SCHOOL RETOOL

DEEPER LEARNING SNAPSHOT

Where are we using deeper learning practices in the service of equity in my school?

Be sure to complete pages 8 and 9, and bring them with you to Workshop 1.

Sherlock Holmes sat silent for a few minutes with his fingertips still pressed together. *"You appeared to read a good deal upon her which was quite invisible to me," Watson remarked. "Not invisible but unnoticed, Watson. You did not know where to look, and so you missed all that was important."*

–The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

OBSERVING AS A EQUITY DETECTIVE

Ideally, when a detective arrives at the scene of a crime, they would find the criminal along with conclusive, irrefutable proof of guilt. Because this doesn't happen, a detective must instead collect clues: a fingerprint, a loose strand of hair, a piece of paper with a scribbled note. The detective doesn't know which items will help them solve the crime–perhaps the fingerprint belongs to the victim, maybe that scribbled note is completely innocuous. Still, they collect all the clues because the combination allows them to piece together an explanation that points them in the right direction.

As you use the Deeper Learning Snapshot, think of yourself as an equity detective looking for clues that point to the ways that deeper learning practices might be present in your schools. And look for evidence where deeper learning practices engage students furthest away from opportunity. When you spot something interesting, write it down. You don't have to know for certain that what you're seeing is linked to deeper learning or equity. You just have to think it's *possible*.

WHAT IS EQUITY?

Equity means every child receives what they need to develop to their full academic and social potential.[1]

WHAT IS THE INTENTION BEHIND EQUITY?

Ensuring equally high outcomes for all students and eliminating the predictability of success or failure based on gender, race, religion, ethnicity, learning differences or socioeconomic status.

1. National Equity Project http://nationalequityproject.org/about/equity

OBSERVE NOW, QUANTIFY LATER

Let's focus on observing behaviors as indicators of Deeper Learning in the service of equity. This kind of qualitative observation can be hard to adjust to in a world of accountability systems filled with core standards, state testing and API scores. But the behaviors of students are important pieces of a school's learning culture and these may result in some of the quantitative outcomes down the road. These interactions are real, and they are happening all the time in and out of the classroom. They can show us how we got to where we are now or where we are headed — and might give us enough time to shift outcomes in quantifiable ways.

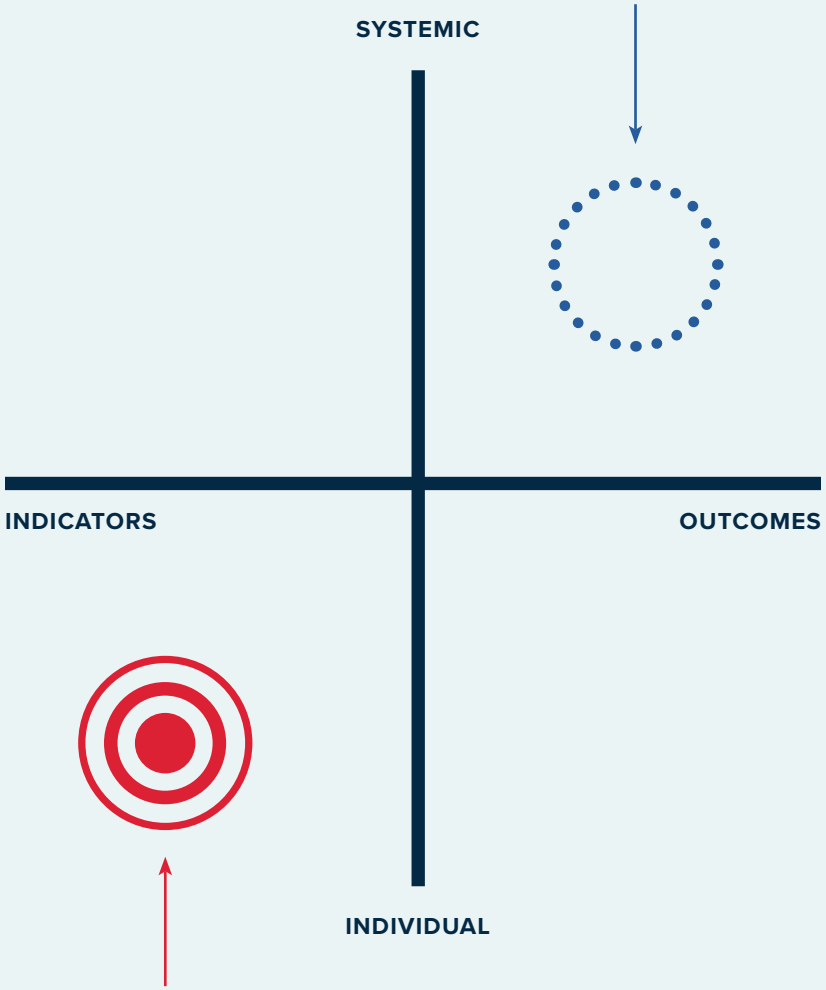
At first, we'll likely notice individual behaviors—a couple of students in the class are collaborating well, for example. Over time, we hope to see a shift from discrete stories to trends in the school culture.

It may be helpful to think about this simple diagram:

Resist the urge to say, *"But how do we know there is causation here?"* or *"But seeing one student's action is not a large enough sample to show real results"* or *"But this one, isolated incident won't necessarily make a dent in my long-term goals."*

Eventually you will have systemic quantitative/qualitative results, but for now you need to look for qualitative indicators.

Of course we want to be here, but that's not always possible, especially when you're experimenting with something new.



In the short time frame, we start here – qualitative indicators – because that's what we can measure during a hack cycle.

WHAT IS DEEPER LEARNING?

Before we can find clues about how and for whom deeper learning is happening at your school, we first need to be clear about we're looking for.

Cognitive

THINK CRITICALLY & SOLVE COMPLEX PROBLEMS

"I apply knowledge, skills, and tools in different ways to identify and solve a variety of problems."

Students apply tools and techniques to formulate and solve problems. These tools include data analysis, statistical reasoning, and scientific inquiry, as well as reflection, creativity, nonlinear thinking, and persistence.

MASTER CORE ACADEMIC CONTENT

"I am applying these skills to meaningful, challenging school work and real-world problems."

All of the competencies operate within this context. For example, all students have the opportunity to communicate and collaborate on a challenging class project, not just those who are planning the school dance.

Students develop understanding in and academic discipline and are able to transfer knowledge to other situations.

Interpersonal

WORK COLLABORATIVELY

"I can work and learn with my peers in ways that help us all grow and meet our goals."

Students cooperate to identify and co-create approaches to academic, social, vocational, and personal challenges.

COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY

"By listening to and understanding others, I can express and understand myself."

Students clearly organize their data, findings, and thoughts. Students express themselves in writing, orally, and visually across content areas in multiple media, languages, and cultures.

Intrapersonal

DEVELOP LEARNING/ACADEMIC MINDSETS

"I belong here because I am a learner. Challenge, struggle, and failure are all part of learning."

Students develop positive attitudes and beliefs about themselves as learners that increase their academic perseverance and prompt them to engage in productive academic behaviors. Students are committed to seeing work through to completion, meeting their goals, and doing quality work, and thus search for solutions to overcome obstacles.

LEARN HOW TO LEARN

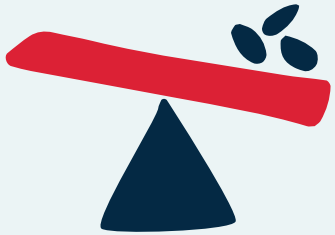
"I know when I'm learning—I set goals, reflect on my progress, and look for help when I need it."

Students monitor and direct their own learning, and believe they are capable of learning.

On the Snapshot Tool, you can see examples of student behaviors that might serve as indicators of each of the competencies. Do these align with initiatives your school or district is currently pursuing?

STUDENT BEHAVIORS: QUALITY AND QUANTITY

As you observe, pay attention to the types of behaviors you see, as well as how often that behavior occurs. If, for example, you notice one student using evidence to prove her point, that is a small clue of deeper learning; if you notice it happening ten times by ten different students, that's a much stronger clue. Check off the specific behaviors you see happening multiple times in the Observation Guide.



STUDENT BEHAVIORS: FOCUS ON WHICH STUDENTS

As you observe, pay attention to the types of students doing which behaviors. Ask yourself:

What kind of students did you see engaged in these behaviors?
What did they look like?
What are their learning styles or learning differences?
What is their primary language?

Be sure to note these important aspects about which students are engaged in which behaviors in your Observation Guide.

OBSERVATION GUIDE

NAME:

DATE & TIME:

DIRECTIONS:

Go out and look for clues that deeper learning might be happening. As you see them, write them down. If you see a behavior more than once, put a check mark next to it–the more you see it, the more check marks. See the examples for inspiration.

Pay attention to which students are engaged in these behaviors, too. Notice and document what they look like, their learning styles or learning differences, and their primary language.

THINK CRITICALLY & SOLVE COMPLEX PROBLEMS

your notes:

Examples: I saw a student...

... ask and answer explanatory questions ("Why?" "How do you know?")
... use evidence to justify her thinking
... take on more than one point of view
... use creative strategies and resources to approach problems
... respectfully disagree with others and with the teacher
... point out areas for improvement

WORK COLLABORATIVELY

Examples: I saw a student...

... work on a project with students of different backgrounds and perspectives from their own
... build on another student's ideas
... compliment and encourage others
... challenge and critique others
... ask for and offer help to other students

DEVELOP LEARNING/ACADEMIC MINDSETS

Examples: I saw a student...

... actively participate in class discussions (students are talking more than the teacher)
... ask for help
... try hard, even on tasks he found challenging
... continue to try after failing
... share his interpretation, even when he knows others may disagree
... revise an assignment in response to feedback

MASTER CORE ACADEMIC CONTENT

your notes:

Examples: I saw a student...

... explore a complex, cross-disciplinary question
... produce high quality work
... explain what she is learning and how it matters to her community
... reference something she learned in another class or earlier unit
... convey concepts in different ways (talk about it, write about it, draw it, act it out)
... use feedback to reflect on her understanding of course content

COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY

Examples: I saw a student...

... present her work and respond to questions from her peers
... use evidence in her writing and speaking
... give feedback respectfully and accept feedback gracefully
... synthesize other people's thoughts and ideas
... recognize when she was being misunderstood, and try other ways of communicating
... translate effectively between two languages

LEARN HOW TO LEARN

Examples: I saw a student...

... manage her assignments and tasks in an organized way
... record progress toward a goal
... try to find the answers to questions on her own
... critique work and explain how to improve it
... seek out challenges
... ask how she could have done better

REFLECTION GUIDE — A

Complete this page and bring it with you to Workshop 1.

SCHOOL RETOOL

DIRECTIONS:

Now think about the six Deeper Learning competencies more specifically.

1 Assess your school's progress in each category.

a. How regularly did you see students engaging in behaviors that point to evidence of the competencies?

1 = NEVER; 2 = SOMETIMES; 3 = OFTEN; 4 = ALWAYS

b. How regularly did you see students furthest from opportunity engaging in behaviors that point to evidence of the competencies?

1 = NEVER; 2 = SOMETIMES; 3 = OFTEN; 4 = ALWAYS

Cognitive		*Interpersonal*		*Intrapersonal*	
THINK CRITICALLY & SOLVE COMPLEX PROBLEMS		**WORK COLLABORATIVELY**		**DEVELOP LEARNING/ACADEMIC MINDSETS**	
Score 1:	*Score 2:*	*Score 1:*	*Score 2:*	*Score 1:*	*Score 2:*
MASTER CORE ACADEMIC CONTENT		**COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY**		**LEARN HOW TO LEARN**	
Score 1:	*Score 2:*	*Score 1:*	*Score 2:*	*Score 1:*	*Score 2:*

2 Prioritize areas for transformation.

Where would you like to begin to ensure all students achieve equally high outcomes in your school?

Put a star next to your top 3 priorities.

Circle any competencies that align to initiatives or goals your school or district is pursuing. Then turn to Reflection Guide B and jot down some thoughts.

REFLECTION GUIDE — B

Complete this page and bring it with you to Workshop 1.

DIRECTIONS:

Take a few moments to think about your observations and the Deeper Learning competencies that you prioritized. Jot down some notes about which competency could most impact and transform your school.

We'll reflect on this together in workshop 1.

Which of your prioritized Deeper Learning competencies do you think will most help transform your school?

Why?

How might focusing on this competency ensure all students achieve equally high outcomes across your school?

What assets do you have in your school that could support that transformation?

What might need to shift in the culture or conditions in your school to facilitate this transformation?