Transformative Practices in Leadership and Advocacy Handout

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This session is going to be done a very interactive format with a lot of large-group, small-group, and individual activities. If you are unable to attend the session, you can follow the links below to gain access to the materials used. We have also included a Project Framework to offer guidance in implementing a project-based team to enhance your school counseling program, especially Standard 5: Leadership and Advocacy.

For more information and downloadable content related to the new Ohio Standards for School Counselors, please follow the link below:
http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Teaching/Educator-Evaluation-System/School-Counselor-Standards-and-Evaluation

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Project Framework

This document will provide you with a framework for leading a project-based team, whether that be a group, club, guidance lessons, or even your PLC. This is merely a framework, with some additional activities at the end. There is intentionally a lot of room for personalization and creativity as you modify this framework to fit your needs.

For more activity ideas, go to the School Reform Initiative (SRI) website:
http://www.schoolreforminitiative.org/protocols/

For more information on projects, go to the Buck Institute for Education's (BIE) website:
http://www.bie.org/

If you are interested in some of the best training on Project-Based Learning, there are PBL institute's nationwide. There is even one right here in Ohio. Follow the link below to find out more:
http://www.pblohio.com/pbl-ohio-institute.html

Group Forming

This portion of the project framework is pretty basic and most counselors have training and experience with the steps outlined below, but I want to make sure to highlight the importance of the early steps of forming a project-based group. As a project gets underway, the later process almost starts to run themselves, so it is imperative to build a collaborative and productive environment for the process to work.

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- **Applications/Recruitment -** No matter the project, you need participants.
- **Norms/Expectations -** It is always important to set group norms and expectations early on with group work.
- **Informed Consent/Membership Agreement -** When working with students for a prolonged period of time, I like to make sure that I have parent consent, student assent, and an agreement of some sort that outlines expectations, in writing.
- **Project Path** - It is always good for students and adults to know where a project is headed and what steps are needed to get there. An example of a project path could be as simple as the following:
    a. Brainstorming
    b. Researching
    c. Planning
    d. Implementing
    e. Reflecting
    f. Presenting
    g. Annual Review
- **Ice-Breaker Protocols -** It is always important to build cohesion and comfort in a group setting. This framework calls for a lot of collaboration and peer feedback, so members need to be comfortable with one another. If you haven't found a few go-to ice-breakers, check out the SRI website listed above or do a simple google search.
- **Generating Ideas w/ One-Word Note Cards & Wall Clustering -** Every successful project needs to start with a dream. I know it sounds corny, but starting with logistics and open-ended research is a sure-fire way to kill a student or adults interest and imagination. We need to start big and go for broke. Projects will become more focused and realistic as members work through various protocols. Members will choose one word that captures the issue/problem they want to address this year and write in on a notecard or sticky note. They can use multiple cards/stickies for additional issues if they wish. When they are finished, members will place their ideas on a board or wall, attempting to group issues together as they place them (i.e., clustering).
- **Important Note for Indecisive Members -** By design, this project framework is loaded with collaborative protocols, so they will have many, many opportunities to contribute to the planning process of other project groups.
- **Ranked Interest -** To help members pick a group, they will silently rank their top 3 clusters on 3 post-its and hand them to a facilitator. It is only necessary to have members silently rank their interest if you are working with students that tend to only choose what their friends are doing. If needed, place friends across room to eliminate friend bias. To start, the facilitator will place the stickies on the board to see who will be in what group. Most of the time, people will get their first choice. I recommend groups stay small (1-4) to prevent freeloaders and keep too many cooks out of the kitchen. Yes, I do let people work alone. There is so much collaboration that even someone flying solo will receive and give feedback.
- **Collaboration Rubric Expo Experts -** When working with students, it is important to discuss what good collaboration looks like, sounds like, and feels like. They will raise their hands to offer suggestions and have discussions about their suggestions. As ideas are called out, students will take a marker and write the behaviors and words on the large post-it. Let them know this will be their guide while working in groups. Then need to know what we want to see and hear from them when working on tasks.

Meeting Procedures

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I find that a beginning and ending procedure helps focus our work and provide opportunities to check-in/clarify any confusion. I have entered what I use below, but there are an infinite number of possibilities here, including community meetings.

- **Opening Discussion -** For the first 5-10 minutes of a meeting, members will have a whole group discussion about how the process is going. This will be a time to reflect and readjust objectives as needed. Questions during this time are generated from observations of the facilitators, members, and feedback collected from the Reflection Note Cards from the previous meeting.
- **Reflection Note Card -** For the last 5 minutes of a meeting, each member will reflect on the day's work on a note card. They will include any questions/thoughts/concerns they wish to share with me. They will also rank their groups collaboration 1-10, with a brief explanation as to why they chose that number. I want to make sure no one is feeling left out of the group process. I will often address collaboration concerns before the meeting concludes.

Brainstorming

Like I said earlier, this is the stage of extremes. Some students will go blank and others will have a million ideas, none of which are remotely realistic. Both of these scenarios are nothing to be concerned about. The protocols and project framework is self-differentiating and students at different stages, with different abilities, and with different learning styles will benefit from the collaborative project. If members or groups don't know what to do, have them ask for ideas. If they have 20 ideas, have them pick their favorite 3 or 5, it doesn't matter and have them go with it. They will get there in time. Be patient.

- **What is a Gallery Walk? Discussion -** Whether you use the gallery walk or another protocol, it is important for members to know what it's purpose is and how to prepare for it. With that said, members and facilitators alike will naturally improve the more they use the protocol. After a description of the gallery walk event, a simple whole group discussion about what a good gallery walk poster looks like gives members some direction. Like the collaboration rubric, members will raise their hands to offer suggestion. Then a person with the idea will take a marker and write the ideas on the large post-it. Let them know this will be our guide while working in on the posters.
- **Prepare Brainstorming Gallery Walk -** The brainstorming gallery walk is exactly that: a chance for groups to brainstorm project ideas, with the end goal always in mind. There is a large body of outstanding work by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe on backwards design that makes a strong argument for starting at the end, so check it out if you have the chance. Groups will work together to generate ideas on a large post-it.
    a. Group Name: Some people like to be creative, some don't. Don't sweat this part of the project.
    b. Issue/Problem/Topic: No matter how you title this portion, there is something to be said for working to solve a problem or address an issue. It kind of creates a call to action that motivates people, something that is necessary for the hard work to come.
    c. Event: Again, the label is not important here. What matters is that groups start imagining how they want solve their respective problem.
    d. Outcome Measure: Whether it is a student project or an adult project, it is always good practice to think about how you are going to make sure what you are hoping to achieve is actually achieved.
- **Complete Brainstorming Gallery Walk -** After the ideas are generated, students will walk around, viewing each groups poster, and providing Praise, Questions, or

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Suggestions in a helpful, specific, and kind manner on post-its. After the 20-30 minute gallery walk, groups will pass the post-its around and silently take notes about what they read for 5 minutes. Then they will share their thoughts and questions with their group.

- **Reflect on the Brainstorming Gallery Walk -** Groups will discuss the ideas, suggestions, and questions gathered and discussed during the last meeting and will enter their ideas into some sort of singular document that will act as an outline for their project. This project outline will be the one place where all their work, thoughts, and useful feedback is aggregated. It is always changing and provides a foundation for later work.

Researching

The research and planning phases are very circular in nature, going back and forth between one another. While this framework is presented in a linear format, the project path is often not linear. Research hinges on the generation of questions. The more specific the questions, the closer a group is getting to the planning phase. In an information age, where billions of pages of information (and misinformation) are available in seconds, questions help students know where to look and what to look for when they find a source. Of course, assessing the quality of a source is very important but is beyond the scope of this framework.

- **Question Forming Techniques (QFT) -** Groups simply pass around a printed piece of their work to other groups and each person will have 30 seconds to ask a question on a post-it note and stick it to the paper. In the end, there will be a lot of questions generated… hence the title (I did not come up with this or any of these protocols, for that matter). It is okay to present members with pre-developed guiding questions.
- **Finding Sources -** Members will choose a question or series of questions they need answered and order them in matter of importance to their group. They will then have to find a source they think answers the question and share it with the group.
- **Reading/Watching with a Question -** Members will read 1 article or excerpt from source with the intent to answer 1 or more questions they previously generated in the QFT. For students, it may be necessary to demonstrate this process by doing it all together and then letting them work on their own.
- **Prepare the Research Gallery Walk -** Similar to the first gallery walk, but with much more detail, groups will start to build a level of expertise on the issue/topic of focus. This means that they will have to spend quite a bit of time researching, discussing, analyzing, summarizing, and synthesizing information. This is the least glamorous part of the process, but it is critical for all the steps that follow. One way to spike interest in the research portion is to have members conduct their own mini research project. Students seem to be more vested in their own results than those of someone else. Either way, they will still need to research outside sources. There is a lot of flexibility as to how members present their research on the poster, so be creative or let them be creative.
- **Complete the Research Gallery Walk -** Nothing new here. Same process as before.
- **Reflect on the Research Gallery Walk -** Groups need to take a hard look at the feedback and questions posted on their posters. This is the stage where gaps in either understanding or presentation of understanding need to be filled, because successful planning depends on sound research. It is important that students always revise their work before moving it from the gallery walk (or other collaborative protocol) to their project outline.

Planning

Students may do some planning during the research phase, but they will focus their planning with a critical friends protocol. Up to this point, the gallery walk has been the protocol of choice,

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because it allows for a broader range of feedback in a short period of time. When we move from idea to action, a closer and more critical look is required - enter the critical friends protocol.

- **Prepare the Planning Critical Friends (CF) Protocol -** Groups will work together to plan their event/program. There is a lot of flexibility to what's included in this portion, but here are some ideas:
  a. Issue: It's always good to keep your eye on the prize.
  b. Event/Program: At this point in the process, no details should be spared. The presenters should be able to cover all their bases when it comes time to complete the CF protocol.
  c. Outcome Measures: As stated earlier, you need to know if what you are going to do is working. At this point, there should be a detailed plan of what the outcome measure looks like and what specific things it will measure.
  d. Timeline: It is amazing how the constraints of time will really start to bring a project down to earth. Again, the devil is in the details.
- **Complete the Planning CF Protocol -** After the ideas are generated, members will pair up with 1-3 people from another group and complete the following steps as they discuss what they have planned and receive critical feedback along the way (see what I did there).
  a. Presentation (5 mins): presenter explain their project, audience listens (no interruptions)
  b. Clarification (2 mins): audience asks short clarifying questions, presenters respond
  c. Assessment (1 mins): Audience quietly uses rubric to assess project, presenters wait
  d. "I like…" (3 mins): audience shares what they like, presenter listens
  e. "I wonder…" (3 mins): audience shares concerns, presenter listens
  f. Reflection (3 mins): presenter reflects on useful feedback, audience listens
  g. "I have…" (3 mins): audience shares ideas and resources for the project, presenter may respond
- **Reflect on the Planning CF Protocol -** As always, groups will discuss the feedback and work together to use the useful bits to revise their work and fill in gaps. It is important these revisions are being added to a common, shared document.

<u>Implementing</u>

Finally, after what has been months of hard work and endless feedback loops, it's time to actually implement the event/program. Members will implement their program or event as scheduled. This is the part your members have working hard for, so let them enjoy the process.

<u>Reflecting</u>

After they have implemented the event/program, they will need to reflect on the experience and outcomes during their group time. We are not going to assume that a program/event is effective, just because it was implemented. Critical reflection is important for any endeavour.

- **Outcome Measures Summary -** Groups need to analyze the outcomes of their event/program and summarize what they find.
- **Prepare the Implementation Gallery Walk -** And you thought you wouldn't have to do another gallery walk… Well, you don't but I don't see the point in adding a new protocol this late in the game, so it is what I use at this stage. Again, you can use your own sections, but here are some ideas:
  a. Qualitative/Anecdotal Experiences: This is simply a space for groups to share their experience implementing the event/program.

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        b. Outcome Measures Summary: This is where the group will put the summary of their outcome measure data. Numbers can be fun and are easy to present.

        c. Changes for Next Time: No one gets it perfect, so groups need to share what they would change if they implemented this again. If this is a project of a school counselor, this is important for the next time around. Waiting to make these changes the next year is not a good idea, because you will likely forget what you learned from the experience a year from now.

- **Complete the Implementation Gallery Walk -** Nothing new here.
- **Reflect on the Implementation Gallery Walk -** Same as before.

<u>Presenting</u>

Whether this project is for students or professionals, presenting work forces rigor and provides an opportunity to share successful events/programs with larger communities of people. Based on logistical constraints, this may be small-scale, but would ideally include as many experts and stakeholders as possible.

- **Presentation Rubric using Expo Experts -** For students, you will need to make sure they know what a good presentation looks and sounds like. They will raise their hands to offer suggestions and have discussions about those things. Then a person with the idea will take a marker and write the behaviors and words on the large post-it. Let them know this will be our guide while preparing and delivering presentations. There are many other ways to discuss presentations, so be creative.
- **Prepare the Research Gallery Walk -** This gallery walk is a little different. While there will still be the critical feedback component, it will take longer to complete the gallery walk, because groups will not just create a poster, but actually present their work as they would to the community at-large. Be flexible about how they present their work, but make sure it is complete and includes everything developed up this point. Note: If you are going for a smaller-scale presentation, this gallery walk may be the final presentation, but I use it to give them a chance to rehearse their work and get feedback before the larger presentation event (described below).
  - a. Issue/Problem/Topic: This needs to include the research summary, so that the audience is informed of what they were addressing.
  - b. Event/Program: They need to give the audience a clear and detailed picture how the event/program functioned.
  - c. Outcomes: This includes not only the objective data, but the experience of the event/program.
  - d. Reflection: What they would do differently next time.
- **Complete the Research Gallery Walk -** This is similar in regards to feedback delivery and content, but groups will actually give a presentation.
- **Reflect on the Research Gallery Walk -** Always reflect, even this late in the game. They may present in the future and need to know how to do it better.
- **Presentation Event -** If you go for the larger presentation, members will present their work to family, friends, and/or community members. For students, you will want to invite experts on the issue they are addressing so they can provide feedback and encouragement. This will add some pressure and rigor to their work.

<u>Annual Review</u>

Congratulations, you made it! Everyone has worked hard to get to this point and hopefully has a lot of quality work to show for it. It's finally time to relax and carry out some easy closing processes.

- Reflection - This time is more for your sake than the members. You need feedback to

make sure that the project framework worked well and note any changes for next time.
- Celebration - Everyone has earned a reward for this work. Pizza and ice cream are great, but maybe an awards ceremony or other public recognition is in order. Go all out and really treat yourself and your members to whatever floats your boat, you all earned it.

<u>Additional Ideas</u>

The following are some additional ideas that I didn't use, but could arguably be used for a project-based team.
- **Entry Event -** It never hurts to start the process with an evocative and inspirational event/movie clip. Who doesn't like a great motivational youtube clip?
- **Group Name -** You may want to separate the group naming process from the first gallery walk to add a group building process and chance for students to practice collaboration on a smaller scale. Feel free to make this as artistic or rudimentary as you like or just leave it out all-together.