ROADMAP FOR SCHOOL SYSTEMS NAVIGATING THROUGH COVID-19:
RESILIENT LEADERSHIP ⏱ (access all Roadmaps at www.catalyst-ed.org/covid/roadmaps)

catalyst:ed **LEADING ELEPHANTS**

ROADMAP SECTIONS	Put Humans at the Foundation	Set your Compass	Transform Ambiguity Into Clarity	Create New Agile Ways of Working Together	Pull Up and Place Your Bets
ROADMAP KEY	♡ DEI 💵 Finance 🗨 Instruction ⌂ Social and Emotional ✉ IT and Operations 👥 Talent ⟳ Resilient Leadership
RELATED RESOURCES	Leading Elephants Resources on Human-Centered Leadership	Jim Collins' *Great by Choice*	*William Bridges: Managing Transitions*

Phase 1 - Launch Remote Learning	Phase 2 - Finish the School Year Strong	Phase 3 - Implications for Summer & Beyond	Resources and Sample Technical Assistance Projects (request support here)
Put Humans at the Foundation			
♡ ⌂ Consistent with the Social and Emotional Student and Family Supports, all people need to feel known, safe, and productive to thrive in their work. [See Social and Emotional Roadmap.] ♡ ⌂ 👥 Providing guiding principles for caring for the social and emotional well-being of your staff and families. Affirm the need for allocating time toward connection structures and other non-academic structures. [See Social and Emotional Roadmap.and Talent Roadmap] Set an intention for how you want to interact as a warm, human leader. When communicating, check to make sure that tone exists. Give yourself permission to take care of yourself as a leader. Find the moments to pause and re-center so people experience that intention. Find ways to show appreciation and celebration for your team.	Help people shift to a more sustainable pace. Find a new normal that creates space to balance the needs at home, do strategic thinking and collaborate on figuring out the big stuff ahead Find a way to punctuate the year ending to create a sense of celebration and accomplishment.	♡ Reflect on how you want to make special parts of this experience (increased partnership with parents, strong teamwork, etc) last beyond your current experience. ♡ Assess for impacts of trauma on your staff. Identify what healing needs to happen - to repair frayed relationships or to help people rejuvenate after the challenging experience.	**Resources:** For examples of humans at the center, see KIPP TX High Five Questions Leading Elephants: Ideas for Building Connection and Leading Elephants Article: Leading Through Uncertainty **Sample Technical Assistance Projects:** Providing executive coaching for leaders (with a focus on equity and inclusion) as they navigate this crisis.

Set your Compass

♡ Remind yourself of your equity commitments; align on what it means to live those commitments at this time.

With your team, re-articulate your True North (i.e., what is still true for your organization, despite upheaval).

Review your organizational values, and articulate what it looks like to be with each other during this time.

♡ 🔢 ✨ ⌂ ✉ 👤 As a leadership team, articulate what you are valuing as you are making tough decisions that impact finances, talent, and more.

Create a narrative. Be prepared to share that early and often. (The goal isn't just for *you* to know your True North, but to help your team understand and be inspired by it.)

Find ways to reinforce your compass in your everyday work.
- Ensure those principles continue to guide tough decisions and are included in your communications about them..
- Celebrate - liberally - what you have accomplished together and who you are becoming.

Consider how to evolve your narrative as the COVID-19 situation unfolds and as the year comes to an end.

Re-create your narrative to use during your summer communications and especially with the start of school. Connect the experience people have gone through to who you are as an organization and who you are becoming

♡ Find new ways to infuse your equity commitments and your values as you reform 2.0 remote structures and you reopen schools.

Resources:
Firstline Schools' values-based [Commitments for Distance Learning](#)

Uplift's [True North](#) team lunch meeting with Remy Washington

KIPP Texas speaks from its values in Daphane Carter's [Adaptive Ways of Leading](#) and [chalkboard team newsletter](#)

[Leading Elephants True North Tool](#) helps you draft your own

Sample Technical Assistance Projects:
Facilitating conversations with your team to articulate your True North and review organizational values.

Crafting a narrative and creating a communications plan to message this to staff, students, families, and the community.

Transform Ambiguity Into Clarity

Name what your short term wins need to be. Assert the belief that your organization/team can tap its creativity to meet short term issues.

Give your team short term clarity.
- Articulate what you do know of the situation and your short term priorities.
- Set up a way for your team to get clear on *their* short term actions.
- Provide a way to look across functions to ensure cross functional connections.

♡ Recognize that in times of crisis, an absence of information can cause anxiety and reactivity in people.

- Determine the frequency and forums in which you are going to communicate
- Ensure your communication lines extend to families, board members, and staff members who are not deeply involved in the new day-to-day work

Identify who can help to streamline your communication methods to help the *lift* be light on your end, but the *experience* to be warm for the receiver. (e.g., how could you make easy videos, low lift emails, or host Q&A sessions that will meet your communication goals.)

Set medium-term plans:

- With your clarified hypothesis, remap your priorities, key actions, and goals. Set structures for your team to do the same.

- Check on your next year priorities - especially with big initiatives you thought you would be launching

Re-assess your communication structures, frequencies, and methods for summer and start of school. (If COVID-19 closures persist, recognize that you may need to communicate more than average for summer to help combat isolation and stress.)

While you may have reset your priorities, there are still likely a number of areas that are bumpy or ambiguous. Name and narrate your Q1 priorities for the start of school.

Identify key start of year communication forums (all staff times, new staff orientation, etc, new family welcome events) where you can share your priorities and highlight your key goals.

Develop a communication strategy for future crisis / closure moments.

Resources:
Leading Elephants: Finding New Ground Tool and Blog

Leading Elephants: Articulating Your Priorities Tool

Jim Collins Article on Making Steady Progress in Times of Uncertainty

Sample Technical Assistance Projects:

Partnering with you to create communication structures during remote learning which include key messages, the frequency and forum of the communications, and distribution of responsibilities.

Identifying key learnings from this crisis to develop a communication strategy for future crises.

Create New Agile Ways of Working Together

Form your COVID-19 task force. Ensure there is both a sponsor and project management support to make the work happen. Get clear on decision making and input expectations.

♡ Identify ways to mobilize your staff to minimize all design and problem solving coming from your leadership team.
- Create forums for next level leaders to understand issues.
- Enable sub-groups to work on topical issues.

Set up the team for agile working structures to adjust to the adapting
- Set expectations that work will evolve, and that teams should start with a strong prototype and iterate.
- Reimagine your meeting structures. Set a short term cadence for meeting together frequently.

♡ Develop ways of listening to needs that are heartfelt and manageable.

Push to provide a sense of normal and consistency. People can get normalized to crisis mode. Find the rituals and moments for normalcy, even if things still feel up in the air.

As implementation finds its rhythm, gauge whether you are meeting the intended goals and whether you need to be making changes.

Monitor and adjust agile working structures themselves to ensure productive collaboration.

Make end-of-year adjustments:

- ⌂ To provide a sense of closure, reflection and learning, consider an abbreviated (climate / pulse) survey of families and staff on the COVID-19 era. Identify what other listening forums are required to help you assess and adjust for the year ahead. (See Social and Emotional Roadmap)

- Decide how to re-form or disband working groups that are no longer serving the current needs. Give opportunity to regroup for people who may be fatigued.

Evaluate the benefits of how you have operationalized this challenge (collaborative structures, distributed leadership). Determine what elements of this you want to take into your SY '20-21 version of the org.

♡ Create ongoing listening forums for students, families, and staff to help you keep a pulse on their needs.

Sample Technical Assistance Projects:

Developing structures that allow for meaningful input from leadership team, staff, and community. Designing a variety of channels through which to receive this input where possible (i.e., anonymous surveys or office hours and town halls).

Creating decision-making structures and protocols that allow you to

Recommending meeting structures and frequencies to make sure all team members are able to give input and everyone is aligned.

Pull Up and Place Your Bets

Carve out time for yourself and for your team to pull up out of the crisis and look ahead.

Assess your biggest near term risks impacting your organization. Take rapid measures on these discrete areas to ensure you are safe. (Take care that you don't try to over-plan in a time of rapid change.)

Encourage innovation on your teams - get explicit about boundaries they can push and ideas they can propose.

♡ 🏧 ☆ ⌂ ✉ As a leadership team, assess the landscape ahead of you. Formulate your best hypothesis for what will be true for your organization over the coming months - from a funding, enrollment, and school re-opening perspective.

- ✦ With this hypothesis and the compass you defined previously, work with academic leaders to determine what big bets to make in the academic program - where to shift to near term, to well-being needs, or to SY '20-21. Determine how much focus needs to be spent in creating a robust 2.0 remote learning plan. [See Academic Roadmap]

- Question major assumptions. Identify how you can explore creative solutions that may not have been possible in a traditional context.

- Identify your biggest downside risks, and identify decisive measures to ensure your organizational longevity is not compromised.

- Communicate with people your current thinking.

Identify where you have momentum from wins and what additional measures you can take to reinforce your upside opportunities.

With your team, determine what is necessary to weather ongoing existential risks. (Where is the organization stretched thin? What areas are most sensitive to disruption?) See Jim Collins on Productive Paranoia for Managing Risks

Sample Technical Assistance Projects:

Planning for potential transition between in-person and virtual learning next year

Strategic planning to identify areas and initiatives where the team can innovate.

Supporting your team to evaluate the impact this crisis has had on the strategic plan and making adjustments as needed.