Book Study: The New School Rules (Kim & Gonzales-Black)

Chapter 1: Plan for Change, Not Perfection

* Page 15: Talks about “dust(ing) off the old one [plan] and start[ing] a refresh every few years, with very little of the old one [plan] implemented.”
  + What initiatives/plans has your school rolled out in the last few years? Where do they stand now?
    - As you move through Redesign, you will have to collectively decide what stays and what goes. This list can help.
  + How did you measure the impact of these initiatives/plans?
* Page 30 says we need to “Get specific about impact.” As the Redesign leaders start thinking about this question:
  + What impact will this [Redesign] have on our team and organization?”

Chapter 2: Build Trust & Allow Authority to Spread

* Page 37: Talks about the “Hollywood Model” of Team development. Within this model, teams operate as “autonomous hubs.”
  + As the principal (pilot/co-pilot), how will you decentralize decision-making to allow teams “empowered execution?”
  + How will you prevent chaos (p. 41)?
* Page 53: Says teams must be founded on purpose and trust. In advance of next school year, create a list of all teams. (If you know the team’s purpose write that as well.) Start thinking about which teams will dissolve and which can be combined and/or absorbed.
  + How will you work to build trust within and between teams?
    - Note: Serve as a neutral facilitator.

Chapter 3: Define the Work Before you Define the People

* This chapter discusses the importance of clearly defined roles with organizations and teams. As a team, take some time to collectively define your own roles before “tentatively” defining the roles of “all staff.”
  + Principal
  + Pilot
  + Co-Pilot
  + School Redesign Team
  + All Staff
* Page 79: What roles do you anticipate you will need to fill? (You are not tied to this list.)
  + Once you have some roles, work through the questions on page 82.
* Page 83: Says “Responsive organizations know that to maximize the impact of the organization, every person must be empowered to leverage their perspective for the greater purpose.”
  + This will be fundamental to your redesign work. How will you make this a part of your culture?

Chapter 4: Aim for “Safe Enough to Try” Instead of Consensus

* Think about a time you were a part of a failed initiative.
  + Why did it fail?
    - What lessons from Chapter 4 did you miss in your failed initiative?
    - What will you do differently (using what you learned from Chapter 4) to ensure your Redesign is a success?
* Pages 107-110: Talks about the impact of “noise” and the importance of “small decisions.”
  + - Proactive and Reflective, not Reactive and Impulsive
    - This section talks about “cutting out the noise” while also making small decisions to move forward.
    - By communicating your redesign plan early and often you will calm noise and set the stage for continuous improvement.
    - While your redesign plan (small decisions) is not yet made (& won’t be made for quite some time), you have made the Big decision to Redesign your school.
    - What can you say to your various stakeholder groups before the school year starts to let them know what journey you are taking in order to quiet negative noise?
* Page 112: Says “Academic results in schools are sustained by student engagement and school culture, not programs and initiatives.”
  + What will you do from School Day 1 to create a school culture that is ready for “safe enough to try” and “transcends a “program?”

Chapter 5: Harness the Flow, and Let Information Go

* Page 125: Talks about information sharing and the idea that information can expire.
  + Come up with a plan for how you will share information with stakeholders.
    - 24 hours
    - 1 week
    - After each Regional Training
  + What will your “streams of information” be? (page 132)
    - PS- Remember the 3x3 Rule (page 142)
* Page 134: Breaks down into 3 categories:
  + - Known knowns
    - Known unknowns
    - Unknown unknowns
  + As the key redesign leaders, think about what information you can put in these categories about Redesign

Chapter 6: Schools Grow when People Grow

* Page 158: Says “For adults, cognitive development can come from more experienced peers, training, formal education, coaching and mentoring, supportive feedback, and problem solving with peers where tensions are resolved and new solutions are crafted.”
  + We learn on page 163 about the importance of Reflection. As we strive to be proactive and reflective, instead of reactive and impulsive, we must first establish an intention to learn. How will you establish this intention at the beginning of the year in order to set your organization up for success?
  + When applying for Redesign, you were asked to commit 80% of your non-teaching time (i.e. prep time, collaboration time, staff meetings, PD days, etc) to tackling Redesign. What can you plan right now to ensure that those times are geared toward learning amongst and within your staff? How will you empower your staff to view themselves as agents when coming to (and leaving) these meetings?
* Page 162: Sit down as a Leadership Team (Principal, Pilot, and Co-Pilot) and create two lists.
  + List 1- Strengths and Weaknesses of your Organization
  + List 2- Things that have been a success, and things that have been a failure.
    - Bonus- Write down what you learned from your failures.