



BRIGHT Pathways for School Equity

Participant Workbook

BRIGHT-CS Researcher-Practitioner Partnership

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Project Overview

BRIGHT Pathways for School Equity is a research and development project funded by the National Science Foundation. BRIGHT stands for “Building student Retention through Individuated Guided coHort Training.” The BRIGHT Pathways project is a collaborative learning team (CLT) of researchers and educators studying how the system of learning STEM+CS can be improved for culturally and linguistically diverse students, in particular for Black girls and other girls of color.

The BRIGHT Pathways project is part of a learning ecosystem. The BRIGHT-CS project created a student program with middle and high school girls of color in New York City and in Arlington, Virginia to teach computational thinking and computer science in after-school programs and summer camps. The BRIGHT Pathways extends the learning ecosystem to educators to improve the system of learning for students.

Educational equity is a system where every student receives what they need to actualize their full potential.

Acknowledgements

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Expectations for the CLT

This CLT is an advanced-level course on educational equity and culturally responsive pedagogy. Educators in this CLT are expected to:



1. *Bring an equity-focused growth mindset.*

Have a “beginner’s mindset”. Bring your curiosity, humility, and vulnerability. Ask, “Why?” Before we can think about solutions, we don’t need to understand the problem. We know what the problem is—inequity. We need to understand the “why.”



2. *Be fully engaged and present with each other and yourself.*

Participate in synchronous discussions. This is especially important in virtual settings; engage in virtual synchronous discussions. Do not just come to listen.

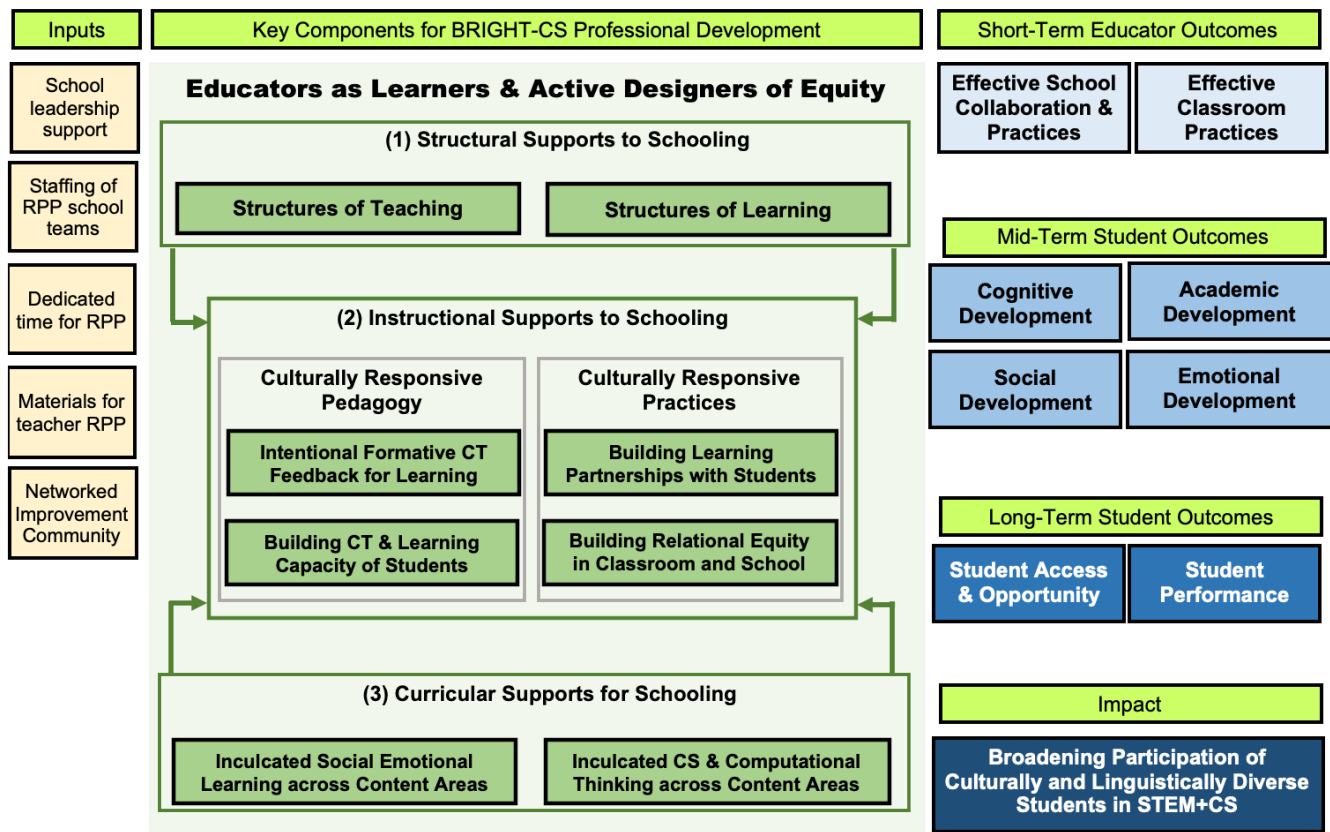


3. *Commit to mindful practice.*

Reflect on your practice, study the outcomes, and revise the system (your circle of influence). You will conduct a series of adaptive continuous improvement cycles and present your learnings to the CLT.

Conceptual framework: Educators as Learners and Active Designers of Equity

Educational equity is about improving structural, instructional, and curricular supports to schooling. Focusing on educators as active designers of equity within these areas will lead to effective school and classroom practices. Effective educator practices will lead to every student developing their academic, cognitive, and social and emotional development. These, in turn, will lead to student access, opportunity, and performance.



Meeting 5: Instructional Barriers to Supports

(A) Pre-work Before the Meeting

Concept of Focus: Instructional Aspects of Schooling

- Instructional aspects of schooling are the educator intent plus actions for equity to support students through the learning pit. There are two types of instructional supports.
 - **Culturally responsive pedagogy:** Providing intentional formative feedback for learning and building the learning capacity of students (academic, cognitive, social, and emotional development).
 - **Skim:** Hammond (2015). *CRT and the Brain*. Chapter 6 Establishing alliance in the learning partnership: Becoming an ally to help build students' independence (p. 88-107).
 - **Key takeaways:**
 - *Warm demander:* In a learning partnership, your job is to find a way to bring the student into the zone of proximal development while in a state of relaxed alertness so that she experiences the appropriate cognitive challenge that will stimulate her neurons and help her dendrites grow (p. 97).
 - *Wise feedback:* Claude Steele, who coined the phrase 'stereotype threat,' recommends providing wise feedback. Wise feedback is a way of giving feedback that reassures students that they will not be stereotyped or doubted as less capable. The teacher has to convey faith in the potential of the student while being honest with the student about the gap between her current performance and the standard she is trying to reach (p. 104).
 - **Culturally responsive practices:** Building authentic learning partnerships with students and relational equity in classrooms and school.
 - **Skim:** Pollack (2015). *School Talk*. Chapter 6 Life Talk (p. 257-305).
 - **Key takeaways:**
 - *Core tension:* Much of the education field wrestles with the core tension of diversity work of relating to students from diverse groups and good teaching of content (p. 271).

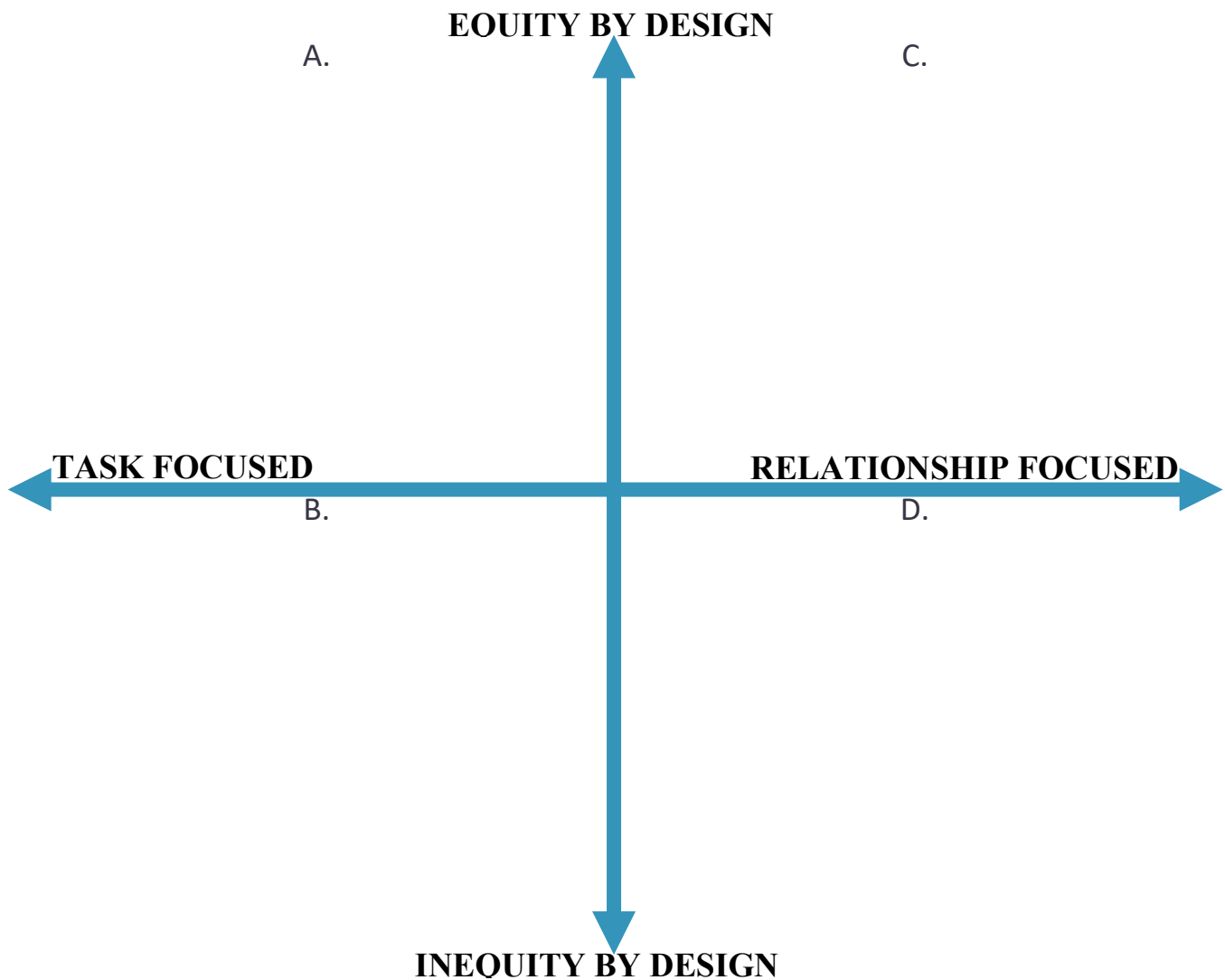
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- *Academic and social goal planning:* Researchers emphasize the critical importance of students and educators planning toward both academic and social goals, asking: Where am I going (what are the goals), How am I going (What progress is being made toward the goal), and Where to next (What activities need to be undertaken to make better progress). In a chapter called “What a Coach Can Teach a Teacher,” Jeff Duncan-Andrade and Earnest Morrell describe building such goal-focused Life Talk into a basketball program for girls (p. 289).

Reflections and Ponderings Before the Meeting



Mica Pollack (2015), in her chapter *Life Talk*, writes, “Many educators grapple with a key question about Life Talk: how much time should people take to talk specifically about students’ lives, especially if their main job is to teach a subject? Much of the field wrestles with this Core Tension.” (p. 271).

Complete the polarity map below. In thinking about the teaching profession at large, jot down educator actions and/or behaviors, attitudes, intent, and perceptions for each quadrant. Remember, your list is just ponderings of the teaching profession at large, not a teacher evaluation of you or other educators you know.



(B) Meeting 5 Presentation and Discussion Probes

Culturally Responsive Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is often thought of as “just” exit tickets, quizzes, or grades. Instead, let’s think of formative assessments as feedback loops for educators and students to develop students’ academic, cognitive, social and emotional development. As such, artifacts resulting from the formative assessment process should not be graded.

Formative assessment is a great tool for equity. It helps educators work with each student and support each student’s meta-cognitive, social, emotional and academic needs.

Formative Assessment

Answers three questions for learners		
Where am I going?	Where am I now?	Where to next?
Begins with a positive, safe learning environment, an environment that promotes ongoing improvement		
Clarity about learning expectations	Evidence gathering	Responsive action
Teacher: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies clear learning targets and performance criteria aligned to standards. Selects/develops student task(s) aligned to both content and cognitive demand of standards. Communicates learning expectations to students. Builds relevance of new learning with students. Clarifies: Why is this content/skill important to learn? 	Teacher: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formulates a plan for evidence gathering (when/how during instruction). Probes student thinking to ascertain student understanding and/or misconceptions. Administers checks for understanding (individual task, writing prompt, exit ticket, ungraded quiz, etc.). Documents student progress. 	Teacher: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determines best instructional next step for student learning. Provides descriptive feedback and/or additional instruction. Groups students as needed for reinforcement/extension of learning. Provides time for students to take individual action. Moves to summative assessment activities (after responsive action loop is complete).
Student: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internalizes learning expectations through discussion with teacher and peers, reviews anchor and exemplar artifacts. Connects prior knowledge of topic to expected new learning. Finds personal connection and relevance with topic. 	Student: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participates in peer feedback activities. Tracks own progress toward learning targets. Participates in self-assessment activities. Reflects metacognitively on learning successes and challenges. 	Student: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Takes action based on teacher and peer feedback (self-regulation). Revisits own progress toward learning targets. Requests help as needed. Prepares for summative assessment.

Student engages with new learning

Source: Dempsey, Kathleen (2018). Formative assessment quick check chart. Resource developed for use with high school instructional coaches. McREL International. Denver, CO.

For next time...

1. Think about an instructional barrier(s) at work in your classroom, school, or circle of influence.
2. Plan or test out a small win using Adaptive Implementation.



(C) Study and Share for Next Meeting: Instructional Barriers to Supports

<Instructional supports definition: (1) Culturally responsive pedagogy and (2) Culturally responsive practices.>

1. Identify one instructional barrier.
 - The instructional barrier you identify should come from data, such as empathy interviews with students, your assessment or cross-walk analysis of your lesson plans, or self-reflection on your pedagogy and practice. Do not identify a barrier without data. Verify your thinking and self-assessment with data.
 - The instructional barrier you identify should be within your circle of influence (i.e., in your classroom, with your students, with your PLC / CLT, etc.).

2. Strategize for one instructional support...like using **culturally responsive formative assessment!**
 - Think small wins. Small wins are concrete, complete, implemented outcomes of moderate importance that can produce visible results within weeks. Small wins should not take a whole school year to determine if it worked.

3. Test it out using an adaptive implementation continuous improvement approach.
 - The key to the process is using data to test an enacted practice and then to learn from it.
 - Follow the Adaptive Implementation worksheet on the next page.

Meeting 6: Instructional Barriers to Supports

(A) Adaptive Implementation Cycle 3: Dig Out Instructional Barriers, Plant Equity



Core Goal: Supporting each student's academic, cognitive, and social and emotional development.

Problem of Practice (Instructional barrier): Based on empathy interviews, observations, cross-walk analysis, or ponderings:

1. What do we need to see? [Classroom or school short-term outcome]
2. What resources do we need? [Resources for teaching and learning]
3. What will we do? [Structural support: Think small win. Data collection.]
4. What did we do? [Data results]
5. What did we learn? [I used to think x, now I know y.]

(B) CLT Learn and Share Notes

Instructional Barriers	Instructional Supports
Ideas to try in my classroom or school	