AN EARLY INQUIRY INTO EDUCATOR AND LEADERSHIP

Mindsets

Resources to enable personalized learning

OCTOBER 2018

Transcend
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
The Educator and Leadership Mindsets Inquiry resource is an early inquiry into key mindsets needed to effectively execute optimal learning environments at both the educator and site leader level. These mindsets are critical to supporting the work outlined in the Instructional Look Fors and the Site Level Conditions.

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OVERVIEW
Personalized learning has the potential to empower students to lead successful and fulfilling lives, yet shifting teaching and learning practices are significant undertakings. Schools, systems, and their many stakeholders have voiced a need for clarity on what personalized learning entails at both the classroom and site levels, an articulation of capacities and mindsets needed to implement new personalized learning practices, and confidence that the changes they are making will positively impact outcomes for students.

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDENT IMPACT FRAMEWORK
The Student Impact Framework is an oversimplified model of how impact happens for students. It starts with student outcomes and asserts that they are affected by students’ actions and experiences, which are in turn affected by educators’ actions and mindsets. Educators’ actions and mindsets are then shaped by site level conditions and site leaders’ actions and mindsets. We have developed resources, including the Educator and Leadership Mindsets Inquiry, to support the realization of the Student Impact Framework.

STUDENT IMPACT FRAMEWORK

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<tr>
<th>STUDENTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STUDENT OUTCOMES</td>
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<tr>
<td>STUDENT ACTIONS &amp; EXPERIENCES</td>
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<th>EDUCATORS</th>
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<td>EDUCATOR ACTIONS</td>
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<td>EDUCATOR MINDSETS</td>
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<th>LEARNING SITE</th>
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<td>SITE CONDITIONS</td>
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<td>SITE LEADER ACTIONS</td>
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<td>SITE LEADER MINDSETS</td>
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HOW DOES THE EDUCATORS AND LEADERSHIP MINDSETS INQUIRY RESOURCE SUPPORT THE STUDENT IMPACT FRAMEWORK?
The Student Impact Framework helps us identify where each resource has the ability to impact skills, capacities, and conditions at every level of a system to increase learner impact. The Educator and Leadership Mindsets Inquiry sit at both the educator and leadership level in the Student Impact Framework. These mindsets are critical enablers for enacting Instructional Look Fors and/or the Site Level Conditions. (See our website for how all the personalized learning resources fit into the Student Impact Framework.)
HOW CAN I USE THE EDUCATOR AND LEADERSHIP MINDSETS INQUIRY?
The content is not meant to be user-facing but rather as fodder for building contextualized, usable tools. This content is most beneficial when used in spaces where teams can interact with and debate the mindsets to better internalize them, rather than simply reading through them. Possible use cases for this content include:

- Team visioning at the start of a year with internal/external stakeholders: e.g., “When are these mindsets more or less in play?” (see an example activity in Appendix)
- Team creation of mindsets necessary to support their work
- Educators’ and site leaders’ personal goal-setting
- Baseline setting for coaching conversations or ongoing coaching

HOW WAS THE EDUCATOR AND LEADERSHIP MINDSETS INQUIRY RESOURCE DESIGNED?
While educators’ and leaders’ skills and knowledge are critical to their roles and in hiring processes, both Lindsay Unified School District and Summit Public Schools have found through the years of doing this work that having adults on site with aligned mindsets is key to the culture, innovation, and flexibility required for personalizing learning. The Educator and Leadership Mindsets Inquiry resource outlines a set of mindsets useful for all educators (any adult on campus) and a supplemental set of mindsets specifically for site leaders and leadership teams implementing personalized learning. Each articulation contains mindsets about effective learning and related mindsets about the role of an educator or site leader.
MINDSETS ABOUT LEARNERS AND LEARNING

- Every child can achieve at the highest levels.
- Children learn best as active participants in the process of acquiring knowledge.
- Every child is unique in key ways (strengths, needs, interests, identities, and life context)—‘one size fits all’ fits no one.
- Positive relationships are foundational to a child’s sense of safety, belonging, and willingness to challenge themselves.
- Children must be equipped to be lifelong learners, armed with the skills and habits to keep learning and growing as they face new contexts in and beyond their school.
- Students’ investment in their learning is the shared responsibility of educators and students.

MINDSETS ABOUT MYSELF AND MY ROLE

- I am responsible for my students’ outcomes.
- I deeply understand each student’s strengths, needs, and interests to effectively customize their learning.
- I collaborate with peers to customize learning and understand the whole child.
- I am aware of my cultural biases and foster belonging for all students.
- I continuously seek feedback, iterate, and improve my own skills as an educator.
- I am committed to overcoming challenges and persevering to create an excellent personalized learning environment for all students.

MINDSETS ABOUT ADULT LEARNERS AND LEARNING

- Adults in schools produce quality work and support students best when leaders set clear expectations, ensure adults are heard and understood and supported, and recognize positive intentions.
- If adults get supportive feedback and coaching, they will grow in their productive mindsets and skills.
- When adults act in ways that seem problematic or unhelpful, they may still have good intent but feel caught in a bind (without easy ways to express or resolve it) and need support.
- An educator’s commitment and investment in the instructional vision is the shared responsibility of site leader and the educator.

MINDSETS ABOUT MYSELF AND MY ROLE

- I am responsible for fostering, evolving, and ensuring shared commitment to a clear instructional vision.
- I develop trusting relationships with educators, understand their experiences, and invest in their capabilities so they can make the most positive impact possible with learners.
- I continuously strive for true commitment to our vision rather than simply ensuring compliance from my staff.
- I commit to having the appropriate levels of vulnerability and humility, while also recognizing that this is not at odds with having strength and clarity.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

**Example Exercise for Site Leaders and Educators**

The exercise to the right prompts adults to reflect on situations or contexts in which they might find themselves on one end of the spectrum or the other. The objective is not to use the spectrum to map a "permanent state," but rather to use the spectrum to help adults individually or collectively engage in reflection around what it means to live into these mindsets and find areas of strength and areas for growth. (Please note the chart to the right uses two of the above adult mindsets as examples).

**How to facilitate this exercise:**

- For each adult mindset, create (or co-create with educators/leadership teams) examples of when a mindset is less in play or more in play based on your context (e.g. adapt or replace the examples in columns 2 and 3 in the chart to the right and add continue to build out examples for all mindsets about myself and my role).

- Create a reflection opportunity for educators/leadership teams by asking participants (individually or in groups) to place themselves on a spectrum for each mindset. Ask: "When is this mindset less in play vs. more in play for me in my role?"

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**MINDSETS ABOUT MYSELF AND MY ROLE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHEN THIS MINDSET IS LESS IN PLAY...</th>
<th>WHEN THIS MINDSET IS MORE IN PLAY...</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I collaborate with peers to customize learning and understand the whole child.</td>
<td>I rarely review data about student progress and needs with other educators</td>
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<td>I rarely discuss specific instructional approaches and practices with colleagues</td>
<td>I frequently share work and engage in constructive feedback sessions to improve lesson plans and instructional strategies</td>
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<td>During team meetings, I can lapse into complaints or gossip rather than problem solve site-wide issues</td>
<td>I regularly bring school-level issues and potential solutions to consider in team meetings and expect the same from peers</td>
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<td>I continuously seek feedback, iterate and improve my own skills as an educator.</td>
<td>When I see gaps in student progress, I attribute them to problems outside myself</td>
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<tr>
<td>When I keep others out (whether actively or passively) of my classroom and practice, if they may be critical of me</td>
<td>I keep others out (whether actively or passively) of my classroom and practice, if they may be critical of me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I rarely observe peers</td>
<td>I assess student learning, but rarely used assessment data to modify instructional strategies</td>
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<tr>
<td>I rely more heavily on my past experience and training rather than new forms of input</td>
<td>I aggressively look for gaps in student progress to find places where I can improve my practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>I assess student learning, but rarely used assessment data to modify instructional strategies</td>
<td>I consistently seek feedback from students and colleagues to push my growth</td>
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<tr>
<td>I take measured risks in trying out new practices that may feel uncomfortable or unfamiliar</td>
<td>I regularly seek out and consume PD opportunities for myself (e.g., books, conferences, observations)</td>
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This framework and its corresponding tools are living documents and will continue to change as both systems iterate, learn, and improve the content. We welcome thoughts and feedback at dfranco@lindsay.k12.ca.us.