ROADMAP FOR SCHOOL SYSTEMS NAVIGATING THROUGH COVID-19:
TALENT ☆ (access all Roadmaps here)

catalyst:ed   🐘 **LEADING ELEPHANTS**

ROADMAP SECTIONS	Vision and Values	Building Connection	Staff Expectations	Managing Capacity	Employee Needs (PTO, Extended Leave) & Assistance	Compensation	Open Positions and Promotions	Contracts, Renewal, and Performance Management	Performance Pay	Certification	Recruitment, Selection, and Hiring	Onboarding Processes	**SHARE THIS ROADMAP: bit.ly/2L9kmok**
ROADMAP KEY	♡ DEI 💵 Finance ☆ Instruction ⌂ Social and Emotional ✉ IT and Operations 👤 Talent ↻ Resilient Leadership	
RELATED RESOURCES	CSGF: Talent Practices for Virtual Leadership The 74: What Will the Coronavirus Pandemic Mean for the Teacher Labor Market? 5 Predictions and 4 Strategies TNTP Virtual Talent Guide.	

Phase 1 - Launch Remote Learning	Phase 2 - Finish the School Year Strong	Phase 3 - Implications for Summer & Beyond	Resources and Sample Technical Assistance Projects (request support here)
Vision and Values Alignment			
Align with your leadership team on your vision and guiding principles for supporting staff members during this time of crisis, including their: • social-emotional well-being; • relationship with and connection to the school; and • feeling supported and productive in the remote learning environment Align with your leadership team on the guiding principles surrounding key talent decisions. Ensure these guiding principles are values based, equity-driven, and pragmatic (e.g., "Because we believe ABC, we will preserve as many current roles as possible" or "We value XYZ, so we will provide supports for remote working such as… ") Implement ways to get meaningful staff input on critical	Continue to align with leadership team. Work with the Superintendent/CEO to identify key communications to affirm your culture and care for your staff. ♡ Monitor staff engagement, satisfaction, and culture through formal and/or informal means in partnership with your Instructional team. Disaggregate analysis by key identity markers to assess differential impacts, if any.	As long term implications for workforce and SY '20-21 budgets get clearer, assess whether your guiding principles are still aligned with your context. Reflect with the team on how staff engagement, satisfaction, and school culture might have changed and if so, what to do about this moving forward.	**Sample Technical Assistance Projects:** Developing and implementing a plan to monitor staff engagement, satisfaction, and culture - including what data to collect, how and when to collect it, how to analyze and use it, and how to share it. Developing a talent plan for SY '20-21. Working with leadership team to articulate and/or update key goals and guiding principles. Conducting research to

decisions. Identify how your values and equity commitments will inform difficult potential decisions.

💵 Work in partnership with your CFO to forecast impacts to budgets and identify key talent investments (hiring, benefits, employee support) that you will put into motion. (See Finance and Development Roadmap)

♡ Develop common messaging around your guiding principles. Refer back to this whenever you are sharing major changes/adjustments to your talent policies so that you are consistent, caring, and transparent in your communication.

understand landscape and test critical assumptions. Forecasting budgetary implications of recommendations. Checking for equity implications and alignment with guiding principles, and iterating as needed.

Building Connection

♡ Create a plan for staff community building and connection that supports staff well-being and self-care.

Create virtual staff communication structures that provide opportunities for authentic connection and sharing. Consider what recurring meetings and staff rituals can continue virtually or be redesigned. Also consider hosting occasional office hours or town halls as a resource – i.e., an agenda-free, equally accessible space where leaders can make themselves available to hear people's concerns, build rapport, and offer supports accordingly if needed.

Ensure that school leaders and other team leaders are checking in with their staff members individually to understand and respond to their needs and challenges.

Create opportunities to celebrate and affirm the hard work that staff members are doing during this crisis - shout outs on team calls, spotlights in email newsletters, celebrations on social media, etc.

Consider what "community partnership" could be for your staff during this crisis, from connecting students' and teammates' families with needed resources to teammates supporting each other as workstreams and

Continue to ensure that school leaders and other team leaders check in with staff members individually to understand and respond to evolving needs and challenges.

Ensure that staff communication structures are sustained through the end of the year.

Design a staff connection and communication plan for the summer months.

Consider how to celebrate your staff members and bring them together virtually at the close of the school year in the absence of in person graduations and end of year celebrations.

Form a diverse organizational task force to maintain a strong pulse on organizational health and evaluate all COVID-related policies, procedures, etc. from an equity and inclusion lens.

As you move into the summer and fall, determine ways to deepen connection and community - and to welcome new team members.

Develop a 2.0 connection structures vision for SY '20-21 to have in the event of delayed openings or rolling school closures.

Resources:

KIPP TX's High 5 Questions for Care and Connection.

Leading Elephants: Ideas for Building Connection

Aspire Public schools: Living our values and delivering on our mission in a remote world

Management Center: Survey Questions for Assessing Staff Needs and Check-In Template

Sample Technical Assistance Projects: Designing a staff connection and communication plan for the summer months and/or for SY '20-21 to have in the event of delayed openings or rolling school closures.

capacity shift.

Staff Expectations

Coordinate with schools to articulate and share new schedules and responsibilities, management expectations, and expectations for living org values during this shifting time. Where possible, include guidance on capacity (see below for gauging capacity).

⌂ ♡ Create a vision for teacher and school leader support and well-being that equips them to be a warm and assuring presence for families. (See Social and Emotional Student and Family Support Roadmap)

♡ Ensure that historically marginalized groups won't be disproportionately impacted by new or updated expectations and guidelines. Get input from a variety of people / perspectives. Modify your guidance as you identify areas that impact subgroups more acutely.

♡ Determine guidance to address situations such as: staff with kids or other dependents; if/when staff get sick; if/when staff dependents get sick. Seek low-cost ways to support staff (e.g., schedule flexibility, reassuring parents/caregivers that their children are welcome as long as distractions are kept to a minimum, etc.) and be public about investing others in these new norms.

☆ Collaborate with the Instructional team to articulate the staff expectations for putting the remote learning plan into action. (See Academics Roadmap)

☆ Collaborate with the Instructional team to provide resources and virtual PD for leaders to be effective supports for their team. (See Academics Roadmap)

Coordinate with the leadership team to articulate expectations for home office staff in a virtual environment.

Communicate adjusted expectations through EOY.

Communicate evolving expectations for summer work (schedule, roles, etc.)

If delays to the start of school or re-opening school go into fall, re-assess any shifts to expectations.

Achievement First's Staff Expectations

and YES Prep's guidance for Leading and Managing Remotely

Aspire Public schools: Living our values and delivering on our mission in a remote world

Sample Technical Assistance Projects: Developing guidelines and expectations for working from home which address specific situations such as: staff with kids or other dependents; if/when staff get sick; if/when staff dependents get sick.

Developing guidelines and expectations for summer work which could include summer school, enrichment opportunities for students, professional development, and preparations for the 2020-21 school year.

Facilitating conversations across team members to re-assess shifts to expectations if delays to the reopening of school go into the fall.

Developing a communication

✉ In partnership with your IT team, clarify what distance learning platforms you will use and how students and staff should interact safely with these platforms. (See IT and Operations Roadmap)

Name "decide-by" dates – e.g., "We recognize that each of you have different needs, so we commit to deciding to make X decision about X thing by X date so that you can always plan accordingly."

plan, including clear messaging, mode, and frequency, to share out any changed expectations to staff

Managing Capacity

Work with teams to triage the work ahead and identify highest needs areas for capacity.

Coordinate with leadership to identify which functions will be overloaded vs underutilized and where capacity can be repurposed to support new priorities or accelerate spring/summer tasks.

💵 Coordinate with your CFO and legal team to assess what restrictions state funding requirements place on remote and flexible work. (See Finance & Development Roadmap).

Plan for how responsibilities will shift in the event staff members get sick.

Continue to monitor capacity and adjust as needed.

☆ Serve as a resource to the Instructional team as they decide if expanded summer learning programs, shifts to start dates for school, or other intensive remediation strategies are viable options for your organization. (See Academic Roadmap)

Design teacher-leader and manager "stretch roles" with appropriate stipends and release time to extend the impact and retain top performers, and use expanded leadership roles to address capacity gaps. Be equitable and transparent about the selection process for these types of roles to counteract unconscious bias and dominant culture fit.

Work with your school leadership team and CFO to model any longer term workforce adjustments due to financial constraints, summer school needs, or changes to 'SY 20-21 model. If you need to initiate staff cutbacks:
- Consider all possibilities including freezing new hiring, reviewing home office initiatives and staffing first, and other ways of maintaining school-based budgets
- Communicate early and often – even if things aren't clear on the budget to let teams know when more info will be coming.
- Bring in senior level staff early. Give them input into the decisions, if possible, particularly if they will be

☆ Coordinate with the Instructional team on capacity planning. Adjust supports, roles and responsibilities to ensure readiness for SY '20-21. (See Academic Roadmap)

See Leading Elephants: Articulating Your Priorities Tool for triaging workflows

Sample Technical Assistance Projects: Researching state funding requirements and laws around remote and flexible work and share implications and recommendations

Conducting an organizational review of staff roles and responsibilities. Redesigning staff roles so teachers and other staff are leveraged most effectively

Designing teacher-leader and manager "stretch roles" with appropriate stipends and release time to extend the impact and retain top performers, and using expanded leadership roles to address capacity gaps.

responsible for communicating these changes to staff.
- Confer with counsel on any contracts or agreements that have already been given out .
- Ground these decisions in values, equity and fairness. Look for inadvertent trends in the identities of individuals who are at risk of cutbacks and consider if there are equity implications worth further exploration.
- Be forthright, authentic, and humane in all decisions and messaging regarding potential or actual cutbacks. Name the difficulty. Be crystal clear about the process and timeline so that all stakeholders know what to expect.

Consider what resources (e.g., financial and non-financial) that might be helpful to exiting staff members and provide where possible.

Staff Development

☆ *See the Academics Roadmap for development supports for teachers and leaders.*

Employee Needs (PTO, Extended Leave) & Assistance

Partner with your legal team to review paid leave provisions of the EFMLEA and EPSLA (under the FFCRA) and determine your organization's next steps. Ensure all staff members are fully updated about their new rights.

♡ Publish guidance for staff around policies on taking leave and how to ask for assistance from their manager (or who to go to if there are challenges there). Maintain constantly updated FAQs as new information is released and new decisions are made.

♡ Proactively offer a host of diverse resources or supports that staff members can opt into since people vary in their levels of comfort with speaking up about what they need. Where possible, invest the funds to

Monitor use of leave and keep in touch with school leaders to determine if leave policies are providing appropriate relief for affected families, and if there are any unanticipated capacity challenges or impacts to other staff.

Implement an accessible straightforward process - even if just an email address and phone number - for staff to anonymously report any issues they have.

If ongoing summer learning occurs, identify any modifications for leave and vacation time.

Sample Technical Assistance Projects: Developing leave policies for staff and develop and implement a communication plan for messaging these policies to staff members. Collecting data on use of leave and conducting surveys and interviews with school teams on effectiveness of leave policy.

provide financial and other relief for those who truly need it.

Compensation			
💵 🤍 Partner with CFO and senior team to reground in compensation philosophy and determine culture and budget implications of any adjustments to raises, promotions, and COLA. (See Finance & Development Roadmap)

Communicate compensation and job security information about the current school year as quickly as possible to minimize anxiety. | Message to staff plans for salaries next year (remain flat, COLA increase, or other), including transparency around any potential for changes.. Socialize recession and funding context early such that it does not come as a shock.

Consider what to share with newly hired staff about salaries for next year. Ensure that they are receiving direct and clear messages about this from their new managers (rather than the rumor mill). | Revisit compensation philosophy and policies moving forward to include guidance around what happens in extreme circumstances. Share any updates with all staff. | **Sample Technical Assistance Projects:** Updating compensation policies for staff and developing and implementing a communication plan for messaging these policies to staff members. |

Open Positions and Promotions			
💵 Partner with CFO and senior team to determine the path forward on budget, including any new FTEs or promotions that were planned for 2020-21. (See Finance & Development Roadmap)

🤍 Consider the impact of not filling these new roles or implementing the promotions, particularly if any have been filled or shared with staff members. | Message to all staff the path forward with new roles and promotions. Have transparent conversations with any directly impacted staff.

As the budget situation is more clear, make more informed decisions about your path forward on investments. | Finalize budget for 2020-21. Consider implications for 2021-22 based on the final outcome of investment decisions for 2020-21. | |

Contracts, Renewal, and Performance Management			
🤍 Work with schools team to determine approach to renewals (go with info you had before closure, gather additional data throughout virtual time, etc.). Consider equity implications with all renewal decisions. Disaggregate data to identify trends in identity (as mentioned above).

Communicate any changes in the process to principals and teachers.

🤍 Provide guidance for any staff not likely to be | Encourage managers to stay closely connected with teachers to understand their plans for next year and any changes in their return status.

Confirm "intent to return" with each individual teacher within the last 1-2 weeks of school, even with teachers who initially said they were leaving.

☆ In partnership with the Instructional team and leadership team, determine what role, if any, EOY evaluations play in contract renewal this year. Assess | Implement engagement touchpoints throughout the summer to stay connected with teachers and have a pulse on their likelihood of returning.

Assess and reconcile impact of the EOY process on records and talent management moving forward. | Management Center: Tackling Performance Challenges in COVID-19 Context |

renewed or under performance improvement plans. Where possible, provide outplacement support or means to offset the impact for teachers who are not renewed.

implications with state guidelines, certification, etc. Ensure that teachers are not penalized by decisions here (e.g., in years of instruction, use of formal evaluation as a reference for future jobs, etc) . (See Academics Roadmap)

Performance Pay

Assess the impact of COVID-19 on possible performance pay scenarios:
- Partner with schools and/or data team to determine data availability given closure impact (state tests, ops staff not on site, etc.).
- Partner with CFO determine budget implications of paying all, some, or none of performance pay this year.

♡ Identify modifications to performance pay and any implications for teacher promotions. Keep equity in mind across all performance pay groups, and make decisions acknowledging that SY '20-21 is likely to be compromised as well.

Message to all staff about which portions of performance pay will be suspended for the year (if any) and which will continue in some way (if any). Transparency on rationale and impact from COVID-19 is critical.

Pay out any performance pay that you decided to continue for this year.

Update performance pay approach and policies to include language around what happens in similar situations with lack of data and/or prolonged school closures.

Articulate impact for 'SY 20-21 performance pay given potential absence of starting point data, potential late start to school year, and any other modifications

Resources:

Uplift's Monitoring Overview and Remote Learning Evaluation Measures

Sample Technical Assistance Projects:
Assessing the impact of COVID-19 on possible performance pay scenarios and identifying any modifications to approach or policies. Checking for equity implications and alignment with guiding principles, and iterating as needed.

Certification

If there are immediate questions about certification requirements that can't be answered by the state, stay flexible and use a common sense approach to communicate with potentially impacted staff members.

Connect with the state on any impact of certification granting, processing, transferring due to pandemic. Determine any waivers or exceptions that will be made for testing, late graduations, etc.

Regularly communicate with any affected current staff members and anyone who works with candidates in the pipeline who might be impacted.

Continue to be in contact with the state and any close university partners, since things can and will change as this situation evolves. Consider and account for any resulting increased barriers to entry for underrepresented groups.

Continue to communicate with staff and monitor compliance in alignment with any changes.

Recruitment, Selection, and Hiring

♡ Evaluate the current teacher hiring process with schools team/principals to determine which pieces need to be adjusted in the virtual world, particularly demo lessons to create a "real classroom" experience.

♡ Provide just-in-time training resources (video, reference guides) for hiring managers on how to effectively and equitably assess candidates and make hiring decisions through a completely virtual process.

Ensure your virtual hiring process is clear and efficient for candidates and the team is ready to process candidates and new hires efficiently.

Review marketing strategy to determine what to start, stop, and continue to improve online presence.

♡ Observe interviews and other hiring activities and give hiring managers feedback on their practice. Focus specifically on the extent to which the process and experience are equitable and unbiased given changes that have been made..

♡ Review your recruitment strategy and data to decide whether any changes to your current recruitment plan would strengthen your ability to build diverse pools of candidates in the coming months..

Share the culture of your schools with top candidates (since they can't do school visits) via videos, student and teacher testimonials, and pictures so they can get a flavor of your school or network.

Monitor people you have already hired, offerees and new hires closely as they go through the process to ensure they don't drop out. With likely lower conversion rates for offer acceptance and higher renege rates, staying connected with all new hires and keeping a hard sell is critical. Share this responsibility with principals, but remain engaged in it.

Consider ways of keeping offerees / new hires engaged: early onboarding, outreach from leaders, and sharing inspiring updates on how your schools are rising to the occasion)

Determine any potential hiccups or holdups on the logistics of getting new hires processed (fingerprinting, state to state reciprocity, etc.) and problem solve ASAP.

Be prepared for different timing and pipeline shifts as COVID-19 plays out and the economy shifts:
- Lower conversion rates may mean longer hiring season and later hires
- Recessions bring an influx of applicants - but with a mixed level of quality

See CSGF: Multidimensional Teacher Hiring in a 2D World

and KIPP Metro Atlanta's Guide for Hiring Managers

Aspire Public Schools: Promising Practices for virtual interviews;

Management Center: Email Templates for Communicating with Job Candidates During COVID-19

Sample Technical Assistance Projects: Reviewing and updating recruitment strategy and data and recommending changes to current recruitment plan.

Onboarding Processes

Start to plan for what adjustments would need to be made to new hire onboarding and HR processing.

Stay flexible and use a common sense approach if there are immediate challenges to the logistics and timing of the onboarding process (due to certification questions, uncertainty about budget, changes to offer letter timing,

Start to plan for what adjustments would need to be made to new hire onboarding and HR processing.

Management Center: Onboarding During COVID-19

	etc.). Consider what changes or additions to the new hire onboarding process will support new hires in feeling welcomed and connected if communication and community building remain virtual. Communicate onboarding plans, including any potential contingencies, to new staff.	Establish peer mentoring relationships and virtual shadowing opportunities between new hires and current staff to support onboarding process	**Sample Technical Assistance Projects:** Designing and implementing an updated onboarding process.