How do we create an effective learning system?
Coverage

• Understanding system reform and learning systems?

• (Equity & Excellence) and **Empowerment**

• Developing a [collaborative] learning system: A multi-perspective model

• Leading an effective learning system in East Renfrewshire
### High cohesion and low regulation - An empowered system...?


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<thead>
<tr>
<th>High Social Regulation</th>
<th>Low Social Cohesion</th>
<th>High Social Cohesion</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fatalistic cultures</strong></td>
<td>'Uncertain, nostalgic organisations’</td>
<td><strong>Hierarchical cultures</strong></td>
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<td>'Uncertain, nostalgic organisations’</td>
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<td>'Bureaucratic, managed organisations’</td>
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<td><strong>Individualistic cultures</strong></td>
<td>'Market-based, state-funded organisations’</td>
<td><strong>Egalitarian cultures</strong></td>
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<td>'Market-based, state-funded organisations’</td>
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<td>'Mutualistic, self-improving organisations’</td>
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<td><strong>Egalitarian cultures</strong></td>
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<td><strong>A LEARNING SYSTEM</strong></td>
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- **Likely outcome of system-mismanagement**: High Social Cohesion, Low Social Regulation
- **Probable unintended consequence**: System-mismanagement
- **Likely outcome of successful system leadership & shared ownership of reforms**: High Social Cohesion, High Social Regulation
ICEA Recommendation 13

13. Consider three key policy imperatives for the next phase of improvement that will help to create a self-improving learning system. These are:

• **professional empowerment**- enhanced autonomy, decision-making power and professional voice

• **Responsibility**- With the above comes enhanced professional responsibility

and

• **Ownership**- Using networks to link staff with mutually similar aspirations, but with differing levels of expertise, and helping them to develop trust in each other can also give individuals an increased sense of ownership of what they are learning. Rather than a change ... seemingly being imposed from outside it quickly becomes something they feel that have ownership of. This sense of ownership, or as (Coburn, 2003) terms it ‘transfer’ of ownership is key for a change to embed itself within practice
“In our view there is need now for a bold approach that moves beyond system management... new dynamic and energy to be generated nearer the learning level.”

“We call for a strengthened “middle” operating through networks... within and across local authorities... to create coherent and cohesive cultures of system-wide improvement.”

(OECD, 2015: 15 my emphasis)
Collaboration for a self-improving learning system
A typology of collaborative endeavour

**Collegiality**- Long term commitment to a shared enterprise underpinned by shared long-term vision and set of common values with a focus on sharing and developing new knowledge, resources and practice

**Collaboration**- more sustainable ways of working underpinned by a set of common values and commitment to share knowledge, resources and practice with some development of new practices

**Cooperation**- Short-term task focused activity around a specific issue incidental sharing of knowledge or resources on specific issues

**Association**- Traditional pattern of working with incidental meetings often initiated through a hierarchy. Very little or no sharing of knowledge or resources

(building on Ainscow and Chapman, 2003; West and Ainscow 2005)
The dark side of collaboration

Illusion of association- Passive buy-in as a ‘sleeping partner’

Fabricated cooperation- Pursue your own agenda often at the expense of others

Collaboration with the ‘enemy’- Engage to control damage limitation but often turns into collusion, become trapped by the discourse and taken in by it

Contrived collegiality- False public expression of values and belief systems, particularly prevalent where unequal power relationships

(Building on Peter-Koop et al, 2003 and others)
• The system has untapped capacity to improve itself

• There is a need to strengthen collaboration both within, between and beyond organisations and areas

• Evidence and enquiry can be used to bring a critical edge to new arrangements

• Action has to be focused on specific issues, adapted to and owned by local context

• Some co-ordination of effort is needed to optimise improvement efforts

• This approach can support the development of a more equitable learning education system.
A learning system at all levels

- Beyond Schools
- Between Schools
- Within Schools
- Across classrooms
Within-school improvement

- Unrelenting commitment to CPD and enquiry-based approaches
- Ensuring high expectations and strong cultural norms
- Use of data to inform decision-making
- Rigorous self-review and accountability mechanisms
- Focus on spreading leadership and leadership development
- Combining short-term tactical agendas with longer-term strategic agendas

Learning and teaching

Research: Principles of within-school improvement (Eg. Louis and Miles, 1985; Potter, Reynolds and Chapman, 2001; Muijs, Harris, Chapman, Stoll and Russ, 2004; Chapman 2006)
The impact of leadership activities on student outcomes

1. Establishing Goals and Expectations
   Effect Size: 0.42

2. Resourcing Strategically
   Effect Size: 0.31

3. Planning, Coordinating and Evaluating Teaching and the Curriculum
   Effect Size: 0.42

4. Promoting and Participating in Teacher Learning and Development
   Effect Size: 0.84

5. Ensuring an Orderly and Supportive Environment
   Effect Size: 0.27

Between-schoo improvement

Supporting career progression and succession planning

Facilitating co-ordination of effort to enhance collective will

Promoting collaborative enquiry-based approaches to professional learning

Providing in-house tailored support for schools facing greater challenges

Moving of key staff between organisations to share expertise

Achieving economies of scale

Principles of between-school improvement

(Eg. Chapman and Allen, 2006; Ainscow and West, 2006; Chapman and Fullan 2007; Chapman and Muijs, 2014; Ainscow, 2015; Chapman 2015)
Traditional practice: Collaboration between schools
Collaboration regarding new or innovative approaches

Pink = Primary 1
Green = Primary 2
Black = LA
Blue = HT
Example of practice:
Network for Educational and Social Equity
Beyond-school improvement

Coordinated approach to public service provision

Autonomous localised-governance and funding

Pipe-line of support across transition stages

Open and reliable channels of communication combined with speedy access to resources

Area-based focus including detailed analysis of situation

(Eg. HCZ, 2010; Cummings, Dyson and Todd, 2011)
Example of Practice: Children's Neighbourhoods in Scotland
Towards collective impact

Source: Henig et al., 2015
Reflections...

• What are our strengths within East Ren:
  – For within-school improvement?
  – Between-school-improvement?
  – Beyond-school improvement?

• What structures and process do we have in place to move practice, knowledge and ideas around?

• What else might be done?
Creating a learning System: a multi-lens perspective

Within schools...
- Enquiry-based professional learning and building leadership capacity
- Use of data to promote high quality teaching and learning
- Building a positive school culture

Between schools...
- Opportunities for structured and focused collaboration
- Focus on movement of good ideas and existing instructive practice
- Use of data to stimulate innovation to create new practice, collect evidence to monitor and refine developments.

Beyond schools...
- Linking public service provision holistic approach
- Drawing on ‘assets’ within the system
- Evidence and data used to evaluate efforts stimulate professional discussion and inform decision-making
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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Within School</th>
<th>Between Schools</th>
<th>Beyond Schools</th>
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<tr>
<td>Management</td>
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Direction of System Travel - A continuously improving system?
Leadership of the past: Leadership of organisational structure and position
There is a commitment to working across boundaries

Local context plays a key role in determining the emergence and nature of new public service leadership practices

Innovative and traditional leadership approaches emerge in combination

New ways of working have further complicated management arrangements and patterns of accountability

For working across boundaries to become mainstreamed appropriate incentives, checks and balances need to be put in place
Leadership of future: The emergence of public service reticulists

- Skilled communicators
- Excellent networkers
- Strategic in orientation
- Contextually astute
- Problem solvers
- Self-managing
System leaders ‘reticulists’ that influence the capacity and practice of collaboration:

1. **Skilled communicators**- with the ability to adapt their language to specific settings and empathise with others through negotiation and seeing a situation from a range of perspectives.

2. **Excellent networkers**- gain access to a range of settings, seek out and connect up others with common interests and goals

3. **Strategic in orientation**- they can see the ‘big picture’ and understand how different partners can contribute to achieve common goals

4. **Contextually astute**- they understand how opportunities and constraints within the organisation can influence individual’s behaviour

5. **Problem-solvers**- They think laterally and creatively to seek solutions to the challenges they face.

6. **Self Managing**- They take risks within a framework that understands organisational capacity. In this sense they have sound organisational skills.

(after Sullivan & Skelcher, 2002)
3. Characteristics of a Collaborative Learning System

• Reciprocity and mutual benefit to all involved underpin planning and implementation.
• The culture shifts from competitive to collaborative and leads to better outcomes for all. There is no place for egos.
• Planning encompasses the development of arrangements to support long-term sustainability and new approaches to capacity building.
• Diverse range of partners involved including schools, local authorities, universities, Education Scotland and other agencies.
• Locally owned and led with a clear commitment to developing empowered leaders at all levels.
• Meaningful use of a wide range of data and evidence to inform practice and understand impact.
• Each local authority expects and supports schools to collaborate.
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