessments
 - clear expectations for district and school performance
 - metrics for identifying districts, schools, and student groups in need of improvement

- methods to evaluate personnel performance
- ◆ Recognition
 - recognition for superior progress and results
- ◆ Support
 - diagnostic methods for determining prevalence of effective practice and differentiating supports
 - technical supports (consultation, training, coaching, etc.)
 - implementation of effective practices
- ◆ Intervention
 - change in governance
 - change in personnel

Figure 2 illustrates how these ten elements constitute a balanced SEA SRAS with change leadership at its core.

This balanced system allows for differentiation in what is expected of districts and schools (and what they expect of themselves) and how they are assisted

in meeting these expectations. In addition, greater emphasis is placed on recognizing and rewarding districts and schools that are high performing or are making substantial progress and scaling up their successful innovations. Commitment to closing the achievement gap for students in poverty, minority students, students with disabilities, and English learning students remains central to the purposes of the SRAS. Student learning outcomes include performance on state standards-based assessments, high school graduation rates, and student preparation for college and career. Student growth rather than percent of students meeting minimal targets may be calculated to determine a school's level of performance. Standards are strengthened to aim more sharply at college- and career-readiness.

The SRAS is each state's unique, organized, and coordinated means for encouraging and aiding the improvement of its districts and schools aimed at greater learning outcomes for all students. The SRAS reflects the traditions, context, and desires of the state. The SRAS is managed by the SEA with partner organizations intentionally enlisted in the work. Because it is a system, the SRAS consists of

Figure 2: A Balanced SEA Differentiated System of Recognition, Accountability, and Support



many component parts organized and coordinated to serve particular purposes in relationship to one another. Because it is a social system, people are the system's primary component parts, and the system's strength lies in the human and social capital residing among them.

Systems and supports. A system is not a bureaucracy, but a purposeful and coordinated interlacing of people, policies, programs, procedures, and practices aimed at a result. In education, the result—the goal—is a well-educated, socially and emotionally mature student ready for college and career. By design, a system is nimble and responsive to continuous feedback and new research. Support is not a weak vessel, but a muscular and relentless desire to help others improve. We know what sound practice looks like, and with candor and support, we can see that it shines in every classroom.

Reaching the ultimate goal. The ultimate goal of the SRAS is for the people associated with a school to drive its continuous improvement for the sake of their own children and students. An effective SRAS provides districts and schools with information (data), planning processes, and analytical tools to determine: a) appropriate goals for student outcomes; b) the progress of their students in achieving the goals; c) effective professional practices, including leadership and instruction, for ensuring improved student performance; and d) progress of personnel in routine and expert implementation of the effective professional practices.

Ensuring fidelity of implementation. Fidelity to implementation standards is always a concern in district and school improvement. But implementation is most likely to succeed when its purposes and boundaries are confined within focused programs and initiatives. Implementation of isolated programs and initiatives can produce a fragmentation of purpose and effect if not coherently nested within a responsive SRAS. SEAs are inundated with programs and initiatives originating from the federal level, from state legislatures, and from within their own departments. When these programs and initiatives arrive at the doorsteps of districts and schools without a strong framework and coordinated support, they are viewed in isolation from one another and distract from the central goal of improved student learning.

Achieving coherence in a community of practice. The SRAS brings coherence to the separate programs and initiatives within the state, facilitates

their effective implementation, and eliminates the inefficiency of fractured and redundant supports and monitoring processes. The advantage lies with the districts and schools, where state efforts are viewed within a unity of purpose, and the state is seen as a capable partner in their improvement. The SRAS establishes a community of practice among the people charged with the work and the people in the districts and schools.

Intervening when necessary. When local effort proves inadequate, despite the supports of the state and district, intervention by the state and/or district may be necessary to ensure that students are well served. Intervention, including turnaround initiatives, is a well-defined tool within the SRAS's repertoire of services, targeted to districts and schools where incremental improvement has not been sufficient. The result of the intervention, however, must be both improved student performance and changed operational conditions and practice that enable the people closest to the students to sustain and build upon the intervention's successes. All of this requires a coherent and responsive system that includes the state, the district, the school, and organizational partners, and that encourages innovation and responsibility at each level.

Intervention for Priority schools (and useful for Focus schools) adopts the turnaround principles set forth by the U.S. Department of Education (2011):

- ♦ **Leadership.** Providing strong leadership by reviewing the performance of the current principal, replacing the current principal or ensuring the principal is a change leader, and providing the principal with operational flexibility
- ♦ **Effective Teachers.** Ensuring that teachers are effective and able to improve instruction by reviewing all staff and retaining those determined to be effective, carefully selecting new teachers including transfers, and providing job-embedded professional development informed by teacher evaluation
- ♦ **Extended Learning Time.** Redesigning the school day, week, or year to include additional time for student learning and teacher collaboration
- ♦ **Strong Instruction.** Strengthening the school's instructional program based on student needs and ensuring that the instructional program is research-based, rigorous,

and aligned with state academic content standards

- ◆ **Use of Data.** Using data to inform instruction and for continuous improvement, including providing time for collaboration on the use of data
- ◆ **School Culture.** Establishing a school environment that improves safety and discipline and addressing students' social, emotional, and physical health needs
- ◆ **Family and Community Engagement.** Providing ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement

Applying the Change Leadership Framework to a State Education Agency (SEA)

Applying the Change Leadership Framework to the SEA, we will focus on the SEA's SRAS. The SRAS is the system through which the SEA urges and supports districts and schools to improve, leading to greater student learning outcomes. The SEA recognizes districts and schools for progress and results, sets standards and assessments for which districts and schools are accountable, and provides differentiated supports and interventions to catalyze district and school improvement. For the SEA, the SRAS is itself a change system, and the SRAS establishes processes through which the districts and schools lead their own change to elevate student outcomes. Because the SRAS is a central function of the SEA, its composition and activities align directly to the SEA's core mission, goals for improved student outcomes, and strategies to achieve these goals.

In the explication of the Change Leadership Framework in an SEA (see below), and in the example provided of a change initiative, the focus is on the changes that are required in the SEA itself. As the initiative is adopted by a district, the district leadership would launch its own initiative, following the Framework pattern to implement the initiative. The SRAS builds district capacity for change by assisting the district in establishing its own Change Leadership Framework, and the Framework may likewise be emulated at the school level.

Execution of the SRAS by the State Education Agency

Under the direction of the CSSO, the Leadership Team aligns functions of the SRAS with the SEA's mission, values, goals, and strategies. The Leadership Team determines the strategies through which

the SRAS is administered and organizes the SEA departments and personnel to efficiently conduct the work. Because the SRAS transcends various funding and work streams, the SEA's organizational structure, lines of authority, and communication channels must be clearly designed to avoid silos and redundancies.

Key Tool for Execution. An Operations Manual is a procedural guide that includes the SEA's mission, values, goals, strategies, and initiatives as they affect the SRAS, as well as the SRAS's organizational structure, program components, processes, responsibilities, and timelines. The Operations Manual facilitates the cascading of strategies and initiatives throughout the organization and communicates the SRAS to districts, schools, and stakeholders. The Operations Manual is updated as new initiatives are launched or modifications are made to the SRAS.

Intentionality in the SRAS

The Leadership Team monitors the administration of the SRAS, eyeing implementation and leading indicators, assessing capacity needs, and checking effectiveness and productivity measures. The SRAS itself is subject to change as the Leadership Team adjusts to changes in legislation, federal and state mandates or funding, identifies promising practices worthy of adoption or scale-up, and detects problems with implementation. This change may call for refinement of strategy, launching of initiatives, repositioning of personnel, and modification of the Operations Manual. As always, change is signaled, explained, and its path cleared with attention to Capacity and adjustment in Implementation Plans.

“How can I be sure in a world that's constantly changin'?”

—The Rascals



Key Tools for Intentionality. The Initiative Design is the key document in which the Leadership Team describes the purpose and intended outcomes for a strategy-aligned initiative and outlines means for building organizational Capacity to adopt the initiative. The Activity Termination is the document released by the Leadership Team to guide management in the orderly termination of an unproductive program, practice, or process.

Capacity in the SRAS

As SEAs have moved from a compliance-only mode to an emphasis on their responsibility to urge and support district and school improvement aimed at greater student achievement, they have often found that current personnel are not suited to the new roles. In some cases, retraining and repurposing handle the matter; but at other times staff replacement is necessary in order to achieve the desired skill sets for the work at hand. As the Leadership Team's initiatives for the SRAS move toward implementation, Capacity must be adequate to the task. The people assigned the work must have the necessary skills and experience and a strong desire to succeed. Workgroups must be appropriately structured; and communication, cooperation, coordination, and collaboration must unify them in purpose and commitment. Tools must be provided to carry out their functions. Before Implementation Plans are put in place, the Leadership Team engages management staff to assess current organizational Capacity and makes the adjustments in structure and personnel assignment necessary to move forward in implementing an initiative.

Key Tools for Capacity. A Skill Inventory is a directory of the skills of current SEA personnel, consultants, and partners that constitute the SRAS. A Social Network Map is a graphic depiction of the responses from personnel surveys that outline their frequency of formal and informal contact with other personnel. Periodic surveys of SRAS personnel can gauge levels of work satisfaction, perceived capacity to perform assigned duties, and confidence in the collaborative capacity of teammates. A Technology Guide describes each technological tool employed in the SRAS and lists the people using the tool.

Implementation in the SRAS

With the Initiative Design launched by the Leadership Team, and with the general Capacity the Leadership Team has ensured, management staff develops an Implementation Plan for the initiative. The management staff proceeds in close communication with the Leadership Team. The Implementation Plan explains the initiative's connection to the SEA's goals and strategies, provides a rationale for its effectiveness, and sets out its objectives. For each Implementation Plan, the management staff identifies the new or refined practices and processes that will be required of personnel within the agency and among partnering organizations.

The practices and processes are coherently clustered within programmatic categories as appropriate to the initiative (e.g., Leadership, Instruction, Curriculum, Student Supports, or Assessment) and within sub-categories (e.g., Teacher Evaluation, Alignment, Classroom Management) that clarify their purpose. For each practice, specific, plain-language, behavioral implementation indicators are created to guide implementation. Process checklists are included. Leading indicators, benchmark expectations, responsibilities, timelines, and performance measures are added.

The Implementation Plan considers the settings (e.g., SEA departments, large districts, rural schools, turnaround schools) of the people for whom the new practices are intended and maps alternate routes to achieve the common purpose in each setting. The scale of implementation (e.g., within the SEA, all districts, targeted schools, specific subject areas) is estimated to ensure that the plan is adequate in duration, intensity, and available resources. The Leadership Team approves the Implementation Plans and confirms that they are coherent with one another.

Key Tools for Implementation. The Implementation Plan, as previously described, is a key tool for implementation. Technological tools, such as web- or server-based project management tools, provide structure and documentation for assessing current implementation of practices and processes and for tracking completion of tasks and full implementation of each practice.

Productivity in the SRAS

Effectiveness measures for the SRAS are derived from the organizational goals and strategies that outline its purpose. Statewide student performance on state assessments and graduation rates are ultimate measures of the SRAS's effectiveness, with disaggregation for different categories of districts and schools and for student subgroups. Measures more specific to the SRAS's work would track these same indicators related to the type, intensity, and duration of SRAS-provided supports and interventions.

Cost can be determined globally, for example the per-student cost of schooling across the state, again with appropriate disaggregation for categories of districts and schools and student subgroups. The SRAS's cost is the budget under which it operates, with disaggregation for specific sub-units, workgroups, and initiatives. Cost can also be assigned for

For the SEA and its districts and schools, Walberg (2011) offers the following examples of transformational innovations as ways to improve productivity:

- ◆ Transformational budgeting: Changing personnel and program policies that unnecessarily elevate cost without improving effectiveness.
- ◆ School Triggers: State policy that automatically triggers parent choice options in schools that underperform.
- ◆ Rigorous Family Engagement: Tapping the potential benefits to student learning of family engagement in order to enhance out-of-school drivers of student success.
- ◆ Differentiated Pacing: Providing opportunities for students to move through the curriculum and school system without the lockstep of grade levels in order to accelerate learning without additional cost.
- ◆ Superior Teachers: Some teachers demonstrate greater gains in student learning at the same cost as other, less effective teachers.
- ◆ Performance Pay: Paying personnel based on their effectiveness rather than position ranks, degrees earned, and years in service provides an incentive that can increase effectiveness while reallocating current costs rather than increasing cost.
- ◆ Online Teaching and Testing: The technology now available for high-quality online services holds promise for improving learning outcomes at a lower cost.
- ◆ Transformational Leaders: Leadership at all levels makes a difference to effectiveness. Identifying, placing, and supporting transformational leaders in key positions can improve effectiveness disproportionate to additional costs incurred.

the SRAS's supports and interventions relative to each district and school that receives them.

Productivity Enhancement is estimated by determining the ratio of each workgroup's current rating on standards of practice to that workgroup's cost. Actual Productivity is estimated by determining the ratio of effectiveness measures to the cost of the SRAS, its workgroups, and its initiatives.

Key Tools for Productivity. Tools key to Productivity include a budgeting and financial accounting system that is able to assign costs to organizational strategies, initiatives, divisions, and workgroups. Standards of practice, their criteria, and the instruments for assessing them are other key tools. Technological tools that enable division administrators to maintain a current accounting of costs, assessment of standards of practice, and effectiveness are essential.

Example of the Change Leadership Framework Applied to the SRAS

Execution. Three years ago, the SEA Leadership Team recognized that its goal for improving student outcomes through the SRAS was not being realized for a set of persistently low-achieving schools. A

new strategy called for a reorganization of the SRAS to include within it a Turnaround Office with staff focused on the persistently low-achieving schools. Tracking effectiveness measures, Leadership noted that most of these schools were responding to the efforts of the Turnaround Office and demonstrated improved scores on standards-based state assessments. But high school graduation rates remained unchanged in most schools. The Leadership Team decided to explore what the SRAS might do to address the high school graduation rate problem.

Intentionality. Digging deeper into the data on graduation rates in low-achieving high schools, the SEA Leadership Team discovered that three high schools in one district had made marked improvement in graduation rates over the past five years. In discussions with the superintendent and high school principals in the district, the Leadership Team learned that a district program, led by high school guidance counselors, provided a two-year series of monthly workshops for eighth-grade and ninth-grade students and their parents, followed by targeted guidance for at-risk students. The Leadership Team decided to launch an initiative through the SRAS's Turnaround Office to train superintendents, principals, and guidance counselors in all

outmoded personnel policies, redundant structures, inertia, complacency, and whiplash attempts to incorporate the next new thing. Still, advocating constructive change in SEAs demands at least a rough roadmap for its attainment. The concepts behind Execution, Intentionality, Capacity, Implementation, and Productivity are worthy of consideration by an organization seeking to lead change, and we encourage practical adaptation of the Framework for that purpose.

Leaders of the SEA's SRAS are usually geared toward change, but their focus is on change in districts and schools. Too seldom do they step aside from that work to examine the way they lead change in their own organizations. Instituting anything like a Change Leadership Framework requires SEA leaders to take time from the daily challenges of administering complex agencies to look deeply at how they are organized to achieve their aims, and how they lead change rather than react to its inevitability.

This paper addresses how change can be led in the SEA, especially its SRAS, but similar change models can be applied at the district and school levels. In fact, the SRAS can perform a valuable service by helping district and school leaders put in place their own processes for leading constructive change. Conventional district and school improvement planning processes are inadequate for producing their intended results. Static, annual or bi-annual plans, often created by a small number of people in the organization, lack the plasticity to move change through the organization. They are typically not "owned" by all personnel or even understood by many of them. They seldom consider the motivational factors that inspire people to reach for higher levels of performance, nor do they account for the social dynamics that either accelerate or hinder constructive change.

The Change Leadership Framework proposed in this paper outlines sound leadership practices that expeditiously and prudently inject change into the organization, considering at each step the capacity and motivations of the people in the system. Its components are designed to both cascade intentional change through the organization and head off unnecessary and counterproductive change. Anyone in the field of education can attest to the dampening effects of constant waves of somebody's notion of ways to do things better. The Change Leadership Framework places great responsibility on leadership to govern change so that it is appropriate to

the organization and likely to result in improved effectiveness and productivity.

The people at Newline Services Corporation that met to consider a design for their new office building each brought to the table a perspective that is essential to change leadership: a willingness to innovate; current standards of practice; the parameters of policy and regulation; concern for the effects of change on personnel; an eye to the ultimate outcomes and the cost; and the application of objective management methods to ensure successful implementation. The Change Leadership Framework incorporates these perspectives in a Change Cycle directed by change leaders.

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Appendix



Change Cycle Dashboard

For a concrete visualization of the Framework, think of a computer screen that displays the Change Leadership Framework (as in Figure 1, p. 13). Click on the link to Execution and you find the organization's mission statement, values, goals, and current strategies. Each of the components of the Change Cycle is a link to a screen of data about that component, expressed in a few numbers, charts, or graphs. The Change Cycle Dashboard is an efficient way for leadership (and others) to monitor progress and a source of succinct information for decision making. Data on the dashboard is populated by various individuals and groups throughout the organization. Of course, leadership decisions are based on more than data that can be succinctly presented on a dashboard, but the dashboard is a convenient way to manage a reasonable amount of essential information. It can also provide links to more substantial sources of information. By including each component of the Change Cycle on the dashboard, a balanced scorecard is achieved, enabling leadership to view performance in a holistic way (Parmenter, 2011).

The Change Cycle Dashboard is a source of information, including information about the number of change initiatives that are working their way through the organization at any one time. The pace of change is regulated by controlling the number and complexity of initiatives that the organization is attempting to implement. "To be an innovative organization, we need to measure the number of initiatives that are about to come online . . ." (Parmenter, 2011, p. 11). Thus, not only are current initiatives considered, but also those waiting in the on-deck circle.

SEA Change Cycle Dashboard for Execution. The Execution section of the SEA Change Cycle Dashboard includes links to a succinct presentation of the SEA's mission, values, goals, and strategies and a link to the Operations Manual for the SRAS.

SEA Change Cycle Dashboard for Intentionality. The SEA Change Cycle Dashboard for Intentionality tracks the progress, with summary data, of initiatives aligned to each of the strategies that flow from the SRAS's mission and goals. The Dashboard links to sources of information about pending changes in state and federal legislation and policy and to sources for identifying promising practices emerging from the field and from research.

SEA Change Cycle Dashboard for Capacity. The Change Cycle Dashboard for Capacity includes summary data on the number of personnel by job classification and skill categories, numbers of teams and workgroups and the number of personnel assigned to each, the number and frequency of regularly scheduled meetings, the number of people utilizing specific technological tools, and results of personnel surveys.

SEA Change Cycle Dashboard for Implementation. The Change Cycle Dashboard for Implementation is a summary tracking of each Implementation Plan, including tasks completed and practices implemented. Implementation of a practice is tied to evidence that its implementation indicators have been achieved.

SEA Change Cycle Dashboard for Productivity. The SEA Change Cycle Dashboard includes succinct, summary tracking of measures of organizational effectiveness and productivity, as well as division, workgroup, and initiative effectiveness and productivity. Both Productivity Enhancement and Actual Productivity are included on the dashboard.

Glossary of Terms

The same term can mean different things in different organizations. This glossary explains how key terms are used in this paper.

People and Groups

Leader—the Chief Executive Officer, Chief State School Officer, or similar organizational head

Leadership Team—the Leader's top-level administrators, executive team, or cabinet

Leadership—Leader and Leadership Team

Management—typically the level of administration just below the Leadership Team in the organization's hierarchy, although this may vary according to the size of the organization. For example, in a small organization, the Leadership Team may also be the management.

Division—a department within the organization, a sub-unit of the organization, often headed by a member of the Leadership Team

Workgroup—a formal body, within a division or across divisions, charged with responsibility for a specific program, project, or assignment

Change Leadership Framework

Execution—the Leadership Team establishing and communicating the organization’s mission, values, goals, and strategies, analyzing information, and making key decisions

Change Cycle—the four components of change leadership: Intentionality, Capacity, Implementation, and Productivity

Information Exchange—the Information Exchange among the components of the Change Cycle, with the Leadership Team at the core, including the information provided on the Change Cycle Dashboard

Change Cycle Dashboard—a web- or server-based system that displays succinct data from each component of the Change Cycle and from Execution, also providing links to other sources of information inside and outside the organization

Intentionality—the point in the Change Cycle where innovations are identified and where the Leadership Team formulates a strategy-aligned Initiative Design to launch change

Initiative—an intentional change in organizational practice and process launched by the Leadership Team through an Initiative Design; the introduction of an innovation into the organization

Initiative Design—a succinct document prepared by the Leadership Team that launches an initiative; includes a general description of the innovation and its intended results as well as guidance for addressing organizational Capacity

Activity Termination—a succinct document prepared by the Leadership Team that provides guidance for management to terminate a program, practice, or process that is deemed unproductive.

Capacity—the functional, motivational, social, and technical capacity of the organization; general Capacity readied by the Leadership Team in order to move forward with an Initiative

Functional Capacity—the collective and individual skill and knowledge possessed by personnel in the organization

Motivational Capacity—the attitudinal inclination of personnel to engage and persist with a change initiative; enhanced by incentives

and opportunity to engage and contribute their own ideas

Social Capacity—the ability of personnel to communicate, cooperate, coordinate, and collaborate within a culture of trust and reciprocity affected by the structures within which they work and the Leadership Team’s articulation of mission, values, goals, strategies, and initiatives and the rationale behind them

Technical Capacity—the tools (computer applications, procedural guides) with which people do their work

Implementation—preparation and execution of an Implementation Plan by management and workgroups in response to an Initiative Design launched by the Leadership Team

Practice—what people do in their work; the basic unit of change

Process—an ordering of activity across time; a structure for action

Implementation Indicators—succinct, plain-language, behavioral rather than quantitative descriptions of aspects of a practice to guide implementation

Implementation Plan—the detailed, procedural plan for implementing an initiative and monitoring the progress of implementation

Productivity—the projection and tracking of the organization’s effectiveness (goal attainment), standards of practice, and cost; also application of these measures to strategies, divisions, workgroups, and initiatives as appropriate

Effectiveness—quantitative evidence of the degree of attainment of an organizational goal; may also be applied to specific programs or initiatives based on their intended outcomes

Standards of Practice—optimal personnel practices for each role in the organization, including methods for estimating the current degree to which the standard is met with aggregation for workgroups, divisions, and the organization

Productivity Enhancement—the ratio of standards of practice to cost

Actual Productivity—the ratio of effectiveness to cost

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