STUDENTS TAKING CHARGE

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE FOR LEADERS

Inside the Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classroom

NANCY SULLA | TANYA BOSCO | JULIE MARKS

An **Eye On Education** Book

ROUTLEDGE

Students Taking Charge Implementation Guide for Leaders

Lead your organization to implement innovative learning environments in which students take ownership so they can achieve at high levels and meet rigorous standards. *Students Taking Charge Implementation Guide for Leaders* shows you how to inspire, coach, and support teachers to create student-driven classrooms that empower learners through problem-based learning and differentiation, where students pose questions and actively seek answers. Technology is then used seamlessly throughout the day for information, communication, collaboration, and product generation.

You'll find out how to:

- Inspire the adaptive change at the core of the *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classroom*, aimed at engaging students;
- Understand the structures needed to support its implementation and empower teachers and students;
- Employ leadership strategies that will move teachers and students from engagement to empowerment to efficacy.

This new implementation guide for school leaders offers a more detailed look into the key mindset shifts that are critical for leaders of a *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused School*. With the book's practical examples and step-by-step guidelines, you'll be able to help your teachers implement innovative classrooms immediately.

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Inside the Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classroom

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We dedicate this book to the many school and district leaders with whom we've had the pleasure of working alongside, who always opt to do what is best for learners, and to the Chester W. Taylor Elementary School teachers and community that have so fully and passionately embraced the *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classroom*.

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Meet the Authors

Nancy Sulla is an author, national speaker, and thought leader in transforming learning environments to build student engagement, empowerment, and efficacy. As the creator of the *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classroom*™ and founder of IDE Corp. (Innovative Designs for Education) and EdQuiddity Inc, Dr. Sulla leads her educational consulting firms in the pursuit of equity-focused instructional design, positioning students to change the world. She holds a B.A. in education, an M.A. in computer science, and an Ed.D. in educational administration. Her diverse background includes teaching at the elementary, middle school, high school, and college levels; working as a computer programmer and systems analyst; and leading teachers as a district administrator prior to launching IDE Corp. Learn more at nancysulla.com.

Tanya Bosco is passionate about changing students' lives through meaningful learning and empowering educators with the ability to create classrooms that do that. As the Executive Vice President of IDE Corp., a professional development provider, Tanya facilitates transformational professional development for schools and school leaders. She is a former high school and middle school English and public speaking teacher, and holds both an MAT and an MBA. Tanya's most important roles are that of mom, wife, and daughter.

Julie Marks is the principal of Chester W. Taylor Elementary School in Pasco County and led the school to be the first fully LATIC school in the state of Florida. She began her career as a teacher at both the elementary and middle school levels before moving into the role of school leadership. Julie earned a Master's in Educational Leadership at the University of South Florida. While at Chester Taylor, she has been recognized as Elementary Principal of the Year and District Administrator of the Year finalist in 2016 and 2018.

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Acknowledgments

Nancy—I would like to acknowledge the many school and district leaders with whom I've had the pleasure to work who lead their teachers fearlessly and unwaveringly to design *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classrooms* that change the lives of their students. I would like to thank the members of Team IDE and EdQuiddity who inspire me daily to keep innovating and changing the world with them. A special thanks to Tanya and Julie for co-authoring this book, inspiring me, challenging me, and being collaborative thought partners.

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Introduction

How to Use This Book

This book is intended to be the leadership companion to *Students Taking Charge* (Sulla, 2019a, 2019b): the K–5 version or the 6–12 version. We recommend having either or both books available as you read this, so that you can reference them as you read about leading teachers to design student-centered and student-driven classrooms through the *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classroom* (LATIC) framework. Throughout the book, we offer you online resources to complement your reading.

IDE Corp.'s YouTube channel may be found at: www.youtube.com/user/LATIClassroom. You'll find many videos on the *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classroom* and links to Chester W. Taylor School's journey to becoming the first fully LATIC school in Florida.

MyQPortal (www.MyQPortal.com) (formerly the IDEportal) is an online resource offered by IDE Corp.'s sister company, EdQuiddity Inc. (www.edquiddity.com). It offers you many free resources for the classroom (you do not need to be a full subscriber to access the resources mentioned in this book).

Paradigm Shifts

The *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classroom* focuses on putting students in charge of their own learning through a complex interweaving of structures and strategies based on key paradigm shifts:

- **Teaching From a Felt Need—**People learn best when information makes sense and has meaning (Sousa, 2017). Teachers should launch all units of study with authentic, real-world, compelling, open-ended problems for students to solve that create a "felt need" on the part of the students to learn content, and thus, pursue learning. If students are intrigued by the possibility

of life on Mars and designing a self-sustaining biodome, they'll need to understand photosynthesis. They'll learn it, not because it's Tuesday, but because it will help them reduce the amount of carbon dioxide in the air. As you lead, ask students what they are doing and why. Students should be able to link all of their activities to some greater purpose that compels them. Think about how you craft interactions with your faculty to ensure that they, too, are learning professionally based on a compelling why.

- **From Teacher as Ferry to Teacher as Bridge Builder—**Most classrooms, no matter how active and interesting, have the teacher overtly controlling activity in the classroom. The teacher tells students when to clear their desks, get into groups, take out certain materials, etc. During conversations, the teacher calls on students, often based on a raised hand. This is similar to the experience of taking a ferry across water; someone else controls the journey. The *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classroom* is a powerful framework constructed by the master bridge builder—the teacher. Just as in the case of the bridge, there are structures in place to guide students and ensure success; they can't do just anything, but they have considerable voice and choice in the classroom.
- **Don't Grade the Learning Process—**In conventional settings, the teacher presents information or skills; students then practice with guidance; then they practice independently; and finally, they take a test or hand in work that's graded. Sometimes that work is a larger-scale project. In the *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classroom*, over a period of three to five weeks, students engage in solving a problem and designing a solution as a way of driving their learning. The role of the teacher throughout the learning process is to facilitate learning: provide feedback, ask probing questions, offer instruction, partner with the student to assess progress and set next goals, and, essentially, ensure that the student achieves at the Practitioner column of the *analytic rubric*. Given that level of involvement, to grade the final solution would be to grade the teacher; if the teacher succeeds, the students will be in the Practitioner and Expert columns. Instead of grading what would be the learning process, teachers should provide a performance-based transfer task or unit test to see if students can transfer the learning to a new situation.
- **Trigger Awareness—**Caleb Gattegno was an educational scientist who offered many insights to the educational world, including the

challenge of the subordination of teaching to learning and the idea that only awareness is educable (Educational Solutions Worldwide Inc., 2011). He believed that you could not truly teach another person; you could only make them aware of what they don't know so that they could then pursue learning. In the *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classroom*, one of the venues for triggering awareness is through the *benchmark lesson*. Unlike a teacher in a conventional setting, a LATIC teacher does not present skill instruction to the whole class at the same time. The *benchmark lesson* is used to introduce a concept and intended to have students walk away excited about a new skill or content they can pursue that will help them in ultimately devising a solution to the *problem-based task*. Students then pursue content mastery through *learning activities*, including optionally attending a *small-group mini-lesson*.

These paradigm shifts cannot be taught; they must be internalized over a period of time through experience and "aha" moments. They represent a transformation in thinking. How well-transformed is your own set of beliefs for these paradigms? How well do you recognize these paradigm shifts in action in schools and classrooms? Continually ask yourself these questions, as the transformation of your organization begins with the transformation of your beliefs and actions. Then, you must set up the conditions under which teachers will shift their paradigms.

Mindsets

The chapters of this book are structured by a set of ten mindset shifts that are critical to the leader of a *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused School*:

- Mindset 1: From Transactional to Transformational
- Mindset 2: From Engagement to Empowerment to Efficacy
- Mindset 3: From Ferry to Bridge
- Mindset 4: From Mandating Change to Inspiring Change
- Mindset 5: From Nodes to Lines: Systems Thinking in Action
- Mindset 6: From Surface Innovation to Deep Innovation
- Mindset 7: From Office-Based to Classroom-Based
- Mindset 8: From Dissemination to Conversations
- Mindset 9: From Silos to Teams
- Mindset 10: From Dutiful Administrator to Warrior and Advocate

Our Stories

Nancy's Story

I first designed the *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classroom* (though it was prior to technology in schools) as a teacher in the seventies. At first, it was to break the mold of students sitting all day, listening to teachers, taking notes, and completing worksheets. When computers and the Internet came along, they opened up the doors to expand our problems to real-world situations, as the real-time data was now available. Before you know it, I was helping my own district and others embrace this new framework for designing student-centered and, ultimately, student-drive classrooms. I started consulting part-time in 1987, left my job as a district administrator in 1994, and started hiring consultants to work alongside me and position students to change the world!

In the early days of LATIC, I was fortunate enough to work with a small number of innovative leaders who saw through to the future with me. We encountered many obstacles along the way with people feeling that students couldn't or shouldn't take charge of their own learning. Over the years, however, problem-based learning became more widely accepted, the concept of student voice and choice was introduced, and the educational world embraced teacher evaluation rubrics and standards that practically demand that you put students in charge of their own learning. Growth mindset, global citizenship, blended learning, multi-tiered system of supports, social-emotional learning, and most of the current educational conversation topics are all inherent in LATIC and have fueled the acceptance of this framework.

For me, though, the quest is less about being accepted, and more about changing the world for the better. I've watched students become adults; I've encountered adults from all walks of life, and what strikes me always is that there are some people to whom life happens and some who make life happen. People to whom life happens spend their lives pointing to others who may have thwarted them or not given them help; people who make life happen push aside all excuses and achieve their goals. What a wonderful world it would be if we could all be make-life-happen people. LATIC is about engaging and empowering students in a learning environment whose ultimate goal is efficacy—the ability solve problems and achieve goals.

While it is exciting and rewarding to work with teachers who want to design *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classrooms*, their grassroots efforts to change students' lives are best supported by savvy leaders who are in the position to bring about even greater change than in one classroom. But for those who lead, understanding LATIC is necessary, but not enough. We always recommend that school and district leaders attend all of the training that we offer teachers; but they need more. They need strategies and structures for moving people forward in embracing LATIC. And while

we at IDE Corp. offer leadership training and coaching, it was time to write the book! I hope this book offers you ideas, resources, insights, and inspiration as you lead teachers to design *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classrooms*.

I hope you'll continue to join me on my journey through my books, Twitter (@nsulla), my blog (www.idecorp.com/dr-nancy-sulla-blog), and my website (www.nancysulla.com). You can find out more about this work through my companies, IDE Corp. (www.idecorp.com)—an educational consulting firm—and EdQuiddity Inc. (www.edquiddity.com)—the place for online professional development and instructional resources.

Julie's Story

Prior to beginning our school-wide journey of implementing *Learner-Active Technology-Infused Classrooms* across our school campus, our school was in a place where the leadership team and teachers both wondered what it was that we were still missing that was not taking us to the next level of achievement. We had spent three years building a collaborative culture and unpacking standards, developing lessons that we thought were engaging, yet our state test scores were still resulting in us being a D school according to the state of Florida's Accountability System at that time. An inspirational leader, Kara Smucker, and I reflected on what we had been doing as a school and talked more deeply about student engagement. We had both been reading Dr. Sulla's book *Students Taking Charge* and felt this could be the next step for our school in developing purposeful engagement aligned to standards-based instruction.

Over the course of the last five years of implementing *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classrooms* in our school, state tests have changed, our district shifted its three priorities, our teacher evaluation system was revised; we had new district curriculum maps, adopted new math and science resources, and had quarterly tests implemented. During this time of change, one can easily get anxious and move away from what they are doing to support the changes listed above. When you have changes like this, it becomes the responsibility of the leader to make connections back to the current work, in this case, *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classrooms*. It was important that teachers understood we were still using state standards and meeting all the above expectations, but the delivery of instruction looked different. Every effort was made to show alignment to our teachers. I did not want mandates and expectations from outside the school to prevent them from doing this great work. As a result, every opportunity I had to demonstrate alignment, I did. We were able to align the district's three priorities with our school's three priorities, and *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classrooms* were a part of each action step.

It has been a rewarding journey and, I'm sure, will continue to be as we move forward. I hope some of my experiences will resonate with you and offer you the support you need as you make your similar journey to design *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Schools*.

Tanya's Story

When I first heard of the *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classroom* I was a teacher leader, finishing my first master's degree through a video-based, distance learning program (before virtual learning existed!), and Dr. Nancy Sulla was one of my video professors. In the years that followed, my passion for professional development grew, and I began to seek out opportunities to feed that passion. It was then that I came upon Dr. Nancy Sulla again and her work in designing *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classrooms*. I took it as a sign and pursued an open consulting position in her company.

More than fifteen years later, I've had the pleasure of working with countless teachers in the pursuit of redesigning learning environments to engage and empower learners, building efficacy in teachers and students alike. Further, I have had the opportunity to partner with school leaders as we design *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classrooms* and schools. I love working with teachers on this journey, and I love working with their leaders. It's the teachers who empower their students and the leaders who empower their teachers, clearing the way for innovation. That's what has been most fun about writing this book; thinking back upon the hundreds of leaders with whom I've had the pleasure of consulting, partnering with them to enact powerful decisions and learning designs, and to develop their strategy for bringing *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classrooms* to life in their schools. I appreciate all of their stories, questions, and insights over the years.

When I think of those leaders, a favorite quote comes to mind:

> "Never believe that a few caring people can't change the world. For, indeed, that's all who ever have."
>
> –Margaret Mead

As you read this book, you, too, are a part of that group of caring people on the relentless pursuit to change the world by thinking differently about what learning can look like and working tirelessly to lead and support teachers and students to make it happen. I know you, too, will enjoy this journey and share your experiences on the path to transformational learning in your schools. Share with me via Twitter @Tanya_IDE with #LATIC, join us in #LATICchat, or contact me through our site, www.idecorp.com.

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Mindset 1

From Transactional to Transformational

Scenario: Your teachers are in their second year of designing Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classrooms (LATIC). This year, you've also brought in professional development on Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) and you expected your teachers would see how LATIC is a natural SEL environment. You sit in on a team meeting and hear teachers talking about how hard it is to implement the SEL strategies when their students are engaged in LATIC all the time. You realize they are seeing LATIC as one strategy among many as opposed to a philosophy and framework under which everything else fits, and that SEL strategies woven into their LATIC learning environments would further enhance their implementation of LATIC. You want to figure out how to transform their belief systems.

Technical change involves learning a new skill or strategy; adaptive change requires a shift in beliefs and thinking (Heifetz & Linsky, 2002). Learning merely the structures and strategies of the *Learner-Active Technology-Infused Classroom* is a series of transactions that fall under technical changes; transforming one's belief system to think differently about the classroom environment requires adaptive change.

Historically, in schools, learning has been viewed as transactional: the passing of information from one to another, with a goal of technical change. The learners take and apply what they want into their current way of thinking. Think of a time when learning something caused you to change your belief system and, perhaps, your life. Learning, whether for students in classrooms or for educators through professional development, is most powerful when it transforms one's thinking and, thus, abilities, bringing about adaptive change.

You cannot mandate a transformation! A savvy leader acts in ways that transform the thinking of the educational community and produce learning environments that transform students. The *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused*

Classroom is a transformation: it requires thinking differently about learning, classrooms, schools, and education. It is a framework for putting students in charge of their own learning. It is the embodiment of a set of paradigms, or belief shifts. Leading teachers to implement LATIC with fidelity involves helping them embrace new paradigm shifts through your actions, words, and decisions.

As you read this chapter, consider the opening scenario and identify actions you could take as a leader to address it. What actions could you take in group meetings? What actions could you take individually with teachers? What procedures might you introduce or change? What words should others be hearing you say?

Ground Your Actions in the "Why"

In explaining her experiences as a learner in a *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classroom*, a student stated, "since we've been doing so many real-world problems, I feel like even though I'm in fourth grade, I can change the world!" That succinctly sums up the "why" of the *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classroom*.

We live in an increasingly complex world, with the need to address issues of global economics, a shared environment, peaceful coexistence, hunger, clean water, governance, and more. Today's world requires citizens who are problem-finders, innovators, and entrepreneurs (Sulla, 2015): those who, at minimum, can observe, analyze, empathize, envision, create, communicate, collaborate, appreciate, and reflect; those who are efficacious.

The goal of all schooling should be to build student efficacy so that students lead happy and productive lives. Efficacy, in its simplest form, is the ability to set a goal and achieve it (Bandura, 1997). Beyond efficacy, leadership is the ability to inspire and influence others. Whether you're looking to help a family member or colleague, lead an organization or following, or serve as a world leader, the ability to inspire and influence is key. Efficacious school leaders illuminate a path and provide the why for every word and action taken by teachers and administrators in designing *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused* learning environments. In the *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classroom*, the why is to position students to be efficacious leaders who change the world for the better. As a leader of LATIC, your why is to position *teachers* to be efficacious leaders who change education for the better.

Simon Sinek (2009) introduced the idea of the "Golden Circle" in his book *Start With The Why* (p. 41). He proposes that the most successful organizations start with the "why" and keep that at the center of all actions. Following the "why" is the "how" and the "what." For example, you might say that you want (your why) to ensure that all students have the academic

and attitudinal skills to achieve their goals; doing that requires (how?) providing students with personalized opportunities to learn that fit their needs; this can be accomplished through (what?) differentiated instruction. Sometimes, however, following this line of thinking internally, school leaders purchase books, for example, on differentiation and provide teachers with resources and professional development on differentiation. School leaders do not always make their "why" transparent to the educational community. As Sinek (2009) points out, far too many organizations jump directly to the "what" and maybe the "how" rather than inspiring those inside and outside of the organization to act from the "why."

Whether teachers only read the book, *Students Taking Charge: Inside the Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classroom* (Sulla, 2019a, 2019b), or participate in more comprehensive professional development on the topic, they will most likely find the structures of the classroom the easiest component to embrace. For example, they will set up a *resource area*, create *activity lists*, post a *help board* and *peer expert board*, and so forth. In doing so, they are focusing on part of the "what." Oftentimes, when they experience success in using a structure, they focus heavily on that structure, share it with others, and create a buzz around that structure. When they experience a moment where some aspect of the *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classroom* is not working for them or their students, they eliminate or modify the structure to fit their existing beliefs about teaching and learning, which can lead to undesirable results. Without first being grounded in the why of the structure, it is easy to unwittingly move away from the LATIC framework and lose the potential results it could produce for students. An important characteristic, then, of any leader in this transformational journey is to remain grounded in the why, and to be able to illuminate that for teachers, administrators, students, and parents.

For example, suppose you want teachers and parents to believe and act in ways that reflect the belief that students can and should take considerable responsibility for their own learning. Why? Your "why" might be that taking responsibility is an important life skill for achieving happiness and success. Share stories, images, videos of those who took responsibility for their goals and actions; ask teachers to reflect on the power of taking responsibility for one's self. Share your belief that during your students' time in school, they should build the skill of taking responsibility. Then, as you implement procedures or strategies to build student responsibility for learning, continually point back to why (preparing students for happiness and success in life) in your explanations.

As another example; if you decide to implement an open-seating lunch arrangement where students may sit with whomever and wherever they want during lunch, be sure to explain your "why," which might be to reflect the student responsibility teachers are working to build in their

Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classrooms by increasing student voice and choice ("how") throughout the school.

Table 1.1 offers a sample set of why statements that play out every day in a *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classroom*.

Table 1.1 Sample Why Statements of LATIC

Why?	How?	What?
Because we believe that learning is the result of constructing knowledge, which is best accomplished through active engagement, that is, learning by doing rather than learning by hearing . . .	. . . teachers, rather than merely presenting content lessons, create the conditions under which students learn, which means . . .	. . . teachers design *learning activities* that lead to content mastery; students tackle real-world problems that lead them to use those *learning activities* in order to solve the problems.
Because we believe that information enters long-term memory when it makes sense and has meaning (Sousa, 2017) . . .	. . . teachers introduce content through context, which means . . .	. . . teachers and students identify real-world problems to solve that provide context and rely on mastery of curricular content.
Because we believe people are driven by autonomy (Pink, 2011) . . .	. . . teachers become "bridge builders" that create structures to allow students to take charge of their own learning while positioning them for success, which means . . .	. . . students schedule how they will use their time, including how, when, and with whom they will learn, based on a robust *activity list* designed by the teacher.
Because we believe learning requires grappling with content (Sulla, 2015) . . .	. . . the role of the teacher is to create situations in which students will be grappling with content, which means . . .	. . . teachers design *benchmark lessons* that trigger awareness of important content to be mastered, *learning activities* that drive students to engage with content, and *facilitation questions* to probe thinking and promote further grappling.

Continued

Table 1.1 Continued

Why?	How?	What?
Because we believe learning is easiest when students are "in flow" with challenges being slightly above their ability level (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) . . .	. . . teachers provide for differentiation, allowing students to build success upon success, which means . . .	. . . teachers create a myriad of *learning activities*, offer *small-group mini-lessons*, and facilitate to ensure each student meets with success and is prompted to achieve at the next level.
Because we believe learning is social (Bandura, 1977) . . .	. . . teachers create a learning environment where students have opportunities to be social and collaborate in their pursuit of academic achievement, which means . . .	. . . students belong to a *home group* that collaboratively designs a solution to a real-world problem; they schedule how they will use their time in communication with their peers; they use *peer experts* to offer and solicit help; they engage in formal discussions and informal interactions with others through the day.

In the *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classroom*, every action on the part of the teacher should emanate from the set of beliefs outlined in Table 1.1.

Think Beyond Transactions to Transformation

If you have a skill or concept that can be passed on to another through a conversation or professional development session, it's a transaction. For teachers looking to run *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classrooms*, learning to develop a *problem-based task* statement, write an *analytic rubric*, design an *activity list*, create a *help board*, and so forth are all part of transactional learning. While that is an important part of the learning process, the key to this classroom model is transforming thinking about the roles and actions of teachers and students. When teachers and students *do* what they are taught, they're complying, behaving in transactional ways; when they *think*

differently to automatically take different actions, based on new beliefs, they're engaging, behaving transformationally. When you are in a *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classroom* run with fidelity, you feel an energy in the room, a productive intensity as students are taking deliberate and purposeful actions toward a bigger goal. Start watching students and teachers to determine if they are simply enacting what they've been taught or if their actions are emanating from a transformed belief system.

A group of teachers had been running *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classrooms* for several years. The district introduced a new reading program that was designed to have teachers present a lesson and have students engage in practice, all during a specific time of the day. These teachers worked through the new program materials to pull out which of those lessons would become *benchmark lessons*, which would become *small-group mini-lessons*, and which would become *learning activities*. They developed *how-to sheets* and *how-to videos* as *learning activities* and created *direction sheets* to accompany the *practice activities*. They looked to see how the skills being presented could fit into their *Authentic Learning Units* (ALU) and, where necessary, adjusted or redesigned the units. They did not follow the plan to impose a time for when reading instruction would occur. They felt the reasoning behind that did not outweigh their commitment to valuing and respecting student choice and voice with regards to when students engage in reading. In a *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classroom*, reading occurs all day and not just in a teacher-specified time frame. Juxtapose this with another group of teachers in the school who, as a result of the new programs, established a reading time and had students engage in the *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classroom* during the rest of the day. The latter group of teachers were enacting a transactional approach to the components of the *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classroom*; the former group had transformed their beliefs to embrace the importance of student choice and voice and reworked the program to fit their belief system.

A secondary school leadership team decided to change the bell schedule from a forty-minute block to an eighty-minute block. They presented this to the teachers and parents, provided some professional development to the teachers, and implemented a two-week pilot. Some teachers, attempting to utilize the eighty-minute block, ended up teaching for half of the period and allowing students to engage in homework or watch a video for the remaining time. Other teachers simply taught two topics in an extended lecture. They were using their existing belief system of class periods and instruction and simply lengthened everything to eighty minutes. Students stormed the next board meeting to protest the move to eighty-minute blocks. The problem was that the leadership team in this school viewed block scheduling as a transaction and started with the "what."

In another district, a leadership team wanted to make the same bell schedule shift because they wanted to increase student engagement in content. Instead of starting with the time structure, they offered their teachers professional development in rethinking their practice around increasing student engagement toward higher levels of achievement (the "why"). Teachers designed *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classrooms*. Two years into the initiative, teachers started voicing that if only they had longer blocks of time in the day, they might be able to engage students even more meaningfully in content. The leadership team then agreed to make the shift to eighty-minute blocks. Teachers felt empowered and embraced the new schedule; no additional professional development was needed; no pilot was needed; no convincing was needed. The leadership team in this school viewed block scheduling as a transformation and started with the "why."

At the Chester W. Taylor Elementary School, the art, music, and physical education departments all became involved in the ALUs within each grade level, demonstrating a transformational shift from classroom-oriented LATIC thinking to school-oriented LATIC thinking. Third grade students involved the media center and created a book tasting to decide on the historian they were going to research; they then worked with the art teacher to create a bobblehead of the historian they were studying. The first-grade team involved the physical education department, art department, and fourth-grade team in creating a mini golf course to be used during recess. Now, as teachers plan each ALU, they think about how to involve the special area teachers to see each ALU come alive and to make connections across the school community.

While it's important to engage in transactional learning, the key to LATIC leadership is inspiring and supporting others to transform their thinking. A savvy leader understands the importance of questioning, modeling, and inspiring others to make their way to transformational learning.

Use Metaphors

Schools often embrace many initiatives at the same time, such as: a new textbook, differentiation, technology infusion, social and emotional learning, growth mindset, and so forth. Teachers often report feeling overwhelmed by the many initiatives. Consider the metaphor an administrator shared with Nancy years ago of how a classroom is like an ice-cream sundae. If you eat a scoop of ice cream, then some hot fudge, then a banana, and then some whipped cream, it's nowhere near as satisfying as if you eat a spoonful of ice cream mixed with hot fudge, a piece of banana, and some whipped cream. The flavor is in the synergy of the components melding together. The beauty of a classroom is in melding all of the initiatives together into one, powerful experience. One school introduced LATIC to its teachers and

hosted an ice-cream sundae party to drive home that metaphor. Metaphors are powerful for transforming thinking. (More on metaphors in Chapter 4.)

Honor the Process

Developing a successful *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classroom* for any teacher, whether new to teaching or a twenty-year veteran, can be difficult. School leaders need to be aware of the struggles that teachers will encounter and commit to taking whatever actions are necessary to support teachers early and often. The transformational process of designing a *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classroom* requires teachers to shift their mindsets regarding teaching and learning. What does this look like?

Teachers in their first year of professional development in designing *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classrooms* tend to compliantly follow the book *Students Taking Charge* (Sulla, 2019a, 2019b) to assemble the various components of the classroom, specifically: a problem-based *Authentic Learning Unit*, structures to build student responsibility, and teacher facilitation strategies. This is transactional learning. As they experience these components in action, they begin making connections, reflecting, and rethinking their use of the various structures and strategies. During the implementation, and, if available, coaching process, they begin to transform their thinking about teaching and learning.

Nancy's Story:

I visited a kindergarten teacher's classroom in her first year of implementation and saw all the LATIC components in place. Students were working on ALUs and planning the order in which they would complete tasks on the *activity lists*. Students were busily working all around the room. I asked her how it was going. She reported all great outcomes; I followed with, "So it works for your students." She confirmed "Yes, well, except for him." She pointed to a boy sitting cross-legged on the floor, headphones on, engrossed in a video. I asked, "why is it not working for him?" She pointed out that it was ELA time but he was working on math. I looked at this student who was so totally engaged and said, "Maybe it's not ELA time for him; I think it's math time for him." Light bulb! Teachers are so conditioned to separate learning into content blocks, and, at the elementary level, many schools mandate specific times for learning specific subjects, that it had not occurred to her that it would be okay to allow students to decide when they wanted to tackle different subject-area activities. That evening, she and her colleagues collaborated and redesigned their *activity list* to mix subject-area *learning activities*. Her experience, coupled with the in-the-moment coaching, transformed her thinking. This is why it is so important for school leaders to be in classrooms, to experience all of the moments that could lead to transforming teachers' thinking.

Julie's Story:

I knew our teachers had begun shifting their thinking and embraced the *Learner-Active Technology-Infused Classrooms* when we were at the end of year two of implementation. Teachers in kindergarten, first, fourth, and fifth grades had already been engaged in transformational professional development around designing *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classrooms*. As I walked through the classrooms of the teachers that had not yet been trained, I noticed that they had already begun the shift, at least in their actions. The structures were in place; there were fewer teacher-directed lessons and more small-group lessons taking place; the overall "feel" was different than that of a conventional classroom. Prior to their opportunity to attend the workshops, they were picking their colleagues' brains and visiting their classrooms to get ideas to begin dabbling with what they thought the classroom would be like. Both our second- and third-grade teams, the last to receive formal professional development in LATIC, were able to embrace and create strong *Authentic Learning Units* from the beginning of that training because of the LATIC culture that was building in the school. While there was still a learning curve focused on matching the "why" to the structure, they were able to watch and listen over the two years that their colleagues from the other four grade levels transformed their classrooms.

Three Stages of Transformation

Given that full implementation of the *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classroom* is often the fruits of a shift in beliefs, the transformational journey for teachers takes place over a number of years. A savvy leader will recognize stages of transformation and create the conditions under which teachers can hone their craft. As teachers begin the process of rethinking the structures and strategies of a LATIC learning environment, they first experience a sense of "dynamic disequilibrium." One moment, all seems to be going very well; the change process is exciting, thrilling. The next, it all seems to be falling apart; nothing is working. Human beings are not comfortable with being uncomfortable or not knowing with certainty; so they seek answers. As teachers struggle with early implementation issues, they seek to find the answers to resolving their problems. Given it's early in the process, often, their decisions are not guided by the deep beliefs that will guide them in later years, and the results may be less than desirable. For example, a teacher may design an *activity list* by putting all of the required activities at the top of the page, followed by the choice activities, followed by the optional activities. (See Figures 1.1 and 1.2.) This approach to the *activity list* is teacher-centered, in that it mirrors the teacher's desire to overtly control student actions while attempting to promote independence: if the required activities are first, the teacher can assure they are completed before students exercise more choice in the activities. The *activity*

list, however, should be student-centered, organized by learning goal, so that when a student identifies the need to learn a particular skill or concept, the *activity list* offers a variety of opportunities to learn. (See Figures 1.3 and 1.4.) For each learning goal, the *activity list* would include several choices of different ways to learn the same goals (e.g. *screencast*, *how-to video*, *learning center*, *how-to sheet*, etc.), designated as being *learning activities* or *practice activities*, perhaps one or more required activities, and one or more optional activities as interest-based extensions. Still, for the teacher who is early in the transformational process, the former solution seems to work. Use of the first level of *activity list* is one example of how some teachers navigate through the stage of dynamic disequilibrium: enacting the various LATIC structures, but from their existing set of paradigms of what teaching and learning look like. The savvy leader knows the destination and works to focus teachers on the "why." In this case, for example, the leader might look at a teacher's *problem-based task* and *analytic rubric* and ask the question, "So when students read this in the rubric, and they know they have to learn this skill, where on the *activity list* will they find *learning activities* for that skill?" This could lead to a discussion that would prompt the teacher to rethink the purpose of the *activity list* and move more toward the design of that in Figures 1.3 and 1.4.

Figure 1.1 Teacher-Centered Elementary Activity List

Day Two Activity List			
Required	Read the book, *The Life Cycle of a Butterfly*.		20 min
Required	Watch the video, "The Life Cycle of a Butterfly," once, then again to take notes.	I	20 min
Required	Explore and read the website, www.thebutterflysite.com	I or P	30 min
Required	Complete page 23 in your science workbook	I	10 min
Choose 1 of the 2	Take the online "Butterfly Life Cycle Quiz."	I	5 min
	Play the online game, "Butterfly Life Cycle."	I	10 min
Optional	Find two additional resources on the butterfly life cycle as references. Create a drawing of the butterfly life cycle. Cite your resources on the back of your drawing.	I	30 min
Optional	Play the board game, "Butterfly Life Cycle."	P or G	30 min

Figure 1.2 Teacher-Centered Secondary Activity List

Week One Activity List			
Required	Explore water.usgs.gov to gain an understanding of how hydroelectric power works and takes notes.	P	30 min
Required	Locate, read, and take notes on at least three online sources of information on the environmental impacts of hydroelectric power plants, take notes, and then schedule to meet with your group to discuss your findings.	I	20 min
Required	Complete the hydroelectric power challenge using the Carolina Hydroelectric Power Kit and log your decisions and outcomes. *Sign up for limited resource.*	P or G	50 min
Required	Design and conduct an experiment to demonstrate the conversion of potential to kinetic energy with falling water at various heights.	P	45 min
Choose 2 of the 3	Read the two articles on the Three Gorges Dam of China and take notes using a double-entry journal.	I	40 min
	Read the MoneyBox article on hydroelectric power and global warming and take notes using a double-entry journal.	I	20 min
	Watch the YouTube video, the Mega project of the Niagara hydroelectric power plant and take notes. *May be chosen as homework.*	I	50 min
Optional	Watch the YouTube video, "Energy 101: Hydroelectric Power" and take notes.	I	15 min
Optional	Run the Gold Sim online simulation of the Great Falls Hydropower Plant Project and log events and decisions.	I, P or G	50 min

Given that human beings seek balance and stability, they work to ensure that they employ what they believe are the best implementation practices. As they progress in implementation, they enter the problematic phase of "contrived equilibrium," solidifying these new practices based on their current beliefs about teaching and learning (as they have not yet shifted their beliefs). As an example, teachers who are used to students waiting for them to tell them what to do develop an *activity list* like that in Figure 1.1. Students now compliantly follow the *activity list*, checking off the rows one by one as they move down the list. The teachers are experiencing a level of student independence that is new and refreshing; students like being able to work somewhat independently and have a few choices. The teachers feel a sense of success! In reality, they need to continue shifting their thinking to move students away from compliant list followers to engaged learners making decisions about their own learning. Still, this is one of those small steps toward change! The problem is that the teachers are so excited about

Figure 1.3 Student-Centered Elementary Activity List

Butterfly Life Cycle			
Choose 3 of 5 (LA)	Read the book, *I am a Butterfly*.	I or P	20 min
	Read the book, *The Life Cycle of a Butterfly*.	I or P	10 min
	Watch the video, "The Life Cycle of a Butterfly," once, then again to take notes.	I	20 min
	Explore and read the website, www.thebutterflysite.com.	I	15 min
	Explore the "Butterfly Learning Center."	P	20 min
Choose 1 of 3 (PA)	Play the online game, "Butterfly Life Cycle."	I	10 min
	Take the online "Butterfly Life Cycle Quiz."	I	5 min
	Play the board game, "Butterfly Life Cycle."	P or G	15 min
Required (complete 2 LA and 1 PA)	Find two additional resources on the butterfly life cycle as references. Create a drawing of the butterfly life cycle. Cite your resources on the back of your drawing.	I or P	30 min
Optional	Read the book, *The Life Cycle of Butterflies* for a more in-depth look.	I	20 min
Butterfly Habitats			
	Read the book, *Raising Butterflies to Set Them Free* and write down your ideas for your butterfly garden.	I or P	20 min
Optional	Read the book, *Gardening for Birds, Butterflies, and Bees* to learn about more than just butterflies for your garden.	I or P	20 min
Butterfly Habitat Kit			
Choose 1 of 2 to receive construction permit	Meet as a group to complete the "Butterfly Habitat Construction Permit Application" and have all group members sign it.	G	15 min
	Have all group members individually complete the "I Know My Butterflies" online survey.	I	10 min
Required (must have construction permit)	Unpack your butterfly habitat kit and follow the directions to set it up and start observing your caterpillars	G	20 min

what they are seeing that they share their *activity lists* with colleagues; before you know it, many teachers are using the teacher-centered *activity list*. While "contrived equilibrium" is a natural stage, it can produce less than desirable outcomes for the entire school if the teachers are publicly promoted as

Figure 1.4 Student-Centered Secondary Activity List

Hydroelectric Power: The Basics			
Choose 2 of 3 (LA)	Explore water.usgs.gov to gain an understanding of how hydroelectric power works and take notes.	P	30 min
	Watch the YouTube video "Energy 101: Hydroelectric Power" and take notes.	I	15 min
	Read the article, "Introduction to Hydroelectric power and take notes.	I	20 min
Choose 2 of 4 (LA)	Read the two articles on the Three Gorges Dam of China and take notes using a double-entry journal.	I	40 min
	Read the MoneyBox article on hydroelectric power and global warming and take notes using a double-entry journal.	I	20 min
	Watch the YouTube video, the Mega project of the Niagara hydroelectric power plant and take notes. *May be chosen as homework.*	I	50 min
	Explore the Inhabitat website on a 400 year old abandoned open-pit mine's promise as a hydroelectric power source and take notes using a double-entry journal.	I	20 min
Choose 1 of 3 (PA)	Run the Gold Sim online simulation of the Great Falls Hydropower Plant Project and log events and decisions.	I,, P or G	50 min
	Run the MATLAB online simulation of hydroelectric power and log events and decisions.	I, P or G	50 min
	Complete the hydroelectric power challenge using the Carolina Hydroelectric Power Kit and log your decisions and outcomes. *Sign up for limited resource.*	P or G	50 min
Required (complete 4 LA and 1 PA)	Design and conduct an experiment to demonstrate the conversion of potential to kinetic energy with falling water at various heights.	P	60 min
Optional	Read portions of the book, *Microhydro: Clean Power from Water* to locate additional, relevant information. *May be chosen as homework.*	I	30 - 60 min
Environmental Impacts of Hydroelectric Power Plants			
Required	Locate, read, and take notes on at least three online sources of information on the environmental impacts of hydroelectric power plants, take notes, and then schedule to meet with your group to discuss your findings.	I G	30 min 20 min
Optional	Read portions of the book, *Recovering a Lost River,* by Steven Hawley to learn more about the impact of hydroelectric power on an ecosystem. *May be chosen as homework.*	I	30 - 60 min

being successful, asked to present on the LATIC framework to others, or asked to coach others. The premature decision to place teachers in leadership roles can result in larger groups of teachers implementing the model in less than successful ways. It is important that school and district leaders allow teachers the appropriate time to move through stage two, providing thought-provoking questions, in order for them to arrive at the final stage: reflective practitioner.

Reflective practitioners constantly question practices to push their thinking to new levels, based on the why of LATIC. They ask themselves how this is building student efficacy. While they may be satisfied with their practices and experience strong results, they continue to ask themselves if there may be better ways to create the conditions under which students learn. They actively engage in conversations with peers, not to arrive at answers, but to broaden their perspectives. They create Personal Learning Networks (PLNs) of diverse individuals who will challenge their thinking. They seek out opportunities to continually rethink and discuss their practices. As they embrace the key belief-system changes, they arrive at their decisions based on a depth of understanding that exceeds that of their prior years. Reflective practitioners will, for example, share with you that they developed a new approach to their *activity list* to engage students even more so in taking charge of their own learning, and when you look, you realize how they are moving forward rather than reverting to former methods.

Tanya's Story:

I was working with a group of middle school teachers to design an ALU for upcoming content. A debate began among them about how many activities to put on the *activity list* and how to divide the activities into sections that tied to the progression of content learning. Most of the group was in their third year of the work and had internalized *what* an ALU was, but their conversation and their default reactions showed that they had not yet internalized the importance of leading with the *why*. In the work of considering how they would teach the content, they lost sight of the importance of students knowing why they were learning it. I asked them to imagine the *analytic rubric* as a set of links, with each row linking to a collection of *learning activities* (what they had been discussing) and what impact that would have on learning and students' ability to apply their learning. After a few quiet minutes, one teacher said, "So I think the problem is that we are seeing the *activity list* as things for students to do instead of a variety of opportunities for them to learn." Another said, "We need to change the way we set up our *activity lists*." And with that, these reflective practitioners moved out of contrived equilibrium and set off to redesign their approach to activity lists, with their actions grounded in the why.

Change Takes Time

The move through these three stages seems to span a minimum of four years, even for the best of educators. This is not unlike the craft-honing process of teachers who are new to the profession. The best first-year teachers are much more effective in their sixth year and their tenth year. How fortunate when teachers can learn LATIC when they're new to the profession so they only have to go through a steep learning curve once! The savvy leader will acknowledge and respect the process while providing the support to ensure that each teacher is moving in the right direction for the benefit of the students. A leader should serve as a mirror, gathering observational data and allowing teachers to see themselves through another's eyes. A leader should offer specific, positive feedback to celebrate teachers' successes and pose questions to challenge thinking in a productive way.

When teachers are in the dynamic disequilibrium stage it is important to understand their needs and wants and to support them when they begin doubting themselves. Listen to their concerns and validate their feelings, but stay the course when they start to struggle. Rather than allowing teachers to pull back from innovation, support them in pressing forward. Listen to their needs; one may be as simple as time. Time does not cost money, but may take thinking outside the box and getting creative with your current schedule.

A group of teachers in a high achieving suburban district were in the middle of day two of an eight-day, summer workshop with IDE Corp. consultants, and they were experiencing a level of stress that is not uncommon for day two. They were struggling with designing *problem-based learning units*, as this was new for them. They spoke to the principal about how this wasn't going to work and that students wouldn't be able to learn like this. The principal, and savvy he was, simply said, "You know what? It's only day two. How about we move through all eight days of the workshop and then, after day eight, have a conversation to decide whether or not this will work?" They agreed and, as you can surmise, by day eight they were excited about implementing LATIC in the fall. The principal knew that his teachers had to continue moving through the process, but did not want to ignore or minimize their concerns. Yet, he did not want to derail the workshop by having them complain or opt to quit. By simply moving the question of whether or not this would work to the end of the eight days, the teachers were satisfied and agreed to continue on toward that later discussion. By day eight, the teachers had already begun shifting their belief systems and were excited about what they had designed for their students.

Embrace Student-Driven Learning

It is difficult for anyone to transform their practice by making a shift in mindset; one does not always see what is right in front of them when they are viewing it through the lens of long-held paradigms. For the teaching profession, those paradigms have been cemented through years and years of experience as a student. The age-old approach to teaching has been a more teacher-centered model, a dissemination model: The teacher has content to purvey to students and uses an approach of presenting the information, albeit it broken down into seemingly manageable chunks. (See Figure 1.5.)

Though most teachers today know not to "lecture," they may still be engaging students in group work and hands-on activities that focus more on the teacher presenting content first and then leading practice in groups and hands-on activities in a ferry fashion rather than using bridge-like structures for student learning.

A transformation in thinking would be to engage students in a more student-driven model of learning. With students at the center of the pursuit of learning, they take steps to reach out and utilize teachers, experts, peers, and data banks as resources in their own quest. (See Figure 1.6.)

Ultimately, they decide when, how, where, and with whom they learn. Obviously, with state standards and curriculum guides, schools cannot typically allow students to simply pursue their own interests and problems they find (the "why" and "what" of learning), so the teacher steers them in

Figure 1.5 Teacher-Centered Instructional Model

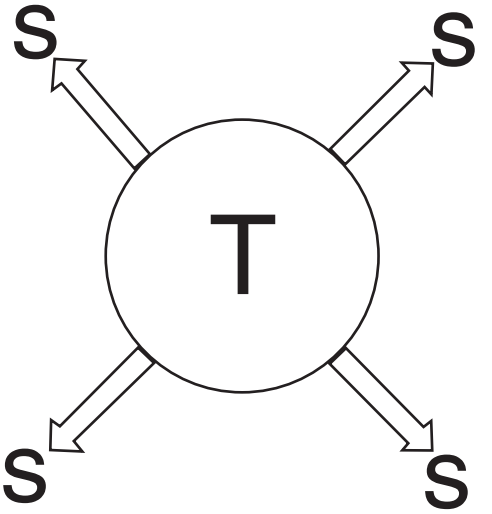
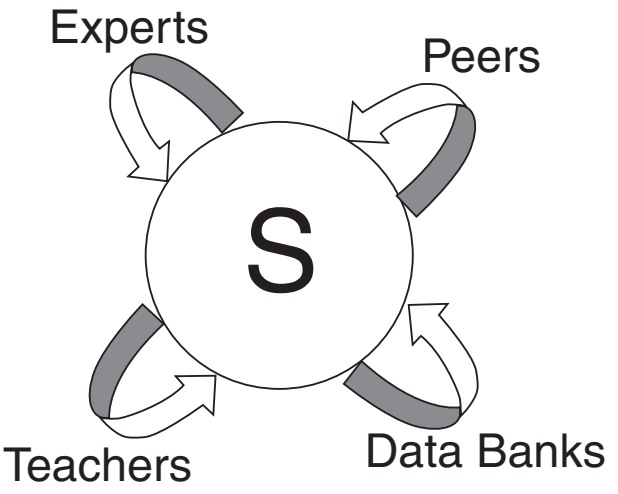


Figure 1.6 Student-Centered Learning Model



the direction of the curriculum by offering compelling, real-world problems that engage students. From there, they take charge of their own learning.

As a leader, it's easy to walk into a classroom and see all of the structures of LATIC in place and conclude that the teacher understands the framework. The real test comes when some new resource or initiative is introduced into the classroom. An obvious example is when an outside expert comes to visit the classroom. It's fine to have an outside expert offer a ten- to fifteen-minute *benchmark lesson* to spark excitement at the launch of a new *Authentic Learning Unit*, However, other than that, an outside expert should be set up as a *limited resource* in the classroom. If the outside expert stands in front of the whole class and speaks for an extended period of time, offering up content, that represents a teacher-centered model. When teachers truly transform their thinking, they set up an *expert corner* and have students sign up to meet with the expert and discuss their progress in solution finding.

Another example is the introduction of a new program, for example, engaging student in pursuing "passion projects." If all other work comes to a halt and it's Passion Project Time, that represents a more teacher-centered model of managing time. If the teacher introduces the idea, creates protocols or direction sheets to follow, and allows students to schedule a certain amount of time each week to work on a passion project, it would seem as if the teacher had transformed thinking in terms of the importance of having students schedule how to use their time in class.

Look at classrooms and the school for evidence of transformed thinking, beyond compliant implementation of any initiative, framework, or program. If the "why" of LATIC is to position students to change the world, they must experience a more student-centered or even student-driven learning environment.

Understand the Fragile Nature of Transactional Thinking

A lot of instruction for students and professional development for teachers focuses on transactions: "I have information or a skill and I'm going to give it to you." Transactional learning is fleeting; it remains until it is distracted by a competing idea. Without a deep understanding of the "why" behind an idea, structure, or strategy, and without a grounded belief system, the learning will be fragile and susceptible to changing with the next idea that comes along. It is why teachers report that students don't know key skills they should have learned last year; though the prior grade-level teachers report that, in fact, they did teach those skills and the students learned them! It is why teachers embark on initiatives and then drop them when the principal or district changes course and establishes new initiatives.

A principal was leading her teachers in the design of *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classrooms* throughout the school. It was after the fourth year of LATIC implementation that the superintendent reconfigured the schools and shifted grade levels among buildings. The new principal of the building where many of the LATIC teachers remained sent out a memo indicating that, "from now on, instruction will take place from the front of the room." Half of the teachers resigned; these were the teachers whose belief systems about teaching and learning were transformed, and the thought of returning to this former way of teaching, once they had experienced the benefits of their transformation, was not an option for them. (Don't worry; they were hired quickly by other districts.) The remaining teachers, for whom the learning was more transactional, started running their classrooms according to the desires of the principal, and gradually moved away from running *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classrooms*.

Model Transformational Practice

As you read through the book and consider the transformational thinking you want your school community to embrace, check yourself to see if you are modeling it. How do you curate faculty or department meetings?

How do you curate community events? What do you write in your emails and memos? What messages are you sending by the way the school looks on the outside? Upon walking in? How are you modeling the beliefs you want the school community to embrace?

One of the first experiences visiting a school is the parking lot. Is your thinking about the use of classroom space mirrored in your parking lot? In the *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classroom*, space and furniture are used functionally. Students do not have their own desks; instead, the room is filled with a variety of furniture to be used based on need. You'll see individual desks, perhaps even study carrels to minimize distractions; collaborative, round tables; conference tables for meetings; lab desks for experiments; couches and other soft seating for group discussions; Adirondack chairs or other fun seating options for independent reading or work; and so forth. Students come into the room and sit based on the activity they planned. Teachers typically dispense with the teacher's desk after a year or two when they realize they rarely sit there and could use the space for more student areas.

Now look at your parking lot. If your parking lot has assigned spaces, or if the principal has a spot, it conflicts with these beliefs. Imagine, instead, a parking lot that has the closest area marked, "I need to park close by today" and the farthest area marked, "I could use the exercise today." Maybe it would have an area close to the entrance marked, "Just stopping in for a little while." Essentially, label your parking lot to reflect the functional use of space rather than ownership! Even your parking lot should mirror your beliefs. If everything you do does not mirror your beliefs, you have to ask yourself if you've truly transformed your thinking. Meanwhile, the principal's spot is like the teacher's desk: do you really need to segment off that space?

Leadership Isn't Always the Person With the Big Title

A Teacher Leader was seeking to empower her colleagues at the school with the experience she herself had in a *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classroom*. Her first tactic was to partner with teachers to design problem-based *Authentic Learning Units*. A few teachers embraced the idea, but many more were not yet convinced. She then set out to design professional development as an ALU, modeling the structures and shifts. Although she was nervous and tentative about her colleagues' reactions, once they were engaged in the learning and immersed in a LATIC environment, they shared with her and the principal that it had been the best professional development they'd attended. From thereon, the principal became a champion of the work, encouraging teachers to participate and removing roadblocks so that all who were interested could get involved.

A belief system shifted for the school leader, who then supported the LATIC framework for her teachers.

Empower Teachers to Start the Transformational Journey

As leaders begin to consider the process of rolling out a fully *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused School*, determining how to begin is critical to making a successful culture shift for the whole faculty. When IDE Corp. provides professional development in LATIC, typically, the transformation begins with a small group of "willing and able" teachers—a single cohort of eight teachers, who may be from various grade levels or departments, or who may be from a full-grade level or department. It is absolutely critical that no matter where the work begins, the teachers who are first to engage truly and deeply want to engage in this work and be the pioneers. Not everyone wants to be a pioneer; no one should be "voluntold!" The attitude of the initial cohort teachers can and will set the tone for the entire faculty. This is where you are planting the seeds of change for the culture of your school.

Some leaders have teachers read the first chapter of *Students Taking Charge* (Sulla, 2019a, 2019b) and then apply to be a part of the first cohort by answering a few reflective questions on their vision for the classroom and their tolerance for the change process. Empower teachers to make the decision to begin shifting their practice.

Even if teachers have read *Students Taking Charge* (Sulla, 2019a, 2019b) during their initial professional development in LATIC, encourage them to read it again, as every time you read the book you gain more insights. Provide time and space for teachers to engage in conversations, collaboratively design instructional materials, and redesign their classrooms. Provide whatever funding you can to allow them to purchase some resources or furniture as they transform their thinking.

Ask Questions

One way to make others' aware of a necessary transformation is to ask questions that will promote deeper thinking. This can be as simple as asking, "why?" when people share what they are doing. Other great questions begin with, "what if?" In *Creative Confidence* (2013), authors Tom Kelley and David Kelley offer a set of questioning techniques from IDEO's *Human-Centered Design Toolkit* that would serve well to reveal student thinking, and thus, teacher transformation, in a *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classroom*:

- Show Me: Ask students to show you the structures with which they interact and have them walk you through a process from their daily life in the classroom. In discussions with teachers about classroom setup or student work, ask them to show you examples or walk you through the process with which they are grappling.
- Draw It: Ask students to visualize their experience in their *Learner-Active, Technology-Infused Classroom* by drawing or diagramming. Ask teachers to draw their optimal classroom setup or new idea.
- Five "Why's": Sakichi Toyoda developed this techniques in the 1930s and revolutionized the Japanese car industry. The intent is to drill down to deeper meaning. With students and teachers, when you ask them a why question, in response to their answer, ask them why that is so, and continue repeatedly to five levels of depth.
- Think Aloud: As students are engaging in a particular task or using a structure, ask them to describe what they are thinking about as they engage. Ask teachers to do the same as you work together to deepen their practice in LATIC implementation.

When visiting classrooms, ask students what they are doing and why. Students can often easily share what they are doing; now listen for the why. See if the students see a real purpose in their work and a link back to the problem they are solving. Questions will cause students to pause and reflect on their work. Having teachers overhear your questions will cause them to pause and reflect on their work. Great transformations have been sparked by questions.

Think Back to the Scenario

Think back to the scenario at the opening of the chapter. How might you as the school leader set a course for transformational change rather than transactional change in that scenario? How would you help teachers view LATIC as a unifying framework and not another, separate teaching strategy?

Now that you're thinking of transformational change as opposed to transactional change, look for opportunities to move beyond transactions in your school to transforming belief systems. Hone your skills daily in the mindset of moving from transactional to transformational actions.

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