

# Earned Autonomy Framework: From Stakeholder Insights to a Theory of Action

April 8 , 2020

# Agenda

- 1 Stakeholder Engagement Process and Key Insights
- 2 Theory of Action
- 3 Next Steps

# 1 Stakeholder Engagement Process and Key Insights

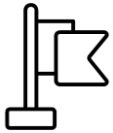
## Who did we talk to in order to ensure that the Framework reflects local priorities?

CPRL has conducted 40+ meetings with stakeholders (comprised of both individual interviews and focus groups). The list below summarizes the individuals who have contributed their voices and ideas thus far.

- Lawrence Alliance for Education (“LAE Board”) Chair
- LPS Central Office Leadership Team (Superintendent, Assistant Superintendents, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Facilities Director, and Director of English Language Learners)
- LPS Principals, Teachers, and Staff Members (including Family Resource Center Staff)
- LPS Parents and Guardians
- Representatives from local for-profit and non-profit business community and local community colleges
- Members of the following DESE offices: Officer of Effective Practices in Turnaround, Office of District Reviews and Monitoring, and Office of District & School Accountability Reporting
- LAE Board Student Representative

## What did we seek to learn through our robust stakeholder engagement process?

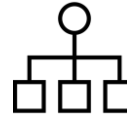
What does success look like at the school level?



What actions must schools take to support all LPS students?



What categories of support are most important for stakeholders?



What are the sources of frustration and day-to-day challenges?



**The answers to each of these questions form key building blocks of the Theory of Action and Framework.**

# What factors contribute to school-level success in LPS?

## Students need:

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**Rigorous curriculum and assessments** that support growth and achievement (including high-need students) and prepare all students for success

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**Socioemotional support** to help students improve relationship-building and to aid those navigating challenges or trauma

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**Opportunities to build college and/or career readiness** that provide exposure to varied professional pathways

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**Commitment to cultural responsiveness** that demonstrates to students that their cultures are valued and celebrated by school leaders and staff

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**School culture in which all students feel valued and safe** in order to promote relationship-building between students and staff

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**Trust in district and school leaders** that educational decisions are reflective of local priorities and student needs

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## Lawrence Voices on Student Needs

*"The **early college program has been a great illustration of our students' potential.** [The students] have proven that when they have an opportunity to reach beyond their comfort zone, they're ready to jump in with both feet. We need to ensure those opportunities are available."*

– Staff Member

*"The first thing [that makes a good school] is engagement. **In my perfect school, I need to see...[careers] we want to do, like shadowing the field you're interested in.** Make students interested and passionate about their fields and the school in general."*

– Student

*"Many students have no idea about the range of opportunities available. For example, the hospital in Lawrence is a huge employer, and most folks who work there aren't doctors and don't have any medical training whatsoever. But **students don't know these jobs exist** – and they won't know unless schools are focusing on this kind of career exposure."*

– Business community member

*"If a student arrives with unresolved trauma, and there's not a guidance counselor trained and available to help him, that student is going to not only disrupt the class, but also **kick start a cycle of disengagement...**"*

– LPS Teacher

# What factors contribute to school-level success in LPS?

## Teachers and staff need:

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**PD programming** that is responsive to teacher and staff needs and scheduled based on teacher and staff availability

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**Sufficient support staff** to ensure that students receive individualized support and help prevent disciplinary issues from arising

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**Opportunities to collaborate with colleagues** in order to problem solve, generate creative solutions, and learn from one another

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**Sustainable expectations** that contribute to job satisfaction and lower rates of teacher and staff turnover

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**Access to resources (including technology)** that are aligned with instructional priorities and enable teachers and staff to use student assessments as diagnostic tools

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**Greater teacher voice** in district- and school-wide decision-making and opportunities to communicate concerns

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## Lawrence Voices on Teacher and Staff Needs

*"When [teachers] have the chance to collaborate, that's when the magic happens. [LPS] has so many great teachers and veteran teachers' willingness to help me problem solve has made me a stronger educator."*

– LPS Teacher

*"Standardized tests can be used as a way to provide additional supports for students, **but instead we test and don't address.** We would love more open communication with leadership about test data and tools to analyze data."*

– LPS Teacher

*"Today's students are arriving at school with more needs than ever before and **teachers are expected to not only teach but also support all those needs.** How are schools making sure that teachers are able to meet all those needs without burning out?"*

– District Staff Member

# What factors contribute to school-level success in LPS?

## Parents and guardians need:

### **Effective communication**

that is timely, easy to comprehend, and tailored to the diverse needs of the full Lawrence community

### **Opportunities for parents to partner with schools**

in order to determine how to best support individual students

### **Bi-cultural commitment**

so that all community members feel valued and able to participate in their children's success

**Programming that enables parents to grow their professional skills** and take on leadership roles within their schools

**Additional support for parents who are recent immigrants** who lack experience navigating the U.S. education system

## Lawrence Voices on Parent and Guardian Needs

*"The Family Institute for Student Success is a **wonderful example that shows Lawrence parents can be amazing partners in creating a culture of high expectations.** High expectations is crucial to student success."*

– District Staff Member

*"Many of these parents are working two jobs...and are worried that taking off work to go meet with the school principal ...will jeopardize their jobs. This means **schools need to be flexible and creative when it comes to designing programming that works for Lawrence families.**"*

– District Staff Member

*"I am **grateful for the communication I have with my child's teacher.** I can use the class app, ClassDojo, to find out everything from my child's spelling words to announcements from the teacher."*

– Parent

*"A lot of **the same ten or so parents come to the same events.** It's not enough to give students a flyer that might get lost in their backpack...The district needs to do more in engaging families."*

– Parent

# What factors contribute to school-level success in LPS?

## Principals need:

**Transparent communication around district-level strategic planning** so principals can design school-level plans aligned to district goals and initiatives

**Autonomy** to make school-level decisions, coupled with district-level supports and collaboration in select, strategic areas

**Equitable access to updated, quality facilities, and technological resources** in order to create a positive school climate and contribute to school pride

**Funding** for district-recommended programming that is distributed equitably across schools

**Teacher and staff recruitment and retention assistance**, particularly for counselors and other support staff (i.e., reading specialists)

**Access to data** that is diagnostic (rather than purely evaluative) to guide school-level planning and decision-making

## Lawrence Voices on Principal Needs

*"One of the things that has been great over the past year has been the **increased attention on listening to students**. When I hear that the district wants to better understand whether students feel safe at school, I'm excited because that will help me create a better environment."*

– Principal

*"The **open line of communication between the district and principals is important**, especially in a district with school-level autonomy."*

– Principal

*"My concern is about the timing of when we learn about new initiatives from the district. For example, the district has made a restorative justice program a priority which is worthwhile. But that means we have less time for PD on instructional [practices]. **Principals need to be involved in these initiatives so that we can figure out how they impact the million other things we're doing.**"*

– Principal

## 2 Theory of Action

# Why a Theory of Action?

## Theory of Action

Articulates a working hypothesis about **how specific steps will lead to school-level success**. The Theory of Action forms the foundation of the Earned Autonomy Framework.

## Earned Autonomy Framework

**Equips LPS with strategically selected indicators** that reveal the degree to which each school is (i) carrying out the actions needed to support all students and (ii) producing desired student outcomes.

## Framework Dashboard

Produces a comprehensive “snapshot” that **allows LPS to understand how each school is performing**, compare current outcomes to prior performance and peer schools, and **strategically allocate resources**.

**IF** the leadership, staff, and community at each Lawrence district school collaborate to:

Plan, execute, and improve school-level operations in an efficient, transparent, equitable, and sustainable manner (**Operations**);

Deliver a rigorous and culturally responsive curriculum and high-quality instruction that addresses the needs of diverse learners (**Academic Experience**);

Build an inclusive school environment that supports all students' socioemotional needs and in which all school community members feel welcomed, valued, and safe (**School Environment**); and

Provide community engagement and family partnership opportunities that are effective, inclusive, and tailored to Lawrence's diverse needs (**Family and Community Engagement**);

**THEN** all students, including high-need students, will:

- Engage in the school community and invest in their own academic and personal success (**Student Engagement**);
- Demonstrate learning gains each year in English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and English language proficiency (**Student Growth**);
- Reach key academic performance milestones (**Student Achievement**); and
- Build key 21<sup>st</sup> century skills needed to graduate prepared for college and/or careers (**Prepared for Success**); and

**AS A RESULT**, students will succeed in college and/or employment, and ultimately become engaged members of their communities.



# 3 Next Steps

## Progress against Timeline

