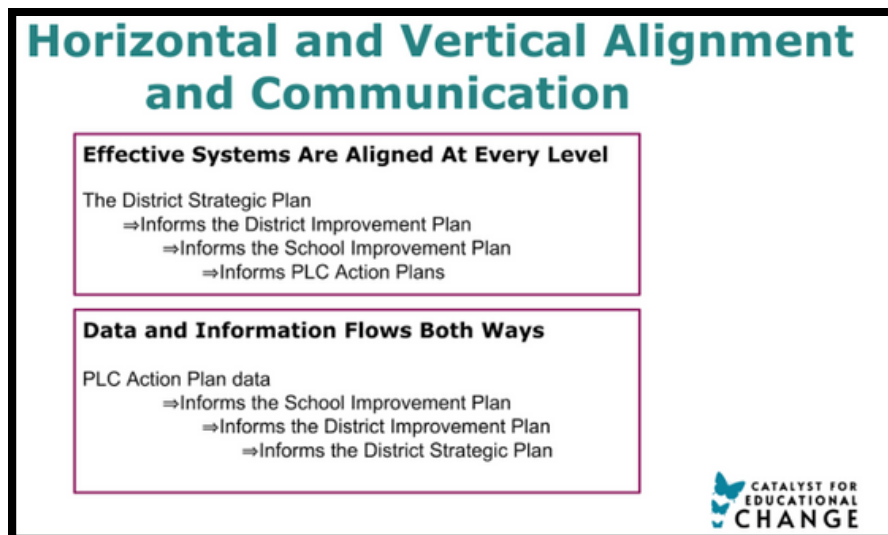


## The Growth Equation:

**(System Commitment + System Alignment) x Collaboration = System Growth**

How does a school district move from 19% proficiency on the state ELA assessment to 35% proficiency in 3 years? Everyone in the Berwyn South District is dedicated and hard working, but they have not been able to see the student learning results from their hard work. The missing pieces: System Commitment and System Alignment!



### Who Is Berwyn South?

- In West Cook County
- Houses ~3000 students in 8 schools (6 Elementary Schools and 2 Middle Schools)
- 83% of the students are Hispanic, 9% are White, and 5% are Black.

## WHAT'S HAPPENING

CEC began our partnership with Berwyn South during the 2021-2022 school year. We started our work with school and district administrators, providing them with an overview training of the entire Empowered Teams offering. This administrative team was, and continues to be a very strong team, led by a hands-on, actively involved Superintendent, and by an equally strong and actively involved Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning. It was clear from the beginning of our work together that there was full central office commitment, which continues to the present. Bea Maldonado, the Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, and I have worked very closely together in every aspect of the 4+ years of our work together. Her hands-on, servant leadership has ensured that everyone district-wide understands this as the priority.

## WHY IT MATTERS

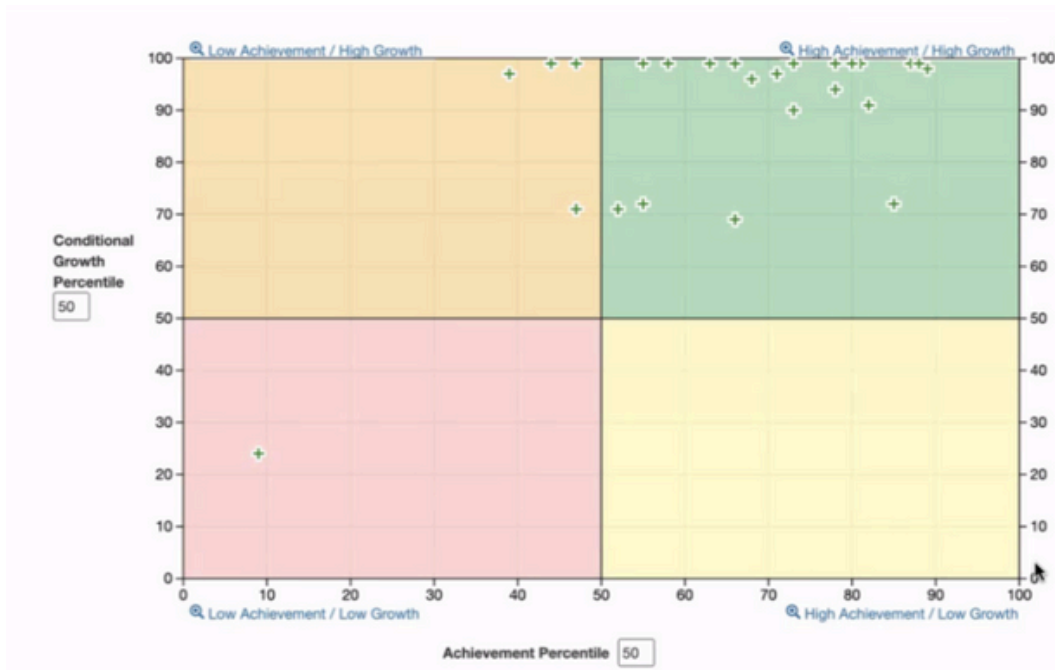
Bea and I have been true collaborative partners in every step of our work together. We spent our first year building the capacity of our building administrators to lead the Empowered Teams work at their schools, piece by piece, to help them ensure their entire staff was knowledgeable and ready to do the work of collaborative teams. Bea embodies the expectation of “supportive accountability”; she set clear expectations, and provided as much support as each school administrator needed to get the job done, including co-facilitating meetings, and even attending the PLC and SIP meetings of multiple teams to really jump start them.



The most productive part of our work was our one-on-one coaching sessions. After principals led their school teams in learning and applying each step of the Empowered Team process, Bea and I met with each administrator individually, to talk through and debrief the session, and then to discuss how each specific PLC was applying and doing the work. Together we problem-solved issues, and provided differentiated support for them to use with teams, whether they needed re-training, additional practice, or next steps information to move along at a faster pace.

### How do we get to attainment? **GROWTH!!**

This is a sample of benchmark growth data from one of the schools (NWEA Benchmark).  
*Note that the majority of students are in the “high growth” quadrants.*



## WHAT'S NEXT

Each school moved at the aggressive pace that worked best for them, and each team within the school worked that way as well; the pace was aggressive, because there were, and continues to be, end of year expectations for all teams.

We are now in our second year of Living Your Plan, after two years of building their Empowered Teams. Bea and I now meet with each school administrative team three times a year. In addition, the superintendent attends when she is available. Principals really appreciate these check in times for a variety of reasons. Bea recently shared with me that the principals told her that they knew they better have their data ready for their meetings with me, so they made sure they were always on top of their data.



These coaching meetings are similar to our Empowered Teams sessions; we review their baseline, progress, and growth data, and determine how they are addressing what their data tells them. They know that the expectation is that they use 5 types of data during their continuous learning cycles (baseline, implementation, formative, summative, and benchmark), and their school improvement plans show each type of data within the cycle. They have become so knowledgeable about how to use data during their cycles that they can speak very fluently about each type of data, and so can their teams! They are accountable to the superintendent for their School Improvement Work, and it is always a part of their evaluation conversations.

Our goal for this year is to move from semester based continuous improvement cycles to 6-8 week, or unit-based continuous improvement cycles. Each new step is met with some nervousness and trepidation, but they have learned to meet these challenges head-on, because they have always received the support they need to reach their goals.

The District Superintendent, Dr. Mary Havis, told us "The conversations principals are having around school improvement have been transformative, significantly increasing their confidence in leading their schools through focused, strategic goals and actions. Together, we've gained a deeper appreciation for every educator's role in the process and embraced data analysis and monitoring as valuable tools for learning and growth. Our partnership with CEC has strengthened the collective investment and ownership of school improvement among staff, leading to measurable academic progress for our students."



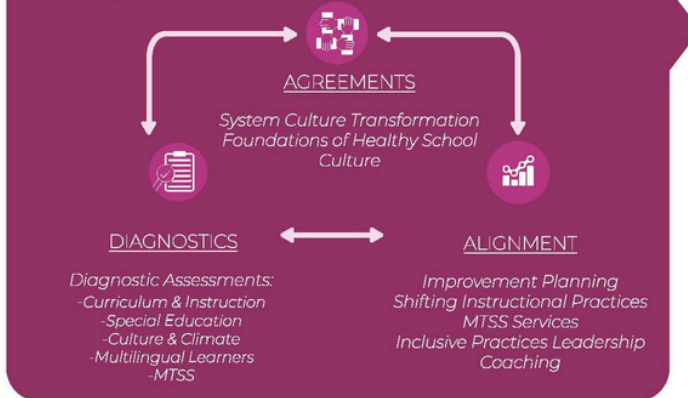
**PROBLEM STATEMENT:**

*Lack of coherence and shared ownership limits the quality of improvement and innovation in educational settings.*

**SYSTEM  
CONTEXT**



**CAPACITY BUILDING INPUTS**



**MEASURABLE OUTCOMES**

SHORT-TERM	
SYSTEM IMPACT	PEOPLE IMPACT
Decision-Making	New Knowledge or Skills
Policy Changes	Attitude Shifts
Resource Flow	Common Language
	Adapting Practice
MID-TERM	
Sustaining Practice	Strengthened Culture
Improved Alignment	Empowered Educators

**LONG-TERM OUTCOME:**

*Increased system capacity to orchestrate equitable, inclusive transformation to reach intended outcomes through large-scale organizational change.*

When stakeholders work together around shared agreements...the unthinkable is possible. CEC's focus on the **System Agreements** in school reform efforts aim to realign the adult culture and dynamics. We know when systems cultivate healthy, values-based relationships within each school and classroom measurable outcomes are more likely. People matter. And people working together really matters in schools. Developing a strong adult culture as[1] a foundation of a change agenda is what makes CEC stand apart.

CEC uses **System Alignment** to create collective efficacy on the agreed upon improvement aims of a school or district. Our tools and processes are designed to empower those closest to the issues to own the work. Our change management approach intentionally paces improvement through attainable short-term, mid-term, and long-term goals. It is the "secret sauce" of school improvement.

We invite you to explore the role our **Logic Model** might play in your system's large-scale improvement. Our website includes [FREE](#) resources that might be helpful in opening up dialogue with key stakeholders. Let's work together to turn ideas into action, so we can all see what's possible for our schools.