



# Connecting to the Challenge

## Steps for Equitable Engagement

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10.06.2020

- Name
- Your role in our education landscape
- *One thing that is making me lighter right now is...*

**For example:** *“My name is Natalie, my role is to serve as a trusted advisor for districts across the country, and one thing that is making my lighter right now is my journal.”*



The image shows a Zoom meeting control bar at the bottom of the screen. From left to right, it includes: a 'Join Audio' button with a headset icon, a 'Stop Video' button with a video camera icon, an 'Invite' button with a person icon, a 'Manage Participants' button with a group of people icon and a '1' next to it, a 'Chat' button with a speech bubble icon, a 'Record' button with a camera icon, and a red 'End Meeting' button. To the right of these buttons is a white chat input field with the placeholder text 'Type message here...' and a small downward arrow above it.

# Welcome



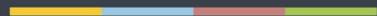
Natalie Hall  
Sr. Design Principal



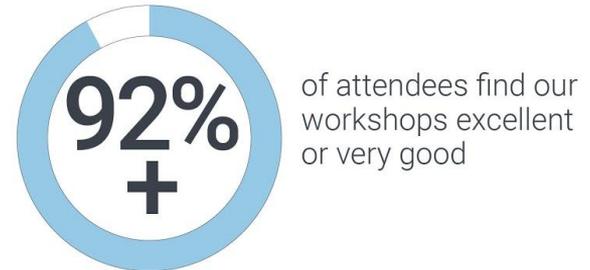
David Hardy  
Managing Partner



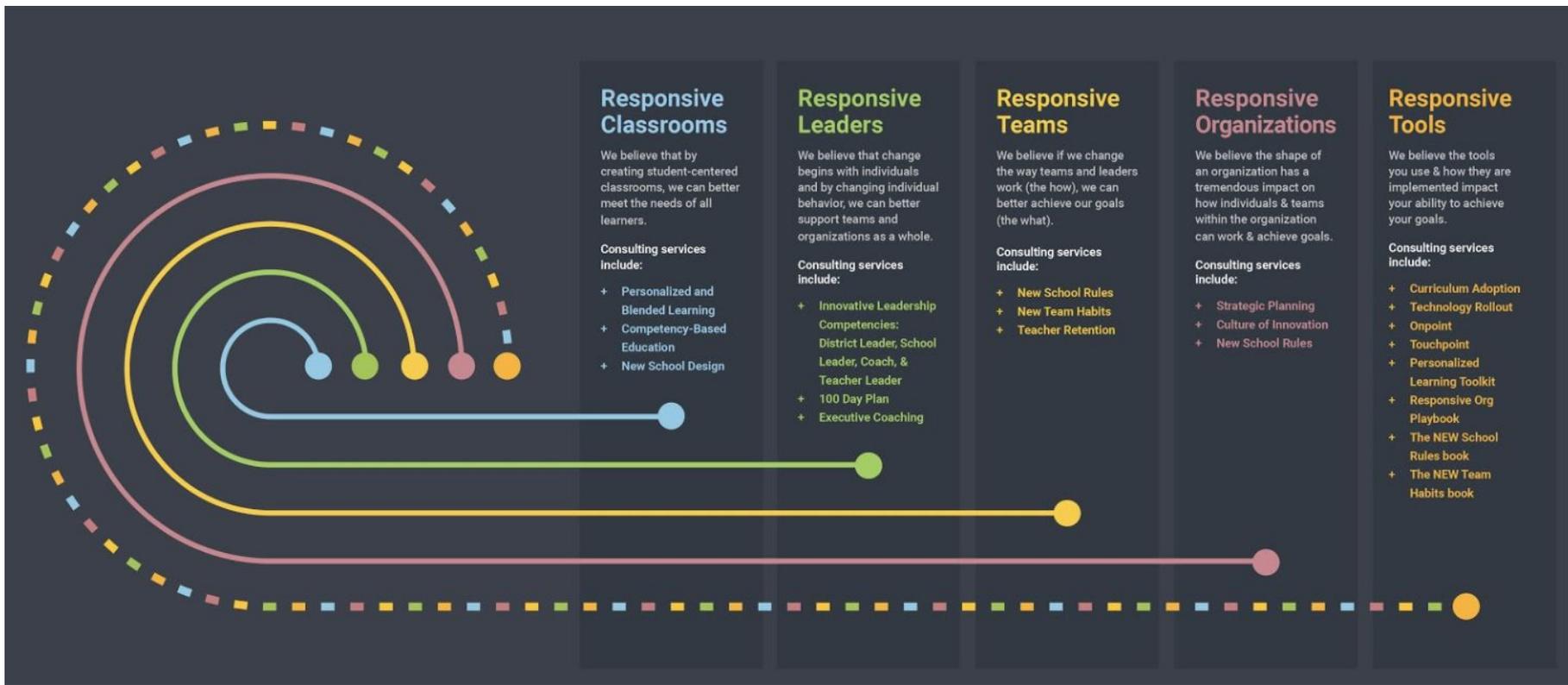
# Hi! We are Education Elements



WE ARE AN EDUCATION CONSULTANCY, THAT HELPS TRANSFORM SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS



# Ways We Work With Districts



# Framework

## **STEP 0: Start with Yourself + Cede Power**

*Identify your own bias, power, and privilege in how you make decisions*



### **STEP 1: Connect**

*Unpack the challenge by understanding the experience by those most deeply impacted*



### **STEP 2: Include**

*Include and elevate the voices of stakeholders at the margins*

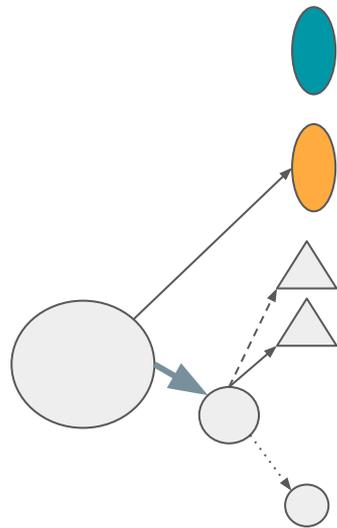


### **STEP 3: Create**

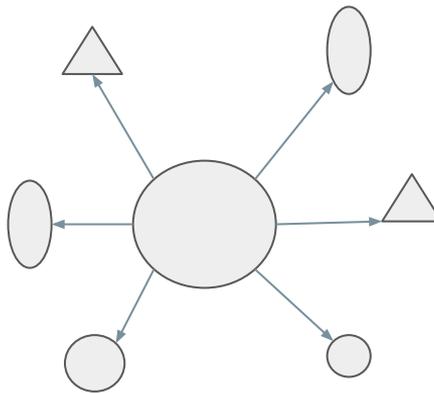
*Design prototypes that create equitable outcomes for ALL students*

# How We Define Educational Equity

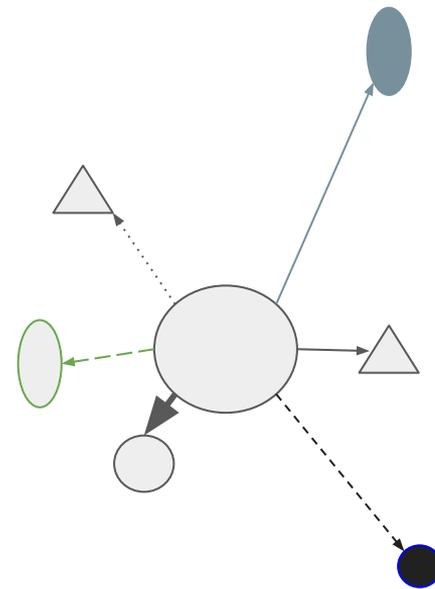
**Educational equity** is the systemic recognition that our current racial and socio-economic learning gaps are a result of deliberate action, and therefore require that a greater amount of attention and resources are dedicated to addressing biases and intentionally infusing anti-racist ideologies that progress forward the eradication of such barriers.



**Typical**



**Equal**



**Equitable**

**“The fact is that we don’t know what equity looks like as a society, because we’ve never actually had it.”**

# Today's Format & Future Goals

## Today's Format

- “Safe enough to try” conversation
- Perspective then Pose (a question)
- Levity and challenge in the same conversation

## Future Goals at EE

- **Amplify Educational equity**
- **Build community**
- **Share with the world**

# Today's topic is:

How does one connect to a challenge and take steps towards engaging equitably with stakeholders?

Please add your answer to  
the chat.

**What are some challenges you are  
currently facing in connecting with your  
stakeholders?**

Where we've seen across the country...



## Where we've seen across the country...



- Well intended practices
- Increased of time on computers and communication platforms by adults and children
- Increase in stress levels
- An increase in uncertainty

**An increase in awareness of the inequities that exist in our education system**

Please add your answer to  
the chat.

**What are the things you consider when  
making decisions that impact you?**

# Perspective: Facing a challenge



## Perspective: Facing a challenge



# Perspective: Facing a challenge



In ideal situations:

1. Everything would be in a neat package
2. Everyone has been transparent about what they know
3. All stakeholders involved want and need the same thing

# Perspective: Facing a challenge



However, in most situations:

1. We have incomplete information
2. The problem is complex and has existed for some time
3. There is no perfect solution
4. The timing of the challenge is not right

# What does it mean to Connect?

Step & Question	Key Action	Guidance
<p><b>1</b></p> <p><i>Who is most impacted by the challenge?</i></p>	<p>Assume she does not know the answer - go to your community instead.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Before getting to a point where you can identify what information you require to guide decision-making (i.e. feedback, buy-in, new ideas), it is important for a leader to begin at the source - your community.</li><li>• Another important part of this step is introspection.</li></ul>
<p><b>2</b></p> <p><i>How is the challenge presenting itself?</i></p>	<p>Recognize the challenges that befell her engagement activities last time, and seek to avoid them</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Challenges with time and place, tokenizing certain groups or voices, lack of trust between community groups, and lack of rigorous data review protocols can all lead to engagement that feels more like 'checking the box'; vs. authentically connecting with one's community.</li></ul>
<p><b>3</b></p> <p><i>Why does this matter?</i></p>	<p>Engage her community to identify a problem statement.</p>	<p>Now that you have clarified which group(s) to engage and the challenges to avoid, it is time to generate your 'why' statement. Craft a statement that names the groups to include and the problem we will collectively tackle. Examples could be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>We seek to collect feedback from Black parents, teacher-leaders, staff, and Black community leaders in order to increase safer learning environments for all students, especially our Black males.</i></li><li>• <i>We seek secure buy-in from parents of SpEd students, principals, policy experts, and SpEd staff about structures we have developed to support SpEd students in our return plan.</i></li></ul>

# Remember: Connecting is all about Empathy



Connect with your challenge by understanding the experiences of those most deeply impacted. Who is most impacted by the challenge? How is the challenge presenting itself? Why does this matter?

## Outputs or Outcomes

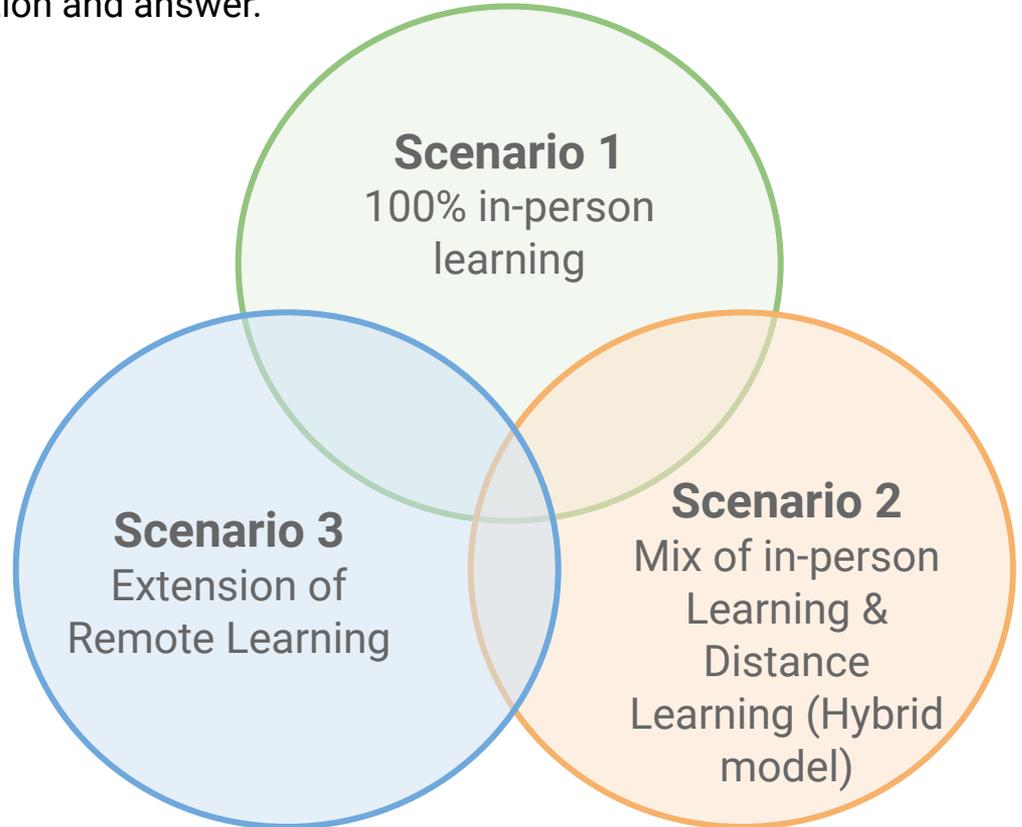
- Define the system you need to address, the scope of change you want to make, and whom you are making the change for.
- Empathize with the identified school level challenge
- Determine your redesign priority: are you redesigning for impact, urgency or ease?

# Example of Connect Planning for Reopening

1

*Who is most impacted by the challenge?*

This is a complex question and answer.



# Example of Connect Planning for Reopening

## 2

*How is the challenge presenting itself?*

Parents - challenge with work  
Educator + Staff - personal safety / pedagogy  
Political implications that hinder fast decision making

**Answer in the Chat**  
What challenges does this presenting for you?



# Example of Connect Planning for Reopening

## 3

*Why does this matter?*

## Identifying your Problem statement

### Questions

- What are the district requirements for remote learning and in-person learning? What aspects does the school have autonomy over?
- How have made decisions prior? For policies? For preferences and choices?
- What about the current schedule works for marginalized students? Where does the the model create inequities for them?

### Potential Learnings

- I prioritized adult logistics over continuity of the student experience
- I plan for SPED/EL students last

# Perhaps your Problem statement connects to one of these common challenge or pitfall...

<b>Common Challenge or Pitfall</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>TIME &amp; PLACE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There is a limited time to engage with stakeholders due to tight deadlines.</li><li>• Stakeholder participation has struggled with overrepresentation from some groups and persistent underrepresentation from other groups</li></ul>
<b>TOKENIZING</b>	The multitude of voices and opinions within a stakeholder group are consistently ignored, with only the most enthusiastic and visible voices (often those of leaders of community organizations) included.
<b>POLITICS</b> Board, Business, Local Officials	The influence of local governing bodies forces certain decisions, leaving leaders in a position of trying to make everyone happy
<b>SURVEY &amp; ENGAGEMENT DATA REVIEW</b>	You have an overwhelming amount of existing data from previous engagement opportunities (surveys, focus groups, etc.)

# Time to Crowdsource A Challenge!

**What stakeholder group would you like to problem solve around as a group?**

# Time to Crowdfund A Challenge!

**What challenge would you like to address for this group?**

# What does it mean to Connect?

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<p data-bbox="181 336 224 419">1</p> <p data-bbox="59 445 359 503"><i>Who is most impacted by the challenge?</i></p>	<p data-bbox="388 341 672 478">Assume she does not know the answer - go to your community instead.</p>	<ul data-bbox="736 341 1831 478" style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="736 341 1831 445">• Before getting to a point where you can identify what information you require to guide decision-making (i.e. feedback, buy-in, new ideas), it is important for a leader to begin at the source - your community.</li><li data-bbox="736 450 1470 478">• Another important part of this step is introspection.</li></ul>
<p data-bbox="181 592 224 675">2</p> <p data-bbox="85 702 332 760"><i>How is the challenge presenting itself?</i></p>	<p data-bbox="388 560 672 767">Recognize the challenges that befell her engagement activities last time, and seek to avoid them</p>	<ul data-bbox="736 598 1846 734" style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="736 598 1846 734">• Challenges with time and place, tokenizing certain groups or voices, lack of trust between community groups, and lack of rigorous data review protocols can all lead to engagement that feels more like 'checking the box'; vs. authentically connecting with one's community.</li></ul>
<p data-bbox="181 855 224 938">3</p> <p data-bbox="79 964 340 991"><i>Why does this matter?</i></p>	<p data-bbox="388 860 672 964">Engage her community to identify a problem statement.</p>	<p data-bbox="701 805 1821 909">Now that you have clarified which group(s) to engage and the challenges to avoid, it is time to generate your 'why' statement. Craft a statement that names the groups to include and the problem we will collectively tackle. Examples could be:</p> <ul data-bbox="736 915 1850 1018" style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="736 915 1850 964">• <i>We seek to collect feedback from Black parents, teacher-leaders, staff, and Black community leaders in order to increase safer learning environments for all students, especially our Black males.</i></li><li data-bbox="736 969 1802 1018">• <i>We seek secure buy-in from parents of SpEd students, principals, policy experts, and SpEd staff about structures we have developed to support SpEd students in our return plan.</i></li></ul>

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# Time to Crowdsource A Challenge!

## ***Add to the Chat***

Given our challenge, what could our 'problem statement be'?

What would you be trying to solve for with your engagement?

**Try beginning your response with 'How might we...**

**Example:** "How might we minimize continued learning loss for our Black and brown students in a virtual learning environment?"

**Remember to Consider these Pitfalls!**

**TIME & PLACE**

**TOKENIZING**

**POLITICS**

Board, Business, Local Officials

**SURVEY & ENGAGEMENT  
DATA REVIEW**

# Your 'Key 3' Calls To Action

## Check Out In the Chat

### **Internal**

When it comes to bringing about change, what do you usually put your voice to?

### **External**

Looking at your district, where are people using voice to bring about change?

### **Philosophical**

Are we speaking from our heart or mind to create change?

# Thank You!

Stay safe, stay healthy!

Access today's slides:  
[bit.ly/EEConnect](https://bit.ly/EEConnect)

Connect with Education Elements on social media to continue the conversation, or subscribe to our blog for more resources about educating through COVID-19.



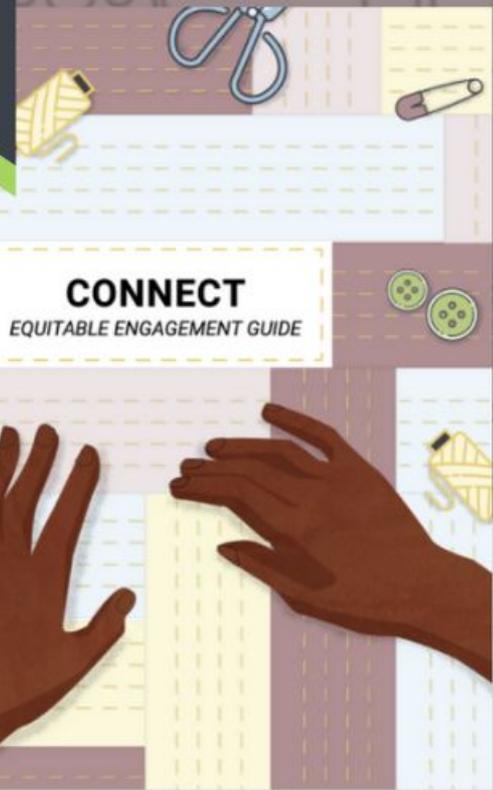
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Guide**



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