Big, Hairy Challenges and How We Are Leading Change

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We can lose the future if we forget the past, but we can’t win the future with the past as our guide.

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“Why” change?

“What” does change look like?

“How” do we change schools?

Are we on a trajectory to intersect the future?
the call
“Why” change? It's not just about jobs and rising tuitions...
education market 1990

- Neighborhood public
- Parochial
- Private

education market today

- Neighborhood
- Social-Structured
- Micro-urban
- Charter
- Magnet
- Choice
- Home
- Online
- After school
- Hybrid
- Parochial
- Other faith-based
- Independent day
- Boarding
What are families searching for?
CD’s  
Taxis  
Malls  
Hotels

iTunes  
Uber/Lyft  
Online shopping  
AirBnB

• Bypass costly infrastructure  
• De-centralized  
• Increase individual connections
Time

Rate of change

Technology +

Human Adaptability

We are here

Eric Teller, in Thomas Friedman, *Thank You for Being Late*
In 25 years, schools will all fall into one of three categories:

- Insulated by some combination of market, legacy, demand, and finances
- Highly differentiated by program or brand
- Struggling/failing
“What” does the change look like? And how can these impact our cost equations?
Culture of Learning Series

“We are shifting from…”

-Bo Adams

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Student Engagement

Increasing Curiosity

Student Centrism

DEEPER LEARNING

“Deeper Learning Cheat Sheet”

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“The Box”

TIME

SPACE

CAMPUS BOUNDARIES

SUBJECT

AGE

STUDENT:TEACHER RATIO

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What is inevitable in school change in the next 20 years?

What are big levers that provoke change?
The future looks a LOT different...
STUDENT-TEACHER RELATIONSHIP
INTEREST-BASED LEARNING and OER
LEARNING IN AND WITH THE WORLD
RELATION-RICH TECHNOLOGIES
“How” will we change our schools?
ADAPTING TO VUCA WORLD
• Effective change lies in the alignment of strategy and culture

• Change requires both comfort and capacity (heart and head)

• Most schools are deficient in “innovation DNA”
Strategy:

Is your strategic plan strategic?
Strategy Series

“Five Questions” model of strategy (Roger Martin)

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What is our winning aspiration?

Where will we play?

How will we win?

What capabilities must we have?

What management systems do we need?
Strategy Series

- Vision
- A plan
- Optimizing the status quo
- Following best practices

Strategy is NOT...

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Big Question #2: What are we watching?
Is your leadership asking...

What are major trends impacting education?

How are *different* schools responding?

What are the hurdles to innovation and how do we address them?

How do we decide where to focus?

What is it in our organizations and structures that make it challenging to pursue a longer-term vision for our future; what can we do to refocus our sense of time and magnitude of our goals?
Are we ready to push out to the “Third Horizon”? 

Horizon 1: KNOWN 

Horizon 2: SEMI-KNOWN 

Horizon 3: UNKNOWN
Strategy Series

Shift Our Approach to Strategic Planning…

FROM

INWARD
BACKWARD
EPISODIC
MEDIUM TERM
TACTICAL

TO

OUTWARD
FORWARD
ONGOING
LONG RANGE
STRATEGIC

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General Steps of “Strategic Design”

- Create a sense of urgency around a big opportunity
- Unwrap and articulate a North Star; identify the core elements of OUR aspirations
- Accelerate movement by removing barriers
- Research, design, prototype, and test
- Visibly celebrate significant early wins
- Institutionalize changes in culture

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Modified from Kotter, HBR 2012
expansive...transparent...inclusive...systemic...ongoing...messy
Three Tools
SCHOOLS OPERATE ON THREE LEVELS:

30,000 feet: Where are we going, what do we want to be, and how are we going to get there?

10,000 feet: Systems that align to the vision: pedagogy, instruction, curriculum, professional growth, space, time

Ground Floor: What am I going to do with my students today?
Distributed leadership requires effective teams

The Five Behaviors of a Cohesive Team™ Model

Update to “Five Dysfunctions…” by Patrick Lencioni
Inputs

WHAT RESOURCES DO YOU NEED?

Activities

WHAT WILL YOU DO?
HOW WILL YOU APPLY THESE RESOURCES?

Outcomes

HOW WILL STUDENTS AND TEACHERS BENEFIT?

Impacts

WHAT CHANGES IN THE SCHOOL OR COMMUNITY DO YOU WANT TO SEE?

Your planned work

Your intended results
What are we really thinking?

- Five events in 2017
- About 250 heads, board chairs, senior administrators
- About 900 post it notes
  - Mission
  - Learning experience
  - People
  - Finance and operations

Think: How many of these are in your current “strategic” plan?
MISSION

1. Urgency of pushing our thinking and vision; the basic model is outdated

2. Changing and defining culture and traditions

3. Defining our real value in times of changing markets and demographics
LEARNING EXPERIENCE

1. Shift to deeper learning: flexible, interdisciplinary, student-centered, differentiated

2. A culture of learning rooted in risk, failure, growth mindset

3. Assessing what we value in student performance

4. College admissions and expectations
1. Shifting role of the teacher; how to hire, retain, evaluate, and develop

2. Educating parents and managing parent expectations

3. Developing board and leadership structures and skills

4. Parents and teachers are risk averse
OPERATIONS

1. Economy, politics, and the business climate

2. Daily schedule and annual calendar

3. Efficient and evolving use of physical spaces
1. If our students don’t learn to manage civil discourse, fact and opinion, science, and global stewardship, the rest will not matter.

2. Evolution is neither fair nor kind.

3. Adapting to a world of AI and VR. Balancing plugged and unplugged

4. Re-aligning assessment with intrinsic motivation.

5. Finding differentiated value at the *margins* of our experience
SCHOOLS of the FUTURE?

Possible Innovation Trajectories

Most schools 1975
Most schools today
Some schools here

CHANGE

-40 -30 -20 -10 0 +10 +20 +30 +40

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