Spring 2014

Promoting Equitable Learning Communities through Equity-Oriented Strategic Planning

March 13, 2014

Seena M. Skelton, Ph.D. & Marsha Simon, Ph.D.

Great Lakes Equity Center

in collaboration with

&

Our commitments for engaging in courageous conversations

Stay engaged

Speak your truth

Experience discomfort

Expect and accept nondisclosure

Singleton & Linton (2006)

Purpose

- This professional learning series is designed to engage teams in **equity-oriented strategic planning**.

- Participants will **examine critically, intersections of policies, procedures, structures and practices** pertaining to major domains effecting student outcomes within participants' educational contexts.

- Teams will **chart and evaluate initial courses of action necessary for advancing educational equity at the systemic level**; and leave this series with **knowledge and skills needed to scale-up equity-oriented strategic planning** throughout system domains.

Session Scope & Sequence

Day One — Leadership Practices for Advancing Equity

Day Two — Critical Examination of District and School Policies and Practices

Day Three — Action Planning for Advancing Equity

Day Four — Evaluating and Refining School/District Plans for Maximum Impact

Series Outcomes

An understanding of the impact of current policies and practices on school and district cultures

Strategies for addressing equity issues at the school, district or organizational levels

Plan for sustaining safe, equitable and inclusive school cultures

Day One Objectives

Participants will be able to:

- **describe** the purpose of this professional learning experience;

- **recognize** elements of critical collaborative inquiry within an equity-oriented strategic planning process, and

- **articulate** a strong rationale for examining policy, practices and perceptions regarding equity.

Agenda

Welcome and session overview

A framework for leading transformative change towards educational equity

Equity-oriented leadership practices that disrupt institutionalized inequities and build the capacity for transformative change towards equity

The critical collaborative inquiry process

Preliminary assessment of current plan goals and outcomes

How will we spend our time?

- Facilitated Discussions
- Reflection
- Video Discussions
- Readings
- Action Planning

What's in your packet of materials

Words with Friends

1. Introductions at table
2. As a table team choose one letter and create a word that the team associates with equity
3. Each table shares the word

Equity

A Framework for Leading Transformative Change Towards Educational Equity

- Access
- Representation
- Meaningful Participation

- Structures
- Policies
- People
- Practices

Equity & Social Justice Focused

Systemic Change

Strategic

Critical Collaborative Inquiry

- Planned Data-based Actions
- Guided Implementation
- Plan Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

- Surfacing Marginalizing Policies and Practices
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Investigative

Equity

What is Equity

- Write your team's definition

- Moving clock wise review other teams' definition and silently write comments and questions about their definitions

- Return to your table, review comments and discuss how you might revise your definition

Silent and Reflective

KEY DIMENSIONS OF SOCIAL JUSTICE IN EDUCATION

RECOGNITION

Claims for respect and dignity

REDISTRIBUTION

Demands for more equitable sharing of wealth and power

KNOWLEDGE & ACTION

Calls for education that promotes critical thought, examination of beliefs, policies, and actions and taking social action for change

(Cochran-Smith, 2009; North, 2008; Rodriguez, 2013)
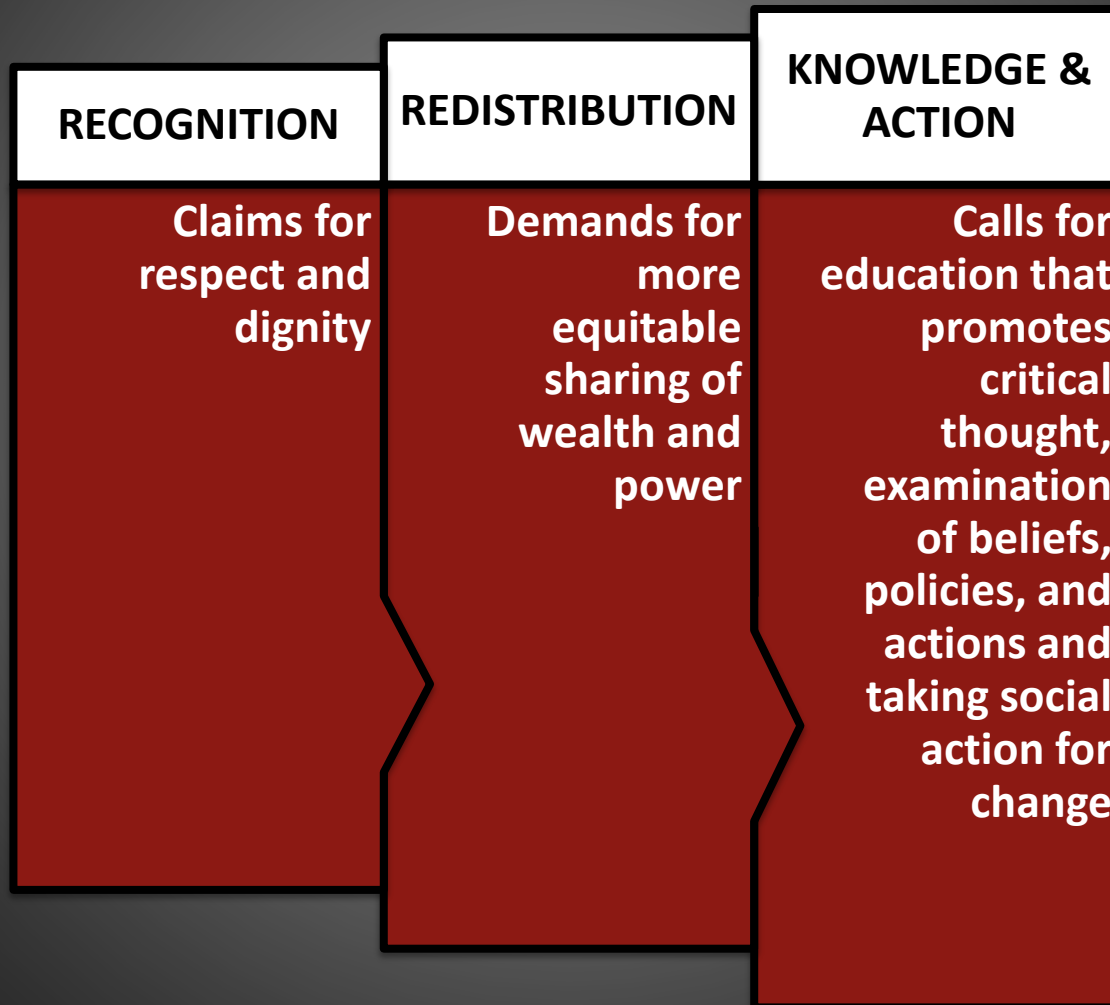
Dr. Heather Hackman on Social Justice

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cx0Pgn6h_Nk

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Reflect on one of the following questions...

What is your role in creating social justice and equity for all students?

What assets can you bring to bear to ensure social justice for your students?

In which areas would you like build personal capacity to create socially just schools ?

IN WHAT SPECIFIC WAYS WILL YOU INCREASE CAPACITY FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE?

In what ways will you leverage your assets as an equity leader moving forward?

What is your greatest hope for achieving social justice in your educational setting?

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10 Minute Break Time

Transformative Change Towards Equity

Transformative change towards educational equity is **systemic** change that **disrupts** and **dismantles** historical legacies of normative **assumptions, beliefs, and practices** about individual characteristics and cultural identities **that marginalize** and disenfranchise people and groups of people.

Great Lakes Equity Center (2012)

View and Discuss

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8KYJl0PECv8

Mirrors of Privilege: Making Whiteness Visible Conversations -Video Activity

Discuss the following questions:

- When did you first become aware of white privilege?

- How does the intersection of privilege and difference show up in your context?

- Have you ever thought about your "space" (working, living, learning) as a racialized space? How do you react to this concept?

Home work - The Trouble We're In: Privilege, Power and Difference Reading Jigsaw

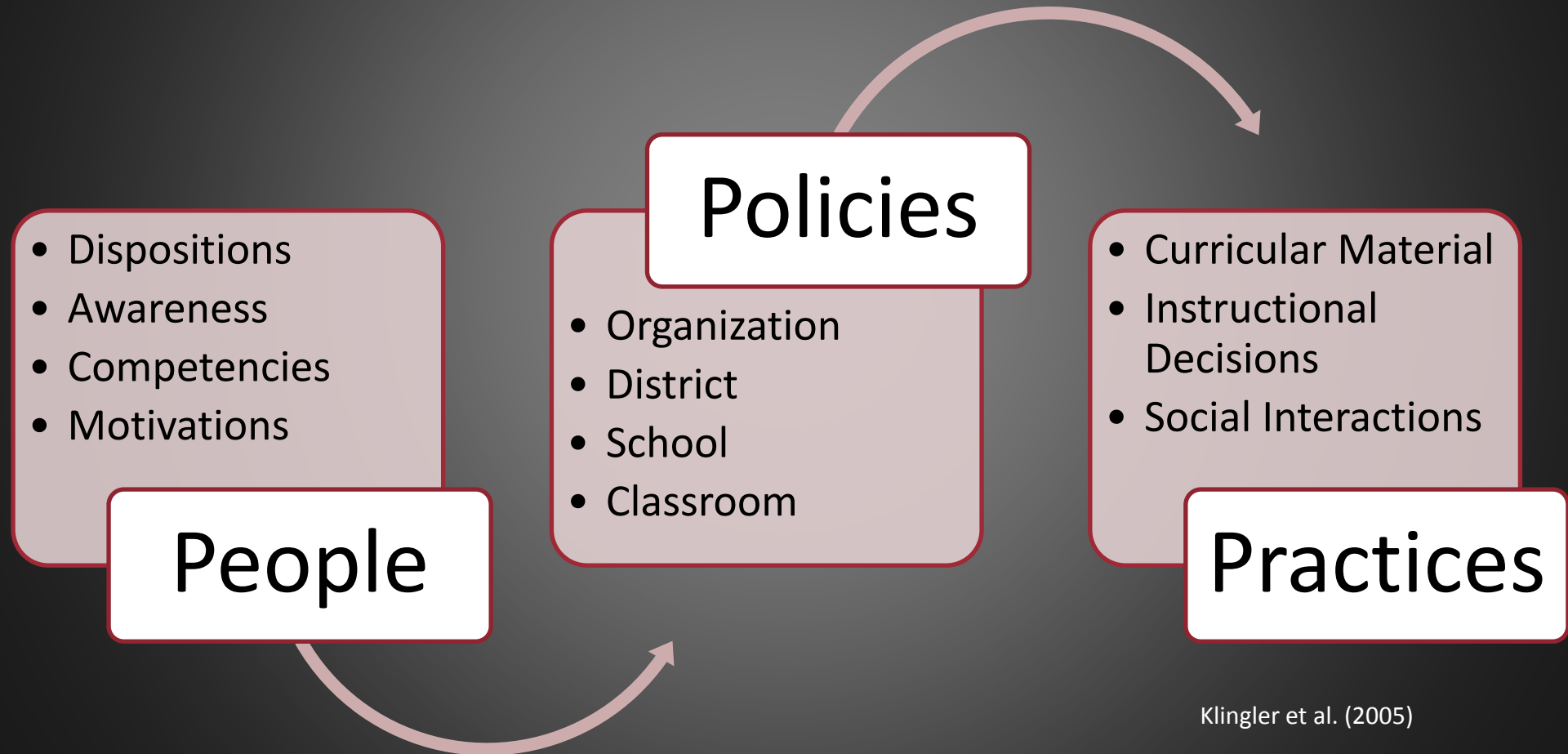*Allan Johnson*
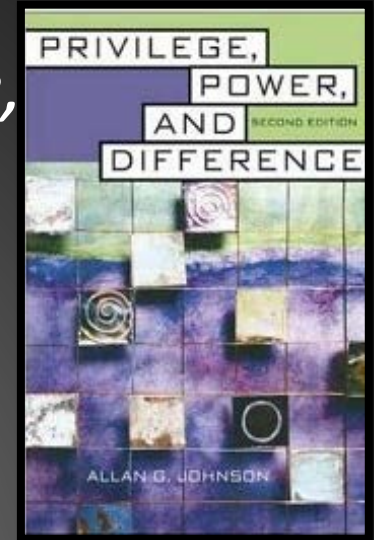
- *Individually*
    - *Everyone reads page 1*
    - *1s read - The Social Construction of Difference*
    - *2s read – What is Privilege?*
    - *3s read – Two Types of Privilege*
    - *4s read – Privilege as Paradox*
    - *5s read – Oppression: The Flip Side of Privilege*
- *In small group - Teach, Discuss, Reflect*

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- Investigative

Systemic Change through…

People
- Dispositions
- Awareness
- Competencies
- Motivations

Policies
- Organization
- District
- School
- Classroom

Practices
- Curricular Material
- Instructional Decisions
- Social Interactions

Klingler et al. (2005)

When asked "would you rather work for change, or just complain?" 81% of the respondents replied, "Do i have to pick? This is hard."

Change is hard!

FOCUS ON **PEOPLE** TO CHANGE PRACTICES

Learners assess and interpret the relevance, usefulness, and cost/benefit of any new theory and practice. Their responses then range along the following continuum:

(Timperley et al., 2007, page 14)

reject/ignore the new theory and practice and continue with prior practice

continue with prior practice, believing that it is new practice

Select parts of the new theory and practice and adapt them to current practice

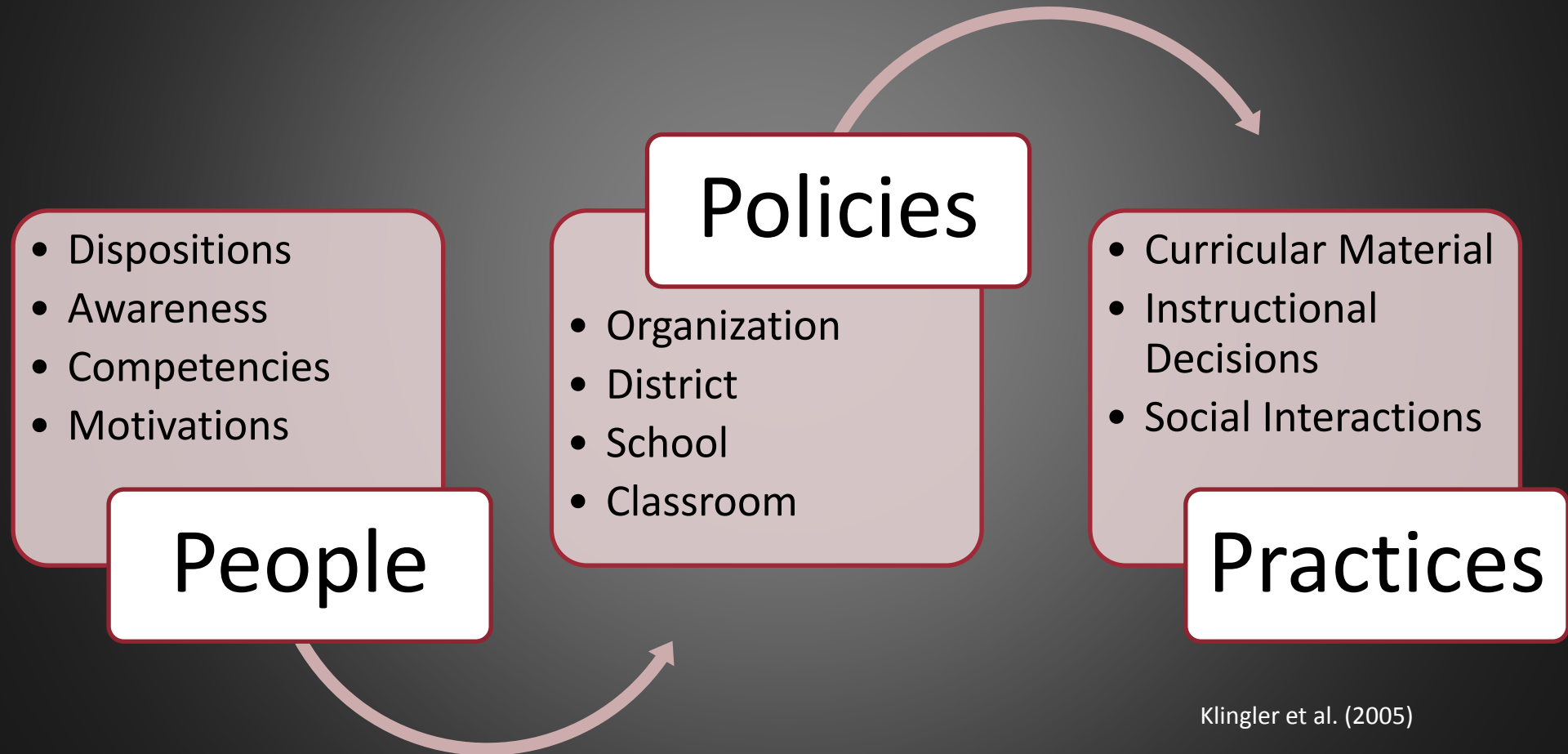*Implement as required*

Actively engage with, own, and apply the new theory and practice and change practice substantively

Systemic Change through…

People
- Dispositions
- Awareness
- Competencies
- Motivations

Policies
- Organization
- District
- School
- Classroom

Practices
- Curricular Material
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Klingler et al. (2005)

Mapping Your Efforts

Where have you focused your efforts?

What gaps do you see?

How can you expand your scope?

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Collaborative inquiry provides a shared context for the process on on-going dialogue, identifying issues related to equity, proposing and testing solution, and (de)constructing individual and collective knowledge.

Rogoff, B. (2003)

Critical Collaborative Inquiry

Collaborative Critical Inquiry Requires Bringing in Stakeholders

A learning community that's engaged in transformative change toward equity should include representatives from multiple stakeholder groups.

Stakeholders should include historically underrepresented groups.

As we learn collaboratively, we should seek the diverse perspectives of the community in which our institutions are situated.

Critical

We operate in systems where taken-for-granted assumptions are rife with issues of **privilege and power**; such issues must be surfaced in order to disrupt systems towards advancing equitable practices.

Freire, 1970

What we talk about | How we talk about it

Critical Discourse

Examines the relationship between discourse practices and wider social practices.

Recognizes how social power and dominance in discourse contribute to the reproduction of inequities.

Focuses on the discourse strategies that control, or otherwise normalize the social order in order to maintain inequality (Fairclough,1985).

Measures dominance of groups by their control over discourse as a way to manage social representations.

Sees access to discourse including active access to communicative events and control over the occasion, time, place, setting and the presence or absence of participants in such events as a crucial power resource

Dijk (1993)

Its about asking better questions

Questions should …

- Be relevant to the real life and real work

- Be genuine

- Invite fresh thinking/feeling?

- Generate hope, imagination, engagement, creative action, and new possibilities, rather than increase a focus on past problems and obstacles

- Surface whose interests are being served well and whose are not by the way things are

- Examine what can be done differently to better serve all people within the system

- Leave room for new and different questions to be raised as the initial question is explored

You should always ask yourself - What assumptions or beliefs are embedded in the way this question is constructed?

Brown, Isaacs, Vogt, and Margulies, 2002   Copyright 2014 by the Great Lakes Equity Center

Its about being a better listener by ...

| Separating the person from the problem | Focusing on the interest rather than the position | Attending to what is not being said, as well as what is being said | Seeking first to understand |

Scenario Activity

Questions for Discussion

? What relationship do you see between the discourse practices and wider social practices?

? How has social power and dominance in discourse contributed to the reproduction of inequities?

? What were some of the strategies used to legitimate control, or otherwise normalize the social order, thus maintaining inequality (Fairclough,1985).

? Who seems to have control over (access to) discourse as a form of social action control, and the management of social representations?

? Who has active access to communicative events and control over the occasion, time, place, setting and the presence or absence of participants in such events?

Reflect on your own setting

? What relationship do you see between the discourse practices in your organization and wider social practices?

? In what ways have the social power and dominance in discourse in your organization contributed to the reproduction of inequities?

? What are some of the strategies used to legitimate control, or normalize the social order, thereby maintaining inequality (Fairclough,1985).

? Who seems to have control over (access to) discourse as a form of social action control, and the management of social representations in your learning community?

? Who has active access to communicative events and control over the occasion, time, place, setting and the presence or absence of participants in such events in your learning community?

Advancing Equity Through Critical Collaborative Inquiry:

For your scenario, brainstorm questions that:

- Surface whose interests are being served well and whose are not by the way things are
- Invite fresh thinking/feeling
- Generate hope, imagination, engagement, creative action, and new possibilities
- Leave room for new and different questions to be raised as the initial question is explored
- Examine what can be done differently to better serve all people within the system
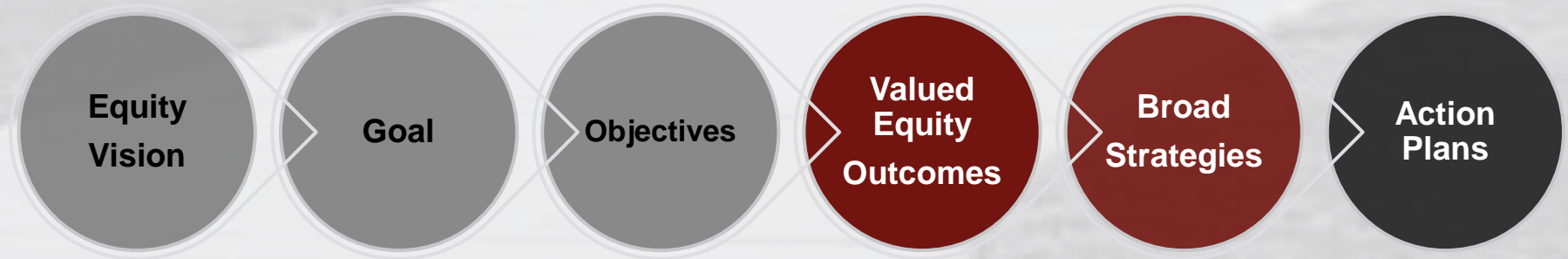
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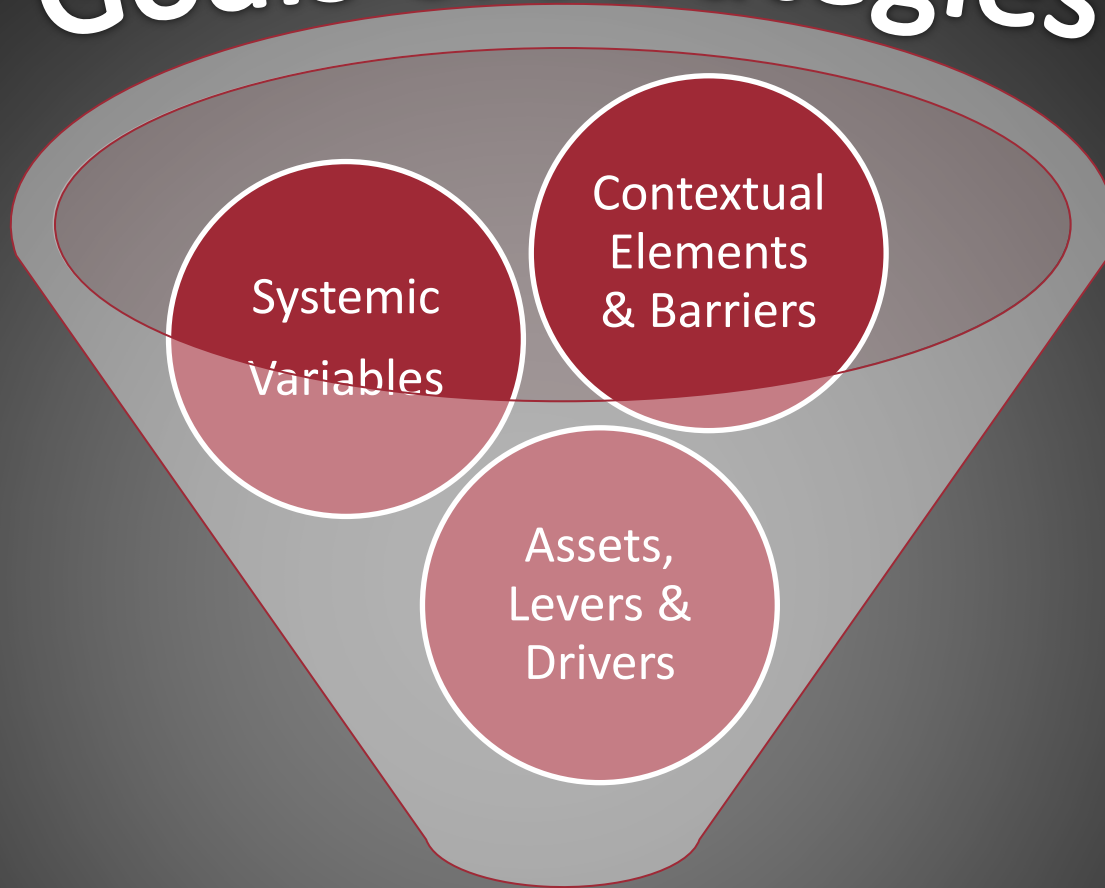
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Pathway to a strategic plan

CONTEXT ANALYSIS:
Critical, Technical &
Contextual

Equity Vision → **Goal** → **Objectives** → **Valued Equity Outcomes** → **Broad Strategies** → **Action Plans**

Great Lakes Equity Center (2013)

Goals & Strategies

Systemic Variables

Contextual Elements & Barriers

Assets, Levers & Drivers

Effective and Efficient Implementation

Strategic Plan Equity Quick Check: Ensuring Equal Opportunity

Will our specific actions move students closer towards educational opportunity?

Do we talk precisely about the causes of racial disparities?

Do we talk in detail about which students need which opportunities?

Pollock, 2008

Strategic Plan Equity Quick Check: Activity

Review your district's, school's or organization's strategic or improvement plan

Using the Strategic Planning Quick Check form in your packet assess your plan in terms of the listed outcome domains

OPEN SPACES
CROSS-AGENCY CONVERSATIONS

Day One: Planning & Preparation
- Identify important topics
- Identify conveners
- Develop schedule

Day Two: Convening
- Overview Schedule
- Assign locations
- Review Ground Rules
- Conduct debriefing

OPEN SPACES
TOPICAL CONVERSATIONS

GROUND RULES

- Whoever comes are the right people

- Whatever happens is the only thing that could have happened

- Whenever it starts is the right time

- When it's over, it's over

- If you find yourself in a situation where you are neither learning nor contributing, use your two feet and go to some place more productive.

What worked for you?

- Where did you focus?
- One take-away

What didn't?

- Where did you struggle?
- What questions do you have?

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" Education is a human right with immense power to transform.

On its foundation rest the cornerstones of freedom, democracy and sustainable human development.

- Kofi Annan