

District Guide for PCBL Implementation

APRIL 2024



INTRODUCTION

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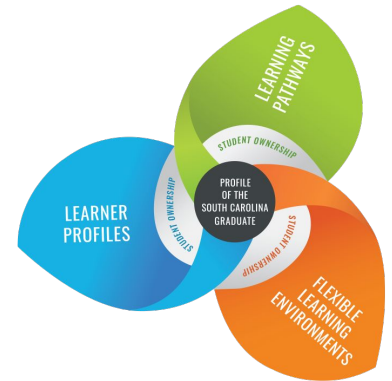
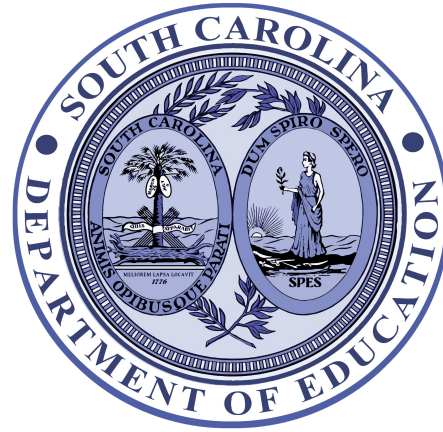
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INTRODUCTION WELCOME

Welcome to the District Guide for PCBL Implementation! We created this guide for district leaders across South Carolina. This guide does not include everything you may need but we hope that you will find the tips, resources, and examples helpful to you and your district as you move forward with your own PCBL implementation. We will continue to update this guide as we learn from and with each other.



BRAND NEW TO PCBL?

If you are brand new to Personalized Competency-Based Learning (PCBL) you may want to explore some foundational learning opportunities before you jump into this guide.

1

[PCBL
Framework](#)

Our framework provides...

2

[Professional
Development](#)

We offer a variety of...

3

[Contact Us](#)

Your regional coach...

INTRODUCTION

THE YORK STORY & STUDENT VOICE



Elissa Cox, Director of Secondary Programs for the York School District One, has written “**The York Story**” features which showcase how one school district has engaged in the PCBL work in each of the change leadership elements.

special features!



Alexandra Dye, member of reDesign’s Youth Advisory Council, has written the “**Student Voice**” features where she provides an example of how young people can play a meaningful part of each of the change leadership elements.

INTRODUCTION

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

If you are brand-new to PCBL and want to get a sense of what it is...

...then you can explore this guide to learn more about what it is, the work happening on the ground in districts across SC, and see what resource are out there to support you.

If you are interested in implementing PCBL in your district, but aren't sure where to start...

...then you can use this guide to help you think through an implementation plan and decide on an entry point right for you.

If you are implementing some aspects of PCBL but are facing challenges or are unsure about how to scale and spread...

...then you can use this guide to reflect on the different elements of change leadership, identify challenges, explore ideas and resources for inspiration and possible next steps.

If you are in advanced implementation and want to take a more active role spreading the PCBL message ...

...then you can use this guide as a tool for organizing your thinking about your own implementation journey, network with other schools and districts by hosting visitors, sharing your journey and learnings along the way.

INTRODUCTION

CHANGE LEADERSHIP FRAMEWORK

This guide is organized around a **Change Leadership Framework**. Below you will find a video introduction to the framework and an aligned note taking tool that you may find helpful to record and organize your thinking.



Change Leadership Strategy Planner

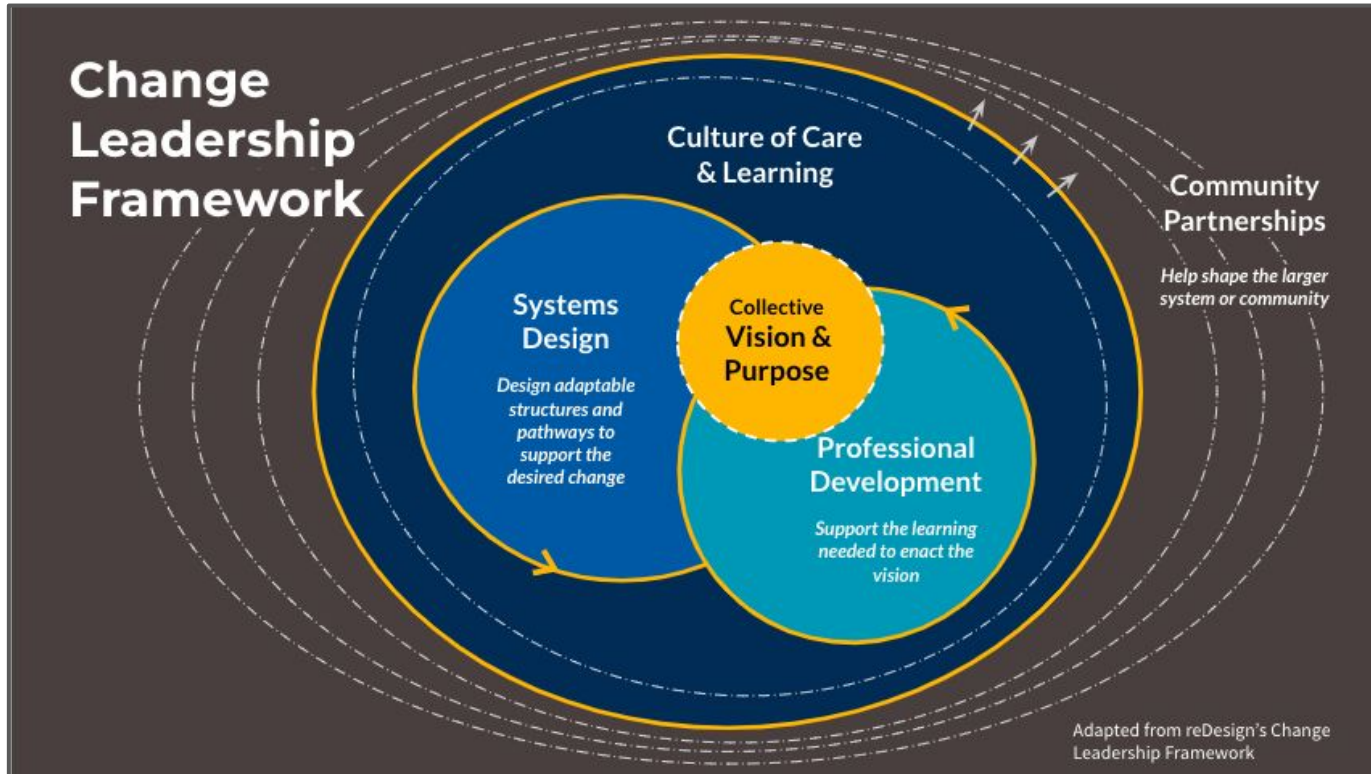
Use this simple planner as a place to record and organize your thinking as you work through the district guide.

STEPS	ELEMENT: VISION AND PURPOSE	YOUR IDEAS & QUESTIONS
Set a goal	What would we like to see change in this element? By when? What goals are already in place related to this element?	
Make a plan	What is our plan of action for reaching our goal? What are we trying or doing?	
Monitor progress	What initial data do we have? What data will we collect?	
Reflect and Adjust	How and when will we analyze our data? What changes can we make to our plan based on our learning?	

STEPS	ELEMENT: CULTURE OF CARE AND LEARNING	YOUR IDEAS & QUESTIONS
Set a goal	What would we like to see change in this element? By when? What goals are already in place related to this element?	
Make a plan	What is our plan of action for reaching	

INTRODUCTION

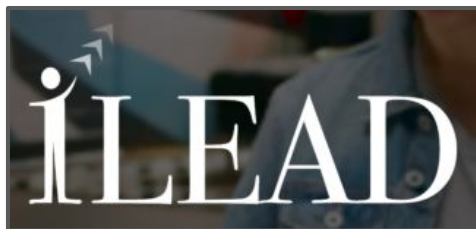
CHANGE LEADERSHIP FRAMEWORK



INTRODUCTION

LEADING CHANGE IN SOUTH CAROLINA

While this guide is organized around one change leadership framework, SCDE is committed to helping you lead change in your district and has created several entry points to support you. **Click** on the images below and you may be able to build your own change leadership effort off of these additional great resources.



PLACEHOLDER:
C.A.R.E



PLACEHOLDER:
Hope Network

COLLECTIVE VISION & PURPOSE



COLLECTIVE VISION & PURPOSE

INTRODUCTION

Remember to add your ideas and questions to your [Change Leadership Strategy Planner](#).

What are vision and purpose?

When we say collective vision and purpose, we mean a collaboratively designed image of the future of learning that reflects your hopes, values, and commitments to learners' success.

Why are vision and purpose important?

Multiple studies in and outside of education have highlighted the importance of developing a widely shared understanding of a system's purpose and goals for enabling true transformation that endures over time and across political leadership changes and funding environments. Transforming Education Systems Why, What, And How Policy Brief, The Brookings Institute (2022)

How will they help us?

By establishing a collective vision and purpose for PCBL in your district, you can narrow your focus to actionable and aligned outcomes and choose the strategies that will get you there!

special feature!



COLLECTIVE VISION & PURPOSE *IN ACTION*

THE YORK STORY

The leadership of York School District One (YSD1) desired to capitalize on several opportunities and events to **develop a new vision** of education in our district. Working with 100+ stakeholders (students, parents, district educators, administrators, School Board members, industry partners, and community partners), we examined our progress toward becoming a learning organization (as defined by the Schlechty Center).

Through this collective stakeholder work, our **Strategic Change Agenda** was developed and has become our **actionable Vision and Roadmap** for our continued focus toward becoming a learning organization and providing a quality educational experience for the students of our community.



Strategic Change Agenda

York School District One Strategic Goals

Create a challenging and supportive educational environment that ensures readiness for all students.



Strategies:

- Collaborate to create a comprehensive and seamless K-12 teaching and learning experience.
- Promote a culture that embraces diversity and addresses the needs of the whole child.
- Create relevant, meaningful, and applicable learning experiences that support student readiness.
- Engage in collaborative reflection with a variety of stakeholders to capitalize on the strengths of the district.

York School District One Strategic Goals

Create quality opportunities for ongoing learning for students and staff in order to promote innovation and flexibility.



Strategies:

- Design opportunities for student-centered learning experiences that are challenging, meaningful, and relevant.
- Integrate current and innovative technologies to increase student engagement and performance.
- Provide personalized learning experiences to meet the individual needs of students and staff.
- Embrace student feedback to aid in the design of quality work and learning experiences.

York School District One Strategic Goals

Build capacity and leadership at every level of the organization.



Strategies:

- Develop a shared understanding of quality student work, valuable experiences, and high expectations.
- Provide professional learning opportunities to promote a culture of creativity, risk-taking, and innovation.
- Build a leadership network that creates role members to the field.
- Leverage data to inform teacher practice, student learning, and organizational performance.

special feature!



COLLECTIVE VISION & PURPOSE *IN ACTION*

THE YORK STORY

How did York School District 1 do it?

Assess	Determined need to revise or renew district vision (The District's Why? Student Needs? Community Needs?)
Plan	Developed a strategic plan to evaluate, revise, or design a vision based upon successes and needs of the community (district, school, community, partners)
Seek Input	Facilitated district/school community and stakeholder activities to determine priorities and desired outcomes for students.
Set Goals	Intentionally designed 3 – 5 district goals that align with stakeholder outcomes of facilitated discovery activities, gather feedback from the stakeholder group and revise as needed.
Communicate	Developed and implemented a plan to communicate these goals as the focus of the district's work and commitments to the students, families, educators, and communities to be served.

SELF-ASSESSMENT

If you already have a vision statement, spend some time self-reflecting and assessing:

- Were the conversations to set this vision inclusive of a wide variety of perspectives and voices?
- Is the final version clear to everyone? Is there buy-in?
- Is anything missing?
- Is the language accessible and inspiring?
- Does it reflect a future state (5-10 years from now)?

If you answered “no” to any of these questions, or if you don’t yet have a vision, the tools on the next slide are for you!

MAKING A VISIONING PLAN

Self-Assess

Do we need to evaluate/revise/design our district vision?

Plan

How will we evaluate/revise/design our vision?

Get Input

Who are our stakeholders and how can we ensure their involvement?

Set Goals

How can we develop and refine goals based on that input?

Communicate

How can we effectively communicate our goals and commitments?

COLLECTIVE VISION & PURPOSE

TOOLS & TEMPLATES

You've got all your stakeholders around the table. Pencils are sharpened, and everyone's ready to craft a compelling, inspiring vision for the future of learning with PCBL. What do you do?

If you need to focus on ...	Try...
Diverse perspectives	Use this From ... To table to capture everyone's individual visions, then look for themes and resonances. Here's an example .
Backwards design	Try this When We Become protocol as an elegant way to get from an exciting, but perhaps abstract, <i>vision</i> to a concrete, actionable <i>vision statement</i> .
Prioritizing change initiatives	Use this Now, Next, Later Protocol . You'll need about 30 minutes with your team.

TIPS!!!

“**Pressure-test**” your new or revised vision by [self assessing](#) again:

- Were the conversations to set this vision inclusive of a wide variety of perspectives and voices?
- Is the final version clear to everyone? Is there buy-in?
- Is anything missing?
- Is the language accessible and inspiring?
- Does it reflect a future state (5-10 years from now)?

THEN

Let's add a few more questions to the mix:

- Does the new version resonate among all stakeholders (diverse perspectives)
- Does the vision articulate the influence you have (or want to have) on the different ecosystems of which you are a part (backwards design)?
- Think about current initiatives you have going on now: how and to what extent do they align with this vision (prioritization of change initiatives)?

special feature!



COLLECTIVE VISION & PURPOSE

STUDENT VOICE

Q: How can students help create a vision for school?

Alex: the FIRST IDEA

“Whenever there is a plan to implement something new or change something, students should be given the opportunity to have the first idea.

Instead of sharing your ideas or examples first, provide students with an open prompt so that their thinking isn't influence by adult ideas or perceived limitations. Then, you can compare student ideas with initial adult ideas and look for commonalities and new insights.

Vision and purpose should also include feedback. Students are the ones who are experiencing these changes everyday and they are the ones learning in this setting for multiple hours a day so they should be allowed to have a continual voice in the change after a period of “settling in.””

A black and white photograph of four diverse children laughing joyfully. From left to right: a young boy in a striped shirt, a boy in a plaid shirt with his arm around the first boy's shoulder, a girl in a white t-shirt with her mouth wide open, and a girl with curly hair in a white t-shirt with her arm around the girl next to her. They are all smiling broadly and looking upwards. The background is a solid dark blue.

CULTURE OF CARE & LEARNING

CULTURE OF CARE & LEARNING

INTRODUCTION

Remember to add your ideas and questions to your [Change Leadership Strategy Planner](#).

What is a culture of care & learning?

When we say culture of care and learning, we mean an environment where all individuals feel supported, valued, and motivated to grow and succeed both personally and professionally.

Why does a culture of care & learning matter?

In the 1970s, cultural anthropologist E.T. Hall developed one of the most enduring frameworks for understanding the many elements of culture: The Iceberg Concept of Culture. So much of an iceberg exists below the water line. Similarly, most of what we recognize as “culture” is below the surface: it’s the result of our values, beliefs, systems, practices, and traditions. If we can reflect on and adjust those, we can build the culture we want for learning.

How will it help us?

A culture of care and learning is crucial for cultivating an environment where change is embraced as an opportunity for growth and improvement rather than a source of resistance or uncertainty. This is essential for both enacting change and sustaining it over time.

special feature!



CULTURE OF CARE & LEARNING *IN ACTION* THE YORK STORY

@York1YMS & @York1YIS explored Adult SEL strategies with **Chris Haines** during Collaboration Day! Lots of engagement while learning how to better support each other. #YSD1forImpact



It is important to acknowledge that the work will be “**messy.**” That each school site in the district will move at a different pace and that their entry points will vary. The way they **scale and spread will differ.** Even though we are moving towards a collective goal, our paths will be different, and we need to provide appropriate supports. It is essential for district and school leaders to consistently **model** a culture of care & learning.

special feature!



CULTURE OF CARE & LEARNING *IN ACTION*

THE YORK STORY

Tips from York School District 1

Create **structures** that can provide and sustain continuous leadership support throughout the change journey including **building capacity at all levels** of the district and designing **onboarding programs** for new staff members. This can be empowering and can begin to shift ownership of the work.

Model a culture of learning by creating and maintaining opportunities for **open communication** to occur and **routine feedback** to be gathered regarding the successes, challenges, and supports needed throughout the change journey. **Celebrate** successes, innovative practices, and **risks taken** (these are all WINS in the journey)!

CULTURE OF CARE & LEARNING COMPONENTS

Open Communication

**Innovation & Risk
Taking**

**Collaboration &
Teamwork**

**Adaptability &
Flexibility**

Leadership Support

**Empowerment &
Ownership**

**Continuous Learning &
Improvement**

Student-Focused

Here's another nature metaphor, in case icebergs aren't your thing: Culture is in some ways like the atmosphere: it's pervasive, ever-present, and invisible. Culture can be damaged, either gradually or all at once. And you can't simply institute an improved culture or wave a magic wand and change culture.

But culture, like the atmosphere, is made up of specific components. When we are very intentional about the components we introduce into our culture, we can change the atmosphere of our communities and contexts.

When we talk about a culture of care and learning supportive of PCBL, we are specifically talking about these components.

CULTURE OF CARE & LEARNING

8 COMPONENTS

These 8 components can help you self-assess and intentionally plan to develop or improve your culture of care and learning.

❑ **Open Communication**

There is transparent communication with stakeholders about the need for the change and the implementation approach. Stakeholders feel comfortable expressing ideas, concerns, and feedback without fear of retribution.

❑ **Innovation and Risk-Taking**

The high value placed on innovation and risk-taking is evident in frequent and visible experiments with new ideas, reflecting on failure without punishment, and celebrating the learning that comes from mistakes.

❑ **Collaboration and Teamwork**

Collaboration takes place across departments, buildings, and teams, allotting dedicated resources to sharing our knowledge, time, resources, and experiences with each other.

❑ **Adaptability and Flexibility**

Processes and procedures are flexible, allowing everyone to adapt to changing and unknown futures.

8 COMPONENTS

❑ **Leadership Support**

Leaders advocate for the change and support the implementation, providing support in the way of guidance and resources, and by removing barriers.

❑ **Continuous Learning and Improvement**

People in all roles across the district are afforded opportunities for ongoing skill development and learning experiences. New learning and technologies are leveraged to support improvement cycles.

❑ **Empowerment and Ownership**

Members of the community are empowered to contribute to the process and have ownership over the outcomes. There is widespread and enthusiastic buy-in for change efforts across the district?

❑ **Student Focused**

Students are at the center of our change efforts. They are not only our partners but also our driver of change.

CULTURE OF CARE & LEARNING

ASSESSING & PLANNING TOOLS



Culture of Care & Learning District Self-Assessment			
Characteristics needed to enact and sustain change	Reflection: What questions can we ask ourselves about these characteristics?	Self-Assessment: How are we doing in this characteristic? How do we know? What is our data or evidence?	Next Steps: What do we need to do differently or what are our next steps?
Open Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do we have transparent communication with stakeholders about the need for the change and our implementation approach? Do stakeholders feel comfortable expressing ideas, concerns, and feedback without fear of retribution? 		
Innovation & Risk Taking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do we show we value innovation and risk taking? How do we experiment with new ideas? How do we view failure and mistakes? 		
Collaboration & Teamwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do we collaborate across departments, buildings, and rooms? How do we share our knowledge, time, resources, and experiences with each other? 		
Adaptability & Flexibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How is our collective ability to adapt to changing and unknown futures? How are we flexible in our processes and procedures? 		

Cultivating a Culture of Care and Learning

In a robust competency-based learning model, learners experience a sense of safety, belonging, and care—a primary condition to meaningful and positive learning. Their sense of efficacy, a belief in one's own ability to learn, grow, and achieve a goal is nurtured constantly. Finally, emphasis is placed on the value of growth and of the learner itself ("mastery orientation"), rather than on evaluative grades and how well one performs relative to others ("Performance orientation"). Remember that all aspects of the learning environment can serve to either reinforce or undermine a culture of care and learning. Grading and assessment policies, in particular, are key to culture building. A grading policy that penalizes, or does not allow for revision, for example, will undermine a culture of learning.

LOOK FORS	NOTES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing relationship building: Learners feel known and valued in the learning community; they feel safe enough to ask for help, and are confident that they will get the help they need when they need it. <input type="checkbox"/> Framing learning goals as relevant: Learners have the opportunity to make meaningful connections between the learning goal and their own lives, interests, or goals. <input type="checkbox"/> Awareness of learning as a growth-focused process: Learners' awareness of the "how" of learning (not just the "what") is cultivated; learning is talked about as a process that involves ongoing practice, productive struggle, mistakes, revision, changes to one's thinking, and ultimately growth (rather than a focus on evaluative grades or competition with other students). <input type="checkbox"/> Encouragement: Learners receive positive and hopeful messages about their ability to grow and improve from their teachers and their peers, and have routine opportunities to collaborate with others. <input type="checkbox"/> Reinforcing structures: The norms, routines, and policies of the learning environment reinforce a sense of belonging, efficacy, and a mastery orientation. 	

Click on the images above to explore each resource. The first two resources are tools for self-assessment and planning but in different formats. They may be helpful to pause and reflect on the 8 components and identify strengths and areas for growth. The third resource is a look for tool for culture of care and learning on the classroom level. Using this tool can help district leaders spotlight schools/classrooms within the district that are modeling a strong culture of care and learning and determine where additional support may be needed.

special feature!



CULTURE OF CARE & LEARNING

STUDENT VOICE

Q: What do students need to be leaders in creating a culture of care and learning?

Alex: Trust and timely info

“Trust is essential for establishing a culture of care and learning. When students become informed from the start, they feel more validated and are more likely to be more open minded to the change taking place. Along with being informed, the timing in which the change takes place can be a major factor in the students reaction. Change in and of itself is scary for many people but having open communication from the beginning allows there to be a sense of trust among the student body. Allowing students to become a meaningful part of the process, collecting their feedback, listening to and implementing their ideas for new ways to improve, all builds trust.”

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT INTRODUCTION

Remember to add your ideas and questions to your [Change Leadership Strategy Planner](#).

What is professional development?

When we say professional development, we mean the way the adults in our school systems learn and grow individually and collectively. This learning can come in a variety of forms and includes all adults across different roles within the district. It is essential for every employee of the district to have opportunities to learn and grow.

Why is professional development important?

“Implementing professional development well also requires responsiveness to the specific needs of teachers and learners, and to the school and district contexts in which teaching and learning will take place. These types of common obstacles to professional development should be anticipated and planned for during both the design and implementation phases of professional development.”

Linda Darling-Hammond, “Effective Teacher Professional Development.” Learning Policy Institute Research Brief, May 2017

How will it help us?

No change is possible for learners if we don’t support the adults in the system by building their capacity for change; understanding and addressing their resistance to change; modeling and promoting continuous learning and growing; and tailoring supports & resources for their specific needs / roles.

special feature!



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT *IN ACTION*

THE YORK STORY

We asked ourselves these key questions...

What do our adults need to know and be able to do in order to implement strategies of our Strategic Change Agenda? What do they already know and do? What evidence do we have to support our thinking? Who are the adults at every level of the organization that do elements of our Strategic Change Agenda well?

How do we begin to develop Professional Development opportunities that meet the needs of the adults in a manner that also MODELS how we desire new learning to be delivered? How do we personalize our Professional Development offerings and ensure relevancy to respective roles in the learning organization?

special feature!



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT *IN ACTION*

THE YORK STORY

Superintendent & Cabinet Members
attending State sponsored Competency & Personalized Learning workshops, inquiry labs, & events; participated in learning sessions with reDesign

Principal Collaboration series
(led by Directors of Instruction); monthly professional development focused on student-centered learning practices.

YLead series (led by Directors of Instruction); includes all Assistant Principals monthly professional development focused on student-centered learning practices

Student-Centered Learning cohorts (SCL); meets monthly to provide new learning focused on our Teaching & Learning framework and competencies; includes 1:1 coaching with specialists, goal-setting, and conferencing

Recruited & hired **Instructional Specialists** provided a PD series to entire District Instructional Team to ensure each member was able to support the scale and spread of the work

special feature!



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT *IN ACTION*

THE YORK STORY



School-site Learning Walks with District Leaders, School Administrators, and Teachers in order to identify elements of our teaching & learning framework and develop a common understanding using a common language.

Calibrated Feedback focus with District Leaders, School Administrators, and Teachers here we focused on quality feedback in order to affirm desired practices observed & stretch questions to move practice forward.

Listen & Learns with School Administrative Teams Provided **Aligned Professional Development** (District offerings; School Offerings; Grade-level; Content Departments)

Common Coaching Framework developed and used by District Instructional Team.

Aligned Communications with access to on-demand Professional Development opportunities.

7 FEATURES OF HIGH-QUALITY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

❑ **Is content-focused**

Professional development that focuses on teaching strategies associated with specific curriculum content supports teacher learning within their classroom contexts.

❑ **Supports collaboration, typically in job-embedded contexts**

By working collaboratively, teachers can create communities that positively change the culture and instruction of their entire grade level, department, school, and/or district.

❑ **Incorporates active learning utilizing adult learning theory**

In PD models featuring active learning, teachers often participate in the same style of learning they are designing for their students, using real examples of curriculum, student work, and instruction

❑ **Uses models and modeling of effective practice**

Models include lesson plans, unit plans, sample student work, observations of peer teachers, and video or written cases of accomplished teaching.

7 FEATURES OF HIGH-QUALITY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- ❑ **Provides coaching and expert support**
Experts may share their specialized knowledge as one-on-one coaches in the classroom, as facilitators of group workshops, or as remote mentors using technology to communicate with educators.

- ❑ **Offers opportunities for feedback and reflection**
Feedback may be offered as teachers analyze lesson plans, demonstration lessons, or videos of teacher instruction, which also provide opportunities for reflection about what might be refined or retained and reinforced.

- ❑ **Is of sustained duration.**
Strong PD initiatives typically engage teachers in learning over weeks, months, or even academic years, rather than in short, one-off workshops.

NOTE: These features are focused on teachers but the same ideas can apply to leaders and staff in different roles across the district.

SELF-ASSESSMENT & PLANNING TOOLS

It is important to reflect and evaluate your current professional development systems and offerings so you have an accurate sense of what you can build upon based on your own systems and strengths, as well as identify the small tweaks you can make to things you are already doing before undertaking larger changes. These tools below may be helpful for reflection, self-assessment, planning, and tracking your growth as a district.

Placeholder for PL
Team Rubrics?

ADDITIONAL
RESOURCE?

[Professional
Development
Planner](#)

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SHIFTING MODELS

Old School PD Model

- ❑ **Content:** determined by leadership
- ❑ **Groupings:** set structures (grade level, content area, full staff)
- ❑ **Time:** set times every week, after school, during planning times
- ❑ **Place:** in person, in classrooms or PD rooms
- ❑ **Pace:** determined by leadership

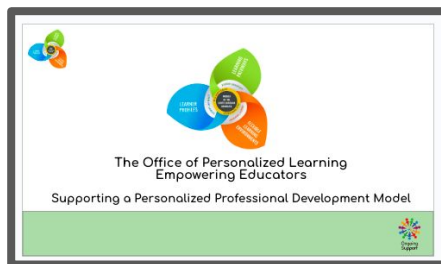
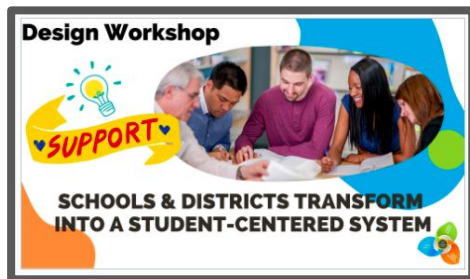
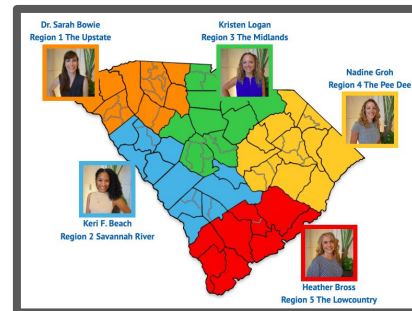
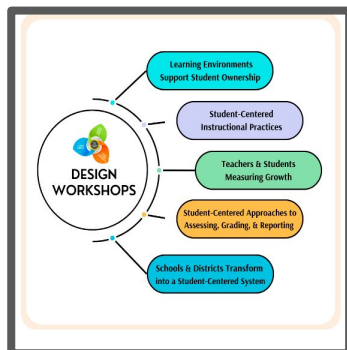
TO
THIS

PCBL PD Model

- ❑ **Content:** variety of choices, create individual goals, learning progressions and/or pathways
- ❑ **Groupings:** varied groups, across grade levels, building, district, or outside the district
- ❑ **Time:** varied times, days, and lengths
- ❑ **Place:** face to face, virtual, blended, on/off campus
- ❑ **Pace:** set your own pace with common reflection & share out points

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PERSONALIZE SC OFFERINGS

Click on the images below to explore some of the support and professional development offered by the Personalize Learning Team. Check out [Personalize SC](#) for more options!



special feature!



PROFESSIONAL LEARNING STUDENT VOICE

Q: How can students be a part of educator learning and growth across the school or district?

Alex: Feedback & Design Partners

“As valuable as teacher and administration feedback is, having a perspective from a student can be really beneficial. Allowing for outside views to provide feedback on what they noticed and what the teacher is doing well and what they could improve on could provide a different form of beneficial feedback. Teachers should have the opportunity to receive feedback from the ones it will affect the most, the students. This could be student feedback and design partner opportunities on a staff development or teacher workday where teachers present ideas for feedback or sign for a design partner where they co-design a project or lesson with a small group of students.”

SYSTEMS DESIGN



SYSTEMS DESIGN

INTRODUCTION

Remember to add your ideas and questions to your [Change Leadership Strategy Planner](#).

What is systems design?

Systems designs refer to the various systems that make up a school district. This includes teaching & learning, human resources, finance & operations, communication, etc. When implementing PCBL in a district it is essential to have systemic supports in place to support teachers and students.

Why is systems design important?

Systems design can impact student outcomes by creating an educational environment that is responsive, inclusive, and supportive of all learners. By addressing systemic barriers, promoting effective practices, and fostering collaboration and innovation, education systems can empower students to achieve their full potential.

How will it help us?

Improving district systems enhances the capacity of schools and districts to meet the diverse needs of students, support their academic and social-emotional development, and prepare them for success. By investing in effective leadership, organizational structures and supportive systems, districts can create a foundation for continuous improvement and student achievement.

special feature!



SYSTEMS DESIGN *IN ACTION*

THE YORK STORY

We asked ourselves these key questions...

What structures, procedures, supports, resources, or policies are **currently in place and effective** that supports our Strategic Change Agenda? What evidence do we have to support their success?

Are there any existing structures, procedures, resources, or policies that **need to be revised** to support our Strategic Change Agenda goals? What are the suggested changes and which Strategic Change Agenda goal will they support?

Are there any new structures, procedures, supports, resources or policies that **need to be considered or recommended** to support our Strategic Change Agenda goals?

Which of these changes or new recommendations are **priorities**? How might they align with the phases of implementation (may determine the order of priority)?

Which of these are **short term** achievable changes or adoptions? Which of these are **long term** achievable changes or adoptions?

special feature!



SYSTEMS DESIGN *IN ACTION*

THE YORK STORY

Using the questions previously shared we took specific, strategic actions to evaluate and adapt systems that support our Strategic Change Agenda. We established priority actions around policies & schedules, human resources, and finance & operations.

POLICIES & SCHEDULES

- ★ Capitalized on state supports and opportunities provided such as the **Competency Based Education waiver**
- ★ Adopted a **modified school calendar** to enable additional supports for students and collaborative time
- ★ **Modified school schedules** to enable protected collaborative time
- ★ **Policies updated** to support competency based learning

special feature!



SYSTEMS DESIGN *IN ACTION*

THE YORK STORY

HUMAN RESOURCES

- ★ **Increased the size of our district instructional team** to support the scale and spread of the desired change within our district
- ★ **Repurposed positions** from programs to create sustainable instructional support positions at every level to assist with building capacity of all members of the learning organization
- ★ **Shifted recruiting practices** and onboarding practices/programs

FINANCE & OPERATIONS

- ★ **Evaluated** programs, resources, and allocations
- ★ **Vetted purchased resources** to determine effectiveness - resulted in streamlining vested tools, non-renewing various tools/resources, and providing professional development to leverage our committed tools in the most effective manner
- ★ **Reallocated funds** from tools found to be least effective to secure other types of supports needed and aligned with our Strategic Change Agenda goals/strategies (collaborative time, updating learning environments)

SELF-ASSESSMENT

The Systems Design Visitation Tool was created for those visiting a district implementing some aspect of PCBL. This tool could also be used as a self-assessment tool. Reflecting on your district's efforts in each of the identified categories is a great way to start thinking about the systems you already have in place and how aligned they are with PCBL. You may also find this [PCBL Mindsets Survey](#) helpful understanding where your district is starting and tracking your growth over time.

PCBL Systems Design Visitation Tool

This visitation tool was created for both those visiting and those being visited. It does not include every possible system, but it does provide some shared language around some of the key shifts that happen during PCBL implementation. Visitors can use this tool to focus their learning during a visit and those being visited can use this tool to plan what to share with others.

CULTURE & MINDSETS

How are culture and mindsets different in a school or district implementing elements of PCBL?

(Shared responsibility, collective decision making, student voice and agency, teachers as facilitators, sense of belonging, culture of equity, etc.)

INSTRUCTIONAL MODELS & PRACTICES

What instructional models or practices are you focused on implementing?

(Student-centered learning, personalized learning, learning pathways, workshop model, station rotations, UDL, student ownership & agency, conferencing & feedback, explicit skill instruction, reteaching, student-led inquiry, etc.)

ASSESSMENTS

What is the assessment system like?

(Timing, student access, self-assessment, continual, retakes, aligned to learning progressions, for learning not just of learning, etc.)

STUDENT GROUPINGS

How are students grouped in classrooms and throughout the day?

(Age, skills, interest, virtual, blended, etc.)

GRADING & CREDITING

How are students graded and credits awarded?

(Skills based grading on progressions, proficiency scales to award credit, learner profiles / portfolios, badges, student access to and use of their data to make decisions, microcredentials, etc.)

SCHEDULING

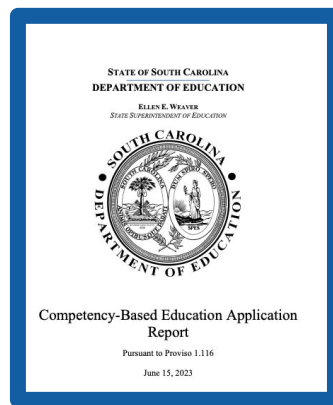
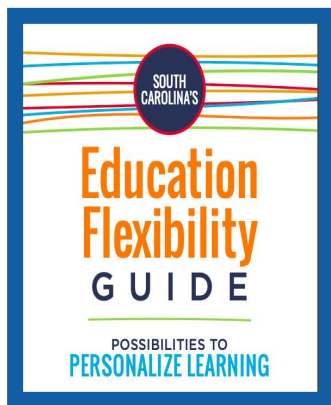
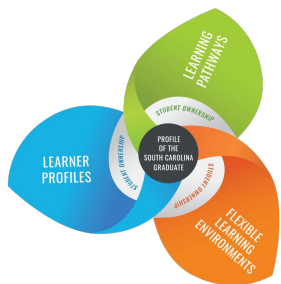
What changes have been made to your school or district calendar or school building schedules?

(Modified balanced calendar, flex mod schedules, staggered start times, half-time, independent learning time, etc.)

SYSTEMS DESIGN

TOOLS & RESOURCES

Tools and resources for systems design are very specific for each system. **Click** on the pinwheel below to see the variety of resources available on the Personalize SC website. Tools and resources can be found in both the professional development and resources tab. Three resources that may provide guidance across systems are also linked below: Flexibility Guide, CBE Waiver Application, and the team's Makin' It Personal podcast with a variety of episodes from educators and leaders across the state.



SAMPLING OF SYSTEMS DESIGN RESOURCES

Click on the tiles below to explore some of the tools and resources available to you. If you are looking for a specific resource, remember you can always reach out to your regional coach.

[Systems 1-Point Rubrics](#)

[Design Workshop
Scheduling, Grading, &
Reporting](#)

[Intro to Competency
Based Grading](#)

[The Shift to Student Led](#)

[9 instructional practices
look-fors tool](#)

[Opportunity Mapping
Template](#)

[Curated PCBL Resources](#)

[Scale & Spread Tipsheets](#)

[Playbook for PCBL](#)

special feature!



SYSTEMS DESIGN

STUDENT VOICE

Q: How can students help to improve current systems or design new ones?

Alex: Administration Pods

“When students are in partnership with district and school administration it benefits both parties. On the administration side, they are introduced to new perspectives from current students. From the student perspective, they become introduced with the “behind the scenes” processes within their school and it provides not only an educational opportunity but creates a new outlet for their voice to be expressed. A pod of students could work with Human Resources to take part in hiring fairs or interview processes. A pod of students could work with maintenance or transportation as problem-solving partners. Students have valuable experience and ideas that can be shared with any department of a district.”



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

INTRODUCTION

Remember to add your ideas and questions to your [Change Leadership Strategy Planner](#).

What are community partnerships?

Community partnerships are the multiple relationships between the school district and the community. This includes two way information exchanges where members of the community are informed about things happening within schools and schools are informed about opportunities within the community.

Why are community partnerships important?

Community partnerships are crucial for student learning because they expand the resources, opportunities, and support systems available to students beyond the classroom. This includes real-world experience and access to role models with diverse perspectives.

How will they help us?

Community partnerships play a vital role in enhancing student learning outcomes, promoting holistic development, and preparing students for success. By leveraging the resources, expertise, and support of the community, schools can create experiences that empower students to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

special feature!



SYSTEMS DESIGN *IN ACTION*

THE YORK STORY

YSD1 is a very connected community (our motto is Connected As One) that has a clear desire for our students to graduate ready for career, college, or military. However, readiness has certainly evolved over time and looks much different and includes new skills than in the past.

We had an extensive need to to educate and inform our community stakeholders, particularly our families, older generations of graduates, School Board members, and veteran retired educators. In turn, we needed to gather insight and understanding as to how our local industries and partners defined student readiness.

special feature!



SYSTEMS DESIGN *IN ACTION*

THE YORK STORY

WHAT DID WE DO?

- **Advisory Committee Presentations** ([Parent Advisory](#), [Student Advisory](#), Teacher Advisory, Community Partner Advisory)
- Floyd D. Technology Center **Open Tours** (during the school day) to showcase programs and non-traditional learning environments (invited retired teachers, key community members, industry partners)
- Produced [School Spotlight videos](#) highlighting a student-centered learning focus of respective school; shared at the monthly School Board meeting, published on district and school website; also used as recruiting tool
- Conducted **Inquiry Labs** at Floyd D. Technology Center, [York Middle School](#), and Hunter Street Elementary
- Facilitated a **School Board Retreat** focused on student-centered learning practices and competency based education
- Facilitated [Community conversations](#) to review our Strategic Change Agenda and determine our progress toward implementation (included the broader community stakeholders, partners, and school community members)
- Offered the **community** various **courses** on school sites (Ex: Culinary, Parenting, Microsoft Office); provided opportunity for community members to receive microcredentials and experience instruction in a student-centered learning environment

SELF-ASSESSMENT & PLANNING

It may be helpful to think about community partnerships in these three buckets:

Understanding your community

Understanding the community means more than just knowing the demographics and statistics. It involves knowing the needs, values, and aspirations of the people who live within the community served by the district.

Communicating with your community

When communicating with the community you need to think about your message, your audience of specific stakeholder groups, best tools for communication and opportunities for two-way communication.

Partnering with your community

Partnering with the community is about establishing mutual relationships where students and the community work together to improve learning in school and address needs of the community.

This simple [note catcher](#) can be used to capture your reflection and ideas.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

TOOLS & RESOURCES

If you need to focus on ...	Try...
Understanding your community	Link to a SC tool for surveying the community's values, needs, etc.
Communicating with your community	Is there a PCBL talking point sheet you can link here? If not, you can link something like this... Writing Effective Talking Points that can help people write their own
Partnering with your community	Also not sure what resources you may have for students earning credits off campus or other school-community collaborations

special feature!



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS STUDENT VOICE

Q: How can students communicate and create partnerships with the community?

Alex: Learning Outside the Box

“Students should have the opportunity to interact and learn from their community members within school hours both on and off school grounds. They can also play a key role in communicating about changes happening or needed in the school. Students are a part of the community they live in but a lot of times they don’t get the chance or have the time to go out and interact with members in their community. Allowing community members to come to the school where they can both teach and learn from students allows for a new type of learning to take place and enhances relationships.”

We hope you found this guide and the resources included helpful for your district's PCBL journey. We are always looking to improve and we'd love to hear from you!

You can share your thoughts in this [PCBL Resource Feedback](#) survey or contact your regional coach [here](#) if you have a tool or resource you'd like to share!

