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## Step 4: Reflect

### Reflective Narrative Template

**Directions:** Respond to the following prompts (no more than 5 pages) with a focus on your leadership capacity to analyze data and propose school improvement strategies related to the California state indicator and identified student group. Type your responses within the brackets following each prompt. Do not delete or alter the prompts.

1. How did your work in Leadership Cycle 1 help you identify, analyze, and understand the potential contributing factors for the California state indicator equity gap identified for a specific student group at your school?

[ There were multiple factors that helped to identify, analyze, and understand the potential contributing factors:

- A. Asking for multiple years of data required me to look for trends and patterns. When looking at data, it is easy to have a one-year spike or dip in data. By looking at multiple years, it allows one to see the trend up, down or that of stagnancy. You can use this trending data to peek your curiosity and begin your fact-finding work in order to identify where you want to dive deeper.
- B. Next, asking us to look at multiple indicators and sources of data was helpful as it assisted in finding the most prevalent issue. This was hard as it lead to many questions for me, both around suspension data but also around the low percentage of students who graduate meeting A-G requirements. For the sake of the time of this project I had to choose suspension rates but looking at multiple indicators and source uncovered a number of issues that could be explored in order to improve the practices at AHS. Without looking at these sources, one might never know that there is an issues, especially at a school that outwardly looks like it has it together well from the outside as AHS does.
- C. Additionally, asking for both quantitative and qualitative data was key. By looking at both you get the issue, and the context. As well, you heard from a number of key stakeholders who provide perspective that one may not have alone. This context is incredibly important as it can assist you in understanding how to approach an issue, what the history of dealing with it is, what are the unseen causes and underlying issues, etc...
- D. Finally, the seeking of feedback in step 3 was critical. It is so important to seek other perspectives and ideas before proceeding. Others can provide a great deal of insights to your blind spots as a leader. In addition, you can glean a lot of information about how various cohorts of stakeholders might react to a policy shift or gather questions they may have so that you can adjust your plan and/or pre-emptively answer questions that may arise. ]



2. Summarize what you have learned about equity-driven leadership. How does understanding the institutional and/or structural factors—including social, economic, or cultural context(s)—that may be contributing to equity gaps influence your ability to provide equity-driven leadership?

[Equity driven leaderships pushes us as leaders to question our institutional knowledge and policies in order to ensure that we are creating a safe learning environment for all of our students. Given that we all experience life and the world differently and may have pre-conceived notions based on these experiences focusing on equity-driven leadership pushes us to look past these notions, seek to surround ourselves with a community, and rely on that community for guidance along the way. Equity-driven leadership makes me think of the African proverb “ubuntu” which is often translates as “I am because we are.” The inclusion of your community in the work we do is what allows us to lead most effectively.

Properly understanding the institutional and structural factors that contribute to equity gaps is vital to success in our ever-changing cultural shifting in our country. Recognizing that factors such as socio-economics, cultural, environmental, etc...have a profound effect on our students and how they experience the world and specifically how they experience school. Better understanding these and taking them into account when interacting with students and creating policy will allow us to be more understanding and drive us to be more progressive and inclusive of our students and their families.]

3. Reflect on your ability to conduct a data analysis and determine an equity gap, identify potential contributing factors, create a problem statement and strategies, gather feedback, and adjust your strategies.

- a. Analyze your strengths and areas for growth in addressing equity needs for a group of students at your school.

[ I think a strength is my ability to quickly find data and disaggregate it into digestible chunks that others can understand. I’ve had a number of jobs in the past that were Educational Data focused and this has been a gift when it comes to understanding how to break-down and present that data.

As well, I have an open mind. I do not get bogged down in “what we’ve always done.” When I say that my guiding question is always “is it what is best for students” I mean this. I am not afraid to reflect on my practice and adjust it if it isn’t working for all. I also seek out and embrace dissenting opinions about my work in order to better understand how I can address needs.

One area of growth that I am aware of is my eagerness to move forward with plans. I am a “doer” and when I believe I have found the cause, I immediately go into solutions mode. I want to fix the issue and move on to the next issue. I need to work on two things. One, slowing down the process to ensure I have thought through all aspects well enough and two, create a system and process for follow-through. Making sure there is a way to track success, check-in along the way, and address adjustments is vital to success. I need to make sure that the team addresses this in order to do our best work. ]



b. Based on the analysis of your experiences in Cycle 1, identify specific professional learning goals and describe next steps for growth.

[1. Join or create a leadership book club – One of the best ways to reflect on your leadership style and grow is to research aspects of leadership and then reflect on your own practice regularly. Participating in a book-club or book-study is a great way to learn more, reflect, and connect with others who are interested in growing as leaders. It not only helps you grow but creates a great leadership network. I specifically would like to connect with leaders who have the lens of equity in their studies and discussions.

2. Seek out professional learning opportunities and conferences that focus on innovative and progressive ideas in education. Learn from the leaders of these and synthesize what I can take back to my campus and then bring back the best practices to my staff for consideration.]