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Project Planning Worksheets

Step 1: Identification

Identify Sustainability Challenges that you want to address.

The main challenge that I wish to address is “simply” getting students to think in terms of sustainability and systems. In education, it seems that quite frequently minimal deep thought comes in to play when students are asked to do an assignment, study a topic, or work on a project. Students also tend to think compartmentally and linearly with regard to their studies. Getting them to see the “big picture” and how this relates to the world around them seems to me a way to get students to naturally become deep, systems thinkers and will as a natural consequence allow students to more easily explore the ideas around sustainability.

Why is this important to you?

I am an educator. My entire career has been with a goal of getting students to be more critical in their thinking/logic. If a student (or anyone!) can incorporate this way of thinking into their lives, they will be able to actually learn rather than simply learn for an assessment.

What other issues is your central challenge connected to?

Better to ask, "Are there any issues that are NOT affected by this way of thinking?"

Step 2: Setting Your Project System Change Goals & Outcomes!

Now that you are inspired, informed, and have developed a clear focus for what you want to achieve, you can decide how to take action.

First, define your project by setting goals. Next, come up with an effective action plan to make your goals materialize.

Setting Smart Goals

Good goals are the key to great projects

Specific - Answers the six "W"s: "Who," "What," "Where," "When," "Which," "Why"

Measurable - Concrete criteria to measure progress helps you stay on track

Attainable - Visualize yourself achieving your goals. As you grow and develop, your goals become more attainable.

Realistic - You must be both able and willing to work towards your goals. Your goal is probably realistic if you really believe it can be accomplished.

Tangible - If you can see or feel the end product, it becomes more measurable and easier to attain

What is your specific goal do you want to achieve?

That students consider more than one lens when making decisions or plans. That they learn to think systemically and

consider cause and effect.

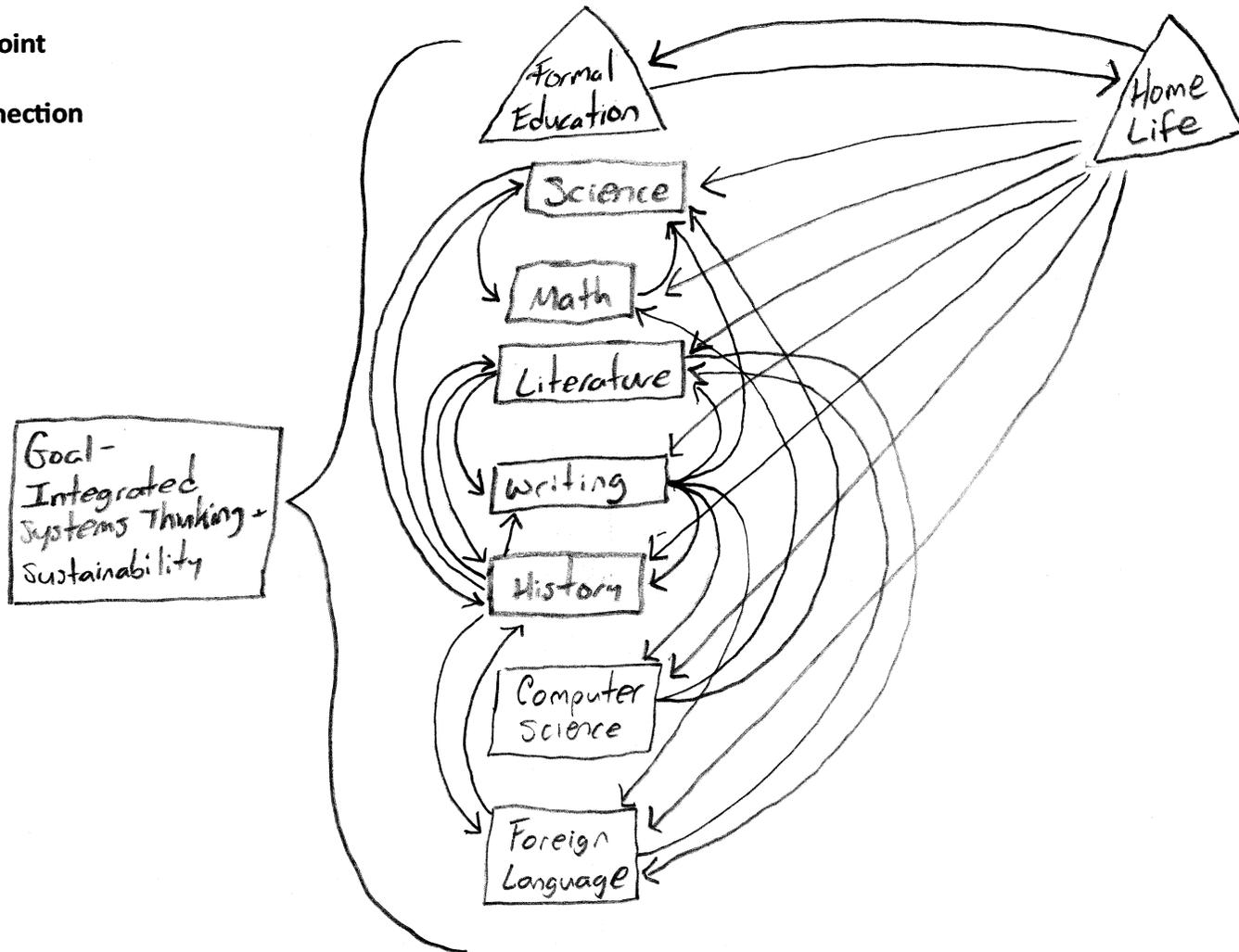
<p>Goal Statement:</p> <p>To integrate systems thinking and sustainability into the 7-12th grades syllabuses and way of being.</p>	<p>Example project Goal:</p> <p>“Integrate systems thinking into all Middle Years syllabuses.</p> <p>.</p>
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<p>What would be some possible outcomes if you are successful in achieving your goal?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Create a population of deep thinkers/system thinkers.2. Help foster/encourage future change makers to be protagonists in creating a better world.3. Inspire true learning.
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Step 3: Causal Systems Diagram

Starting with your change goal, develop a causal systems diagram illustrating the key elements and relationships of the system that you are looking to change. Remember to identify feedback loops and possible leverage points for intervention.

▲ = Leverage Point
→ = Causal Connection



Step 4: Your Theory of Change

A **Theory of Change (ToC)** is a tool to help you describe the need you are trying to address, the changes you want to make (your outcomes), and what you plan to do (your activities). Writing a narrative theory of change can help draw out causal links of your system, and organise your thinking. Writing a narrative challenges your assumptions and helps to identify elements might be missing.

Include in your ToC narrative the following:

Theory of Change

My ToC is that in order to make a change, one needs to become aware that a change needs to be made. More specifically, what change needs to be made. Frequently in education, students will say that school/learning needs to change, but they can't quite put their finger on the pulse of the change that is needed. This, in my view, is primarily caused by a linear/compartmentalized style of teaching. We tend to ask students to "turn off" everything except the subject matter that they currently are working on. This frequently extends to the teachers as well. By not working holistically in learning, we are doing a grave disservice to our students.

I truly believe that our best thinkers, scientists and philosophers are children of pre-school age. They unabashedly question, analyse, and think in a non-compartmentalized way. In school, we tend to crush this way of being through our design. We need to break down the intellectual barriers that separate learning into subjects and encourage students to truly think like children. We need to foster inquisitive minds and imagination. Furthermore, we need to change the grade level system. That is to say that simply because a person is 13, does not mean that s/he is at the same level as every other 13 year old. Learning should be based on ability, not age.

Lastly, I believe that we need to change the focus from a competition style system to one of more collaboration. We should not rate students on GPA, rather on their ability to apply learning in new and unique ways. Students should not shoot for high test scores and grades, rather aim for understanding and as a consequence, high test scores and grades are more likely.

This change has been taking place here at Equity over the past years. It is slow, yet steady. I do not foresee an end date to this. It will be an ever-evolving process and the goals will change with time. This process includes all stakeholders.

- How do you see change taking place to achieve your target
- What causes what? What and who influences what and who? What is the pathway of change?

- What sort of timeframe do you envision to make this change?

Step 5: Indicators of Effect and Impact

Along the Way:

At the end of your change efforts you will want to be able to know how much of a difference you really made, so that you can see if you achieved your objectives. Identify a few indicators that you can use to measure, assess various outcomes and impacts of your efforts.

Type	Indicator
Output Indicators Cross-Curriculum Learning	Students can more easily pull from distinct subject matter and times (grade levels) into current work/discussions. Students will reference prior learning on a regular basis and not need to be reminded (re-taught) previous lessons with the same frequency.
Outcome Indicators Applicability of knowledge	Students will more readily see real-world applications for what they are learning. They will be able to have genuine discussions around the reasons for said material and theory learned. In many cases, they will show they can directly apply their knowledge to their day to day educational experience (and ideally transfer this ability to all facets of their lives)
Impact Indicators A better life	Students should be able to see/feel that their new understanding on the world around them has a positive effect. It can be in the form of reduced time in needing to study, better results on projects/work, a less stressful existence, and an overall increase in their quality of life.

Step 6: AMOEBA Strategy Mapping

<p><u>Change Agents- person or group</u> Students!!</p>	<p><u>Strategy for Introduction and Promotion of Innovation</u> Introduce systems thinking and sustainability. Offer tools to assess (above) Give/Encourage outside of the box style thinking. Allow (and encourage!) failure</p>
<p><u>Transformers- person or group</u> Students (some) Teachers (some) Administration (ideally all!)</p>	<p><u>Strategies for Gaining Engagement and Endorsement of Innovation</u> Encourage and highlight people who model true transformational ideas and beliefs. Find ways to make these people integral into the system and put them front and center on key projects.</p>
<p><u>Reactionaries- person or group</u> Students (some) Teachers (some) Administration (hopefully none!) Parents (more than some)</p>	<p><u>Strategies for Neutralization, Circumvention, or Conversation</u> Allow for the constructive and open expression of ideas/concerns. Make sure these voices are heard and acknowledged. Include these people into the results/findings. Continually offer them a place at the table (as long as they do not stand in the way).</p>
<p><u>Iconoclasts- person or group</u> Students (some) Teachers (some) Administration (some) Parents (some)</p>	<p><u>Strategies for Engaging the Help of Critical Voices</u> Personally, I love iconoclasts! I encourage them to share their ideas/beliefs and then help them analyze the basis for their beliefs/ideas and encourage them to act in accordance with these.</p>
<p><u>Curmudgeons- person or group</u> Students (some) Teachers (some) Administration (ideally none!) Parents (some)</p>	<p><u>Strategies for Reducing their Negative impact on the Change Process</u> Honest and direct confrontation. By being honest and open about how these people (and their ideas) are not beneficial to the end goal, they either change or keep distance.</p>

Step 7: How to Sustain your Change Initiative

Sustaining a change initiative for a long time can be a major challenge. Even if you decide not to continue your own involvement, think about the ways that other people involved can sustain their interest in this initiative towards making it the norm.

Some ideas for sustaining an initiative

- **Having a Clear Time line**
- **Collaborating With Other Organizations:** By spreading responsibility for your project across several different groups, you're building a stronger support structure for the future. If one group discontinues their support, at least there are others who can take on more responsibility.
- **Building Strong Alliances with Adults & Mentors:** Adults & mentors can be a vital source of wisdom, financial resources, and technical expertise that is often required to take a onetime project to a more long-term venture.
- **Plan for Leadership Transition:** You may not always be the person in charge of your project! Leaving the right information so that a new leader can take over is essential. Put together a package of useful information for the next project leader.
- **Keep Good Records and Manage Knowledge:** Keeping good records of your contacts, how you do things, and your achievements will help you to sustain the effect of your project in the future. This includes documenting what you have learned through the process of evaluation.

Describe how you foresee sustaining your change initiative to become the mainstream.

Beyond working intensely within my own system (school) and ensuring that everyone here has all they need to continue in their own areas, I am reaching out to other schools' administrations to share ideas and plans. I am trying to help change the competitive nature of private, international schools to be one of more cooperation.

I keep written/digital record of activities done and tools used/shared. I also help individual teachers infuse these tools and activities into their class structure.

Teachers and staff are encouraged to share successes and failures with everyone during weekly staff meetings.

All important documents, plans, tools, PDFs, books, articles, etc. are shared openly for all stakeholders.

Step 8: Change Action Plan

Take some time to go over the steps that need to be taken in order for you to achieve your project goals. The following charts will help you to create your “Action Plan” and prepare for any challenges that might arise.

Step	Activity Description (Action)	What actually do you need to do? (Your Objective)	What help will you need? (People, resources, financial)	How will you know you are successful? (what is your success indicator?)	Time frame (when?)
1	Introduce sustainability/ systems thinking and tools	Offer classes/lessons for all grade levels and teachers/staff	Time! Post-it notes, markers, poster paper	When I see (as I have seen!!) these tools used and hear students and staff speaking in these terms	Began April/May of 2017 with Staff Continued with students Nov. of 2017. And continues...
2	Infuse compass tools into a more robust Science fair/project for all students	Show how these can be used in Science projects	Time! Post-it notes, markers, poster paper	Comparison of science project outcomes with previous years. Asking students to explain how these tools were used or useful.	Nov. of 2017 – February 2018
3.	Infuse sustainability/systems thinking into student	Show how to use these tools/ways of thinking	STUCO advisor, STUCO members	Evaluation of proposals	August 2017 to present

	government	when drafting proposals			
4.	Teach parents and board members about sustainability/systems thinking	Parent class	School administration and stakeholders	Future interactions with parents and stakeholders.	January 2018