

# 1D - Supporting Network Leaders: Unpacking the Work and Challenges of Hub Leadership

**MARCH 31, 2025: 9-10:30 am PDT**

**PRESENTED BY:**

- Jennifer Zoltners Sherer, Partners for Network Improvement
- Donald Peurach, University of Michigan
- Kelly McMahon, Center for Public Research and Leadership at Columbia Law School

**NATIONAL SUMMIT  
ON IMPROVEMENT  
IN EDUCATION**

# Community Norms

**Join in creating a brave space that is safe for learning and growth.**

Celebrate the work and push on the work.

Be candid and curious, even when it is uncomfortable.

**Treat this space as a reunion and a welcome.**

If you are a returner, welcome new people in. If you are new, contribute!

**Center your why and bring your joy.**

**Be bold.**

Bring your ideas and your energy to our collective work of building the field of improvement today and after.

Who are we?  
The Hub Leadership Study  
(Part of The Network Health Project)

University of Pittsburgh  
Jennifer Zoltners Sherer  
Christopher Matthis

University of Michigan  
Donald Peurach  
Elizabeth Jones

Columbia Law School  
Kelly McMahon

Vanderbilt University  
Megan Duff



WHO ARE YOU?

**Quick Write:**

What is your title?  
What is a hub leader?

**Individual Reflection, Part 1**

<p>How do you structure your role? What hub leadership practice do you do? Are you a jack-of-all-trades? Do you do a multiple types of work? Are you a jack-of-all-</p>	<p>Think about the other people with whom you work who do the same work as you do. How do you coordinate your work with them?</p>
<p>Who else is doing work that you are not doing?</p>	<p>How do you coordinate with your colleagues who are doing the work you are not doing?</p>

# QUICK WRITE

Take one minute to write down your title and what you think a hub leader is.

# Objectives

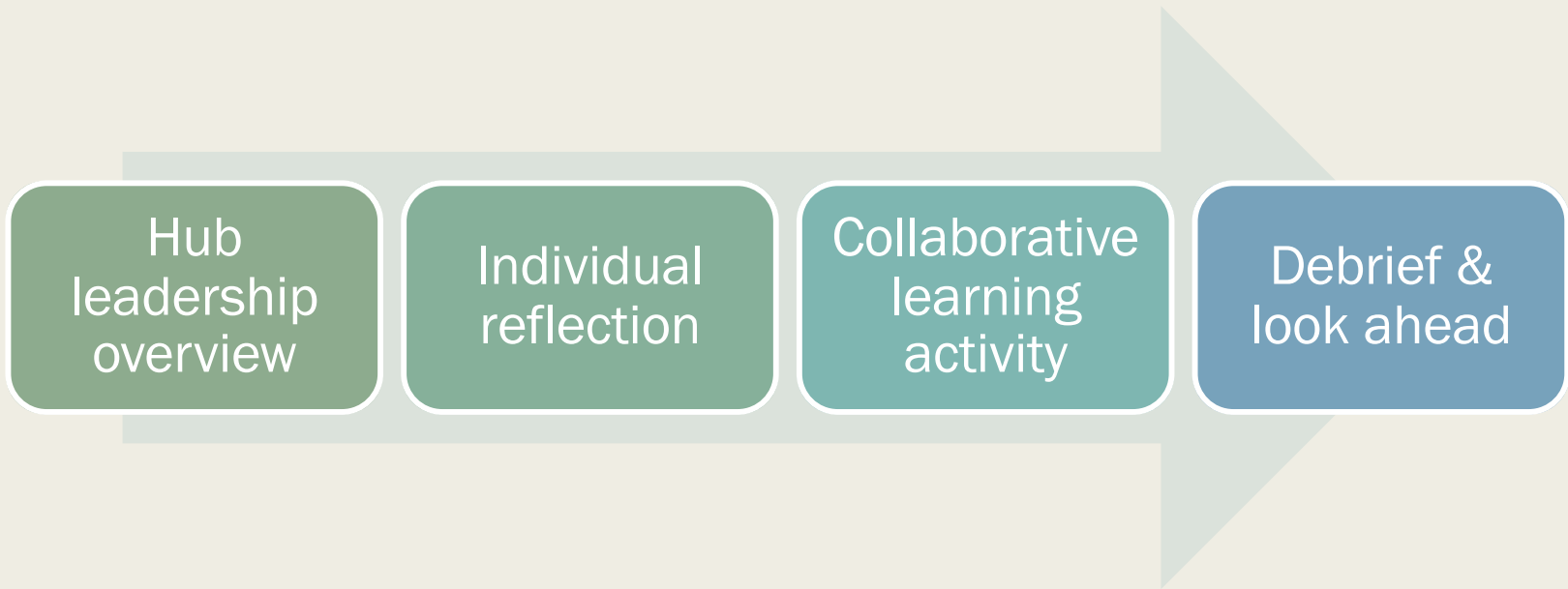
Build a common language for hub leadership practice

Consider how we construct hub leadership practice and the coordination between hub leaders

Learn from each other

Reflect on your practice/your team's coordination

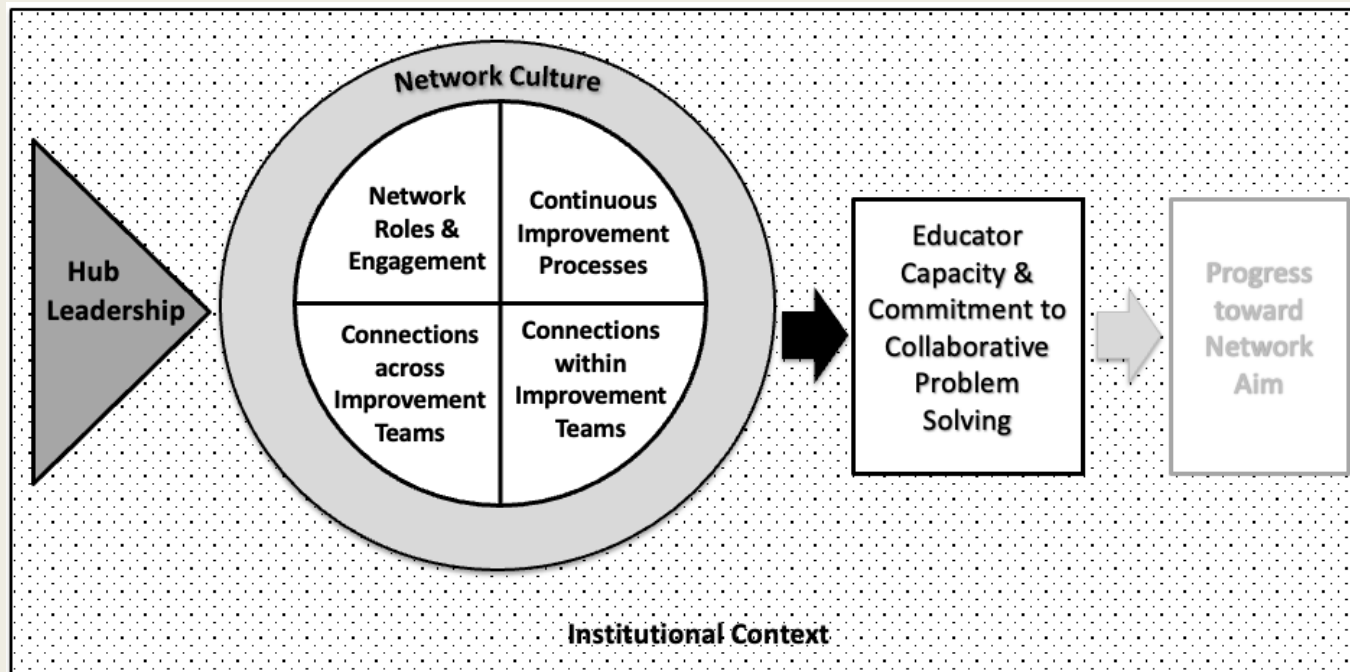
# Agenda



# HUB LEADERSHIP OVERVIEW



# Improvement Network Health & Development Framework



# What is the practical work of hub leadership?

Domains of practical work include:

1. *Developing and sustaining the hub as an organization*
2. *Building and managing the improvement network as an organization*
3. *Supporting improvement activity within the network*
4. *Integrating equity in the network*
5. *Analyzing and improving the network as a learning system, in collaboration with network members and other stakeholders*
6. *Managing relationships external to the improvement network*
7. *“Putting out fires”*
  - System alignment
  - Change management

**Quick Write:**  
What is your title?  
What is a hub leader?

**Individual Reflection, Part 1**

How do you construct your role? Which domains of hub leadership practice do you do? Are you a specialist? Do you span multiple types of work? Are you a jack-of-all-trades?	Think about the other people with whom you work who do the same work as you do. How do you coordinate your work with them?
Who else is doing work that you are not doing?	How do you coordinate with your colleagues who are doing the work you are not doing?

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**The Domains of Hub Leadership Practice, Unpacked**

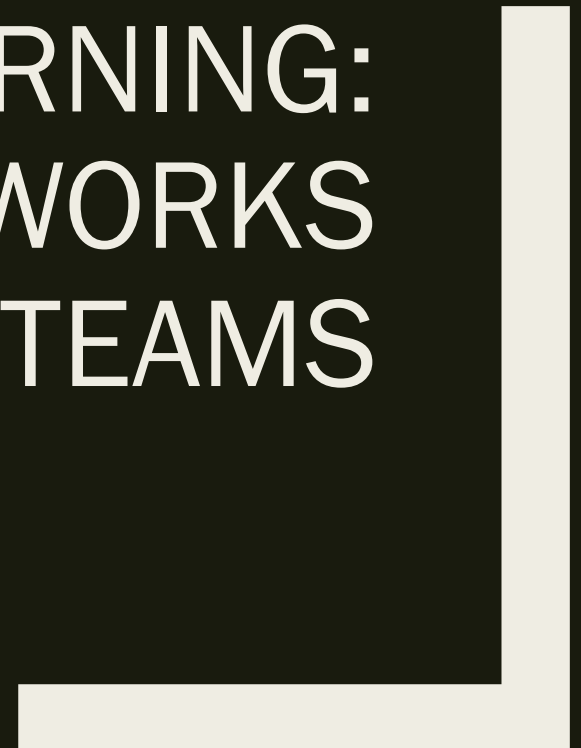
- 1. Developing and sustaining the hub as an organization**
  - Staffing and developing the hub as a team.
  - Coordinating and managing hub operations.
  - Building improvement capabilities in the hub.
  - Analyzing data and evidence to support hub operations.
- 2. Building and managing the improvement network as an organization**
  - Building systems and structures connecting the hub, schools, and (if applicable) districts.
  - Coordinating and managing activities among the hub, schools, and (if applicable) districts.
  - Developing social relationships, norms, and culture among the hub, schools, and (if applicable) districts.
- 3. Supporting improvement activity within the network**
  - Developing improvement capabilities, routines, and tools in schools and (if applicable) districts.
  - Collaborating in improvement activities in schools and (if applicable) districts.
  - Analyzing data and evidence generated from improvement activities in schools and (if applicable) districts.
- 4. Integrating equity into the network**
  - Developing and/or facilitating hub- or network-facing professional learning focused on equity.
  - Attending to equity in staffing the hub team (e.g., hiring and retaining diverse staff).
  - Integrating equity within improvement activities in the network (e.g., discussing the equity implications of change ideas, focusing on equity during coaching sessions, providing disaggregated data, using equity pauses, etc.)
- 5. Analyzing and improving the network as a learning system, in collaboration with network members and other stakeholders.**
  - Analyzing data about how this NSI functions as a learning community.
  - Discussing how this NSI functions as a learning community with other leaders and/or stakeholders.
  - Developing and evaluating interventions and strategies for improving how this NSI functions as a learning community.
- 6. Managing relationships external to the improvement network**
  - Managing relationships between your *network's* hub and the organization by which you are formally employed.
  - Managing relationships between your *network's* hub and external stakeholders.
  - Managing relationships between your *network* and external stakeholders.
- 7. Putting out fires related to system alignment and change management**
  - System alignment
  - Change management

# INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION

# WHOLE GROUP DEBRIEF



COLLABORATIVE LEARNING:  
EXPLORE HOW THIS WORKS  
ON OTHER TEAMS





## **Each person will:**

Share name, organization, title

Explain how you construct your role/the domains of work on which you focus,  
how you coordinate work with others who do what you do,  
who else does hub work that you do not do, and  
how you coordinate with those colleagues.

(~12 minutes)



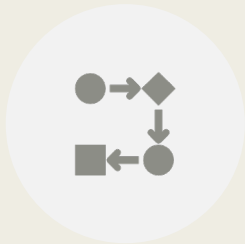
## **As a group you will:**

Discuss similarities and differences

Discuss how you coordinate work between team members

Discuss what type of support you need to do your work and to coordinate your team's work

# Use the task sheet to guide your group's discussion



Each person shares  
(give everyone space to  
share)

Then move into a group  
discussion

Task Sheet for 1D: Supporting Network Leaders, Unpacking the Work and Challenges of Hub Leadership

## Collaborative Task

**Find a triad** with role-alike members with whom you do not work.  
(Hub leaders with hub leaders; non-hub leaders with non-hub leaders)

### Part 1: Share your role and your work

Each leader shares (aim for no discussion-give everyone a chance to share)

- Share name, organization, title
- Explain:
  - how you construct your role/the domains of work on which you focus,
  - how you coordinate work with others who do what you do,
  - who else does hub work that you do not do, and
  - how you coordinate with those colleagues.

### Part 2: Analyze your work in relation to each other

- Discuss similarities and differences
- Discuss how you coordinate work between team members
- Discuss what type of support you need to do your work and to coordinate your team's work

# Find your triad and get started!

## Hub leaders:

Find two other hub leaders with whom you have never worked

## Non-hub leaders:

Find two other non-hub leaders with whom you have never worked

# Use the task sheet to guide your group's discussion



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### Individual Reflection, Part 2

1. Reflect on the session. What would happen if you took the activity back and did it with your team? What would that look like? When might you do it?
  
2. Think back to what you jotted down at the beginning of the session. What has changed?  
I used to think.... But now I think....

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# INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION

# WHOLE GROUP DEBRIEF



Thank you for learning with us



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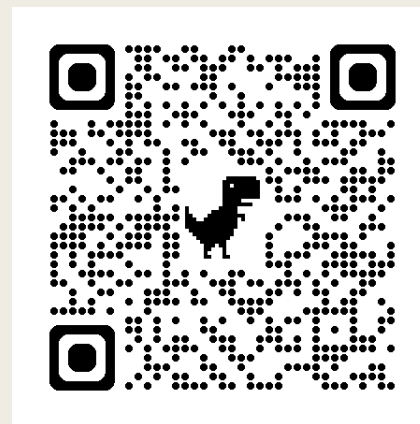
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Stay in touch—share what you learn when you do this exercise with your team.

Learn more about  
The Network Health Project at  
[improvementnetworks.org](http://improvementnetworks.org)



# Thank You

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