A DEVELOPING THEORY OF ACTION FOR RACE-TO-THE-TOP POLICY INNOVATIONS

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THE POLICY PROBLEM AT BASELINE

The policy problem: **Demography predicts educational destiny**.

Policy targets:

- **Equitable access to knowledge** provided by competent, committed teachers in safe, supportive, effective schools

- **Equitable high school graduation** with demonstrated competence & readiness for postsecondary education & careers
THE ESPoused POLICY THEORY OF ACTION: SIMPLIFIED

- Three Disruptive Innovations: CCSS, APPR, & DDI
- Implementation Moves from District Offices to Schools & Results in Performance Adaptations
- Students Gain Equitable Access to Teachers, Learning Resources & Gain Important Knowledge
- More College- and Career-ready Students Graduate from High School with Demonstrated Competencies

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THE RTTT POLICY PRIORITY FOR MULTI-LEVEL ALIGNMENT

State Education

District Office

School

Classroom
THE POLICY IMPLEMENTATION JOURNEY

State Policy Goals & Innovations

District Office: Facilitators, Constraints & Barriers

School Facilitators, Constraints & Barriers

Classrooms: Teacher-Student Facilitators, Constraints, & Barriers
A Continuum of Strategies for Implementing and Embedding Innovations

"LET IT HAPPEN"

DEFINING FEATURES
- Unpredictable
- Unprogrammed
- Uncertain
- Emergent
- Self Organizing
- Time Consuming
- Uneven

ASSUMED MECHANISM
- Natural-Evolutionary

ASSUMED OUTCOME
- Unpredictable and Variable Implementation

"HELP IT HAPPEN"

DEFINING FEATURES
- Negotiated
- Influenced
- Opportunistic
- Need Responsive
- Adaptive
- Non-Linear

ASSUMED MECHANISM
- Social Influence Strategies
- Timely & Responsive
- Technical Assistance

ASSUMED OUTCOME
- Mutual Accommodation

"MAKE IT HAPPEN"

DEFINING FEATURES
- Scientific
- Orderly
- Planned
- Regulated
- Programmed
- System Properly Managed

ASSUMED MECHANISM
- Evidence-based Implementation Leadership
  and Management

ASSUMED OUTCOME
- Implementation Fidelity
Dynamic Theories of Action: Iterative Cycles

Antecedents

Co-requisites

Core Technology Improves & So Do Outcomes

School-level Features & Drivers

Innovation Implementation Strategy & Journey
Figure 1. Antecedents & Co-Requisites

- Stable, Committed, Competent Workforce
- Organizational Readiness/Capacity for Innovations
- Proactive & Adaptive Superintendent Leadership
- The Trust-Communication Connection: Reciprocal & Relational Trust
- Aligned School & District Leadership: Crafting Coherence Together
- An Odds-beating Performance Trajectory
- Ability to Reallocate Resources
Figure 2. Learning-Focused Implementation Leadership

- Capacities & Competencies for Data-guided Improvement
- Strategies for Linking Whole Child Development with Academic Learning
- Organizational Readiness/Capacity for Innovations

- Leaders Communicate Innovations’ Advantages
- Strategies for Developing Clarity, Coherence, & Shared Mindsets in Tandem with District Office-School Alignments: Organizational Learning Systems for Performance Adaptations
- Aligned School & District Leadership: Crafting Coherence Together

- Deliberate Efforts to Integrate CCSS, DDI, & APPR into Existing Practices
- Leaders Grant Teachers’ Discretion to Adapt CCSS & DDI
- Responsive Plans for Resources & Professional Development
Figure 3. Drilling Deeper in Odds-Beating Schools

Positive School Climate Lubricated by Relational Trust

Collaborative Work Structures & Cultures

Strong Communication Networks

A Clear, Adaptable Innovation Implementation Strategy
Figure 4. Improving the Core Technology

Positive School Climate Lubricated by Relational Trust

Collaborative Work Structures & Cultures

Curricular Adaptations with CCSS

CCSS-Aligned, Data-Driven, Differentiated Teaching & Learning Facilitated By Teacher Teams & Student Support Professionals

P-12 Aligned Curriculum Mapping

Strong Communication Networks

A Clear, Adaptable Innovation Implementation Strategy
FOUR IMPLICATIONS

- Although odds-beating schools are not high performers, they are special; and in many ways “atypical.”

- Atypical districts & schools may not be the best exemplars for educational policy (Hatch, 2009)

- **A four component classification:**
  - High performers
  - Odds-beaters
  - Typicals
  - Turnarounds
THE MISSING PART IN ESPoused POLICY TOA

Three Disruptive Innovations

Implementation: From District Offices to Schools & Results in Performance Adaptation

Proximal Outcomes: New Organizational Capacities, New Workforce Configurations & Competencies

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