


# Transformational Leadership *Initiative*



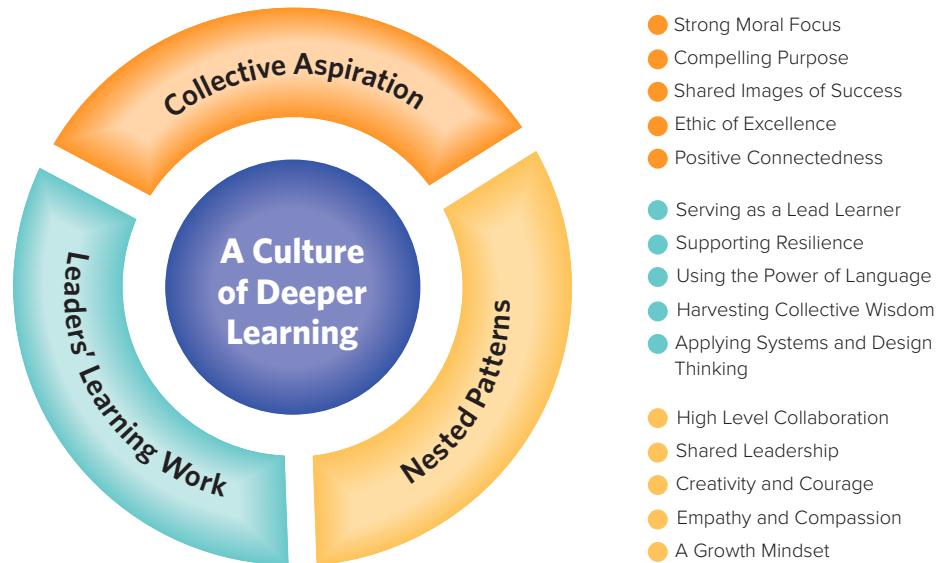
The Transformational Leadership Initiative is an ambitious, multi-year effort designed to improve the academic performance and the overall learning environment for disadvantaged students in public schools in the St. Louis region. The project is a partnership among school districts in St. Louis, Washington University's Institute for School Partnership, and the Santa Fe Center for Transformational School Leadership.

## OUR APPROACH

Dr. Linda Henke, Executive Director of the Santa Fe Center for Transformational School Leadership and partner in this project, developed a model for transformational school change while leading the successful turnaround of the Maplewood Richmond Heights School District in St. Louis. The Model for Human-Centered School Transformation has deeper learning at its core. Deeper learning challenges traditional classroom practices by involving students in highly engaging problems, projects, experiments, and writing tasks that require students to work collaboratively and apply their knowledge in real world settings.

Our approach to school change recognizes that many top-down, prescriptive reform efforts to micromanage school operations and classroom activities have failed. Instead, the Transformational Leadership Initiative builds the capacity of educators to transform their organizations with new approaches to leadership and deeper learning experiences for all students and educators.

## The Human-Centered School Transformation Model



To support this type of learning environment, researchers and educators at the Santa Fe Center for Transformational School Leadership identified three broad areas of transformative leadership work: building collective aspiration; nurturing a collaborative, creative, growth-oriented culture; and approaching leadership as learning

work. In each of these three areas, five dimensions provide the focus for the work as leaders transform their schools and districts. Monographs written by consultants for the Santa Fe Center as well as an array of rich resources, support leadership teams in exploring and implementing practices growing from these dimensions.

## THE PROGRAM

The core program, customized for each district's specific objectives and needs, consists of ten key components:

1. Redesigning roles to create distributed leadership at the school level to include teachers serving as instructional leaders who coach, supervise and evaluate a group of teachers.
2. Professional development for all building leadership teams in coaching for transformation, supervision and evaluation.
3. Weekly coaching conferences for all teachers with either a principal or an instructional leader who supervises them.
4. An intensive retreat for leadership teams that introduces the Human-Centered School Transformation Model, supports team-building, and begins to set the partnership's improvement agenda.
5. Monthly senior leadership design meetings with a district-level steering committee.
6. Monthly team seminars to build strong leadership capacity and strengthen leadership teams' understanding of deeper learning.
7. School site coaching for the leadership team to support the implementation of shared leadership including coaching/supervision/evaluation for transformation and deeper learning.
8. Professional development to support teachers in creating deeper learning classrooms.
9. Support for schools as they develop reciprocal partnerships with their communities, benefiting both students and their communities by creating authentic learning projects around community problems.
10. Yearly institutes that allow participating schools to share their learning with others.

## TRACKING OUR IMPACT

TLI uses a variety of approaches to gauge changes associated with its work across four areas: a) school culture, b) teaching practice, c) student behavior, attitude, and resilience, and d) student learning outcomes.

The measurement approaches:

- Surveys and interviews of leaders, teachers, and students to assess shifts in culture, relationships, and classroom practices
- Ongoing formative assessments of monthly seminars
- Data on student behaviors that are leading indicators of improved engagement and relationships (e.g., shifts in attendance, mobility, discipline incidents)
- Multiple measures of academic performance including class-based performance assessments, student portfolios, and state assessments.



### Dr. Linda Henke

*Executive Director, Santa Fe Center for Transformational School Leadership (SFCTSL)*

Linda Henke is the co-founder with David Bristol of the Santa Fe Center for Transformational School Leadership. She is a popular executive coach for principals and top-level school administrators as well as a consultant with schools in year-long programs of school improvement nationally and internationally.



### Vicki L May

*Executive Director, Institute for School Partnership (ISP) and Assistant Dean of Arts & Sciences, Washington University*

Vicki May, as Executive Director of the Institute for School Partnership (ISP) and as Assistant Dean of Arts and Sciences at Washington University is committed to world-class educational research. May's work with the ISP, the university's signature program for strategically improving K-12 teaching and learning, inspires, connects, and empowers teachers in local schools around exemplar resources.

## Partners 2017-2018

Ferguson-Florissant School District  
School District of University City  
St. Louis College Prep Charter School

## Funding

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## Contact

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