

DeliverEd

**Understanding
Your
Organizational
Capacity to
Deliver**

Jefferson County Public Schools

November 15, 2017

The Delivery Framework breaks down an organization's capacity to deliver on its goals into 15 essential elements

1

Develop a Foundation for Delivery

- A. Define your aspiration
- B. Review the current state of delivery
- C. Build the delivery unit
- D. Establish a guiding coalition



2

Understand the Delivery Challenge

- A. Evaluate past and present performance
- B. Understand drivers of performance and relevant activities



3

Plan for Delivery

- A. Determine your reform strategy
- B. Draw the delivery chain
- C. Set targets and establish trajectories



4

Drive Delivery

- A. Establish routines to drive and monitor performance
- B. Solve problems early and rigorously
- C. Sustain and continually build momentum



5

Create an Irreversible Delivery Culture

- A. Build system capacity all the time
- B. Communicate the delivery message
- C. Unleash the "alchemy of relationships"



To determine JeffCo's current capacity to achieve its goals for students, DeliverEd gathered evidence from key stakeholders

We spoke to:

- *Principals*
- *Teachers*
- *Teacher leaders / coaches*
- *Superintendent*
- *Leadership team*
- *Student engagement*
- *Title I*
- *ESL/Dual Language*
- *Human Resources*
- *Achievement Directors*
- *Student Success*
- *Community members*
- *Strategic Plan Advisory Committee*

We also looked at:

- *JeffCo Generations report*
- *District website*
- *Data on school demographics and enrollment*
- *District budget data*
- *Student performance data*
- *JeffCo 2020 Vision*
- *Employee and Stakeholder survey reports*
- *SWOT org charts*
- *Communication artifacts (e.g., the Superintendent's blog)*

Capacity Review Debrief (1/5)

R	Red
AR	Amber - Red
AG	Amber - Green
G	Green

**1)
Develop a
foundation
for Delivery**

Characteristic

Strength

Rationale

1A) Define your aspiration

Does the system have a clearly articulated and shared aspiration?

AR

The generations document is a strong starting point, listing the overarching aspiration and key priorities of the district with the learner clearly at the center of the work. There are not, however, specific and measurable goals for this plan that include ambitious student outcomes the system aims to achieve by an expected date. "The new generations document is very conceptual but it doesn't have the hard and smart targets yet."

1B) Review the current state of delivery

Does the system regularly and deliberately reflect on its existing capacity to drive progress against aspirations?

AG

The Superintendent has invested considerable time in understanding the district's strengths and challenges and district leaders are aware of gaps in capacity based on staff feedback. There are, however, conflicting perspectives in the field about existing capacity challenges and as goals are further defined, it will be critical to get additional input from the field about capacity needed to achieve them.

1C) Build the delivery unit

Is there a person or team dedicated to driving implementation and monitoring progress?

AG

Tom has been tasked with leading the strategic planning work, people are aware of his role and he has access to and support of the Superintendent. Furthermore, the Superintendent is committed to ensuring that a delivery unit is permanently established to perform this function going forward. It will be critical to ensure this role has strong relationships with all strategy and tactic leaders.

1D) Establish a guiding coalition

Has the system leader identified a group of key people outside the system office who are influential in driving progress against the aspiration?

AG

The Superintendent has built strong relationships with a coalition of influential people and has an opportunity to capitalize on the strong support of the board. It will take more time to deepen these relationships and ensure that the district is intentional about leveraging these people and ensuring they are championing a consistent message.

Capacity Review Debrief (2/5)

R	Red
AR	Amber - Red
AG	Amber - Green
G	Green

Characteristic

Strength

Rationale

2) Understand the delivery challenge

2A) Evaluate past and present performance

Does the system regularly and consistently use data to evaluate performance?

AR

There is a wealth of data available across the district - particularly in the data and research team. Some data is used consistently and staff report a culture of data use. However, various stakeholders could not point to data that tells them whether they are achieving their goals. Additionally, there is some internal mistrust around the data and concerns about data sharing and access.

2B) Understand drivers of performance and relevant system activities

Do system leaders understand the impact of their work and what works in improving outcomes?

AR

There is some understanding of the underlying challenges that have stood in the way of performance. The UIP, for example, requires schools to do a root cause analysis, but it is unclear if it is being used by building leaders. There is also concern that with the increased focus on school autonomy, district leaders may not be aware of all the programs implemented across schools, let alone what is and is not working. "We tend to analyze specific programs, but we don't look across them to learn from each other."

Capacity Review Debrief (3/5)

R	Red
AR	Amber - Red
AG	Amber - Green
G	Green

Characteristic

Strength

Rationale

3) Plan for delivery

3A) Determine your reform strategy

Has the system identified and defined a cohesive set of strategies that will maximize the collective impact on the aspiration?

R

The vision document articulates a set of strategies and there is a plan to further define these through meetings with strategy and tactic owners. There is a need to prioritize ("pick a few things, be a broken record") and ensure the collective impact of the strategies is maximized. Furthermore, the theory of action needs to be fleshed out clearly for each tactic, with further clarity and direction from the Superintendent.

3B) Draw the delivery chain

Do system leaders understand the chain through which implementation must occur?

R

The team has yet to articulate the chain of implementation for the identified strategies and tactics. This is critical given the size of the district and the reality of existing silos that prevent collaboration and contribute to inefficiencies in implementation. "We need to intentionally connect everyone in the organization to each other and the core work."

3C) Set targets and trajectories

Have the aspiration and associated goals been translated to concrete end targets and trajectories?

R

This is a critical next step to more clearly defining the aspiration and goals and prioritizing strategies that will be enough to achieve the targets. There is a plan to build trajectories and benchmark performance.

Capacity Review Debrief (4/5)

R	Red
AR	Amber - Red
AG	Amber - Green
G	Green

Characteristic

Strength

Rationale

4) Drive delivery

4A) Establish routines to drive and monitor performance

Are there regular results-driven conversations that allow for shared review of and action on performance?

R

Meetings occur to discuss and share updates on the work that is underway, but these do not always focus on outcomes or performance. Often "conversations on progress are cancelled and postponed." As a result, there is not an established structure for regularly discussing and acting on performance.

4B) Solve problems early and rigorously

Are there mechanisms to ensure problems are identified, raised early and solved in order of priority?

AR

JeffCo has a culture of solving problems and people are encouraged and empowered to propose solutions. While there are some resources available to address problems as they arise, "we tend to be reactive" as there is no systematic process for elevating, prioritizing, and solving problems in an intentional way. As a result, there is a lot of firefighting and everything feels like an urgent issue. From the field, this culture of problem solving is not always felt: "I get the no, but nobody helps me get to yes."

4C) Sustain and continually build momentum

Does the system maintain its focus through challenges and distractions?

G

There is a lot of momentum and positive energy throughout the district right now. Dr. Glass is a "breath of fresh air." Despite some serious recent challenges and distractions, the staff have remained committed and focused on students.

Capacity Review Debrief (5/5)

R	Red
AR	Amber - Red
AG	Amber - Green
G	Green

Characteristic

Strength

Rationale

5) Create an irreversible delivery culture

5A) Build system capacity all the time

Is building implementation capacity a priority for system leaders and an ongoing endeavor?

R

Some opportunities for staff and stakeholders exist in the form of trainings and school-based PLCs. However, recruiting and retaining high quality staff is a significant concern, and compensation discrepancies are contributing to this challenge. Principals in particular desire additional support. "We hire people, get them in the job and assume they are going to figure it out."

5B) Communicate the delivery message

Does the system regularly communicate about the aspiration and the strategies to achieve it?

AG

Dr. Glass is leading an "authentic and genuine" communications effort in which educators feel increasingly listened to and respected. Stakeholders noted a recent increase in the quality, tone, and transparency of communication efforts. At the same time, messages from the district are sometimes conflicting and can feel "scattershot". There is also an opportunity for greater differentiation of messaging by audience.

5C) Unleash the "alchemy of relationships"

Are relationships that are central to successful implementation deliberately identified, cultivated, and maintained?

G

The generational ties in JeffCo are deep and the district feels small when it needs to. While there is previous erosion of trust that needs repairing and some concerns about the atmosphere of choice creating strained relationships, this area continues to be a strength of JeffCo.

The capacity review summary for JeffCo shows both areas of strength and opportunities for growth

1. Develop the Foundation

2. Understand the Challenge

3. Plan for Delivery

4. Drive Delivery

5. Create Irreversibility

Define your aspiration

Review current state of Delivery

Build the Delivery Unit

Establish a Guiding Coalition

Evaluate Past & Present Performance

Understand Drivers of Performance & relevant system activities

Determine Reform Strategy

Draw the delivery chain

Set Targets & Trajectories

Routines

Solve problems early & rigorously

Sustain & Continually Build Momentum

Build system capacity all the time

Communicate the Delivery Message

Unleash the "Alchemy" of Relationships

In the near term, we recommend taking steps to build on the energy around the Generations document

Identify a few "quick wins"

Key Findings

- The JeffCo system is now at a critical juncture with hope, enthusiasm, and emerging trust driving a belief in the Generations document
- Multiple stakeholders commented that the recent election of Board of Education members signals that the district is moving in the right direction

Recommendations

- Seize the moment, find opportunities for early wins, and take them!
- Determine a few areas where you can move the needle *by the end of the school year and deliver*
- Over-communicate with the field about these efforts

Define your "North Star"

- While the vision document is a strong starting point, it contains a lot of information and stakeholders would benefit from a singular "rallying cry"
- Set a few, concrete outcome goals and communicate them broadly so that everyone can point to where we are headed as a district - and how we will know if we are successful

Clarify foundational elements

- Stakeholders are excited about the opportunity to engage their "entrepreneurial spirits," but they aren't sure what that looks like in practice
- The field has multiple interpretations of "defined autonomy"
- Provide concrete examples of how "entrepreneurial spirit" can be operationalized
- Identify a few "guardrails" around autonomy - where are there opportunities for systemic approaches that create efficiencies of scale?

Longer term, ensure the plan and accompanying routines have the components to set you up for success

Emphasize equity

Key Findings

- Nearly all stakeholder groups mentioned equity as a critical focus that has not always been at the forefront of conversations
- “JeffCo has a blindspot to look at issues of race, class and poverty. JeffCo is equal, not equitable.”

Recommendations

- First, define what equity looks like in JeffCo
- Consider how to address existing inequities and how to ensure equity moving forward
- Be sure that equity is truly embedded throughout the plan, and not just an afterthought

Press on with planning

- There is excitement - and curiosity - around how the vision will be translated into classroom practice
- Stakeholders want to know how their work fits into the plan - and how they will make time to prioritize this important work

- Hold yourselves accountable for the spring deadline to have the strategies, tactics, theories of action, and SMART goals identified
- Consider how to further prioritize the identified strategies/tactics - what are the “big three” (or so) that the district can develop a mantra around?
- Draw delivery chains to identify the pathways for the work to make its way to the classroom - use them to identify risks and potential solutions, as well as gaps in capacity

Keep the plan alive

- Past strategic plans have often sat on a shelf as people continue with “business as usual”
- Pressing challenges (and firefighting) always threaten to interrupt the focus on strategic priorities

- Calendar progress monitoring routines *now* and hold the calendar sacred
- Consider when data is available for the tactics as you design the schedule
- For high-priority tactics, there may be more frequent conversations or updates needed

No matter what, a laser-like focus on capacity building will be vital to the success of the plan



Intentionally build capacity

Key Findings

- Talent and loyalty are at the heart of what makes this district great
- Stakeholders are eager to build their skill sets, and are craving additional support
- We know that good teachers stay and continue to grow when building leaders are great
- In addition, align deployment of resources to strategically support key areas of concern

Recommendations

- Start with more focused professional learning for building leaders - these are your greatest leverage point at this time, especially since they are being asked to do things differently as a result of “defined autonomy’ and the focus on innovation
- Consider ways to adjust compensation to recruit and retain the highest quality talent
- Identify and prioritize resources that meet immediate needs of staff - such as elementary mental health supports or facilities upgrades

Thank You

www.deliver-ed.org