Activity #1. Case Analysis: Grand Prairie Public School District

Watch the interview with Superintendent Sandy McDonald with the following questions in mind. Write your insights/observations in the table below.

- What were the more important results achieved in the Grand Prairie Public School District?
- What specific actions were undertaken to achieve those results?
- Why did these actions produce such results?

Strategic Actions:

Results

Why did these actions produce such results?

Activities 2-5. Crafting your Theory of Action

Use the Theory of Action template provided (hardcopy or electronic version). Here you will find the key prompts to craft your theory of action.

Activity 2. Where we want to be (Results)

Consider your current district-wide strategy, or a new purpose/ strategy you would like to pursue

Use the template available in the Handout. Fill in the red square at the bottom using the following prompt:

- What would we like to see happening in our school authority as a result of our leadership?

- How will we know we're getting there?

If helpful, use the core features of SMART and HEART goals as a reference.

SMART Goals	**HEART** Goals
Specific	**H**ealthy
Measurable	**E**nduring
Attainable	**A**ttractive
Relevant	**R**elevant
Timebound	**T**ruthful

Activity 3. Where we are

Now fill in the yellow box in the Template using the following prompt:

- Where are we now - In relation to where we want to be,?

- How do we know?

Activity 4. Strategic Actions

Now fill in the green box in the Template using the following prompt:

- What are the strategic actions most likely to cause the results we want?

Consider the following two ideas presented in the workshop session:

Strategy is how we turn *what we have* into *what we need* to get *what we want* (Ganz, 2010)

What are your BIG rocks?

If helpful, use the space in the next page to brainstorm all possible strategic actions that come to mind (you can then prioritize and select the few strategic actions with the most chances to produce the results you want.

Strategic Actions. Space for brainstorming.	
What are we already doing?	What else can we do?

Activity 5. Assumptions

Now fill in the blue box in the Template using the following prompt:

- What makes us believe that our strategic actions will produce the results we want?

If helpful, consider the following ideas presented in the session.

A theory of action will be more effective the more it is grounded on a clear, robust, and actionable definition of *how and why people learn* to do things differently.

What motivates us?
- Purpose
- Mastery
- Autonomy
- Connectedness

(Deci, 2020; Pink, 2009)

People adopt change when:
- It is intrinsically motivating
- They take part in its evolution
- They develop ownership along others

(Fullan, 2020)

Activity 6 Feedback session

Form groups of 3-4 with people from different school authorities.

Take turns presenting your draft theories of action. Use the following sequence for each presentation:

1. Presenter presents their Theory of Action (3-5 minutes)

2. Listeners ask clarifying questions, (2 mins.) and presenter responds (1 min.)

3. Group shares comments and feedback (3 mins.)

4. Presenter responds with their main takeaways from the feedback (1 min)

Keep in mind the principles of effective feedback presented below.

Key principles of effective feedback

- Respect
- Candor and care
- Basic agreement
    - The giver is free to talk with as much honesty and candor as they want
    - The receiver is free to accept or reject the suggestions

Activity 7 Self-reflection.

Think about and write down your insights and thoughts on the following questions:

Evidence (of implementation and impact)	
What evidence do we already have?	What new evidence do we need to gather and look at?

Continuous Improvement Process (to test and refine our theory of action)	
What processes do we currently have that we are using or could use?	What else should we be doing to ensure we continuously test and refine our theory of action?