Innovative Learning Implementation Framework

A Guide to Shifting System Conditions for Success and Scale

October 2019

The Learning Accelerator

Introduction

The Learning Accelerator (TLA) is a national nonprofit working to make the 'potential' possible and practical for every teacher and learner. Underpinning TLA's work is a drive to ensure each student receives an effective, equitable, and engaging education — one that is informed by data and supported by technology. Our mission is to connect teachers and leaders with the knowledge, tools, and networks they need to enact personalized, mastery-based practices to transform K-12 education.

Since our founding nearly seven years ago, our team has sought to study, understand, and broadly share the factors that lead to success in implementation at scale. We've worked alongside school systems, developed new tools, and brought together resources from partners across the ecosystem to support practitioner efforts.

We've learned through this work with pioneering educators that sustaining data-driven, personalized approaches to teaching and learning requires coherent, system-wide shifts in strategy and practice. There is no single correct pathway nor timeline for building readiness or action given the different contexts that exist across a school system.

Despite differences, **TLA has found there are common implementation components — "conditions for scale" — that support planning, adoption, and scaling of innovative initiatives. Leaders seeking to implement work in classrooms must align critical supports, systems, and structures, as well as ongoing processes to establish, improve, and scale work over time. TLA's Innovative Learning Implementation Framework, described in this document, outlines these common conditions components.**

There is no one "right" way to use this tool, but we suggest that teams can use it to:
- Develop shared language across critical system and school stakeholders;
- Identify and communicate across these different actors the necessary conditions for change, including often overlooked non-instructional areas;
- Assess current capacity and organize cross-departmental work ahead; and,
- Monitor and reflect on progress and sticking points.

This framework was developed based on TLA's experience in the field as well as deep research into the great work of other organizations nationally. You can explore the work reviewed in the links below.

2Revs: Future of Learning Framework	2Revolutions	*Future Ready Schools Framework*	FUTURE READY SCHOOLS PREPARING STUDENTS FOR SUCCESS
Blended Learning Implementation Guide	BLENDED LEARNING IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE	*ILearnNYC Lab School Implementation*	iLearnNYC
Clayton Christensen Institute: Design Guide	CHRISTENSEN INSTITUTE	*KnowledgeWorks: 10 Pathways*	KnowledgeWorks
Digital Promise: Edtech Pilot Framework	Digital Promise: Accelerating Innovation in Education	*Summit Learning: Site Level Guide and Commitments*	SUMMIT LEARNING
EdSurge: Professional Services Guide	EdSurge	*Transcend: Site Level Conditions*	Transcend: BUILDING BEYOND THE LIMITS OF SCHOOL DESIGN
Education Elements: PL Framework and Core Four	Education Elements		

Finally, this tool is an evolving one. You can provide feedback or send questions to info@learningaccelerator.org or @LearningAccel on Twitter.

# Innovative Learning Implementation Framework Overview

Leaders seeking to implement and improve innovative approaches to learning – ones that are data-driven, personalized, and technology-supported – must tackle a complex set of tasks. Central to all work that educators are doing is the development of a central **Student-Centered Design for Teaching and Learning** that puts into place the practices needed to support personalized, mastery-based, data-driven instruction. (This is commonly thought of as the personalized learning "model" for how students, teachers, and other actors will work together to achieve a common set of aims.)

Around this core student-centered design, educators must establish three sets of conditions that allow them to put the design into action:
* **Essential Supports** that allow educators to effectively and equitably implement the design and practices for all students across all developmental domains.
* **Enabling Systems and Structures** to lower barriers for implementation and accelerate uptake and learning across classrooms and schools.
* **Ongoing Processes** to align, innovate, and improve implementation at scale and over time.

Explore TLA's Blended & Personalized Learning at Work site for:

* Strategies for Teaching & Learning

* School Models
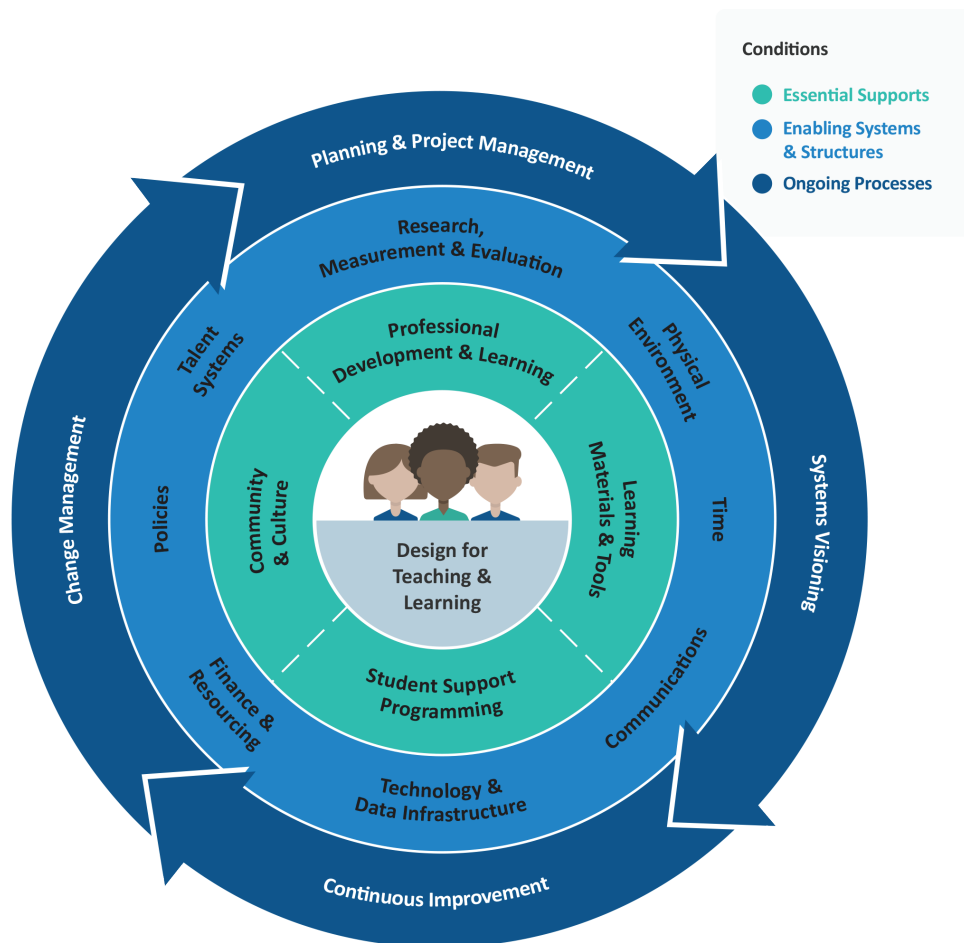
Within each condition layer, there are specific domains of work, or tasks, that educator teams need to coherently address. Conditions and tasks closest to the center of the circle require tight alignment with the specific learning design to be supported. These supports likely need to be highly customized to specific learning models and community needs. Systems seeking to support and scale multiple designs likely need to invest in a variety of supports that schools can leverage. Conditions at the outside of the circle are much more general; they should be consistent regardless of design.

Each domain is explored in the sections that follow.

Essential Supports

Essential support conditions allow educators to effectively and equitably implement a student-centered design and practices for all students across all domains of development (academic, social-emotional, cognitive, identity, physical, and mental). These supports must be highly aligned to the learning model.
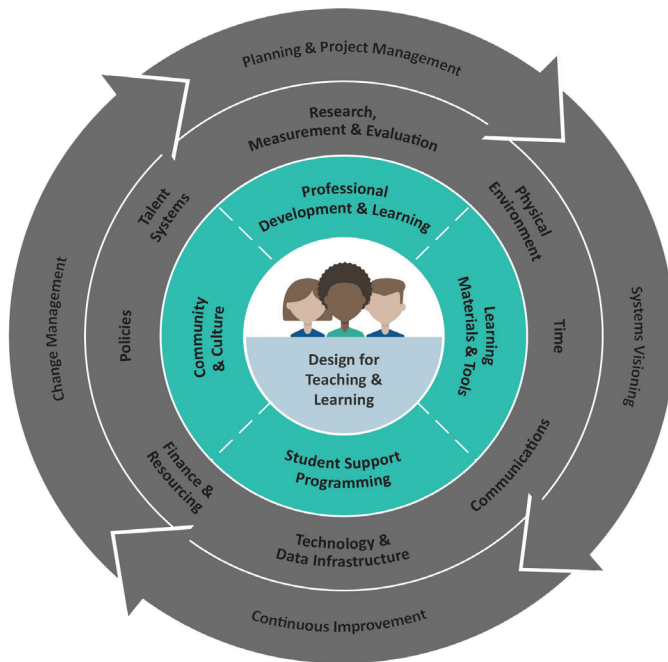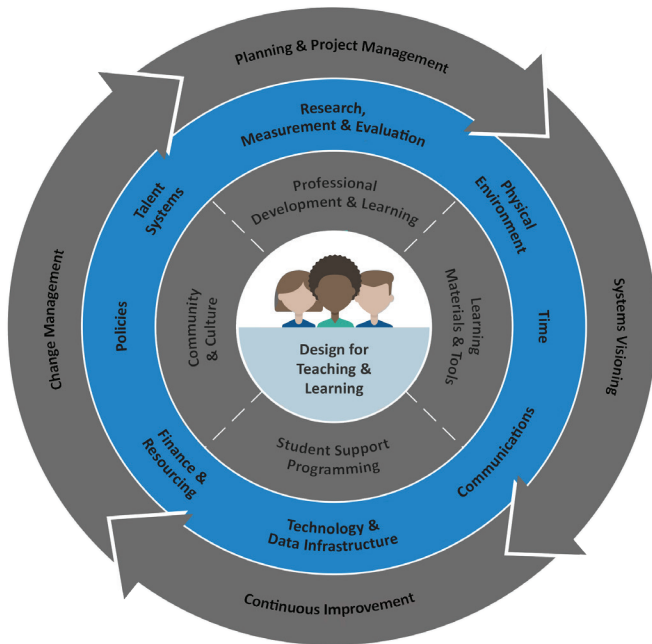
Essential Reflection Questions for Teams

- What does quality support in each area look like, sound like?

- What conditions have we already put into place for support? *(Note, it can be helpful to actually map/list these out!)*

- How similar or dissimilar are the needs of our school(s) in each of these support areas? Are the designs for teaching and learning different enough that we need to develop a portfolio of supports?

- How might we collect data – and who would we collect data from – to assess the quality of supports as well as identify strengths and gaps?

Essential Supports Conditions	
Learning Materials & Tools	Coherently implement aligned resources, including analog and digital curriculum, assessments, instructional materials, and devices
Professional Development & Learning	Put in place adult-level learning experiences that support practitioners to build the necessary skills and mindsets for enacting effective practices
Student Support Programming	Provide student-facing, wraparound programs that enhance and amplify existing learning opportunities and capabilities, often through partnerships with other providers
Community & Culture	Create explicit and implicit practices, norms, rules, and ways of working across students, staff, families, and communities that foster inclusiveness, innovation, and productive relationships

Enabling Systems and Structures

Enabling systems and structures lower barriers for implementation and accelerate uptake and learning across classrooms and schools. These conditions draw on the work of many leaders and departments across a school system.

| Enabling Systems & Structure Conditions	
Technology & Data Infrastructure	Create and maintain technology and data systems and processes (including back-end and front-end infrastructures) to support innovative learning model implementation
Finance & Resourcing	Deploy fiscal models and processes that are clear, transparent, in service of, and effectively ensure resource availability for student success
Physical Environment	Create and maintain physical environments that are conducive to student-centered learning
Talent Systems	Build structures to grow, manage, and sustain talent for the organization across different teams
Communications	Institute effective communication processes that build a culture of engagement, transparency, and trust critical for innovation to succeed
Time	Establish flexible uses of time (daily, weekly, monthly) across all levels to maximize outcomes and opportunities
Research, Measurement, & Evaluation	Capture, collect, and analyze information about a pilot or program inputs and outputs to measure implementation and determine efficacy
Policies	Compose, adopt, and implement systematically adopted principles, rules, and guidelines that support strategies

Ongoing Processes

Leaders must develop and implement consistent, **ongoing processes** to align, innovate, and improve implementation at scale and over time.
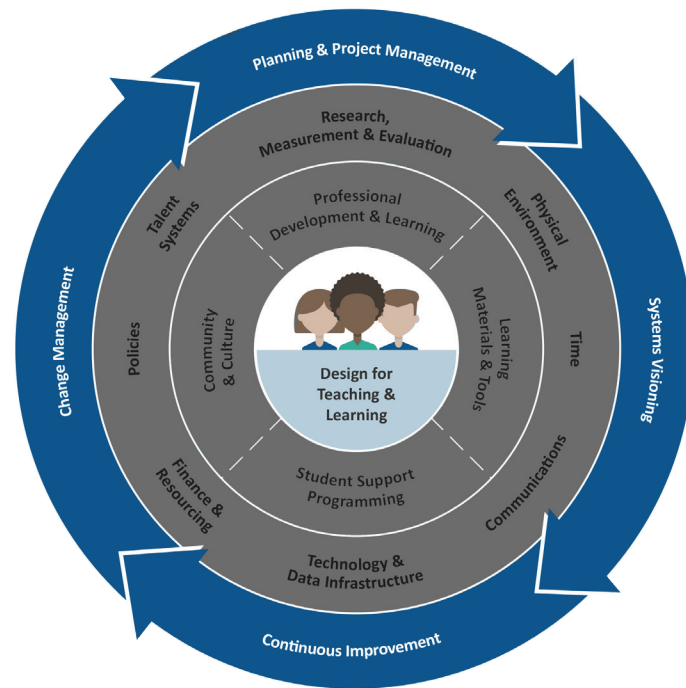
Essential Reflection Questions for Teams

- Who are your current stakeholders that How well have we fully engaged key stakeholders (students, families, educators, leaders, etc.) in our conversations about our vision and change processes?
  Who is typically left out?
  Whose voices should be prioritized?

- What has our history of making bigger system change looked like? Are there any big successes you can draw lessons from? Stumbling blocks?

- What would your team identify as success? What does it look like, sound like?

- How might we monitor the success on ongoing processes? What data do we have already? What data do we need to get, and from whom?

Ongoing Process Conditions	
Visioning	Develop and implement an approach for bringing all stakeholders together to develop a shared vision for the future
Planning & Project Management	Establish systems and routines to ensure that implementation of all efforts stay aligned and on track
Change Management	Support the transition, including implementation of strategies for effecting, controlling, and helping people adapt to change
Continuous Improvement	Instill methods that allow the system to make incremental improvements over time

Take It Further

There is no "right" way to approach implementation planning. On the next pages, you'll find two reflection tools designed to help your team reflect on your current state, identify shared areas for action, and develop concrete plans. We encourage you to use them as appropriate for your context, culture, and goals.

Take It Further

Step 1. Taking Stock & Prioritizing Action

Ensuring alignment across different implementation domains can feel like an overwhelming task. In TLA's work with education teams, we've found one way to get going is to simply assess current state, identifying highest priority actions based on existing strengths and needs. During this phase of work, we've also found that it's highly important leaders bring the right stakeholders to the table to ensure mutual understanding and alignment.

The reflection tables for each condition below are tools leaders can use with teams to do so.

1. Have each member of your team review the chart below. Each individual should mark an "x" along each spectrum that best describes their take on your system's current state in each domain area.
2. Once all members have reviewed, take time to share out where each member marked the "current state."
3. Together, consider these questions:
   a. What do you notice?
   b. How aligned were your results? How different were your results? Why do you think this is?
   c. Looking across the domains and components, which areas do you think are the highest priority to address? Why? (Note that priority could be based on urgency/lack of alignment, but might also be focused on areas of strength and near-alignment, e.g. "low-hanging fruit.")

By engaging in this practice and conversation together, the team will have a better idea about the work to be done (or work that already has!), as well as diverse sightlines into problems that might need to be resolved.

Essential Supports		
Learning Materials & Tools	Not aligned at all ·············· On our way ··············	Fully aligned
Professional Development & Learning	Not aligned at all ·············· On our way ··············	Fully aligned
Student Support Programming	Not aligned at all ·············· On our way ··············	Fully aligned
Community & Culture	Not aligned at all ·············· On our way ··············	Fully aligned

Take It Further

Step 1. Taking Stock & Prioritizing Action

Enabling Systems & Structures		
Technology & Data Infrastructure	Not aligned at all · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · On our way · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	Fully aligned
Finance & Resourcing	Not aligned at all · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · On our way · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	Fully aligned
Physical Environment	Not aligned at all · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · On our way · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	Fully aligned
Talent Systems	Not aligned at all · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · On our way · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	Fully aligned
Communications	Not aligned at all · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · On our way · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	Fully aligned
Time	Not aligned at all · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · On our way · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	Fully aligned
Research, Measurement, & Evaluation	Not aligned at all · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · On our way · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	Fully aligned
Policies	Not aligned at all · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · On our way · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	Fully aligned

Take It Further

Step 1. Taking Stock & Prioritizing Action

Ongoing Processes			
Visioning	Not aligned at all	On our way ⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯	Fully aligned
Planning & Project Management	Not aligned at all	On our way ⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯	Fully aligned
Change Management	Not aligned at all	On our way ⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯	Fully aligned
Continuous Improvement	Not aligned at all	On our way ⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯	Fully aligned

Take It Further

Step 2. Vision Development and Action Planning

Once you've identified similarities and differences in perception and team priorities, consider the process you'll need to undertake to align your perspectives and develop a long-term plan for action. Looking at your highest priority action areas, work with the team to envision a plan for change for each area. The table below outlines one pathway for doing so.

Set your vision and identify key challenges to tackle.

Given your vision for teaching and learning, what do you think the end state for this implementation area should be? (Alternatively, what's your vision for how this condition layer will change to support your model?)

What is/are the challenge(s) or problem(s) that might get in the way of achieving this vision? What data supports your thinking here? 1. **Challenge/problem + supporting data:**   2. **Challenge/problem + supporting data:**   3. **Challenge/problem + supporting data:**

Take It Further

Step 2. Vision Development and Action Planning

Explore stakeholders and resource-needs.

Who should be part of the conversation? Why?

What resources/assets do you have at your disposal? (Alternatively, where do you need to find external support/resources?)

Take It Further

Step 2. Vision Development and Action Planning

Develop a list of action items to tackle, thinking about both the short and long terms.

Short-Term Action Items (e.g., next six months)	Timeline	Who is responsible?

Medium-Term Action Items (e.g., this year)	Timeline	Who is responsible?

Long-Term Action Items (e.g., beyond academic year)	Timeline	Who is responsible?