



Community Schools Research Practice Network Webinar Series

The Need for Youth Voice in Community Schools

Tuesday, November 16, 3:00 – 4:00 PM Eastern Time

IEL CCS RPN Research Agenda



[CCS RPN Website](#)



Collaborative Leadership and Relational Trust

From our research agenda:

*“We should better understand how to measure, foster, and facilitate shared and collaborative leadership, including how to do this in a virtual environment. This includes how we share power inside and outside of schools. Potential questions include: How do we develop leadership at multiple levels? How do we share power in a virtual environment? **How do we bring student voices to the table and share power with young people in community schools? How does this look in different grade or age levels? How do we build leadership inclusive of families and students? What do we know about the impact of leadership development on student outcomes?** In addition to shared leadership structures within schools, there is also a need for research relating to the system-level shared leadership structures. Finally, a core component of shared leadership is relational trust. We need more research addressing how we build and foster relational trust among community members and other actors in the community school space.”*

IEL CCS RPN Co-Chairs



Dave Greenberg
CCS RPN Practitioner Co-Chair;
Executive Director, NEA-NM Center
for Community Schools



Dr. Jessica Shiller
CCS RPN Researcher Co-Chair;
Associate Professor, Towson
University

Moderator & Speakers

Moderator:

Jessica Shiller, IEL Coalition for Community Schools Research Practice Network
Researcher Co-Chair, Associate Professor, Towson University

Speakers:

Sara T. Stacy, Partner, Community-AID Laboratory; Chair, School Engagement
Interest Group - Society for Community Research & Action

Jennifer Halliday, Program Manager of Partnerships, Crim Fitness Foundation

Karen Hunter Quartz, Director, UCLA Center for Community Schooling; Faculty,
UCLA Graduate School of Education & Information Studies

Eduardo Galindo-Munoz, Student

Nareli Lopez, Student



Youth Voice Project:

Exploring youth voice in decision-making within Full-Service Community Schools

Sara T. Stacy, PhD

Jennifer Halliday, MBA

A photograph showing the back of several young people sitting in a room, looking towards a speaker at the front. The room has a green wall and a whiteboard. The text "Why Youth Voice Project?" is overlaid in white on the bottom left.

Why Youth Voice Project?

Credit: Photo by Sam Balye on Unsplash



Youth voice in decision-making

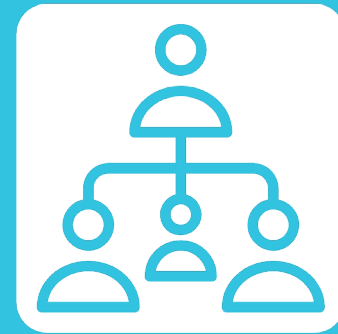
Involving young people in decisions that affect them through *design, reflection, and evaluation*



Principle

Beliefs + Values

+



Process

Concrete structures



Youth voice in Community Schools



A key theme in both the theory & implementation standards:
Designing schools to be ***student-centered & driven by youth.***



Minimal guidance implementing youth voice in decision-making



Existing research + practice does not fully integrate youth



Youth voice is often *overlooked* and *underutilized* within the approach

Research Questions

1

What are the **similarities** and **differences** in how **youth** and **adults** describe youth voice?

2

What are **facilitators** to youth voice in decision-making?



Lead agency: Crim Fitness Foundation
Flint, Michigan

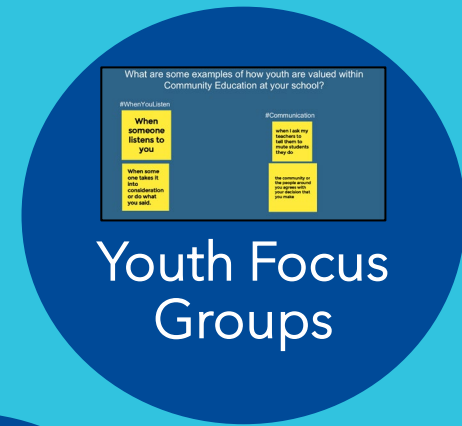
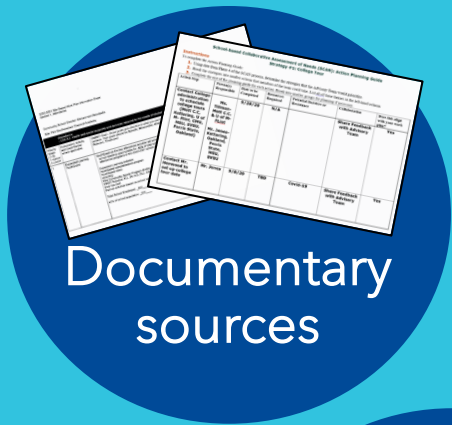
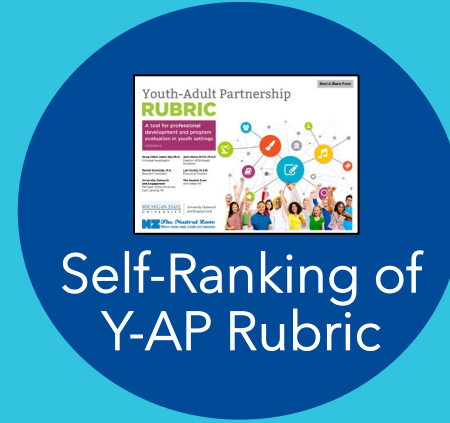
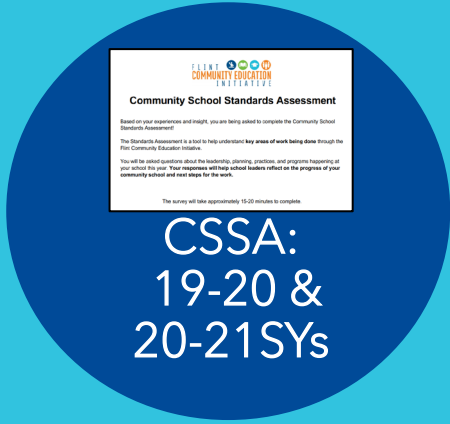
• Operates within 3 school systems:

- Flint Community Schools (11 schools, K-12th)
- International Academy of Flint (1 school, K-12th)
- Flint Cultural Center Academy (1 school, K-7th)

• **13** full-time community school directors

• Serving over **2,700** unique students and over **2,500** adults annually in programming

Data Sources





Key findings

1

What are the *similarities* and *differences* in how *youth* and *adults* describe youth voice?



Youth



Directors



Youth: *"Making your own voice count in decisions."*

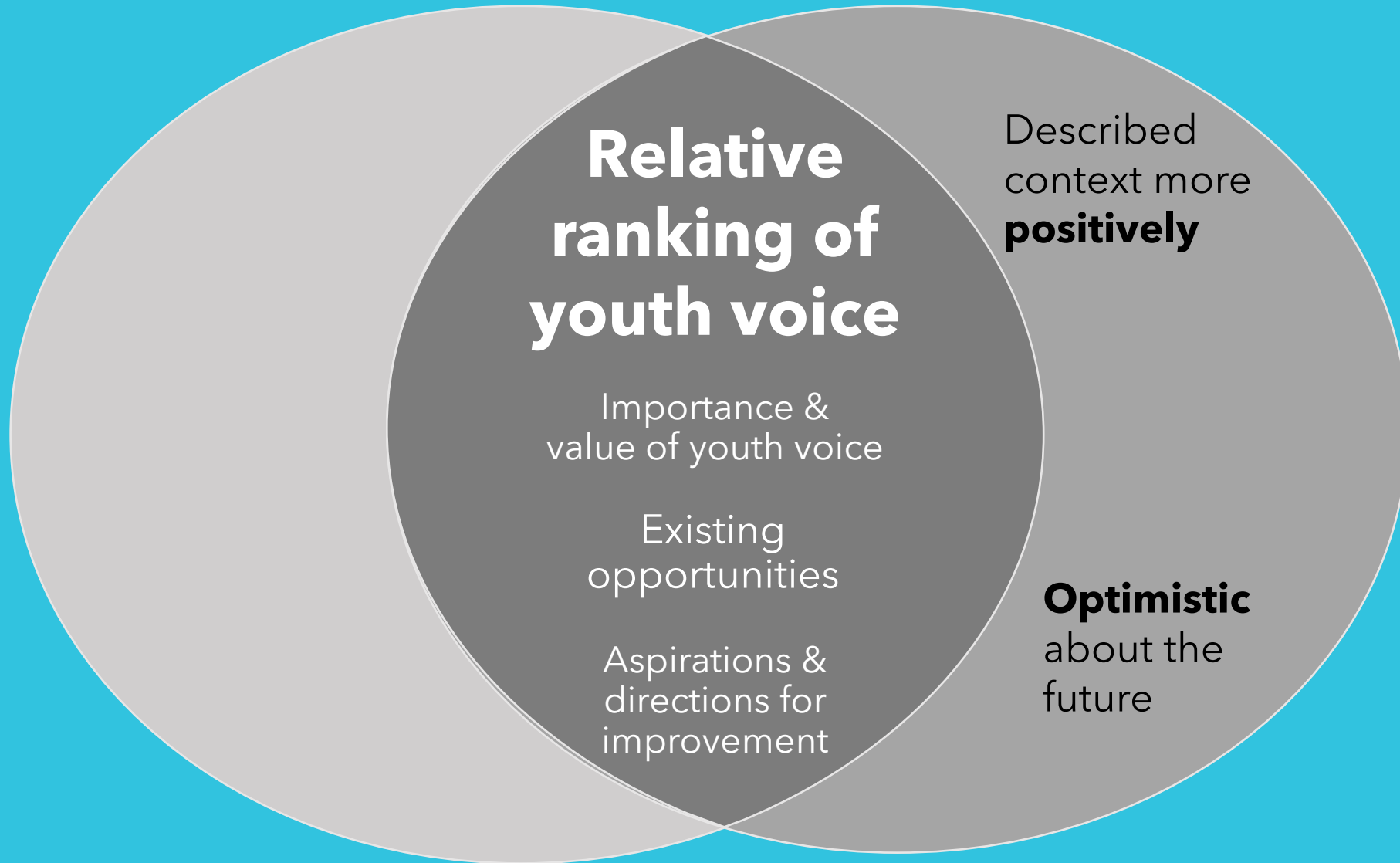
Director: *"Make sure our youth is at the table"*

Opportunities

- Needs Assessment process
- Student Government
- Afterschool space
- Youth feedback processes
- Student Life Organization
- Youth Advisory Council

1

What are the *similarities* and *differences* in how *youth* and *adults* describe youth voice?



Youth



Directors

Youth voice as ***“the heart of the work”***

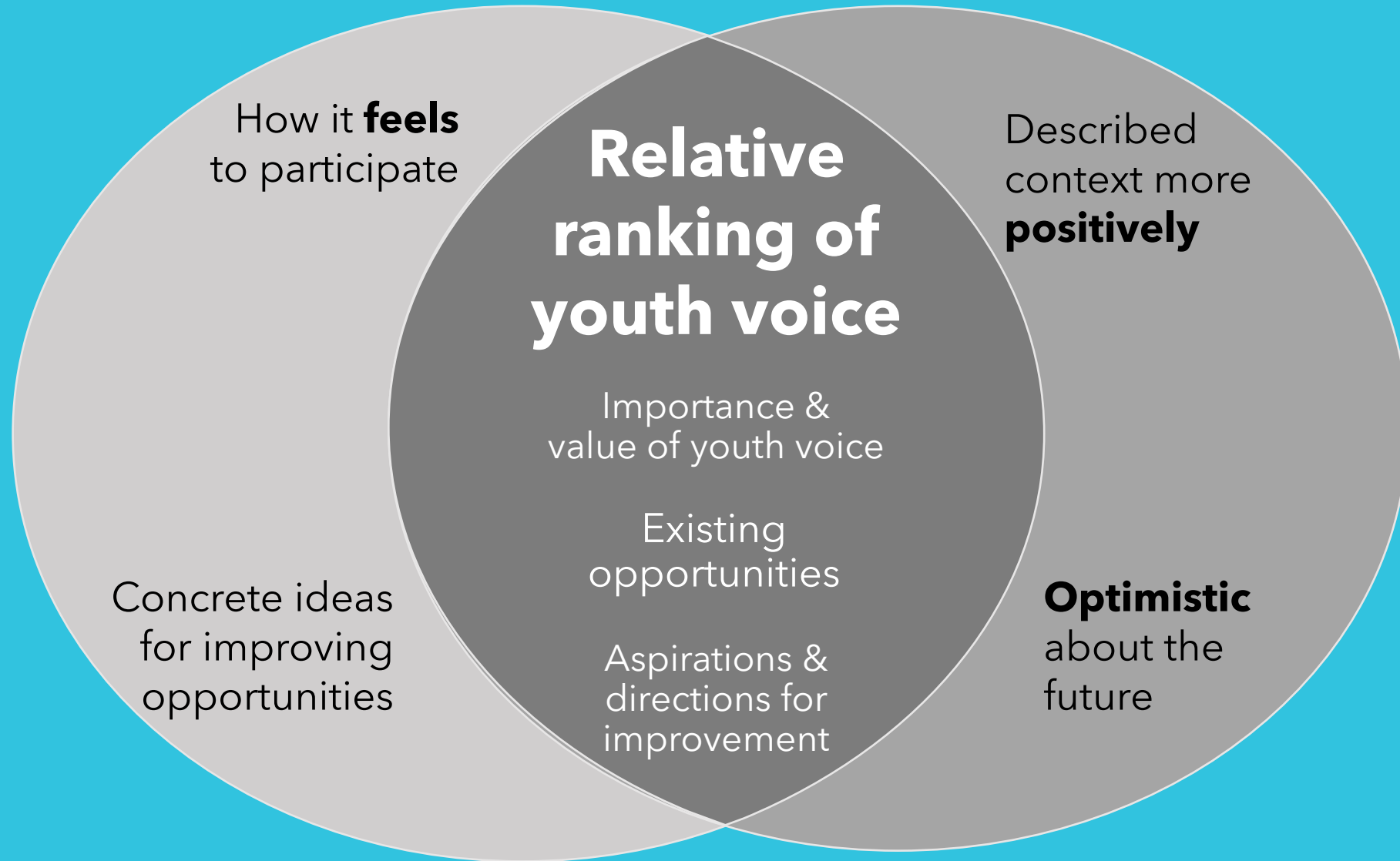
Adultism ***“can creep in”***

Starting ***“a new way with youth voice”***



1

What are the *similarities* and *differences* in how *youth* and *adults* describe youth voice?



“I was nervous because I had to speak up”

“Adults or teachers try to talk as if our ideas aren't as good as theirs.”

***some staff aren't
“really listening”***



**Youth can describe
“policies in action”**

(Cohen et al., 2019)

2

What are **facilitators** to youth voice in decision-making?



Principles

All sites had adults that *valued youth voice*:

Youth voice is "**welcomed**" & "**encouraged**"

2

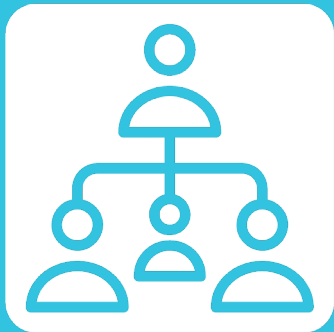
What are **facilitators** to youth voice in decision-making?



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Principles



1. Effectively utilizing partnerships

Processes



Effective partnerships for youth voice efforts

- ✓ Utilize partnerships to support **youth needs** and build capacity.
- ✓ Find “*the right*” partners.
- ✓ Effectively integrate Community School + school setting.

2

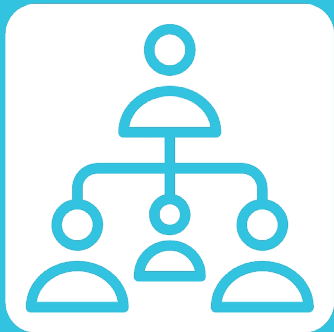
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Principles



1. Effectively utilizing partnerships
2. Relational aspect of youth voice

Processes

Building relationships

- ✓ **Transparent communication**
check ins, navigating challenges, supporting decision-making
- ✓ **Setting & maintaining boundaries**
- ✓ **Repairing relationships with a *“surgical process”***

The work of the community school is “absolutely relational”

Father pampering his child holding him from behind by Jacob Lund Photography from NounProject.com

2

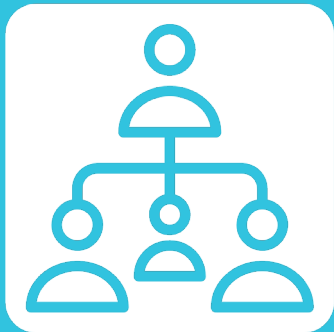
What are **facilitators** to youth voice in decision-making?



All sites had adults that *valued youth voice*:

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Principles



Processes

1. Effectively utilizing partnerships
2. Relational aspect of youth voice
3. Establishing opportunities for youth voice

“Mr. Mohammed always gives us a safe place for talking.”



Safe spaces

But across all sites, youth emphasized wanting to involve ***“more student voices”*** because ***“they might have important things to say.”***

Photo by RODNAE Productions from Pexels

Lessons for practice





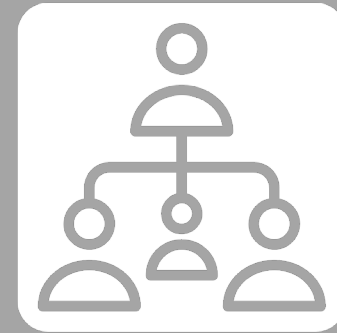
Positive perceptions of youth and their perspectives are **not sufficient** to foster youth voice in decision-making, **structures and processes** that **systematically** include youth in decisions are also required.

(McKinney de Royston & Madkins, 2019; Zeldin et al., 2008)



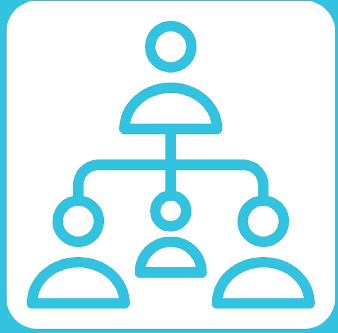
Principles
Beliefs + Values

+



Processes
Concrete structures

Effective processes



1. Select **community partners** that understand & practice youth voice
2. Prioritize **reciprocal relationships** with youth and adults
3. Promote youth voice through **explicit practices**:
 - Define youth & adult roles explicitly
 - Create safe spaces that engage youth across identities, achievement & school engagement levels
 - Engage youth voices wherever you can (i.e., micropower compensation)
 - Align out-of-school-time practices with classroom practices
 - Ensure youth have voice & power in needs assessments

Conclusion

"I feel youth voice is supposed to be a way for the youth to have a voice in the decisions that affect them...

but I don't think it always is."

-Site B Youth

"Youth Voice to me means encompassing the ideas, opinions and desire of young people and students so that in the end it is not only a helpful environment but a healthy and joyful one for the now and future"

- Site B Youth

Thank you!



Jennifer Halliday, MBA
*Program Manager of Partnerships,
Flint Community Education Initiative*

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Sara T. Stacy, PhD
*Evaluation Services Center,
University of Cincinnati*

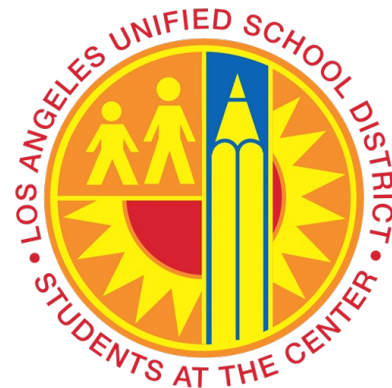
SaraTStacy@gmail.com

YOUTH RESEARCH AT THE UCLA COMMUNITY SCHOOL

IEL Coalition for Community School Research Practice Network

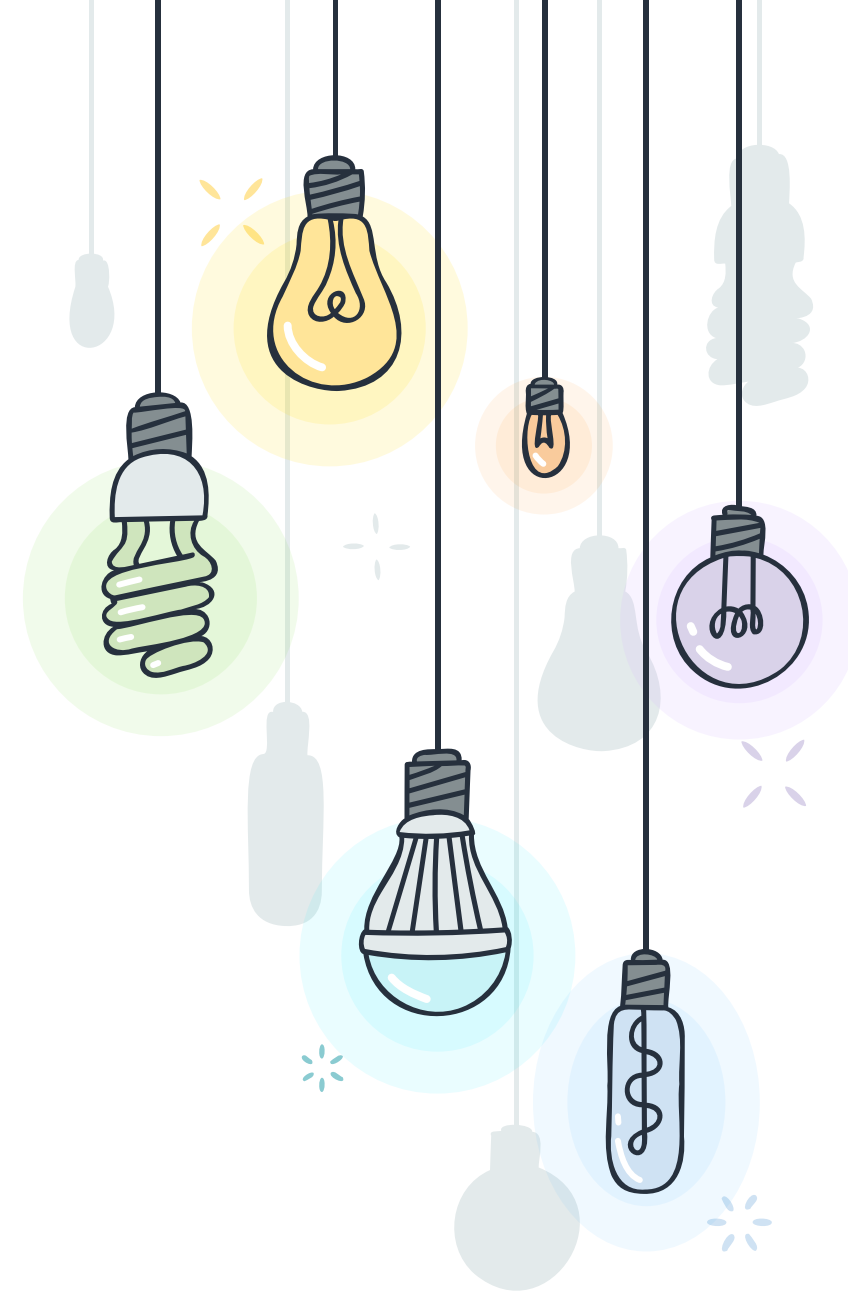
Karen Hunter Quartz, Nareli Lopez & Eduardo Galindo-Munoz

November 16, 2021



* AGENDA

- + Introduction to our school (Karen)
- + Example 1: AP Research (Karen)
- + Example 2: Student Advisory Board (Nareli)
- + Example 3: Youth Podcast (Eduardo)
- + Conclusion (Eduardo)
- + Q&A



RFK UCLA COMMUNITY SCHOOL



- ▶ A TK-12 neighborhood public school in Koreatown serving 1,000 students; opened in 2009 on the former site of the Ambassador Hotel; one of six schools
- ▶ A diverse community: 84% Latino, 7% Asian, 5% Filipino, 3% Black, 1% Other
- ▶ 35% English Learner; 13% Special Education; 92% Socioeconomically Disadvantaged
- ▶ Diverse and accomplished faculty—half are Bruins, 80% teachers of color, 88% bilingual

Abolitionist Teaching
Self-definition, resistance,
freedom, action, & joy

**Language and
Culture**

Translanguaging
Dynamic & agentic,
honors identity
unbounded and agentic
dynamic actions of bilinguals
as they use their entire
linguistic/multimodal
repertoire

**UCLA CS
Core
Beliefs**

Healing-Centered Pedagogy
Healing & organizing,
inward & outward;
building hope is a
political activity

Community

**Social Justice
and Civic
Participation**

Praxis
Reflection, action
improvement science,
movement science, research
practice partnerships,
teacher-led action-research,
youth participatory
action-research,
Freirian-dialogical

It's important to create
infrastructure for
student agency.

“Historically
nondominant students
tend to have fewer
opportunities to
express their agency in
schools.”

Infrastructuring Student Agency

A Research, Practice & Policy Report

By: Ung-Sang Lee, Pedro De Leon, Leyda Garcia, Robert Ly & Beth Trincherro

June 1, 2020



<https://communityschooling.gseis.ucla.edu/infrastructuring-student-agency/>

EXAMPLE 1

AP Research: The Benefits and Challenges of K-12 Span Schools





AP Capstone
Diploma™

AP Seminar

Year 1

Earn score of 3 or higher

AP Research

Year 2

Earn score of 3 or higher

4 AP Exams

Throughout High School
Earn score of 3 or higher



AP Seminar
and Research
Certificate™

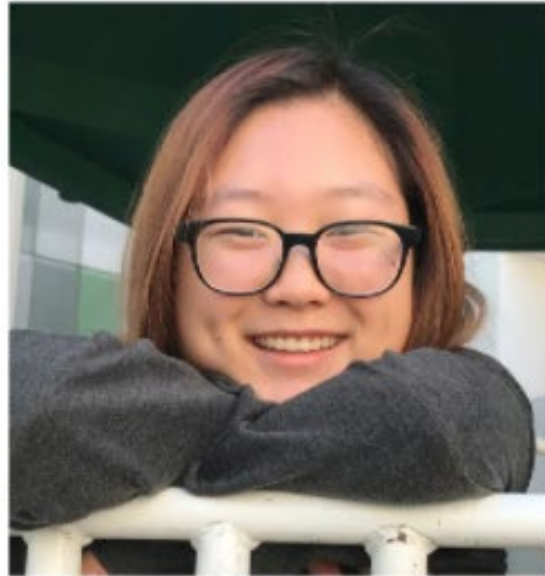
* AP RESEARCH @ UCLA-CS

- + UCLA students and faculty serve as research mentors
- + Expectation that research will help the school in some way
- + Example: What are the benefits and challenges of our K-12 school span?
 - × **Class of 2022 is our first K-12 cohort!**



CREATING PERSISTENT COMMUNITY

The Challenge of Aligning Supports for First-Generation College Students



K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16...



K-12 neighborhood school designed to create **persistent community**: the relationships and resources that affirm students' sense of belonging, community cultural wealth, and agency from Kindergarten through college graduation.

<https://communityschooling.gseis.ucla.edu/creating-persistent-community/>

EXAMPLE 2

Student Advisory Board

Research: Learning During the
Pandemic



* UCLA CS STUDENT ADVISORY BOARD

- + We are a group of students who came together once a week to conduct research and share with others in the community issues that impact us as students.
- + We studied the impact the pandemic had on students throughout the year.
- + We collected data and spoke up for our peers to school staff.



OUR PROCESS

Building Community
& Determining
Purpose



Survey Data
Analysis &
Application of
Learning



Development &
Administration of
a Bilingual
Teacher Survey



Sharing our
Learning



Development of
a Bilingual
Student Survey



Sharing our
Learning



Student Focus
Groups
9-12th Graders



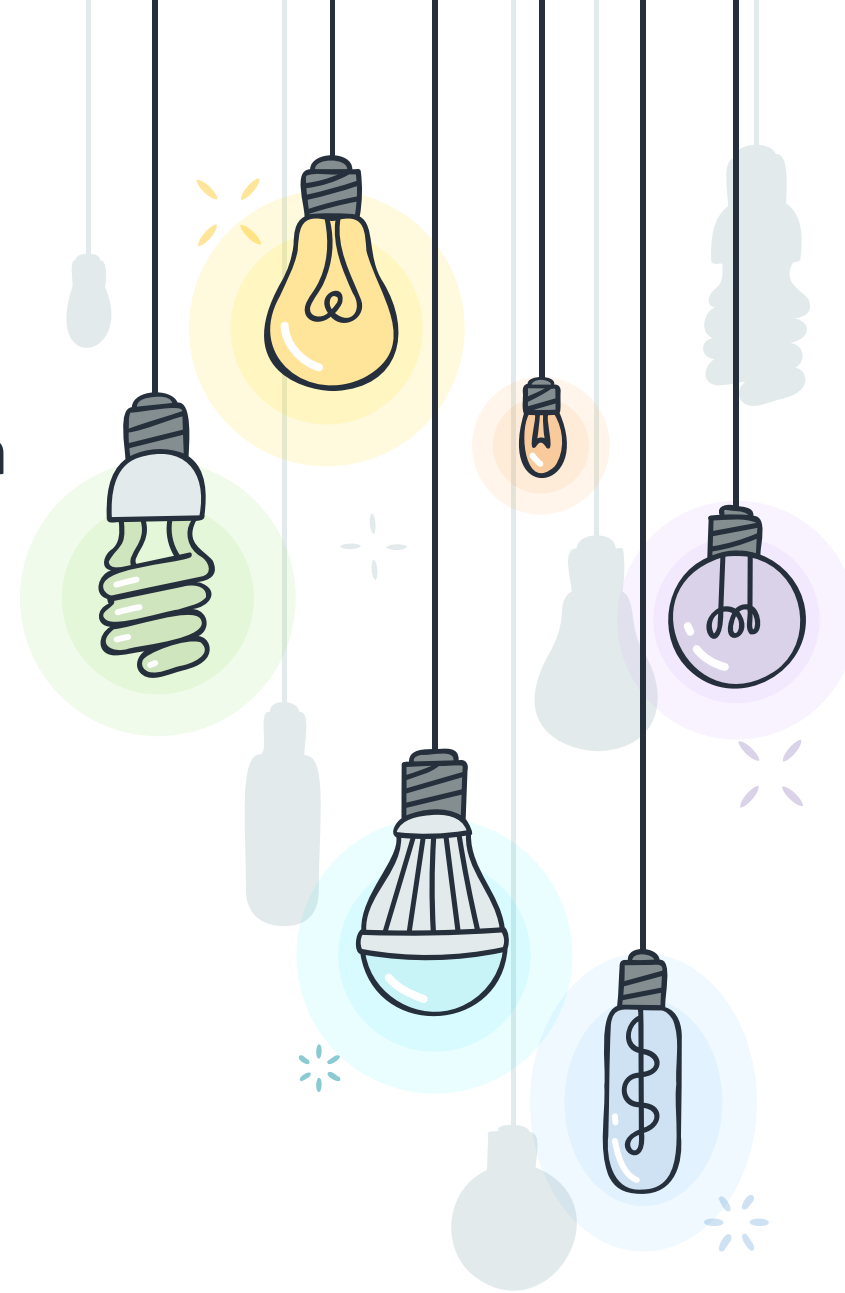
* OUR FINDINGS

- + Through our survey we have found
 - × What each grade found helpful
 - × How they were fairing in class
 - × Their thoughts on how school was currently being run
- + Through the focus groups
 - × We learned how each grade was doing during this pandemic learning & their opinions on the situation



* PD SESSION WITH TEACHERS

- + Guided a professional development session with teachers where we shared the results of the student survey.
- + We held a dialogue with teachers in their grade-level teams.



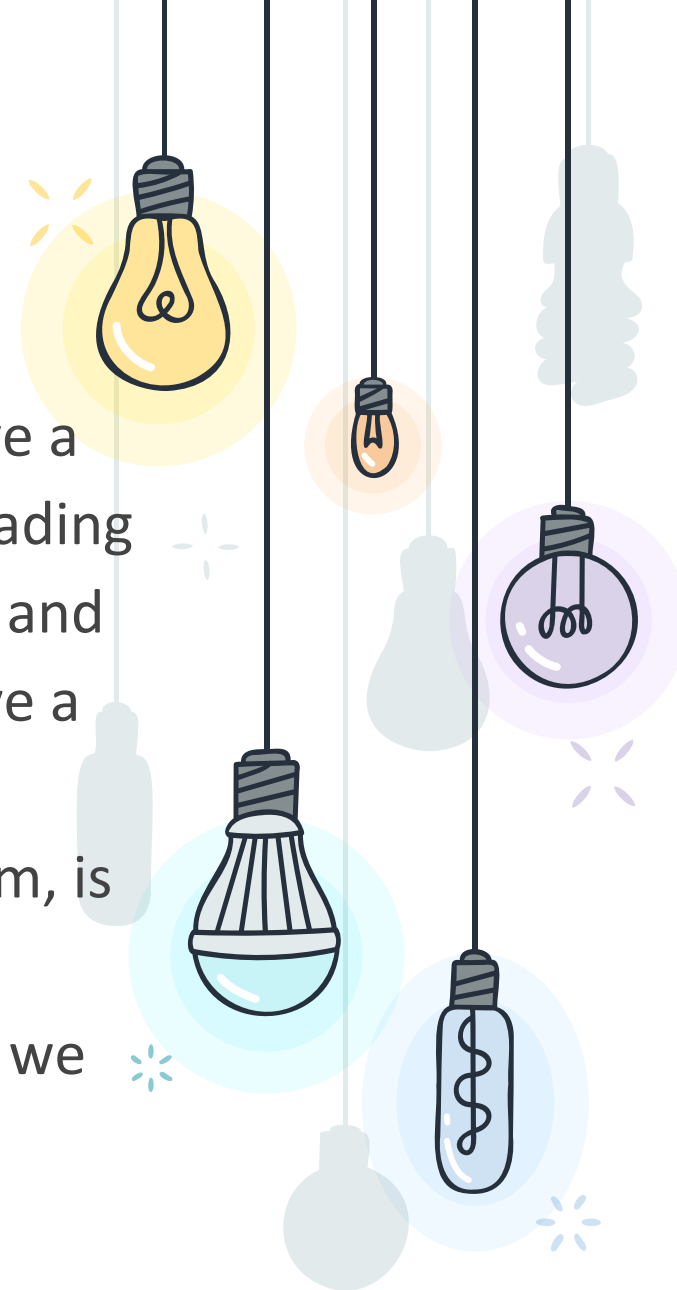
REFLECTION QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS



- + What can we do to make the job of teachers and students easier?
- + What are some ways we can make sure students are learning without overwhelming them?

- + Most students have difficulty learning when so much information and homework is given to them at once, how can we fix that?

- + We know teachers have a hard time grading assignments and students have a hard time finishing them, is there a compromise we can have?



Finding our voices, and our research skills, during the pandemic



Check out our commentary in Ed Source!

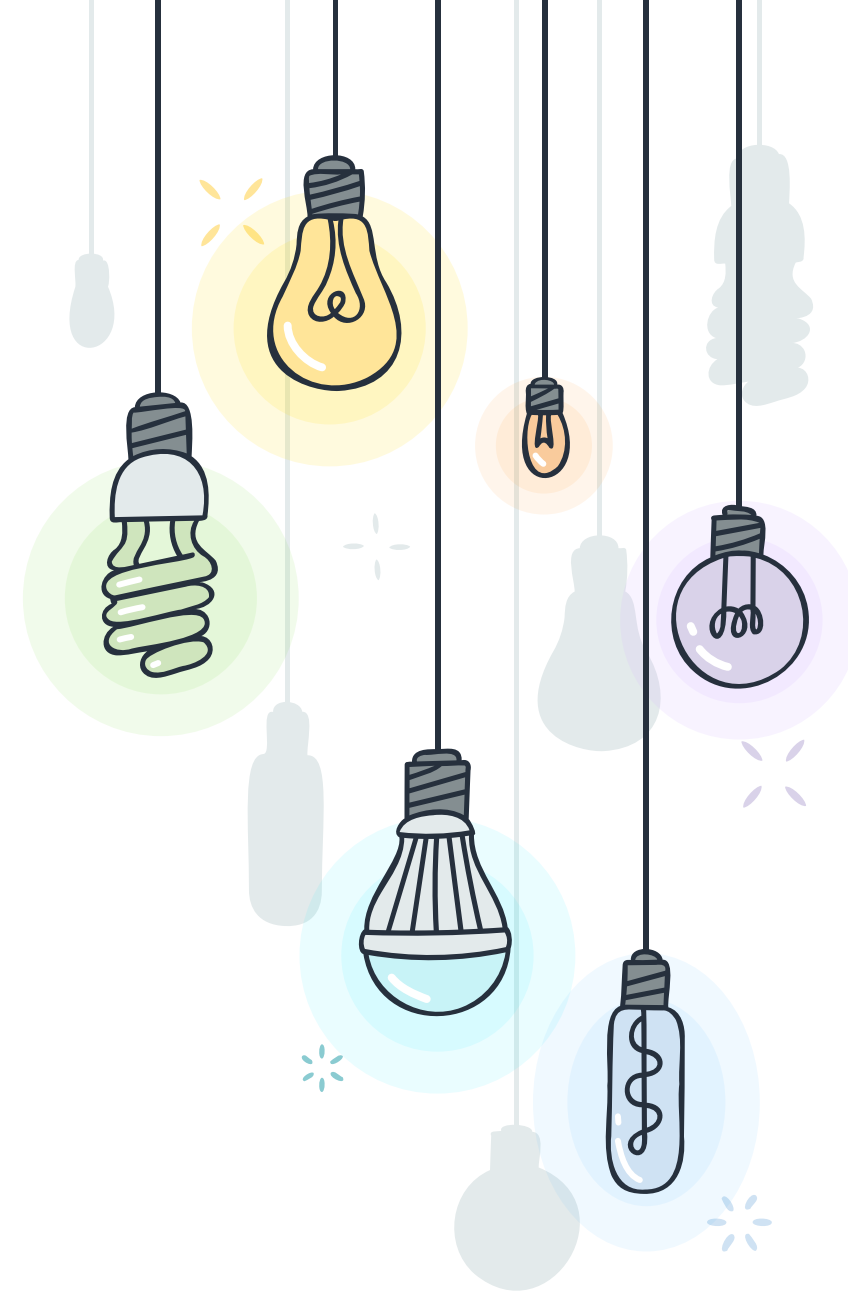
EXAMPLE 3

Youth Podcast: Research:
Learning During the Pandemic



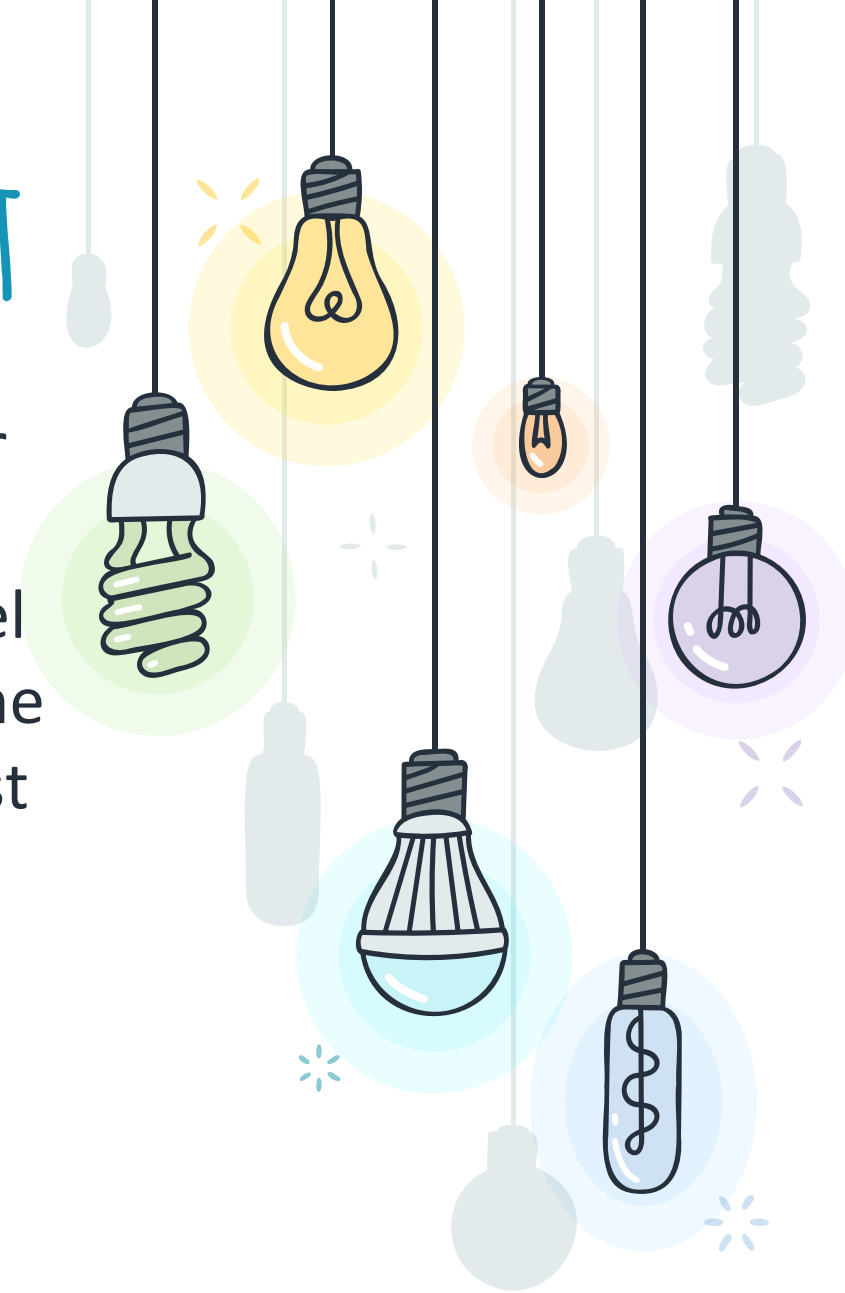
* FALL 2021: RETURNING TO SCHOOL

- Our question: How is our community feeling about returning to school in this time of uncertainty?
- Conducted interviews with K-12 students, teachers, staff
- Collected survey data from parents
- Created a podcast to share our findings



✨ WHAT IS COVID? 1ST GRADE STUDENT

“It is a kind of infection that goes inside your body or your nose, or your mouth, or whatever place but it infects your heart and something and you kind of feel like you don’t feel good. And sometimes you go to the hospital like, you can’t stop the pain. And you are just like scream and shout and like move your arms and like move away. But actually, when the results come in, it means you are kind of like going to be dead in a few days.”



❁ HOW DO YOU FEEL BEING BACK ON CAMPUS? HOW ARE STUDENTS MEETING STANDARDS? TEACHERS AND STAFF

“So, you know, when we went virtual teachers had to prepare everything. We had to rearrange all our curriculum. We had to condense it just to make sure that we’re hitting the biggest, most important standards and getting deep into each as much as we could.”

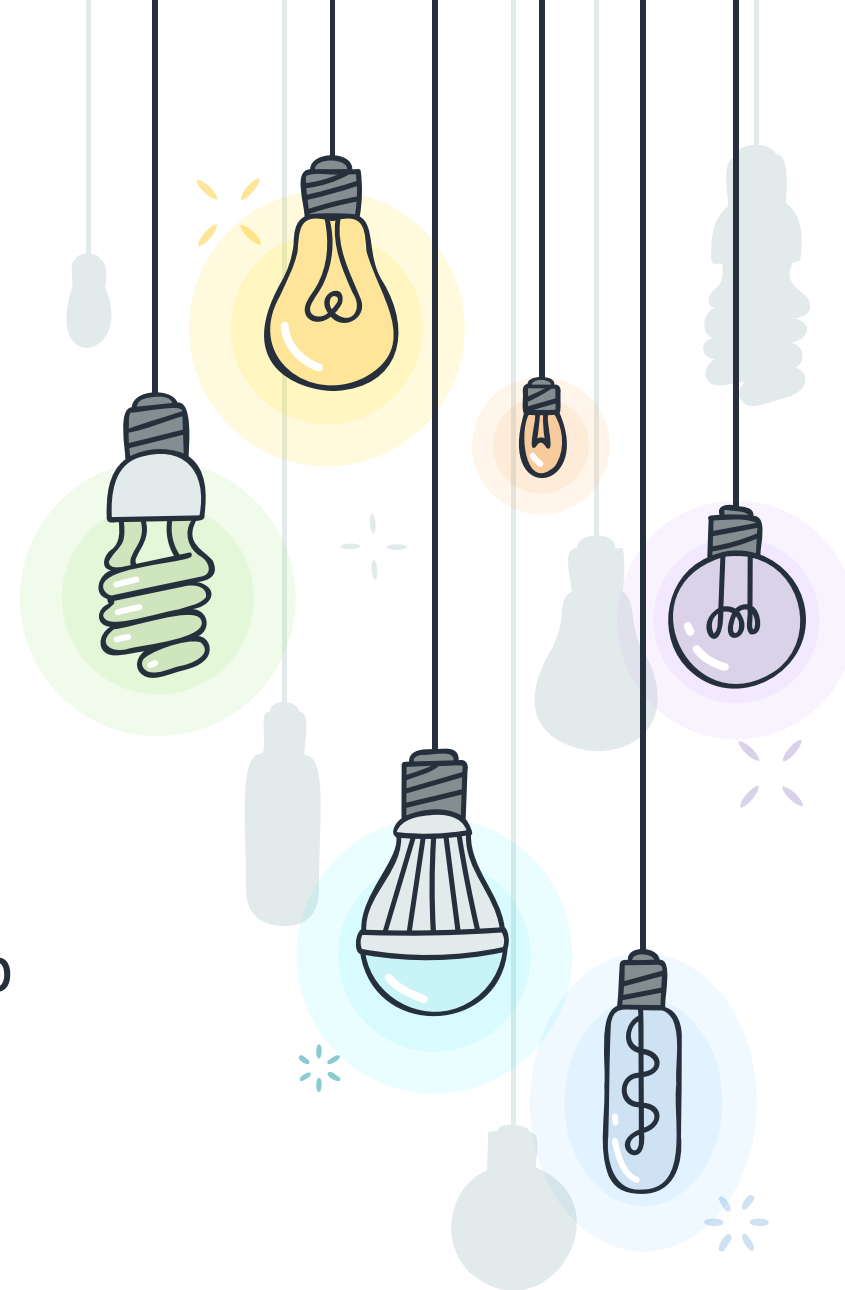
“Oh yeah, we did this last year and now this now and they’re pushing each other to go above and beyond that.”



✧ HOW DO PARENTS FEEL ABOUT COMING BACK? HOW IS THE SCHOOL DOING?

“Despite their concerns for health, they still support reopening schools because they see how happy their children are being on campus.”

“Wonderful, they even encouraged the school to keep up with the great work.”



Returning to School in a
Time of Uncertainty



Listen on
Apple Podcasts



Spotify



Check out our podcast [here](#)

CONCLUSION

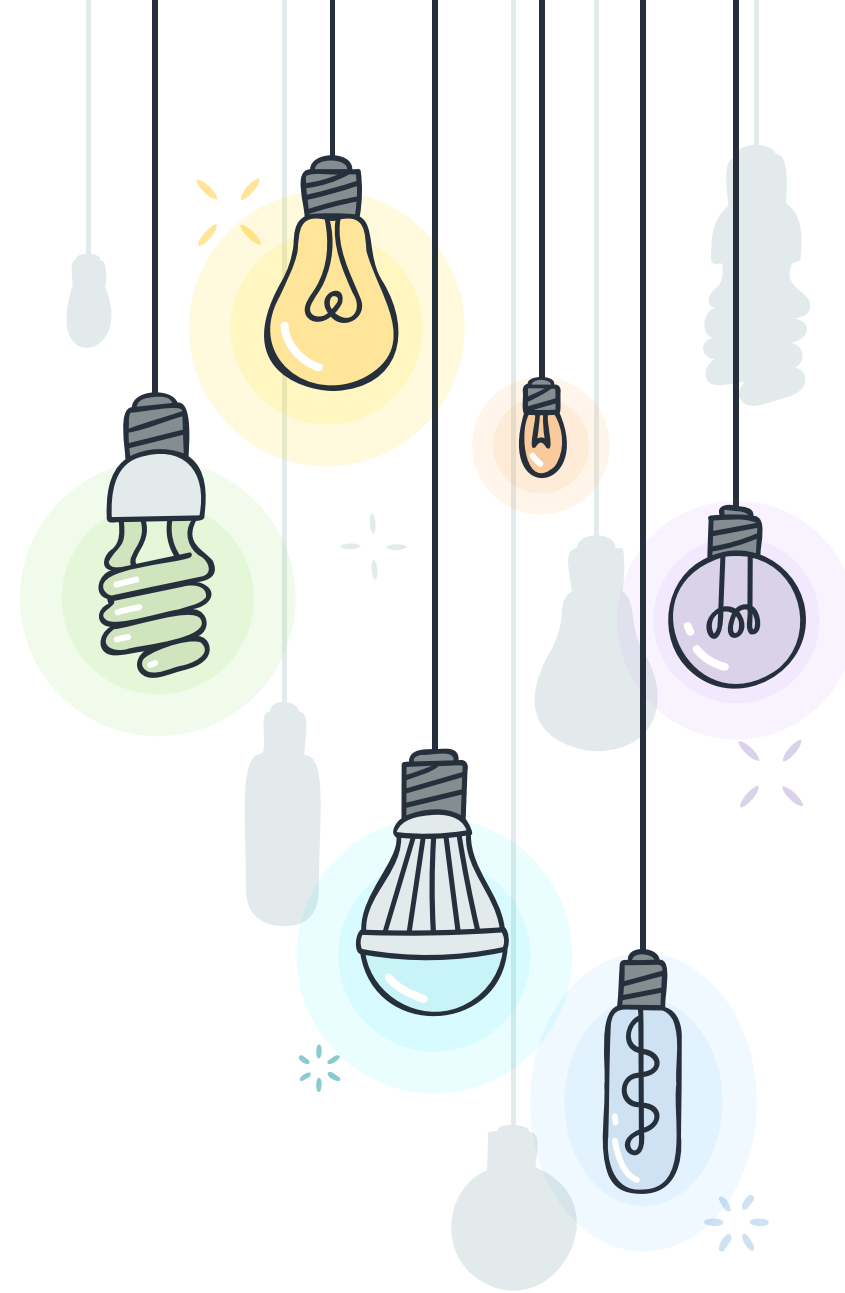


STUDENTS AS RESEARCHERS

- + Create spaces where teachers learn from students .
- + Learning about research methodologies gives students tools to enact their ideas and contribute to their school communities.
- + We recommend that schools take the time to learn about how students are doing at home and school. Never assume anything about students, instead ask questions.



* Q & A



**Please review previous webinar and
session recordings on [CCS RPN Webpage](https://www.communityschools.org/link/join-a-network/research-practice-network/)**

<https://www.communityschools.org/link/join-a-network/research-practice-network/>



Thank You!

[Please fill out the post-webinar feedback form!](#)