

SUMMIT24

MARCH 25, 2024 | 3:30–4:45 PM

4D. Equity in networked improvement: For whom and under what conditions?

Please be sure this session has been added to your schedule in the Summit app

PRESENTED BY:

- *Megan Duff, Vanderbilt University*
- *Jennifer Zoltners Sherer, Partners for Network Improvement*
- *Angel Li, Carnegie Foundation*
- *Sarah Howard & Kimberly Hinton, Network for College Success*
- *Nichelle Woodson & Chris Lewine, CT RISE*



Carnegie Foundation
for the Advancement of Teaching

PRESENTERS



Megan Duff
Vanderbilt University



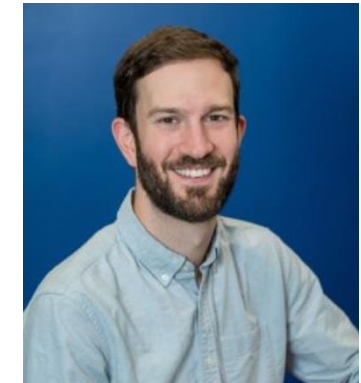
Jennifer Zoltners Sherer
Partners for Network Improvement



Angel Li
Carnegie Evidence & Improvement Lab, Carnegie Foundation



Sarah Howard & Kimberly Hinton
Network for College Success



Nichelle Woodson & Chris Lewine
CT RISE

SESSION AIMS



Participants will understand different **conceptualizations of equity** in improvement.



Participants will add to their toolbox of **strategies** for integrating equity in improvement.



Participants will grapple with the **trade-offs** associated with different approaches to integrating equity in improvement.

SESSION OVERVIEW

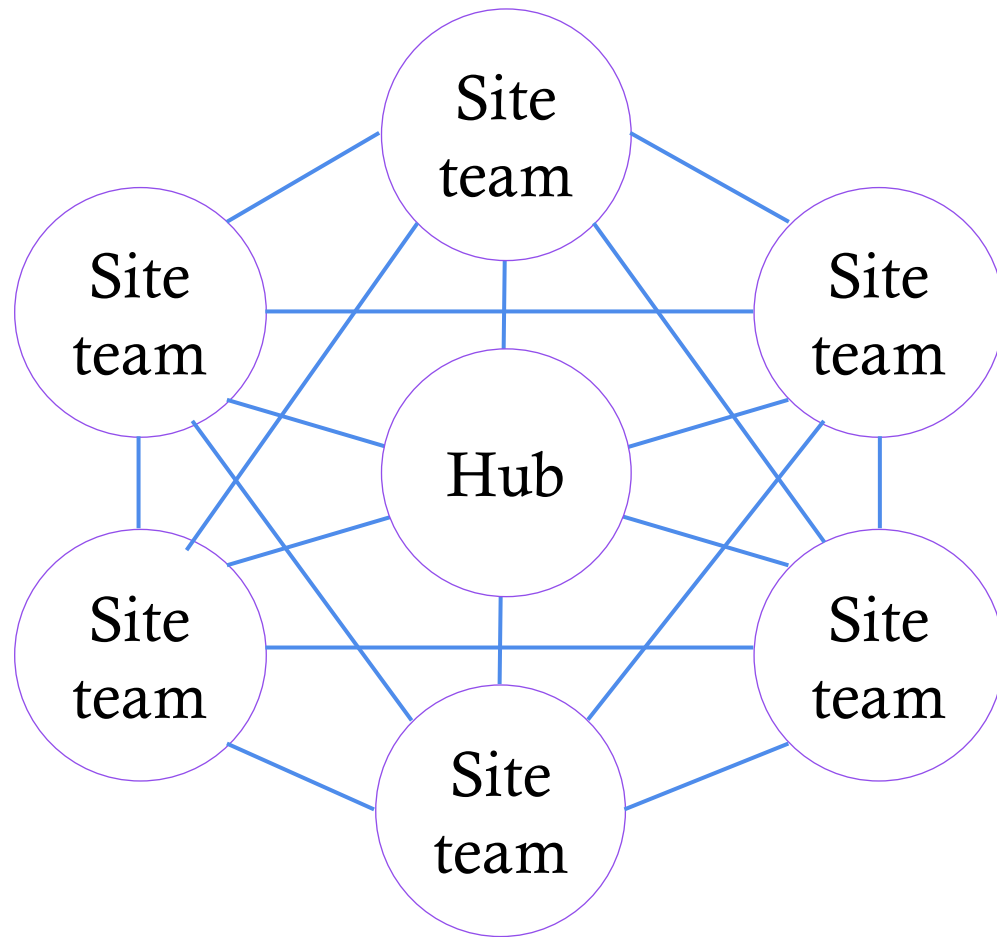
- Defining improvement networks
- What do we mean by "equity" in improvement networks?
- Trade-offs associated with different approaches to equity
- Equity in action
 - Context for our work
 - Integrating equity in CT RISE
 - Integrating equity in Network for College Success
- Discussion
- Reflection & survey

ACTIVATING QUESTIONS

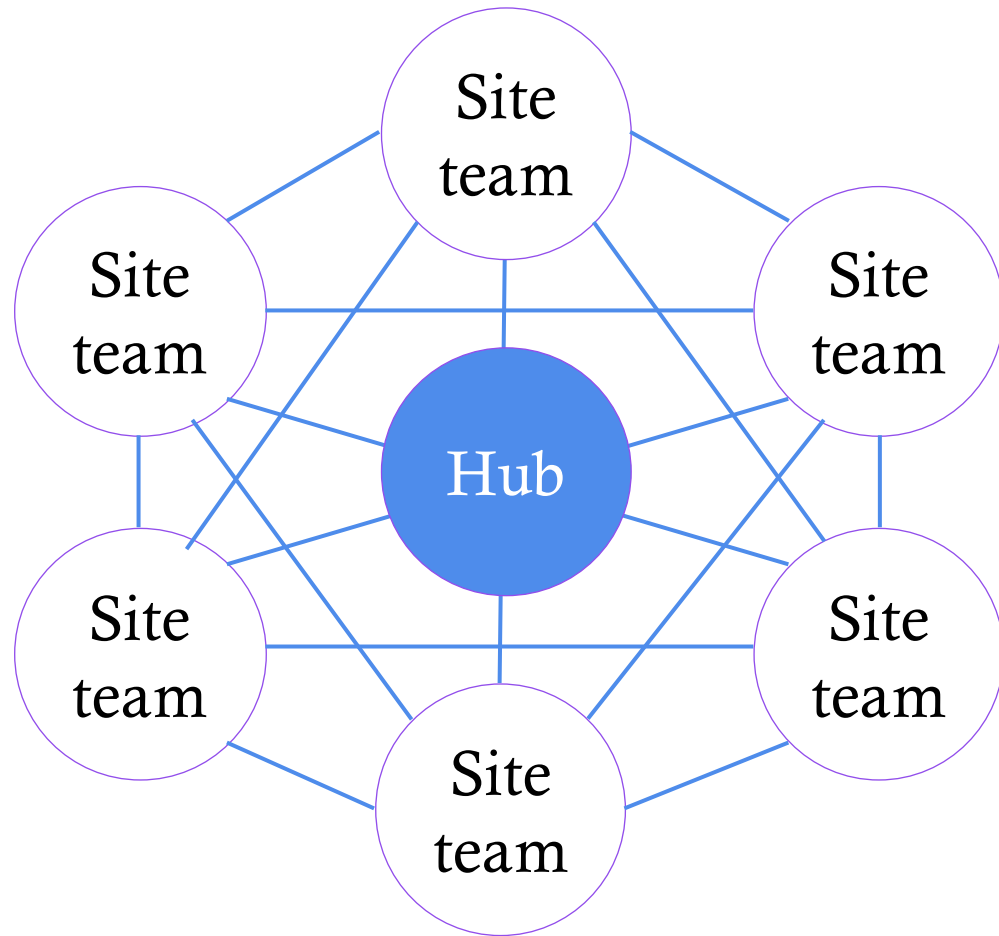
What does equity mean to you?

What does equity mean to the organization in which you work?

DEFINING IMPROVEMENT NETWORKS

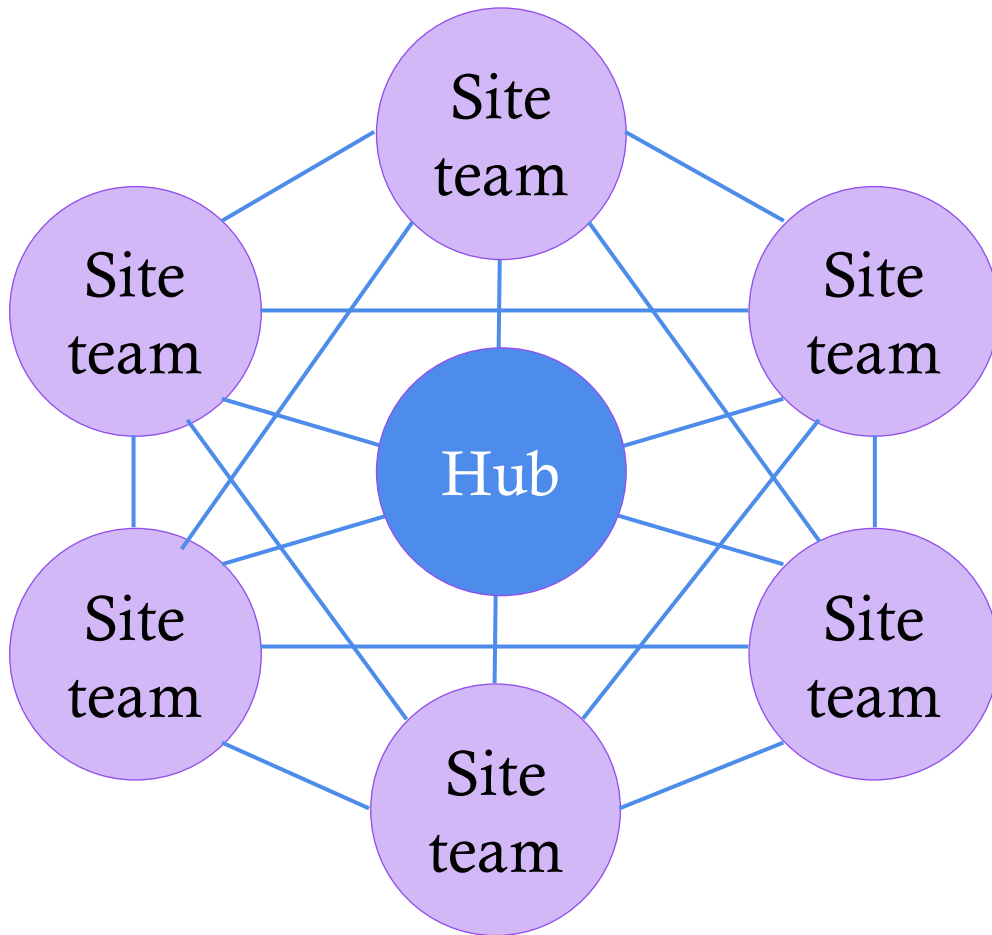


DEFINING IMPROVEMENT NETWORKS



- Network leaders
- Establish structures and routines to support continuous improvement on site teams
- Create opportunities for inter-organizational learning

DEFINING IMPROVEMENT NETWORKS



- Network members
- Explore root causes of common problem
- Identify a measurable aim
- Develop theory of improvement
- Use data-based inquiry routines (e.g., PDSA cycles) to test and refine interventions



WHAT DO WE TALK ABOUT WHEN WE TALK ABOUT EQUITY?

“The almost universal acknowledgement that equity is a valuable goal can obscure real differences in what various people and organizations mean by ‘equity’ and how they operationalize it.”

(Meira Levinson and colleagues, 2022)

CONCEPTUALIZING EQUITY IN IMPROVEMENT

Individuals have **access** to resources and opportunities to learn

Individuals have strong **outcomes**

Individuals understand and value their own **identity** and others'

Individuals have **power** through voice and choice

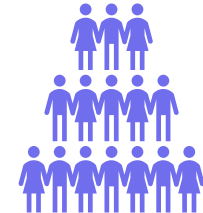


Rochelle Gutierrez, 2007; 2012

CONCEPTUALIZING EQUITY IN IMPROVEMENT



Who is
involved?



Who is
impacted?

Brandi Hinnant-Crawford, 2020; 2021

CONCEPTUALIZING EQUITY IN IMPROVEMENT

Which dimension(s) of equity does the organization prioritize?

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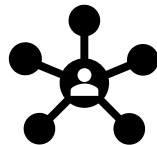


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Who is involved?



Network hubs



District personnel



School personnel



Students



Families



Community

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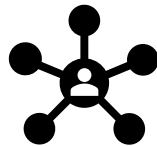


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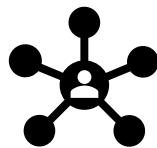


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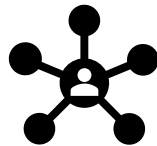


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TURN AND TALK

Which dimension(s) of equity does YOUR organization prioritize?



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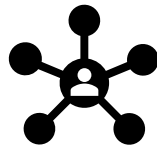


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TRADE-OFFS IN CONCEPTUALIZATIONS OF EQUITY



Resources

Time, money, & personnel are invested in some activities rather than others



Outcomes

Some outcomes for some groups are prioritized over others



Values

Some ideals (such as equity, efficiency, excellence, or democracy) are prioritized over others



Solutions

Some change ideas are selected over others

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Turn and Talk

- Which of these trade-offs resonate with you in your equity journey?
- How have they appeared in your work?

EQUITY IN ACTION

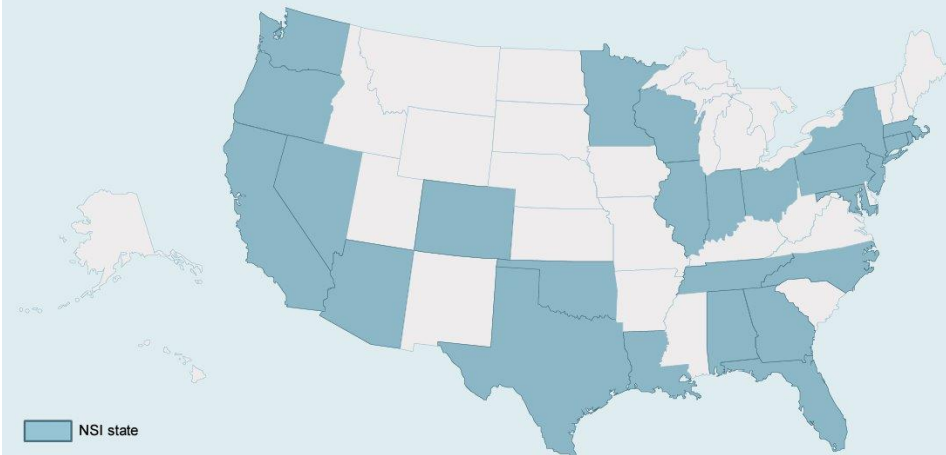


How do networks operationalize various conceptualizations of equity in their improvement work?

NETWORKS FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Working together to help students succeed

NETWORKS FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT: SCHOOL LOCATIONS



What is the NSI Initiative?

- 38 networks of middle & high schools
- Nearly 600 schools in 155 school districts
- Affecting over 150,000 students across 23 states
- \$300 million+ investment in NSIs
- \$35 million in support ecology & evaluations

THE NETWORK HEALTH PROJECT

- Conceptualize and measure “network health and development” in partnership with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- Provide actionable data to network leaders and the foundation to support network development
- Mixed methods longitudinal study of the development of a large sample of improvement networks



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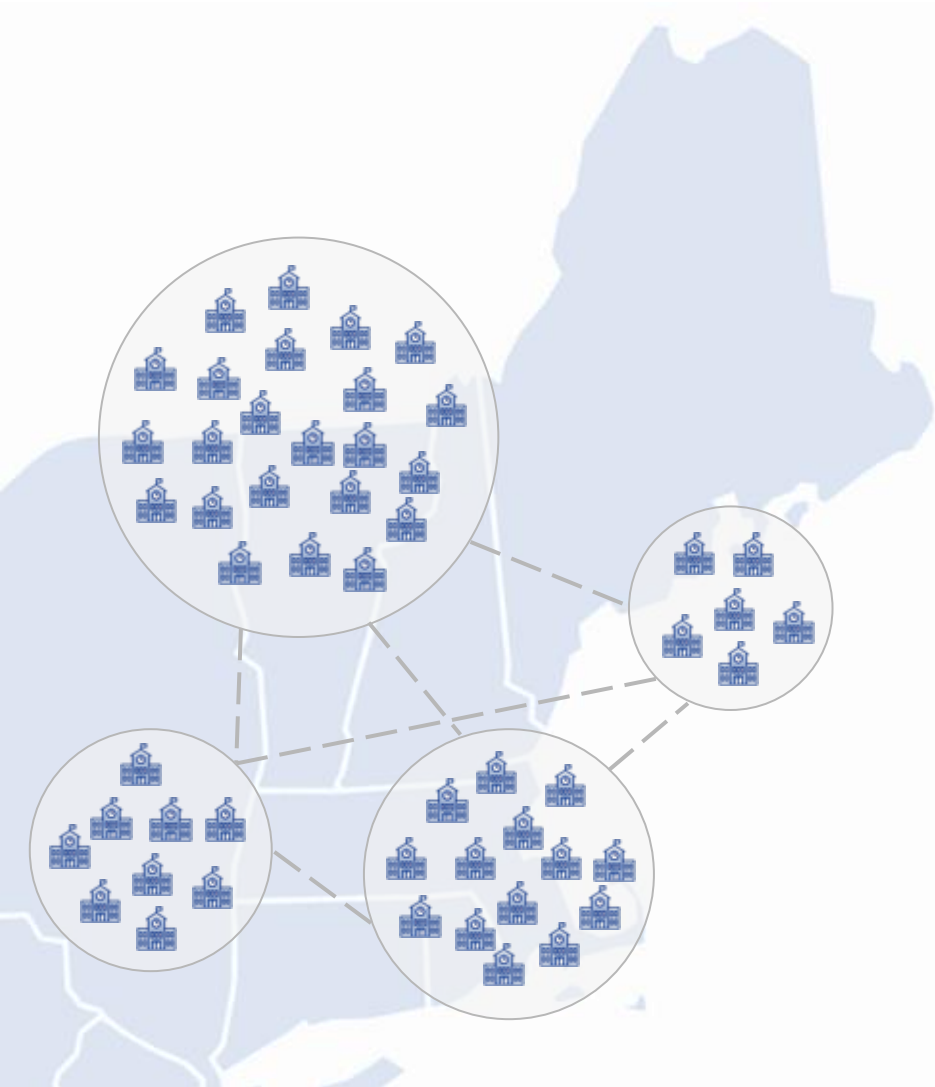
Partners for Network Improvement
Research, Strategy, & Evaluation

INTEGRATING EQUITY IN NETWORKS FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

- Megan Duff
- Jennifer Zoltners Sherer
- Anna Premo
- Hanan Perlman
- Angel Li



Introduction to the RISE Network



Our mission is to ensure all students graduate from high school with a plan and the skills and confidence to achieve college and career success.

We are a **network of networks** using data and improvement methods to promote equitable student outcomes through on-track and postsecondary success.



Middle School

High School

Postsecondary

Equity work: it starts with us

Why start internal?

Advancing equity in our work coaching schools and facilitating networks requires language, skills, practice, and confidence that must be developed. We are all humans and are in this together.

What we've tried

- Articulating our DEIA values & language
- Forming a multi-year DEIA strategic plan
- Focusing on psychological safety as a foundation
- Leveraging internal capacity (steering committee) and external (partner org)
- Examining decision-making

Getting explicit about race

What we're grappling with

- How do we turn our focus inward to spur on personal learning and growth?
- How do we use shared spaces, team spaces, and racial affinity spaces?
- How do we make time to acknowledge and process events and developments in the world?



Dimensions of equity work



	Outcomes	Access	Identity	Power
Progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centering goals/KPIs around marginalized groups Creating data visibility and access to highlight achievement trends/ gaps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extended day programming On-track conferences Summer transition programming On-track coaches 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grade Level Team protocols that bring in student voice Surveys to capture and elevate student perspectives Student focus groups in CI work
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inequitable district policies (grading, seat time, scheduling) Is “on track” enough? Who are the students still not served when we increase on-track rates to ~85%? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Root causes of low program access, including transportation, teacher mindsets, etc. Being nimble with resource allocation to address the kids who need it most 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Missed opportunities in summer transition and on-track conferences Predicting student support needs without labeling or lowering expectations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making better use of survey data & capturing what’s important Spreading and systematizing work to incorporate student participation into CI

PRE- DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

What resonated with you in these networks' equity journeys?

What surprised you about these networks' equity journeys?

What questions did these networks' equity journeys raise for you and your work?

ABOUT NETWORK FOR COLLEGE SUCCESS (NCS) @UChicago

Our Vision

The Network for College Success envisions the transformation of public high schools in the United States to communities of powerful learning for students and educators. We imagine schools in which all students excel academically and develop the agency, integrated identity, and competencies necessary to have successful lives as adults.

Our Mission

The Network for College Success works to cultivate postsecondary readiness and success for all students by translating research into practice and supporting high school leaders to organize their schools for improvement and innovation.

NCS Equity Stance

We commit ourselves to the work of courageously examining race, identity, power, and privilege within our own organization and in partnership with schools. We challenge injustices and build the relationships and capacity that can tolerate/contain/engage the work.

Anti-racism vs. equity

“The heartbeat of anti-racism is confession. It is self-reflection. It is realizing that there is no such thing as *not racist*, no such thing as race neutrality. It is realizing that all ideas and policies are either racist or anti-racist; all people are *being* racist or anti-racist. No one *becomes* a racist or anti-racist. These are not fixed categories. We can be racist one moment and antiracist the next. What we say about the races, what we do about inequity determines what-not who-we are in each moment.”

~ Ibram X. Kendi

HOW NCS CONCEPTUALIZES EQUITY

Org Culture

- Learning journey to becoming a D2 organization
- Equity stance - organizational and individual
- Individual & organizational professional learning
- Common language
- Coaching & responsive supports

Coaching

- Supporting coachees to see the system
- Interrupt deficit thinking and narratives that impede student growth and achievement
- Taking responsibility to examine adult practice
- Keep student voice as the centerpiece of our work
- Awareness of emotions so they no longer serve as detours from the work
- Operating from our stances

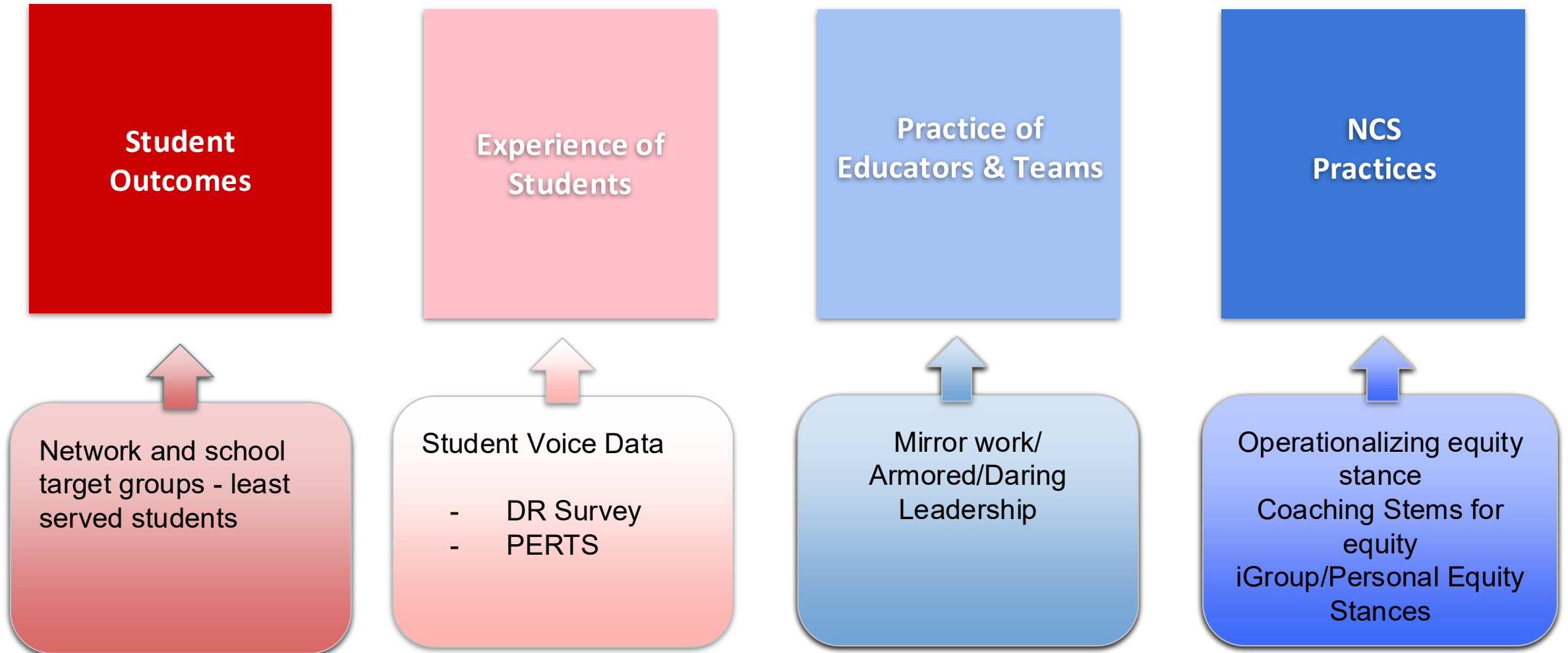
Professional Learning

- Fostering self examination to unpack our own biases and interrupt our enactment of systemic oppression
- Anchoring practice in research
- Sharing practice in progress across schools rather than waiting for perfect products
- Responsive facilitation focused on needs of the community
- Continuous Improvement

Measurement

- Cross-school data review disaggregated by race, gender, etc.
- Focus on collective goals
- Practical measures of work in progress
- Network Health Survey

HOW NCS OPERATIONALIZES EQUITY



TRADE-OFFS AND CONTINUED CHALLENGES IN NCS'S EQUITY JOURNEY

- The **racial identity** of the coachee impacts urgency and commitment
- Creating an antiracist frame produced more **focus** on system changes
- Focus and **small** changes seems to get things moving
- Focus on **our** ongoing learning/inquiry is key to support our coachees learning
- Growth & anti-racist leadership takes **many iterations**
- Pace of change - go slow to go fast
- WSC is the water we swim in

Q & A



KEY TAKE-AWAYS FROM TODAY'S SESSION

What is one idea, strategy, or tool that you will take back to your organization?

With whom will you share what you've learned? Who will be impacted?

5D. Improvement Network Development: Lessons from the Field

Tomorrow, 8:30 - 9:45 AM

What are the distinguishing features of a networked improvement community (NIC)? How can network leaders strategically manage network development? In this session, we introduce a framework for conceptualizing network health and explore what we are learning about network development in a large sample of networks for school improvement. We illustrate how operating a network is a developmental process and demonstrate how the strategic action of network leaders is essential to network development. We share insights about how networked improvement can be an effective strategy for addressing a range of improvement aims and that network development is shaped by a range of contextual factors. Throughout the session, participants will have opportunities to reflect on the presentations and apply lessons learned to their work.

Presenters

Jennifer Lin Russell,

Vanderbilt University

Jennifer Zoltners Sherer,

Partners for Network Improvement

Anthony Bryk,

Carnegie Foundation

Angel Li,

Carnegie Foundation

7D. Putting Networks in Context: How NSI Navigate Complex Environments

Tomorrow, 1:00 – 2:15 PM

Networks for school improvement (NSI), like other education reform efforts that seek to improve outcomes for minoritized students, exist in political contexts with complicated layers of state, district, and school policies. Network leaders must navigate this complexity—crafting alignment between their goals, strategies, routines, and tools with those of the schools and school systems in which they work. This session highlights how hubs in various NSI managed complex, and often conflicting pressures and demands in their effort to build collaborative learning systems aimed at more equitable student outcomes during the backdrop of a dual pandemic.

Presenters

Megan Duff,

Vanderbilt University

Jennifer Lin Russell,

Vanderbilt University

Jennifer Zoltners Sherer,

Partners for Network Improvement

Panelists

Sinead Chalmers,

Bank Street Education Center

Matthew Swensen,

New Tech Network

Chris Thorn,

Partners in School Innovation

Thank you for attending!

Instructions for completing the session feedback survey:

Click on the **Survey Button** at the bottom of the session page *or* **access your profile page** and click on 'Surveys' to find the survey for this session

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