

Journey Map

Creating One for Your School

As school staff members embark on a Smaller Learning Community transformation of their high school or participate in a Design Studio experience with a group of schools, it is important to know their school well. This enables them to engage in critical inquiry that will support the reform work towards developing smaller learning communities within a high performing high school.

The purpose of creating a “Journey Map” is to identify key events, milestones, factors, changes, and influences that have occurred at the school site over the last five (5) or more years including school reform and smaller learning communities activities. These features are then recorded in a visual or graphic way that shows the progression towards current reform efforts.

The Journey Map is a snapshot in time that reveals struggles, challenges and successes. Through reflection and discussion, staff can put words to the elements and characteristics that they value in themselves. This becomes one starting point to develop critical elements and action steps towards implementing successful smaller learning communities in high schools. This Journey Map can also be used to orient new staff and school community members to the school’s history and provide perspective on where the school’s been and where staff want to go.

Create a Journey Map together as a team on paper or poster board (about 3’ x 6’) using markers and colors visible for an audience. Team members can include staff, district personnel, parents, students and community partners. The Journey Map can take the form of a timeline, a graph, a board game, power point, or any other visual representation that illustrates the school’s journey over time. Post these maps and share them with school personnel, students and stakeholders.

Consider the questions below when developing a Journey Map.

Mapping our past:

- ❖ What key events have been important over time?
- ❖ Who has been involved? Who & what influenced the work?
- ❖ What obstacles have been overcome?
- ❖ What influences, positive and negative, have there been?
- ❖ What accomplishments were made and setbacks faced?
- ❖ What goals has the school worked on? Why?
- ❖ How have the goals made a difference?
- ❖ How do staff and school community members define themselves in relation to these words:

* Educators

* Researchers

* Designers

* Assessors

* Reflectors

* Collaborators/Colleagues