



The University of Texas at Austin  
Charles A. Dana Center

# Setting the Stage for Conversations about Equity

## CAMT 2018

Houston, Texas



## Engage With the Dana Center

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[facebook.com/utdanacenter](https://facebook.com/utdanacenter)



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Conference Hashtag: #gotmath

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# About the Dana Center

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— Equity — Access — Excellence —

2018

# Dana Center by the Numbers

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We supported **60,500 K-12 students** attending school on U.S. military bases through our work with the **U.S. Department of Defense Education Activity.**

# Dana Center by the Numbers

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By the close of 2017, the Dana Center had contributed to the **implementation of math pathways** in higher education systems, institutions, and campuses in **29 states**.



# Dana Center by the Numbers

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We engaged with **118 districts in 23 states** to provide middle and high school math courses of the **highest quality**, as recognized by rigorous national and state reviews, including EdReports.org, Louisiana Department of Education, and Texas Education Agency panels.

low enough.

**“Wanted:** A miracle worker who can do more with less, pacify rival groups, endure chronic second guessing, tolerate low levels of support, process large volumes of paper, and work double shifts . . . . He or she will have carte blanche to innovate, but cannot spend much money, replace any personnel, or upset any constituency.”

Evans, R. (1995, April 12). “Getting real about leadership.” *Education Week*, 14(29), 36.

For most of these countries oil is the main source of

## Purposeful Norming

Understand that those who work, learn.

Look for solutions, not blame.

Focus on systems, not people.

Recognize that everyone has expertise.

Be honest.

Challenge ideas.

Share talk time.

Mistakes are expected, respected, and inspected.



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## Leadership

***Leadership* – is no more (and no less) than taking responsibility for what matters to you.**

Ripples of Hope, Julian Weissglass, 1996

- What equity issues in your system matter to you?
- Who benefits most from your district's current mathematics structure?
- What steps are you taking to acknowledge institutional racism and its impact on mathematics education in your system?

## Conversations about Equity

- **Identify & Acknowledge**
  - What are the systemic biases in my system?
  - How can I support honest, reflective conversations about equity?
- **Overcome**
  - What actions are needed to foster high-quality instruction that supports acquisition of math concepts for each student?

## Identify

### Self Examination

*Without a firm self-examination of his or her own role in historically inequitable structures, a school leader is not able to authentically engage with his or her school community (regardless of the level of sameness or difference in the principal's and school community's identities).*

Rigby & Tredway, 2014. Actions matter: How school leaders enact equity principles.

Who should engage in self-examination?

## Identifying Biases

### *Equity Literacy Institute and EdChange*

- Equity and Diversity Awareness quiz
- Poverty and Classism Awareness quiz
- Who Said It? A Re-perception quiz
- Visit **EdChange.org** and **EquityLiteracy.org** for more information

### **Project Implicit**

- Participate in an online research project designed to investigate hidden attitudes, biases, and judgements that influence actions.
- Visit **ProjectImplicit.net** for more information

## Acknowledge – Supporting Conversations about Equity

### What is the value of setting norms for conversations?

Norms...

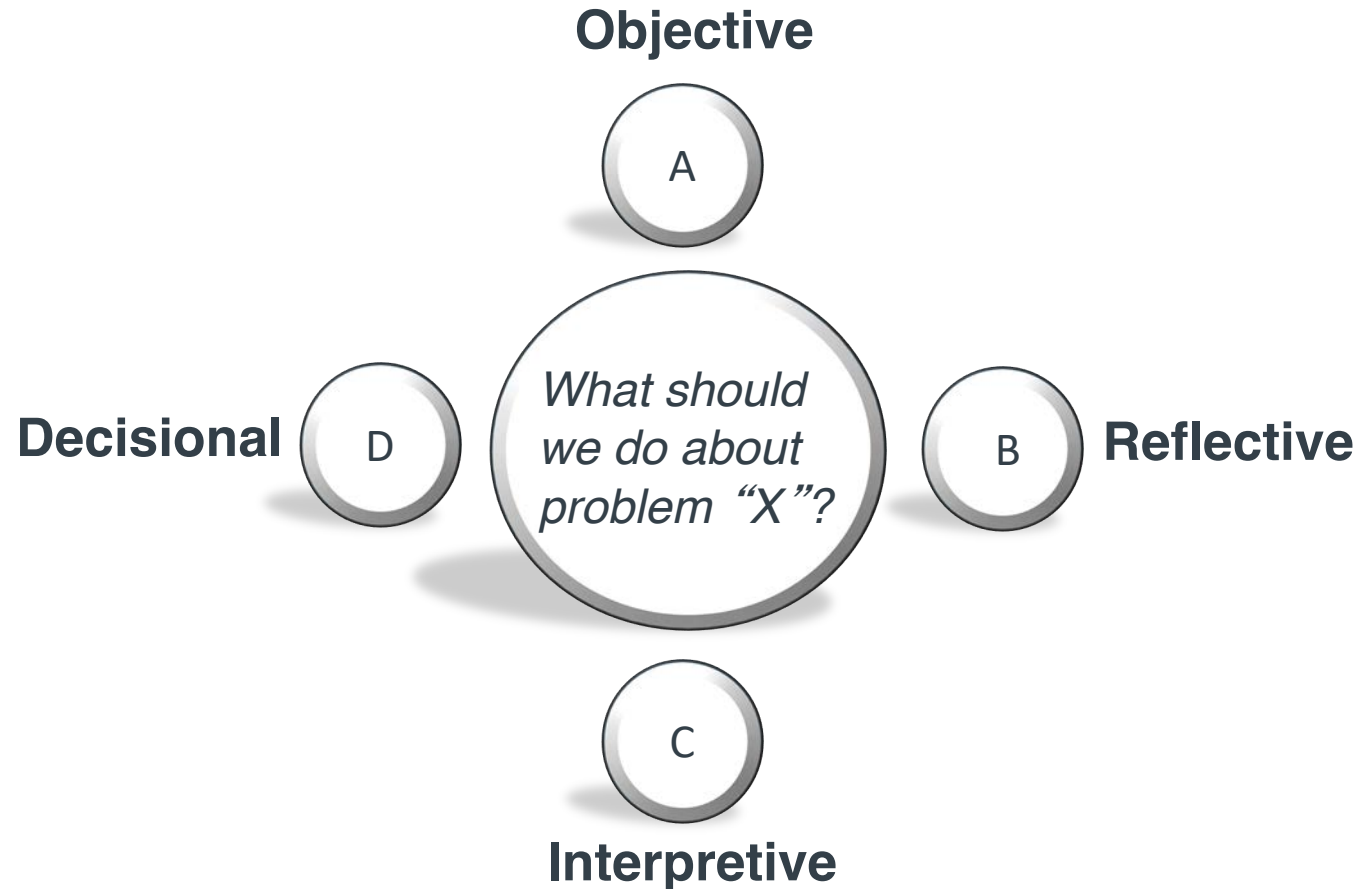
- Promote honest, respectful dialogue
- Establish a safe environment to exchange and challenge diverse ideas
- Ensure maximum participation
- Encourage individual and collective responsibility for learning and planning for action
- Support reflective practice in groups



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# Reflective Practice: What goes wrong?

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— Nelson, J. (2007). *The art of focused conversation for schools: Over 100 ways to guide clear thinking and promote learning*. Second ed. Toronto, Ontario: The Canadian Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA Canada).

# Structured Reflective Conversations

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Objective

Engage *everyone* in surfacing relevant facts and information in the conversation regarding the topic/issue.

Reflective

Elicit feelings, personal reactions, and associations regarding the topic/issue.

Interpretive

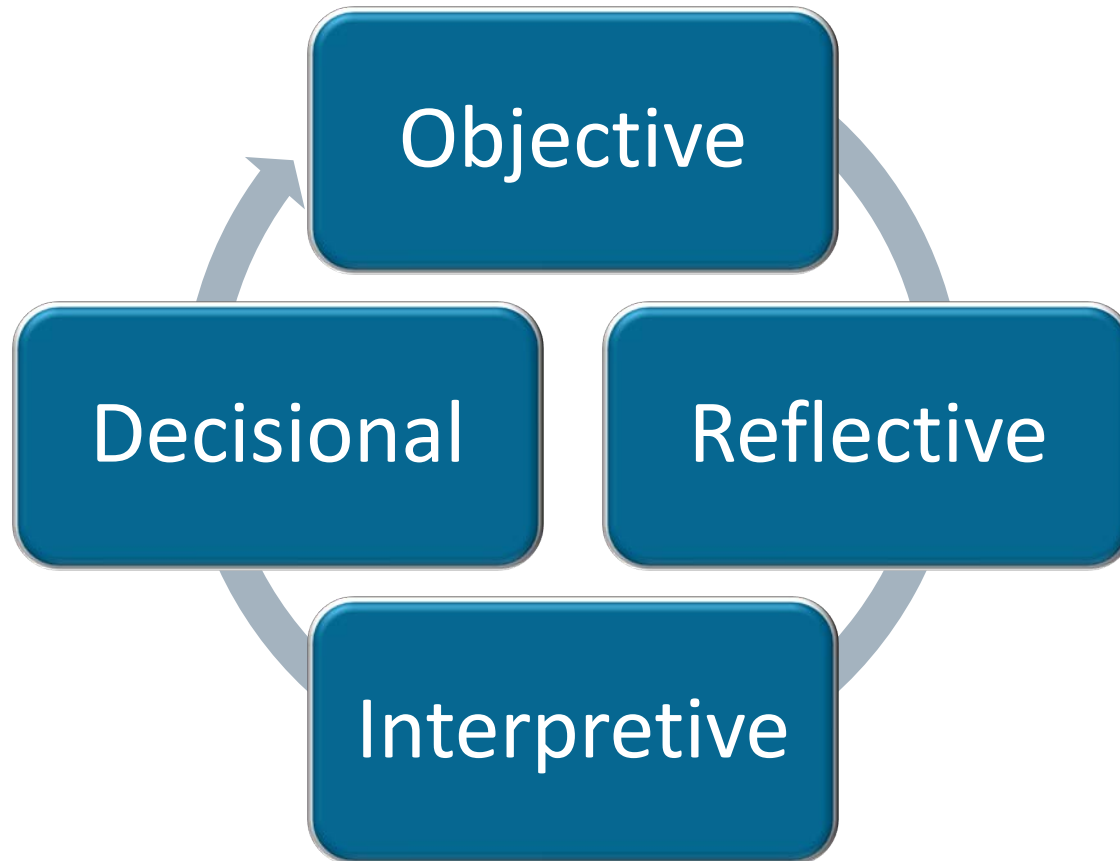
Uncover the meaning, significance, and implications of the topic/issue.

Decisional

Get to action, future direction, and next steps.

# Structured Reflective Conversations

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## Overcome

Inequity is...

unequal distribution of access and opportunity, including access and opportunity to material and non-material resources.

So **Equity** requires a redistribution—not a mitigation, not an add-on program, but a **structural redistribution** of access and opportunity.

Paul Gorski, Equity Literacy Institute

<http://equityliteracy.org>

## How will you respond?

- Students possess different innate levels of ability in mathematics, and these cannot be changed by instruction. Certain groups or individuals have it while others do not.
- Equity is the same as equality. All students need to receive the same learning opportunities so that they can achieve the same academic outcomes.
- Students who are not fluent in the English language are less able to learn mathematics and therefore must be in a separate track for English language learners (ELLs ).
- Mathematics learning is independent of students' culture, conditions, and language, and teachers do not need to consider any of these factors to be effective.

— National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. (2014).

*Principles to actions: Ensuring mathematical success for all.* Reston, VA: Author, p. 63.

## Reflection

- How does this connect to what I already know?
- How does this align to structures within my system?
- Based on this information, what changes would I like to make?



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