RILS 2021: Design Innovation in Educational Assessment Systems

The National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment

September 2021

Welcome to RILS 2021

Purpose of RILS 2021:

Discuss the different aspects of the design innovation process for assessment systems including:

- exploring the process for designing an innovative assessment system,
- providing an overview of current innovations in assessment systems, and
- delving into the attributes necessary for the design of an innovative assessment system.

RILS Sessions

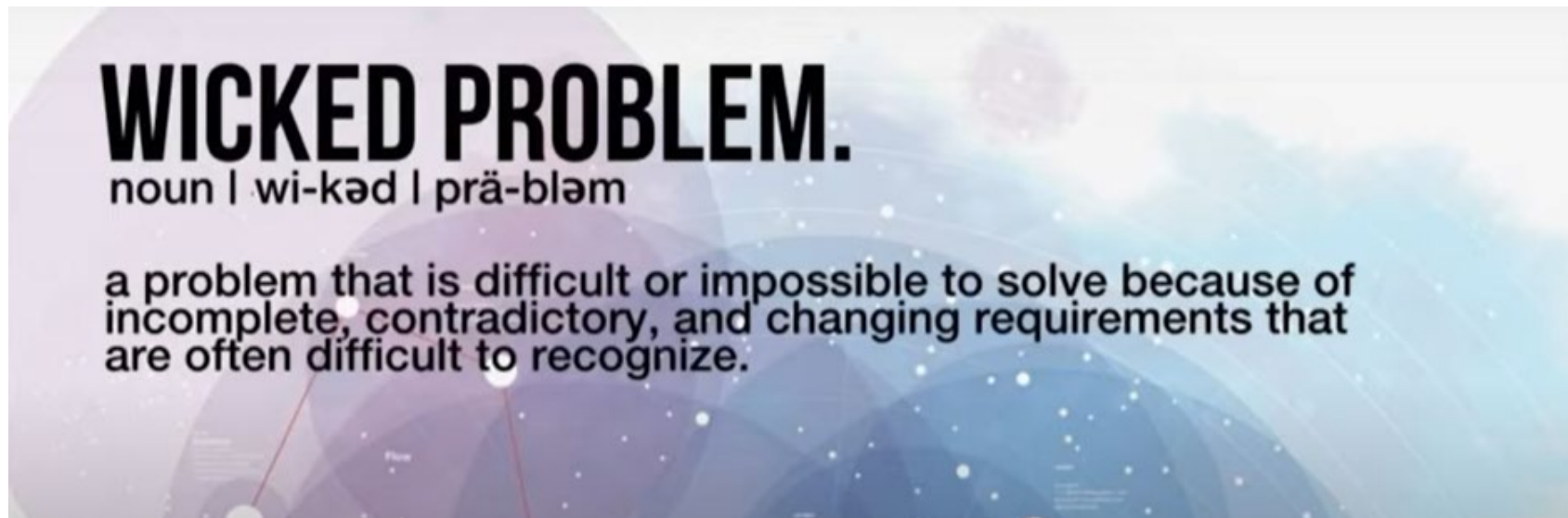| Session	Date	Presenter(s)
Session 2: Understanding the Problems for Design Innovation – *Root Cause Analysis*	Monday, September 20, 2021 1:00-2:30	Juan D'Brot and Chris Brandt Guests
Session 3: Leveraging Community for Design Innovation - *Engaging Stakeholders*	Monday, September 20, 2021 3:00-4:30	Carla Evans Guests
Session 4: Planning for Design Innovation – *Assessment Systems and Theory of Action*	Thursday, September 23, 2021 1:00-2:30	Erika Landl Nathan Dadey
Session 5: Exploring the Design Innovation Process – *Iteration in Assessment System Design*	Thursday, September 23, 2021 3:00-4:30	Brian Gong Guests
Session 6: Exploring the IADA Innovation Process –*Challenges and Opportunities*	Friday, September 24, 2021 1:00-2:30	Scott Marion and Carla Evans Chris Domaleski

Design Innovation – What is it?

Ideology

+

Process

To solve "wicked" problems in a user-centric way

WICKED PROBLEM.
noun | wi-kəd | prä-bləm

a problem that is difficult or impossible to solve because of incomplete, contradictory, and changing requirements that are often difficult to recognize.
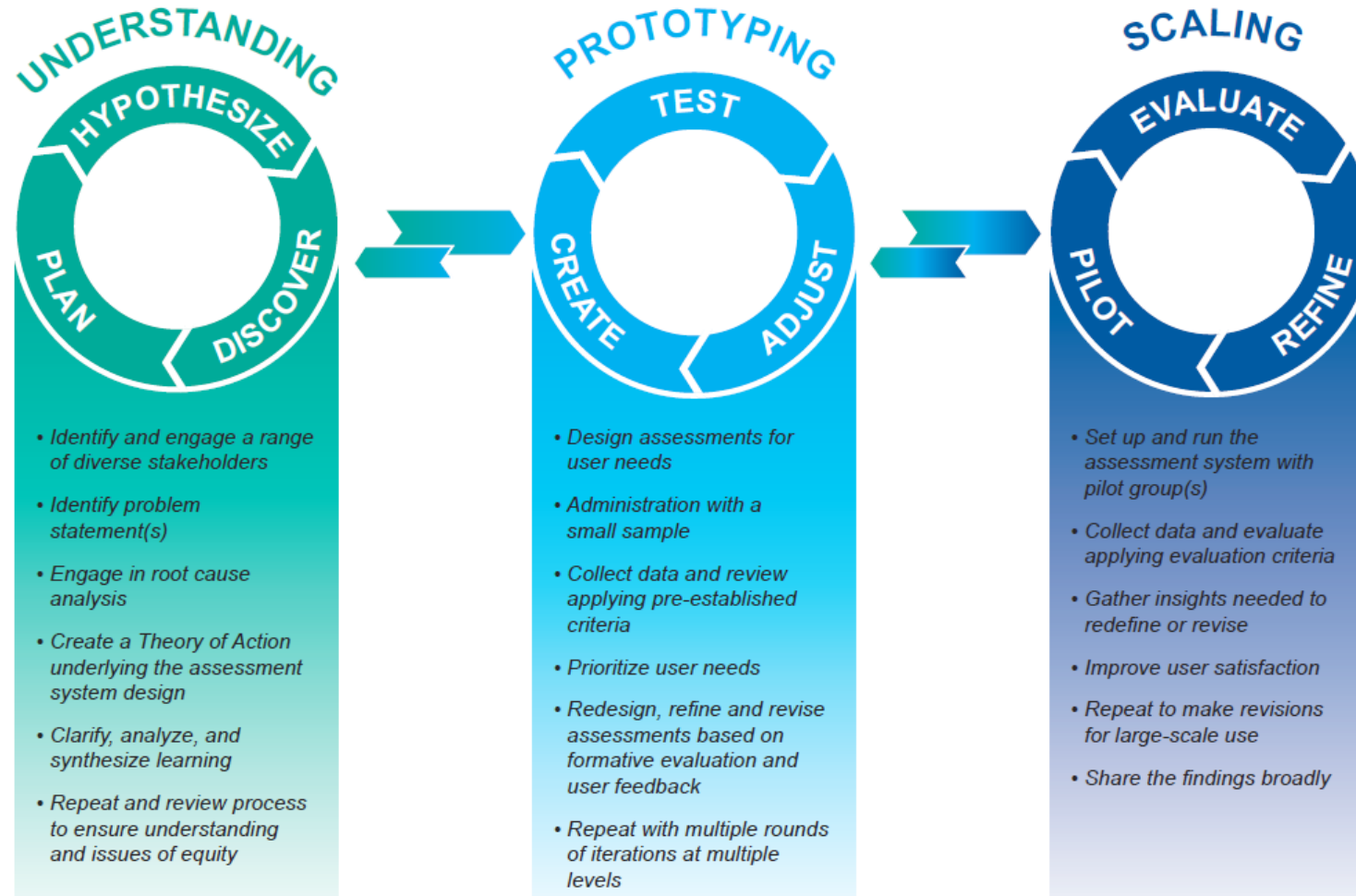
Assessment Systems as a *Wicked Problem*

How to appropriately assess students?

- *What does this mean?*
- *What is the end result*
- *What is the end result?*
- *Will it work for all students?*
- *Will it work in all content areas?*
- *Will it work in all environments?*
- *How does the solution of one aspect impact the next situation?*

One Model for the

DESIGN INNOVATION PROCESS | Center for Assessment

UNDERSTANDING
HYPOTHESIZE · PLAN · DISCOVER

- Identify and engage a range of diverse stakeholders
- Identify problem statement(s)
- Engage in root cause analysis
- Create a Theory of Action underlying the assessment system design
- Clarify, analyze, and synthesize learning
- Repeat and review process to ensure understanding and issues of equity

PROTOTYPING
TEST · CREATE · ADJUST

- Design assessments for user needs
- Administration with a small sample
- Collect data and review applying pre-established criteria
- Prioritize user needs
- Redesign, refine and revise assessments based on formative evaluation and user feedback
- Repeat with multiple rounds of iterations at multiple levels

SCALING
EVALUATE · PILOT · REFINE

- Set up and run the assessment system with pilot group(s)
- Collect data and evaluate applying evaluation criteria
- Gather insights needed to redefine or revise
- Improve user satisfaction
- Repeat to make revisions for large-scale use
- Share the findings broadly

"Understanding" Stage

UNDERSTANDING
HYPOTHESIZE
DISCOVER
PLAN

- Identify and engage a range of diverse stakeholders
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Hypothesize
Discover
Plan

Root Cause Analysis

Stakeholder Engagement

Identify problem statement(s)

Clarify, analyze, synthesize

Theory of Action
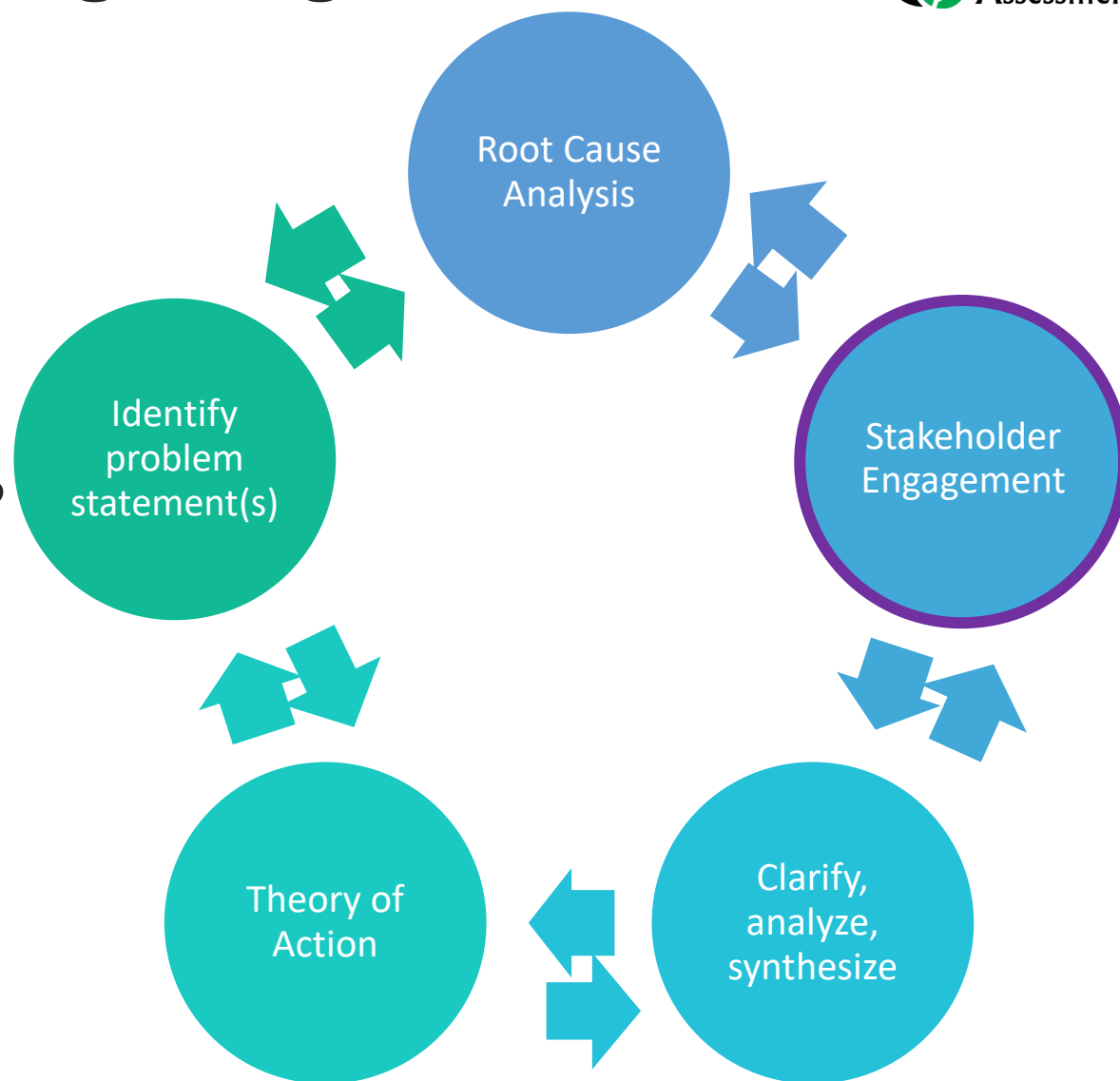
Session 3 Focus

> *"Have no fear of perfection -- you'll never reach it." -- Salvador Dali, artist*

Planning for Innovation

- Tensions in Stakeholder Engagement
- When and How to Engage Stakeholders
- Different Perspectives
- Panel Discussion
- Q&A / Closure

Planning for Innovation - *Engaging Stakeholders*

Carla Evans

Brian Reiter, Hawai'i Department of Education

Jeff Broom, Chicago Public Schools

Leveraging Community for Design Innovation: Stakeholder Engagement

Carla Evans, Center for Assessment

Brian Reiter, Hawai'i Department of Education

Jeff Broom, Chicago Public Schools

Reidy Interactive Lecture Series: Session 3

Rate your previous experience with stakeholder engagement (either from a leader or participant perspective)

Always negative **A**

Mostly negative **B**

Mostly positive **C**

Always positive **D**

Start the presentation to see live content. For screen share software, share the entire screen. Get help at **pollev.com/app**

RILS 2021: Innovation in Educational Assessment Systems

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Pro Forma Activity

-satisfies minimum requirements

-compliance driven

-checks the boxes

Meaningful Activity

-input/perspective driven

-vertical and horizontal

Leads to increased understanding

And feedback loops on design quality, relevance, and usability
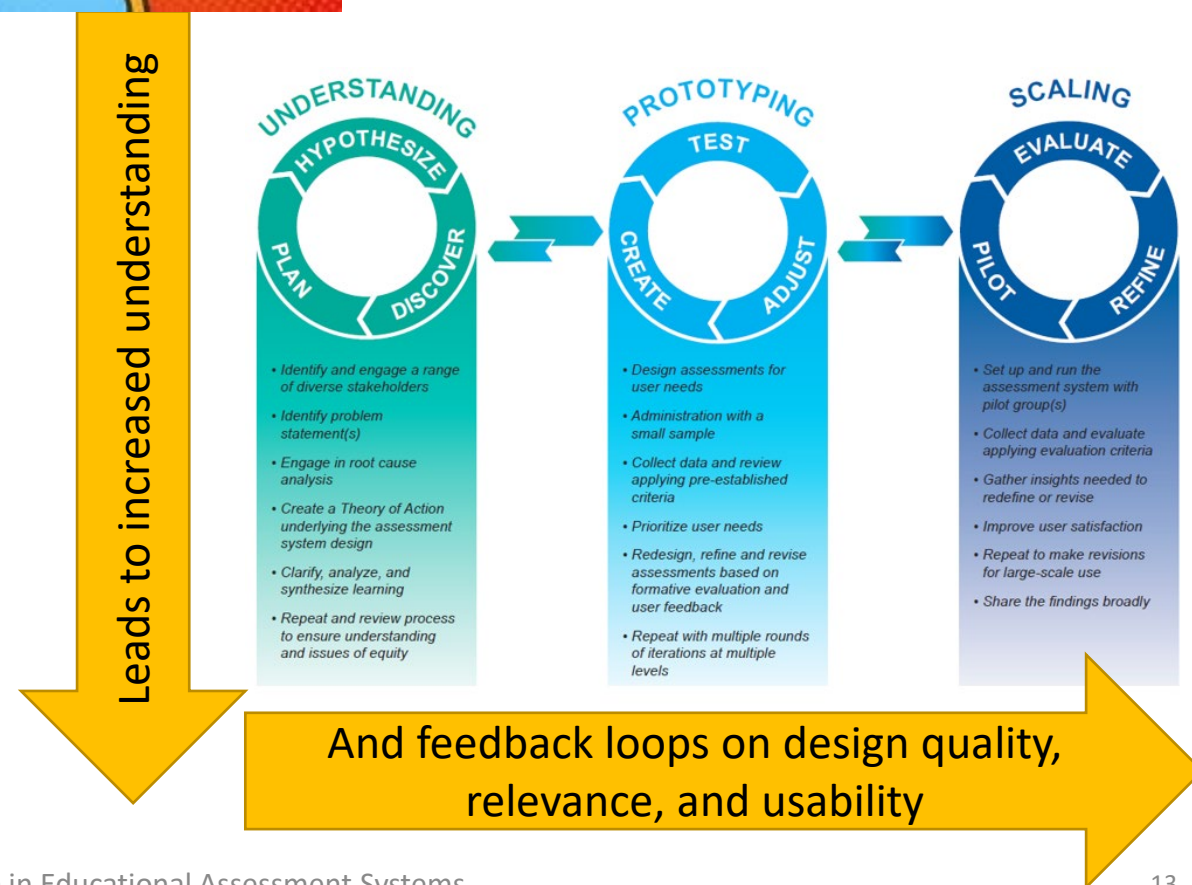
What Gets in the Way?

- **Surface (what is spoken, seen, or heard)**
  - Time, money, effort
  - No history of previous engagement (e.g., state with parents)
  - Other? What would you add….

- **Core (feelings; beliefs; values)**
  - Lack of belief in the value of adjusting/changing design based on feedback
    - Don't we know what is best?
    - What do they really know more than we do?
  - Feedback is not always clear cut or pointing in the same direction
  - History of oppression—those who perpetuate oppression; those who have been previously traumatized/unheard may not want to participate
  - Other? What would you add….

Common Stakeholders in Education

Those who are impacted by the problem, who know the problem, or who have ideas about a solution:

1. Teachers
2. School/district leaders
3. Students
4. Parents
5. Community members
6. Groups representing the special interests of students with disabilities, English language learners, indigenous tribes, etc.
7. Business community

Some Common Methods

For engaging stakeholders and collecting feedback

- *Human-centered design approaches:* empathy interviews; shadowing; defining personas; etc.

- *More common stakeholder engagement methods:* surveys, focus groups, community forums, listening sessions, empathy interviews, etc.

Presenters

- **Brian Reiter,** Student Assessment Administrator, Hawai'i Department of Education

- **Jeff Broom,** School Quality Measurement and Research Director, Chicago Public Schools

Presenter Questions

- What, when and with whom did you solicit stakeholder engagement?

- Why did you structure the stakeholder engagement as you did?

- What did you learn from stakeholders?

- How did you adjust/modify the design and/or implementation plan based on stakeholder feedback and why?

- Was there any feedback you didn't know what to do with and how did you come to that conclusion?

- How are you, or do you plan to, continue to engage stakeholders going forward and why?

Hawai'i Department of Education

Engaging Stakeholders in Innovative Assessment Design

Brian Reiter
Hawaii DOE Assessment Administrator

Innovative Assessment Development Process
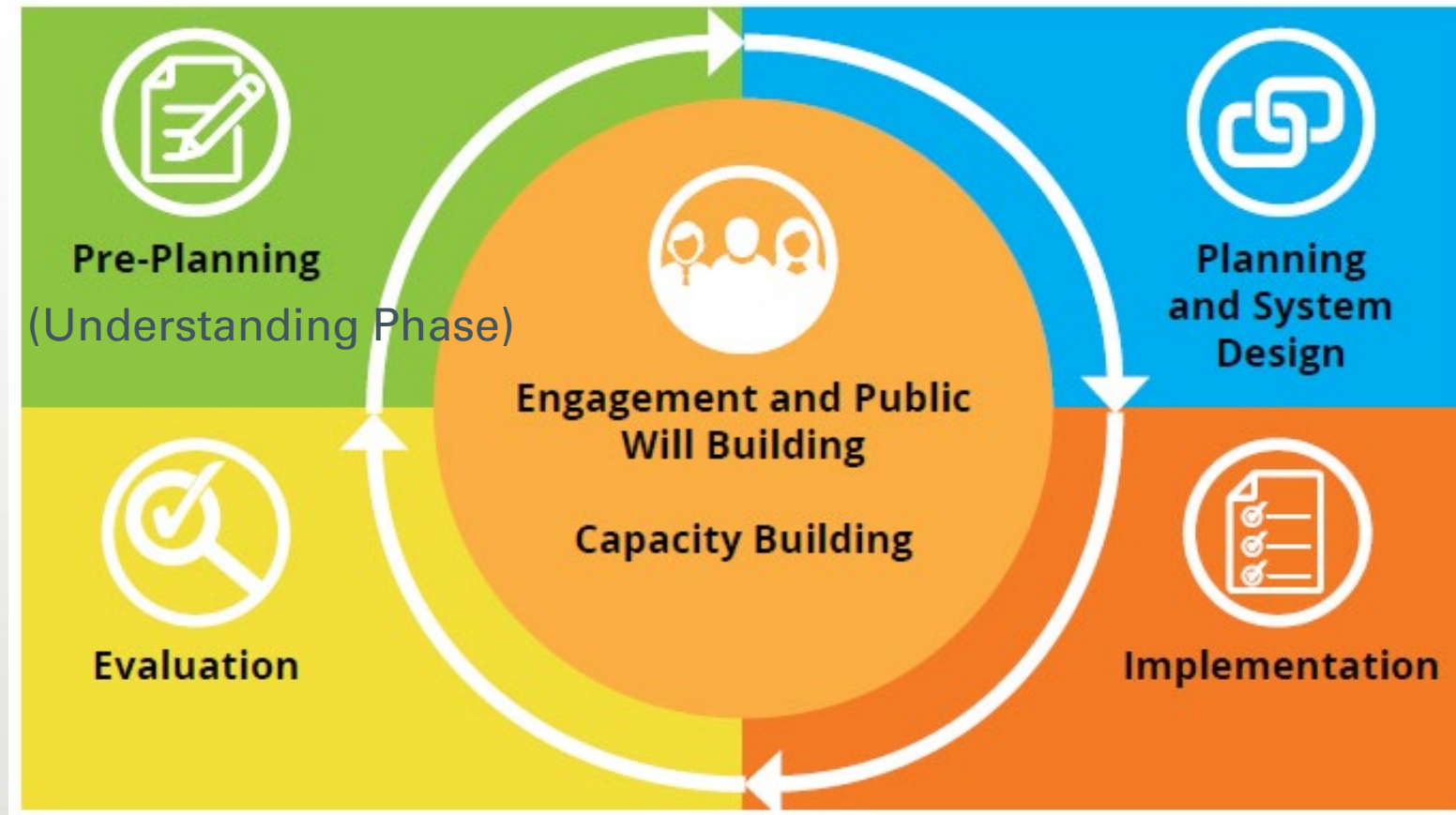
Stakeholders and Stakes

Stakeholder Group	What's at Stake?
Students	Personal success throughout school, future opportunity
Parents	Pride, success, and opportunity for the students they care about
School staff	Professional efficacy and job satisfaction
Complex Area (district) and state staff	"Adequate yearly progress," meeting accountability expectations
Policy Makers (school board, legislators)	Fulfilling the district's mission, media coverage, accountability
Community Members	Ability to hire graduates with skills needed, community economics; Community pride and "livability," real estate values

Stakeholder Involvement in Pre-Planning

- **Objective**
  - Engage a broad spectrum of stakeholders in discussion to increase design team understanding
- **Purpose**
  - To provide opportunity for input
  - To inform and provide contextual knowledge
  - To develop an understanding of various stakeholder perceptions
  - To build 'ownership' of the proposed design
- **Method**
  - In-person multi-stakeholder meetings (25 participants)
  - Direct involvement of stakeholder experts (e.g., SPED/EL advocacy groups)

Pre-Planning
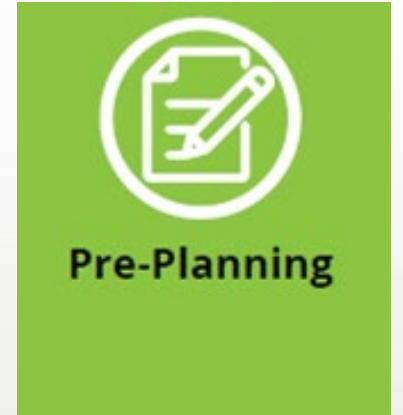
Outreach and Recruitment

- **Announcements**
  - Media (traditional and social)
  - Website postings
  - Flyers
  - Emails

- **Multi-Stakeholder Group Recruitment**
  - Target stakeholder groups
  - Open invitation to apply
  - Automate messaging
  - Identify 'best ambassadors' for participation
  - Send multiple reminders
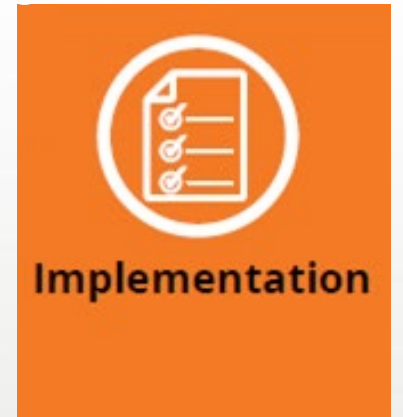
Stakeholder Involvement in Design

- **Objective**
  - Ensure stakeholders are informed of development activities and have an opportunity to provide feedback

- **Purpose**
  - To stay informed of current developments
  - To provide opportunity for feedback
  - To increase awareness

- **Method**
  - Online engagement – website, email, social media
  - Mass surveys – emailed and linked
  - Webinars – record and post to website

Planning and System Design

Stakeholder Involvement in Implementation

- **Objective**
  - Ensure stakeholders are informed of implementation activities and have an opportunity to provide feedback
- **Purpose**
  - To stay informed of current developments
  - To provide opportunity for feedback
  - To increase awareness
- **Method**
  - Online engagement – website, email, social media
  - Mass surveys

Implementation

Design and Implementation Stakeholder Involvement

- Clear expectations
- Stakeholder experts participate in design and implementation phases
- Multi-stakeholder groups informed and encouraged to provide feedback
- Seek to build consensus pragmatically (effective collaboration doesn't require consensus)

Stakeholder Involvement in Evaluation

- **Objective**
  - Engage a broad spectrum of stakeholders in evaluation of prototype

- **Purpose**
  - To develop an understanding of the proposed design
  - To build 'ownership' of the proposed design
  - To increase awareness

- **Method**
  - Annual multi-stakeholder advisory panel (hybrid – both in-person & virtual)
  - Stakeholder partnerships (teacher union, PTSA, SPED advocacy groups)
  - Mass surveys

Evaluation
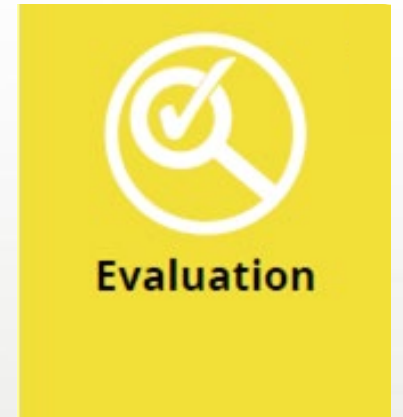
Key Takeaways

- Online engagement for discussion and feedback
- Focus group / small group meetings to elicit feedback on particular issues
- Large scale public meeting (or multi-stakeholder forums) for information dissemination and discussion
- Engage stakeholder experts
- Cross-sector partnerships
- Annual advisory panel for ongoing dialogue with key stakeholders and to establish feedback loop
- Communicate early and often

- Chicago Context

- Accountability Redesign

- Key Factors in Driving Stakeholder Engagement Design

- Activities, Lessons Learned, Path Forward

Chicago
Public
Schools

City's schools called 'worst'

By Linda Lenz

Chicago has the worst ur-

- **1987 - 2010**
  - William Bennett's "Worst Schools in Nation" comments
  - Mayoral Control, Local School Councils
  - Illinois School Code Section 8.3
  - Renaissance 2010

- **2010 - present**
  - School closures of 2013 - Ghosts in the Schoolyard
  - Eight CEOs since 2009 (about to hire number nine)
  - Lightfoot election April 2019
  - First meeting of new Chicago Board of Education June 2019 - mandate for new accountability system

Board's biggest critique of current system was lack of stakeholder involvement in its design

EVE L. EWING
GHOSTS IN THE SCHOOLYARD

Racism and School Closings on Chicago's South Side

Chicago Public Schools
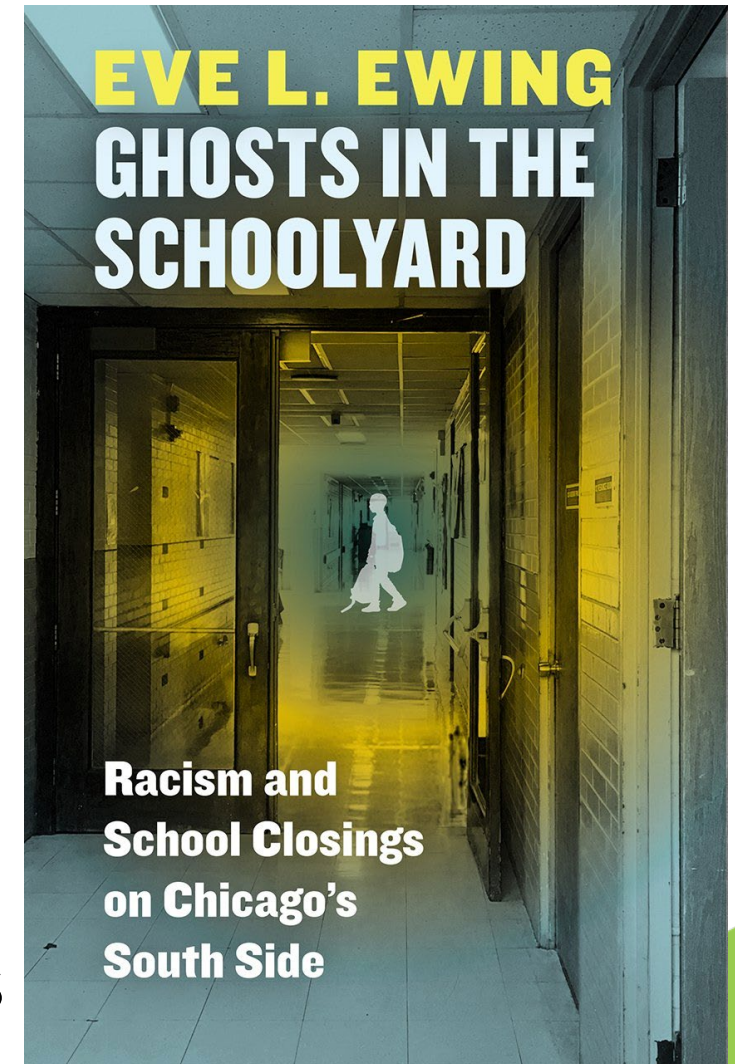
Stakeholder Engagement Drivers

What were some of the key factors driving how we designed our stakeholder engagement work?

- New Board's objections to previous policy design (i.e. insufficient stakeholder involvement)

- Stakeholders' lived experiences (collective trauma from past district actions; lack of trust in the district generally, etc.)

- District capacity for engagement - historically more pro forma (including during school closings); gave impression of stakeholder management, rather than engagement

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Stakeholder Engagement Drivers (cont.)

- Go big or go home - if we didn't engage stakeholders meaningfully, the quality of the policy design would be irrelevant

- Build capacity - articulating complex ideas at scale; making meaning of feedback to drive recommendations. Raised $100k, engaged [Kids First Chicago](#)

- Change how we operate - if the process didn't **feel** different, the policy changes would fail, regardless of efforts

Chicago Public Schools

What kinds of activities have we conducted?

- Democratized policy making process - convened advisory group to guide policy design

- Launched [website](#) where meeting materials are posted - accountability through transparency

- Conducted five town halls (in English and Spanish) with over 750 participants - posting report publicly

- Two rounds of meeting with PACs, CACs, LCSAB, etc. with over 1800 participants and materials distributed to over 4000 LSC members

- First round of focus groups - over 180 participants from various constituencies (students, family, teachers, etc.)

- Multiple summer learning sessions with principals

- Convened a Stakeholder Engagement Design Team (SEDT) to design the stakeholder engagement work and interpret results

Chicago Public Schools

How has/will stakeholder feedback impacted the process?

- Content of policy is driven to a great extent by feedback and will be evaluated by the extent to which it reflects stakeholder priorities
- SEDT grew out of stakeholder recommendations
- Membership of redesign advisory group shifted in response to stakeholder concerns
- Timeline and pace of work has shifted in response to stakeholder concerns about pace
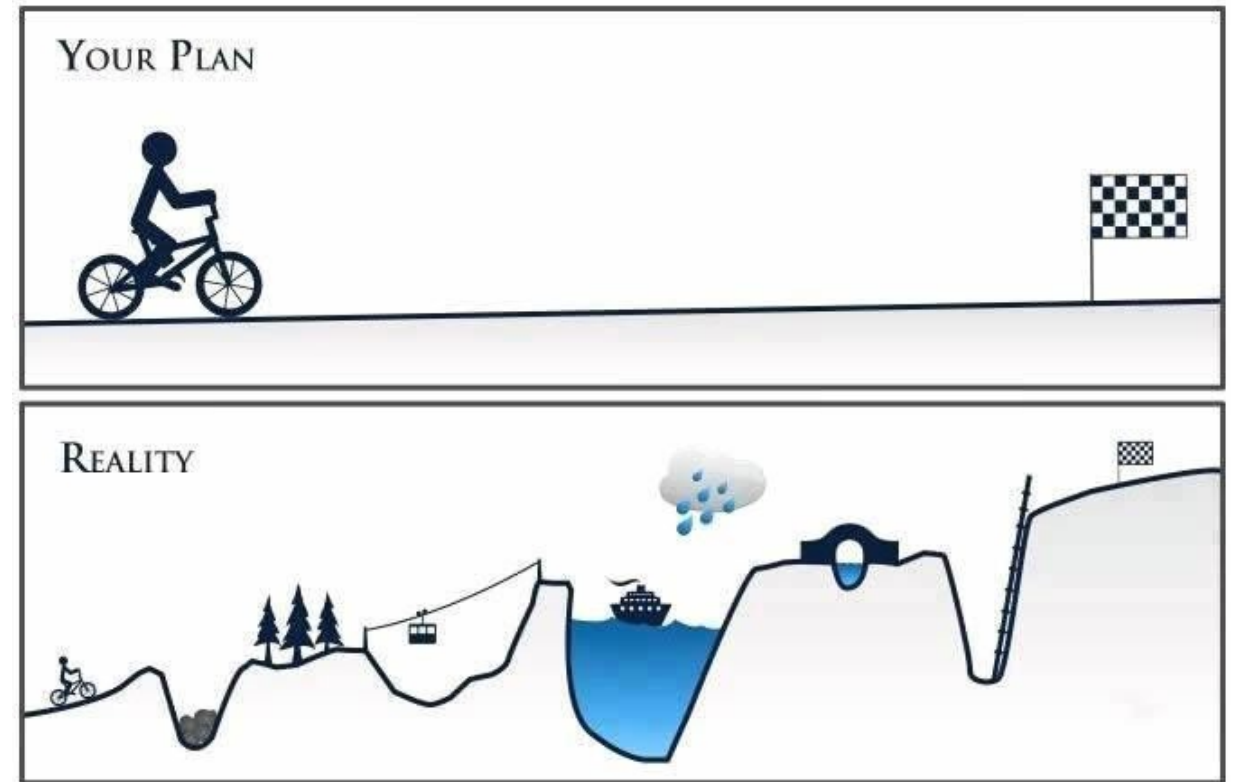
- Additional rounds of focus groups to evaluate and validate policy proposals

- City-wide survey

- Implement "network liaison" model to engage school leaders in process at scale

- Additional rounds of touchpoints with CACs, PACs, etc.

- Continue transparency for advisory group discussions

Discussion

Facilitators: Chris Domaleski & Carla Evans

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