

Family Leadership Design Collaborative Phase 2 Site Progress Report

Purposes

We are asking each of our sites to complete a progress report on their Phase 2 co-design work and to hold a one-on-one design meeting with us (UW research team) to discuss this report. Please be prepared to submit the project summary section by July 16th. There are several purposes for this report, including,

1. to guide your reflection on what your site is accomplishing and what you are learning in the process;
2. to help the FLDC research team better understanding how solidarity-driven co-design is being operationalized within and across our sites, reflect on our own design process, and to (re)design the rest of phase 2 (ends in Jan, 2019);
3. to submit to the W. K. Kellogg Foundation as a required part of our period 3 report; and
4. to update our website, familydesigncollab.org, with information about the work in each of our sites.

Please feel free to reference documents such as our [Core Principles](#), [Partnering Commitments](#), and [Transformative Research-Practice Agenda](#) as well as project overviews, timelines, and design cycles, which can be found on our shared google drive.

Project Summary Guiding Questions (1-2 pages)

Change-making Aims

- What is your project aiming to change, grow, or impact through this co-design work?
- Concretely, what is the thing through or around which you are working to change?
- How does this goal connect to family-defined and -led educational justice and community wellbeing?
- What primary theories of change are you pursuing with regard to *how* families and communities are making change? This can build off the theories of change emerging from phase 1 that we have narrated in the data snapshots.

Through this project, we are focused on building meaningful understanding across staff and parent leaders of general design theory, design practices, design circles, and ultimately, the application of all of this to our project goal of naming the practices our parents can undertake to interrupt typical power dynamics between school staff and low-income parents of color, and to negotiate shifts in the relationship so that there is not only a more equitable and reciprocal power dynamic, but also more opportunities for parents to utilize their internalized wisdom to shift school staff narratives or beliefs about their families and communities. In particular, we are using our track record of parents monitoring school discipline practices as the context, content, and opportunity for application.

This goal is connected to family-defined and led, educational justice, and community well-being at its core, as it is enhancing the heart and soul of CADRE's work for the past 17 years. Specifically, we are seeking to make well the relationships and interactions between teachers/school-based educators and families.

Our theory of change at CADRE (available at <http://cadre-la.org/newhome/theoryofchange/>) is based on supporting the change-making capacity of South LA parents through consciousness, healing, and vision/hope; understanding of structural and systemic changes versus individual change; and narrative shift, both personally, as South LA parents, as a South LA community. Because so much of this is predicated on parents' own beliefs about their power and ability to shift others' beliefs about them, we have landed on role-playing and enactment as the main way we apply our theory of change to this design circle project.

Through role playing conversations between "sides" - parent and educator - we learn to name what is happening, to recognize patterns, and to de-personalize the interactions so that we can see them as stakeholders playing out pre-determined power roles, until there is a disruption through advocacy. The role-plays then are expected to support parents recognizing and practicing those disruptions in real life. Through the use of role-plays in another project, this work was identified by the parents and us organizationally as a place to start, to interrupt systemic oppressive structures. Phase 1 focused on interrupting moments of tension and conflict, and Phase 2 is building on proactively preventing these moments, or addressing them transformatively by focusing on different types of conversations at different times of the year and for different purposes - more of a scaffolding.

Co-Design Process and Partners

- Who is in your local co-design team and what is their relationship to or engagement with the design process?
- What have you implemented thus far? How are you working to build or sustain over time?

Our local co-design team entails CADRE staff coordinating the logistics in planning and resourcing the design circles, as well as brokering the trust between CADRE and UCLA and confirming and sustaining parent participation; then the family and community members are active in designing alongside the staff and Dr. Guillén.

So far, we have implemented Phase 1 role plays – the dream, enact, and reflect cycle. We have then spent numerous meetings between CADRE staff and Dr. Guillén reflecting, imagining, and preparing to implement Phase 2. Lastly, we held one (1) "pre-design" session with parents, CADRE staff, and Dr. Guillén in observance, to foster shared understanding of the Phase 2 goals, application, and connection to CADRE's work over the long-term. We outline our Phase 2 timeline below.

Learning with Families & Communities

- What are you learning about how to take a co-design approach to an aspect of your core work? This can include ongoing questions or frustrations about the process.

- What are you learning about families and communities leading towards education justice and community wellbeing?
- What has changed or grown over time for families and communities in your context through the co-design process? How do you know change or growth is taking place?
- What are ongoing tensions within your co-design that you have been or hope to “lean into”? And how are you working these tensions in your design process?

A summary of what we have been learning about taking a co-design approach to another level in our core work, as observed by Dr. Guillén:

- The dreaming/imagining part has come up for me in the work we are doing in our department around imagining a new undergraduate major. We never have time to just imagine and then create consensus before enacting. That’s the frustrating part.
- The dreaming part has also taken time for CADRE’s work, which seems to be a welcome change in a fast-paced organization.
- The scope of the work is really important. It’s difficult to hold the local as well as the network and bigger picture simultaneously, and to not neglect connections to other organizations as part of the same movement, which is a part of community wellbeing – lifting up the entire community together.
- The first design circle of phase 2 (what ended up being a “pre-design” session) really brought up more parent questions about the scope of our work. Families want concrete goals – for what purpose are we doing the design circles? – in thinking about how we proceed, or what to do next now that we have identified these problems and moments of tension.
- We’ve had to come back to the drawing board a few times with Phase 2. We’ve had to ask ourselves who is really part of the planning and what could that look like such that we stick to the question, or the reason, before continuing.

The fact remains that a lot of time has passed -- 2 years -- between Phase 1 and Phase 2, and clarity of purpose had to be re-established, or established even, with a mixed group of both parents who were part of Phase 1 and those who are joining in Phase 2. This is the main challenge we’ve had in sustaining the context and energy around the design circle project. And while we utilized role-playing in between the phases for our shadow report project, it was difficult to “name” the role-playing we were doing as “design”, although we basically employed the same techniques, but even pre-designed scripts for compare and contrast. Be that as it may, we believe we will easily get back on track, now that new staff are going to be oriented with introductory practice of leading design circles. The growth needed and that eventually will be achieved before we start our design circles in October was among staff; readiness and foundational knowledge will be assessed at our staff development session on Saturday, September 15th (see below).

There really have not been any tensions within the co-design team; most moments were moments of needing the proper alignment with CADRE’s work, which thankfully we always collaborated well in order to reach it.

Designing Forward

Please provide a timeline of co-design sessions and implementations. Phase 2 project ends January, 2019 with final products due in February, 2019. We will hold a final convening in late February 2019 and hope to collectively present a symposium at the American Education Research Association conference, April 5-9, 2019, Toronto, Canada.

Implementation, Reflection, and Redesign

- Please outline the specific activities, events, or programs you plan on implementing between now and January, 2019.
- How do these relate to your project aims and theories of change?

Our timeline between now and January 2019 entails:

- CADRE Staff Development - Design Circle Experience & Facilitation, Saturday, September 15th
- Design Circles with CADRE Parents:
 1. Thursday, October 11th
 2. Thursday, November 1st
 3. Tuesday, November 20th
 4. Tuesday, December 11th
 5. Tuesday, January 15th

We recently recognized the need to do a deep dive with our entire staff in order to better execute the design circles with parents, so we are doing that first and utilizing as a text the 2017 article by Ann Ishimaru and Sola Takahashi, *Disrupting Racialized Institutional Scripts: Toward Parent-Teacher Transformative Agency for Educational Justice*. We will be using this article as a way of helping staff notice “institutionalized scripts” and how they translate to the stories they hear from our parents, and/or the dynamics they have witnessed or experienced themselves.

Once we do this one-day staff development, we will then turn our attention as a team towards designing our Phase 2 design circle process, building on what we did in 2016 as well as the “pre-design” session we had this past spring. Relying again on using role-played scenarios to both re-experience particular institutional scripts and re-imagine how parents can use their agency to interrupt them, we will use the five aforementioned design circle sessions (approximately 90 minutes each) to address 3-4 “opportunities for transformative parent agency” that impact educational and racial justice for South LA families. These design circles will be bilingual and be done with both African American and Latino parents, English and Spanish speaking.

We would like to end up with parent narratives about their experiences with the particular institutional scripts that we collectively choose to address, their experiences with practicing disruption, and their insights into their own agency. From here we will discuss the implications for how these insights are applied to CADRE’s overall work, be it our work to implement positive behavioral interventions and supports or to secure supports for fulfilling the right to literacy.

Cross-site Collaboration

- How have the all-calls, site visits, and other cross-site collaboration activities related to your own project and work?
- How could we deepen the collective learning across sites?

Truthfully and humbly, our organization as a whole is in a slightly different phase than the other sites, namely because we only and solely work with parents, and have been doing similarly aligned work for over 17 years (participatory action research, appreciative inquiry, shared decision-making). At the same time, we are less prepared to work with university partners, but have found an incredible one in Dr. Lorena Guillén; we feel extremely fortunate that she understands the critical consciousness, identity, and practice that we are supporting our parents in developing and surfacing, and is co-designing the eventual collaboration with her educators in training that will take place down the line, where we hope our parent leaders can transformatively shape their pre-service capacity building for dismantling the hierarchical and racially biased interactions between educators/school staff and parents.

With this being said, the all-calls (as a non-core group heretofore, we have not participated in as many site visits and cross-site collaborations) are still vital in helping us understand the tensions that we are naming and addressing in our work - that process has been incredibly helpful. We did not necessarily know how to name them except as structural racism, educational injustice, and power dynamics - typical of community organizers. Naming the tensions, and seeing the commonalities and/or distinctions across sites have been affirming and encouraging - it has added value to our own understanding of our practice, and deepened our gratitude for being part of FLDC.

Deepening the collective learning across sites could be facilitated by shared reading of texts in between calls, especially of Ann and Sola's article referenced above. It is precise in locating the area of disruption and interruption that in our humble opinion is absolutely necessary to humanize school-community relationships, and while by no means assuming it isn't happening, it is unclear where each site is locating their disruption and interruption.

Transformative Impacts

- What transformative impacts towards community wellbeing and educational justice do you envision by January 2019?
- How do you plan on measuring impact or change?

By January 2019 or shortly thereafter, we expect our five (5) design circles and corresponding "ground game" - a strategy of collective advocacy comprised of coordinated individual advocacy - related to monitoring school discipline practices down to the classroom level to result in six to eight (6-8) South LA parent leaders, African American and Latino, who understand their "stance" as parent leaders and community keepers, who recognize the "scripts" in the conversations and interactions with school staff, and who know how to employ 1-2 new tools to disrupt/interrupt these "scripts", in both English and Spanish.

Our staff will be tracking the knowledge attainment, consciousness, and practicing of tools and their results through 1-1 check-ins with and documentation of each parent's journey, along with a focus group evaluation of the design circle process.

Additional Feedback

Please provide any additional feedback, questions and/or suggestions for the work.

Thank you again for including us! Just as important as anything else is the partnership and allyship we are building with Dr. Guillén.