



Superintendent's Leadership Retreat

Richmond County School System

Settling In Activity

Introduce yourself to your table mates
Share what you're most looking forward to
during the retreat



RCSS Retreat Outcomes

- **Cultivating High-Value Support:** Strengthening the partnership between central office and school leaders to ensure every campus has the responsive resources needed to meet its goals.
- **Data-Informed Improvement:** Reviewing feedback from our school communities to optimize organizational efficiency and remove barriers to student success.
- **Coherence & Accountability:** Aligning our collaborative action plans directly with the targets of the RCSS Strategic Plan to guarantee measurable, system-wide results.



Diversity Rounds



Find your people. Form small groups based on a shared definition/response to the topic. Then discuss:

- What's one thing you would like other groups to know about you?

Round 1: hometown

Round 2: birth order

Round 3: educational view
-intention
-connection
-direction

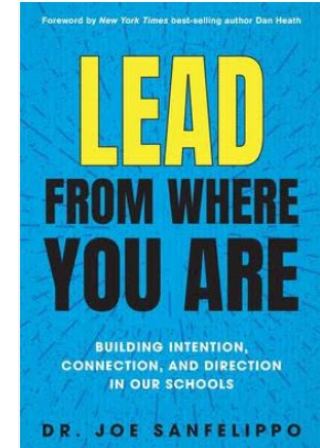
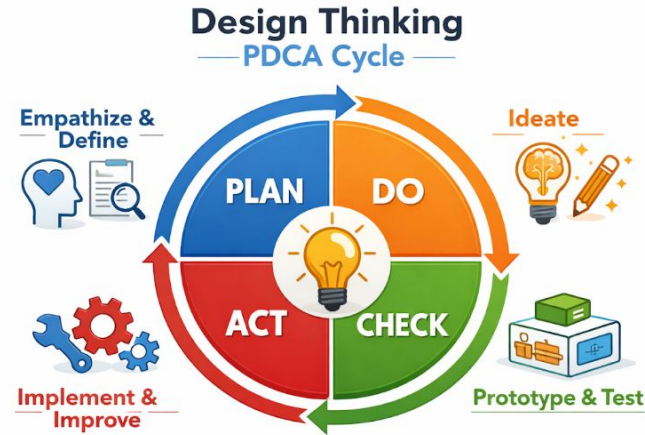


Day 1 Agenda & Objectives

Strengths, Role Perspective, Ideal Future

- 01 Connect individual strengths and personal whys to collective capacity
- 02 Deepen appreciation and empathy for district and school leader distinct realities
- 03 Construct a clear picture of what the ideal, most helpful support system looks and feels like at its very best

Zoom In Zoom Out Approach To Our Work



Community Agreements

- Make space for perspectives, voice, and learning
- Assume positive intent; approach with curiosity, not judgement
- Recognize that we are people first, roles second
- Ensure our actions reflect shared purpose for our students



By the Numbers



STRATEGIC PLAN AT-A-GLANCE

RICHMOND COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

2025-2030 Strategy Map



STUDENT

28

Richmond

This graphic portrays the complete **Strategy Map** which includes:

◀ **The What**
Strategic Themes

◀ **The Focus**
Objectives

◀ **The How**
Critical Initiatives

SCHOOL

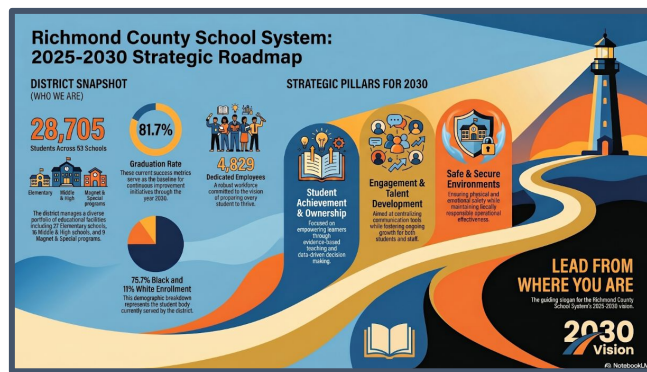
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Campus





My Slice of the RCSS Why



Where do you see yourself in the RCSS strategic plan?
What's your slice of the RCSS why?



Strengths

"What would happen if
we studied what was
right with people
versus what's wrong
with people?"

DON CLIFTON

Father of Strengths Psychology
and Inventor of CliftonStrengths

CliftonStrengths®

CliftonStrengths®



Strengths: Lead From Where You Are

“When you start with strengths, follow up with strengths, give opportunities to demonstrate strengths, you have a better opportunity to create a connection (p. 77).”

“Lean into your strengths. It is important to look at the positive and negative aspects of the journey, but mostly understand where you came from, not how you could have changed situations (p. 111).”

“Know your strengths. Know your weaknesses. Know your triggers. Know where you spend your time and what the perception of that time spent is by those you lead (p. 67).”

Which quote resonates with your leadership approach?



Strengths

Talent

x

Investment

=

Strength

Talent is a natural way of thinking, feeling or behaving.

Investment is time spent practicing, developing your skills and building your knowledge base.

Strength is the ability to consistently provide near-perfect performance in a specific task.



Strengths Domains

Executing

Influencing

EXECUTING

People with dominant Executing themes make things happen.

INFLUENCING

People with dominant Influencing themes take charge, speak up and make sure others are heard.

**Relationship
Building**

**Strategic
Thinking**

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

People with dominant Relationship Building themes build strong relationships that hold a team together and make it greater than the sum of its parts.

STRATEGIC THINKING

People with dominant Strategic Thinking themes absorb and analyze information that informs better decisions.

Strengths

WHEN YOU KNOW YOUR STRENGTHS

More engaged at work
Greater confidence in decisions
Clearer communication with teammates
Faster professional development
Stronger sense of purpose

Executing

Influencing

**Relationship
Building**

**Strategic
Thinking**



Strengths

WHEN STRENGTHS ARE IGNORED

Stuck in roles that drain energy
Constant self-doubt
Repeating the same friction points
Over-investing in fixing weaknesses
Feeling undervalued

Executing

Influencing

Relationship
Building

Strategic
Thinking

Strengths Activity

GALLUP

The Best of Us

You get the best of me when ...	You get the worst of me when ...
You can count on me to ...	This is what I need from you ...

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How do your strengths show up in your current support role?

What do others need to be aware of about your strengths?



Shadows

Content



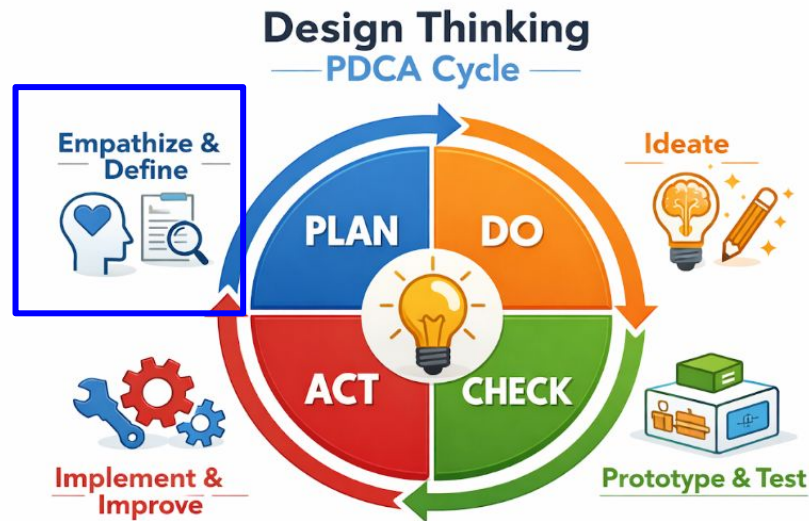
Connect and Reflect

What new thinking do you have about strengths and shadows?

What implications will it have on my practice?



Zoom In Zoom Out





Empathy & Perspective Taking

“It is vital to an organization that there are multiple perspectives throughout, and this is made much easier when investing in all areas (p.80).”

Principals



Central Office



Empathy

"Empathy is the most powerful connecting and trust-building tool that we have."

-Brené Brown



Elements of Empathy

Empathy Element	Affective Empathy	Cognitive Empathy
Definition	Feeling and sharing the other person's emotions.	Understanding the other person's perspective or logic.
Focus/ Goal	Emotional experience. Provide emotional support and connection.	Thoughts, reasoning, and perspective. Show understanding and clarity of their viewpoint.
Language Style	Warm, validating, emotionally attuned.	Neutral, analytical, perspective-taking.
Example (Stress)	"That sounds really overwhelming—I can imagine how stressful that must feel for you."	"I see why you're stressed; the tight deadline and workload make that understandable."
Example (Excitement)	"You seem so excited! I'm thrilled for you—that's amazing!"	"I understand why you're excited; this project could really showcase your skills."
Key Phrases	"I can imagine how that feels..." "That sounds tough..." "I'm happy for you."	"I see why you think that..." "That makes sense because..." "If I'm hearing you correctly..."

Affective Empathy

- experience sharing
- emotional connection to another's experience

"Wow, that sounds really overwhelming—I can imagine how stressful that must feel for you."

Cognitive Empathy

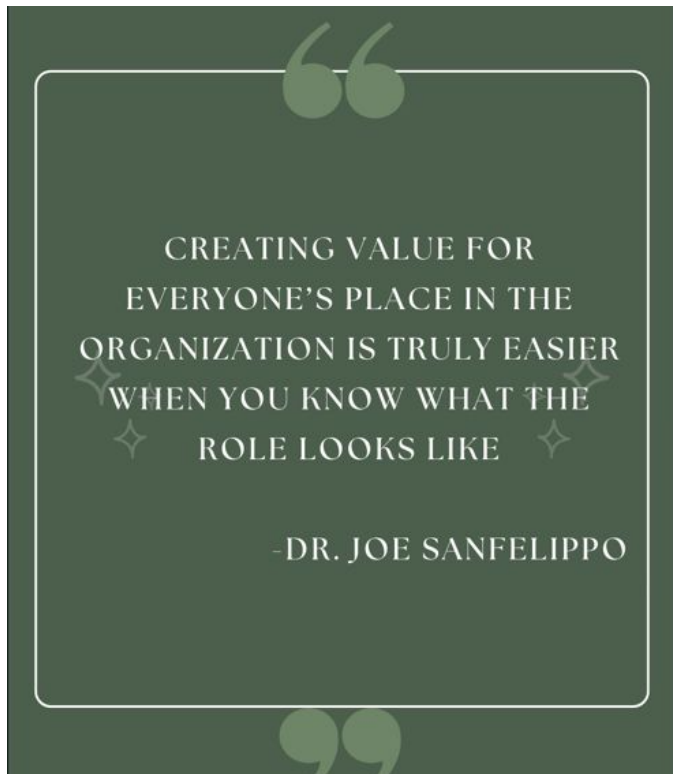
- perspective taking
- recognize and understand another person's emotions

"I see why you approached it that way—given the deadline, prioritizing speed makes sense."

What does it feel like to express and receive empathy?

How can empathy support collaboration?

Role Empathy Journey Mapping



 MINI EASEL PAD TABLEAU À FEUILLES PETITE			
<u>My main role</u>	<u>Challenges & Needs</u>		
<i>What are the main responsibilities you carry each day?</i>	<i>What makes your role difficult?</i>		
<u>Support Yays</u>	<u>Support Nays</u>		
<i>What would you consider helpful, respectful, and appreciated for school/district partnership?</i>	<i>What would feel unhelpful, intrusive, or frustrating, even if well-intended for school/district partnership?</i>		





15:00



Empathy Learning Walk



Read each poster to learn more about the team member's reality!

Leave a post-it comment to share your empathy thoughts and affirmations.

- I can imagine how that feels...
- That sounds tough to...
- I see why you think that because...
- "That makes sense due to.."

Connect and Reflect

What did you learn about your colleagues?

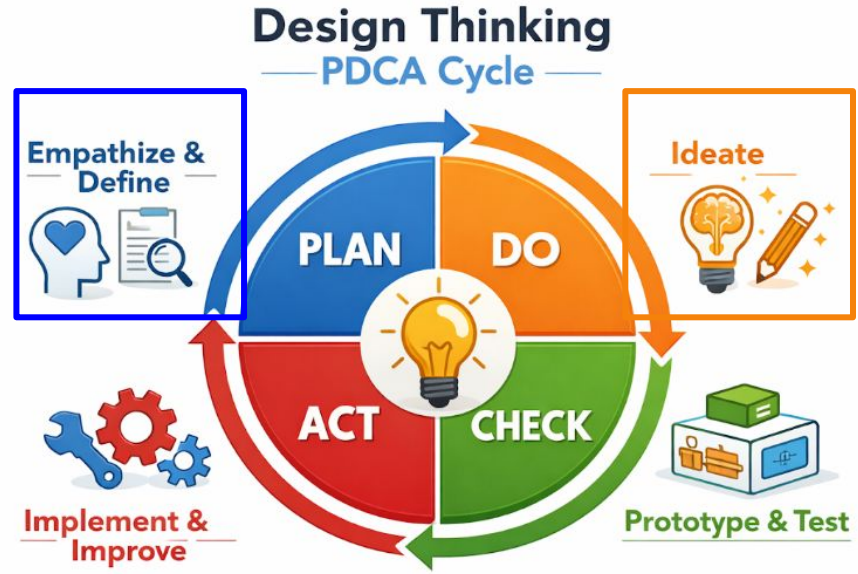
What are you left thinking about empathy and collaboration?

What implications will it have on our intended goals?





Our Ideal
State



Our Ideal State: From Me To We Mindset

- systematic approach to growing capacity to lead
- builds trust within a system
- emphasizes interdependence on talents and strengths
- ensures exemplary work is a collective effort
- process takes longer, acknowledge the journey



From Me to We Mindset Perspective Walk

- 1- systematic approach to growing capacity to lead
- 2- builds trust within a system
- 3- emphasizes interdependence on talents and strengths
- 4- ensures exemplary work is a collective effort
- 5- process takes longer, acknowledge the journey



Which mindset ...

- **resonates with you the most in cross collaboration**
- **is most difficult for you to embrace**
- **will result in the best outcome for RCSS**



Envisioning The Ideal- 4 A's Choice Inquiry

How the central office can support principals as learning leaders

Five ways to ensure site leaders are focused on learning

By Jodi L. McCay | September | October 2024

Model Principal Supervisor Professional Standards
2015



PRINCIPAL SUPERVISION
AS A STRATEGY FOR
SUPPORTING AND RETAINING
SCHOOL LEADERS

A CASE STUDY OF THE
GRANITE SCHOOL DISTRICT



PRINCIPAL SUPPORT
FRAMEWORK

CENTER for EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP
ADVANCING LEADERSHIP • CULTURE OF LEARNING

Envisioning the Ideal: 4 A's Inquiry Menu

Article Title & Link	Summary
How the central office can support principals as learning leaders	This article focuses on the need for central offices to create systems and structures that support the ongoing development of principals as learning leaders. Through actions such as mentoring, designing of high quality systems, supervisor coaching, and a "recultured" district approach to support the work and priorities, true collaboration and partnership can be established.
Model Principal Supervisor Professional Standards	This resource provides insights and unpacks the Model Principal Supervisor Professional Standards (2015). The standards fall into three categories: educational leadership, smooth and effective functioning of the district, and improving the capacity and effectiveness of the principal supervisor as a district leader. All three categories are integral in providing comprehensive support to principals.
Principal Supervision as a Strategy For Supporting and Retaining School Leaders: A Case Study of the Granite School District	This case study describes how Granite School District used one strategy – transforming the principal supervisor role – to both improve principal skills and deepen these leaders' commitment to staying in their roles. Granite made a massive shift in the principal supervisor role from one focused on compliance to one focused on coaching. This case study describes the ideological and cultural shifts that were necessary, as well as the positive impact they had on both educators and students.
Principal Support Framework	The Principal Support Framework describes the partnership between school system leaders and principals that is critical for eliminating the inequities that exist in schools. Based on research and informed by CEL's experience with school systems across the country, this framework offers a vision for how central office leaders can improve the conditions and support for growing equity leadership practices across their systems.

Link to choice inquiry menu:
<https://tinyurl.com/3hbb4ysm>



As you read...

4 A's Protocol

Agree with?

Aspire to?

Assumptions?

Alternate views?

From Me To We: Envisioning the Ideal

Construct a clear picture of what the ideal, most helpful support system looks and feels like at its very best.

Intention- Set expectation	Ideally, what do we need done and when do we need it done by?
Connection- Determine support	What type of support can we offer toward the collective goal? What should it look like/sound like? Frequency?
Direction- Follow through	Ideally, what structure/schedule is needed to support the goal?

INTENTION—CONNECTION—DIRECTION



From Me To We: Envisioning the Ideal

Envisioning The Ideal Support System

Intention Set Expectation What types of support do we typically provide? Is our current support structure in true alignment with the actual needs of our schools and the support we <i>want</i> to provide? Where are the gaps? Moving forward, how do we want school leaders and staff to describe our support? What words or feelings should define their experience with the district office?	Connection Determine Support What specific types of support can we offer that directly advance our collective district goals? What does this support look like and sound like in action? What evidence will prove that this support is high-quality and impactful? What is the ideal frequency and intensity of this support?	Direction Follow Through Ideally, what organizational structure or master schedule is required to sustain this new model and achieve our goals? What do we need to stop doing, start doing, or modify within our current calendar to protect this time for schools?





Lunch



THIS

OR

THAT

Beach



Mountains



City Tours



THIS

OR

THAT

Coffee



Tea



Juice



THIS

OR

THAT

All Inclusive Resort



Cruise



European Tour



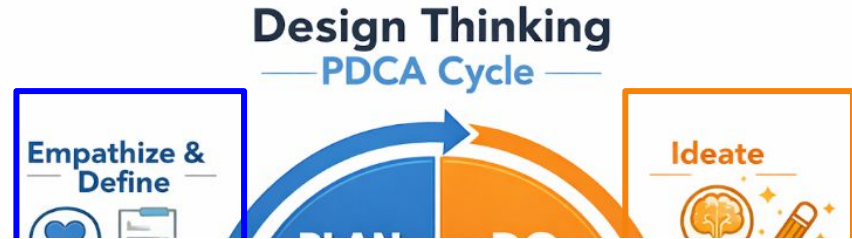
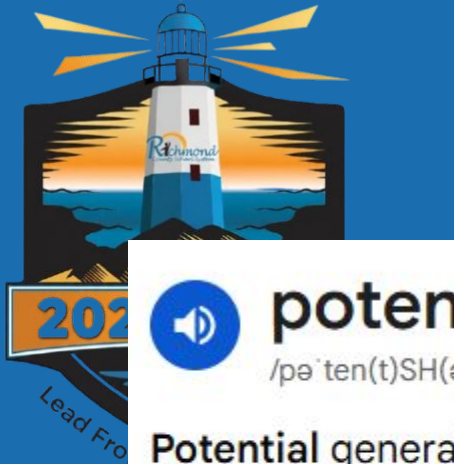
From Me To We: Envisioning the Ideal



Envisioning The Ideal Support System

Intention Set Expectation Ideally, what do we need done and when do we need it done by?	Connection Determine Support What type of support can we offer toward the collective goal? What should it look like/sound like? Frequency?	Direction Follow Through Ideally, what structure/schedule is needed to support the goal?





potential

/pəˈten(t)SH(ə)l/

Potential generally means **possible but not yet achieved or actualized; capable of developing into something in the future.** It describes inherent power, capacity, or possibility.  Cambridge Dictionary +3

Our
State



Department Potential Analysis

Creating a space where collective efficacy is at the core of the organization starts with creating value to the organization's collective direction (p.115).

-Lead From Where You Are

Discuss your department's current reality and areas of potential to support the ideal vision.

What support efforts will make the greatest impact?



CF Team Potential Analysis



Cross Functional Team

Post-it[®] MINI EASEL PAD TABLEAU À FEUILLES PETITE Super Sticky Super colorful  3M	
Current Reality	Areas of Potential
Construct a clear picture of what the ideal, most helpful support system looks and feels like at its very best.	



15:00



Team Harvest Gallery Walk

Common ideas?

Major themes?

Patterns and trends?

Current Reality	Areas of Potential
Construct a clear picture of what the ideal, most helpful support system looks and feels like at its very best.	

Home Team Huddle Time



What did we hear today?

- pain points
- reality
- opportunities
- support
- needs



Closing Moves



What's different because of our time together?

What did you learn about yourself today?

What was the most important/relevant idea to you?



Thank You