Magnet School Development Framework
MSAP Pre-Application Webinar

Doreen Marvin: Hi everybody. And welcome to the pre-application webinar on the Magnet Schools Development Framework. I'm Doreen Marvin, I'm the president of Obelisk Consulting Services. And I'm doing this webinar on behalf of the MSAP Center, which is your technical assistance center as a magnet school grantee or potential grantee. My experience with magnet schools is long and deep. Having worked in Connecticut for quite a while and developing magnet schools there, as well as being on a national board related to magnet schools for Magnet Schools in America. And I'm a past president for that organization.

So today we've got an agenda that really focuses in on how might I, as an applicant, someone who's thinking about applying for the Magnet Schools Assistance Program grant, how might I think about my magnet schools for the greatest level of success? And the MSAP Center along with the U.S. Department of Education have developed a framework that's research based as well as experience based. So what are the things that have happened in the past that have really led to successful magnet schools? As well as what does recent educational research say about magnet schools and successful schools, diversity, equity, instructional practice? So we're going to go through the framework, we'll go through each of the core components, each of the elements. We'll talk about the stages of development and then how you might think about your implementation mapping going forward.

So we want you to know that this framework that it really has a number of uses. And so while it will be very helpful to those of you who are thinking about applying for the Magnet Schools Assistance Program funding source, it also can be really helpful through the life of your magnet school. Magnet schools have this cadence of development over time and you always want to make sure that you're staying relevant. Well, this framework can help you think about how do we stay relevant? How do we make sure that we are achieving the things that were our priorities and that wanted to achieve? How can I use this framework as a way to guide magnet teams, both at the school level and also at the district level? And how do we make sure that we've got really good communication and a common language around magnet schools in both schools and at the district level?

So let's delve into it now. When we look at the framework here, you will see that there's multiple components. Inside, we've got what we call the components of magnet schools. Then the outer circle is around the elements. And then we've got some stages that the magnet schools will go through. And I'm going to break it down and we're going to go through each one of these. So let's get started on the inside of the circle. And if we think about the diversity and equity, enrollment management, partnership, family engagement, curriculum and instruction, those five pieces, while at different points in time, they might be at different places, they're all having to work in tandem with one another.

So let's think about diversity and equity. Everybody can read the definition that's been put forth in the framework. However, I want you to think about diversity and equity is about both and thinking. It's not an either or. It is possible to give all students access and inclusion to every part of your magnet schools, whether you have specialized programs in your school, all students, regardless of their background, their proven propensity for the kind of learning and the kind of learners they are, really should all be included in all aspects of your magnet school. Really need to think about, what are your policies? And what are your practices? Related to equity, diversity, making sure that they are covering all the pieces that really make a very, very strong school that celebrates, believes and spreads division, not only of the theme of the magnet school, but of diverse learning environment.

Next in that inner circle, one of those components is around enrollment management. Now some folks might say, oh, well, this about recruiting and recruiting students. And yes, and that's capital A in And, it's also about making sure that your decisions are not only in keeping with the data and the context of your community, but there also gives you a holistic approach to how you're thinking about retaining students and families. So it's important to remember that, especially if you have a, what's the word I want to use? If you have a magnet pathway and you have a plan that you want students to move from, let's say an elementary stem school into a middle stem school where they maybe have a priority or a preference. That you're really thinking about all of that. And how do we make sure that we're retaining families? How are we staying connected to them?

Make sure you really understand that all the stakeholders are part of your enrollment management. And by stakeholders, we mean all aspects of the community, that could be government, it includes your boards of education, it includes your district level and their priorities. But really looking at your data to say, how is it that we want to make sure that we are attracting a diverse set of students and their families? Another piece around developing magnet schools that I think sometimes falls a little, little bit to the wayside, is in my opinion, is really thinking about the zoning in your community, your economic development, who and what are the businesses that you have that would make a school regardless of its theme, attractive to all types of families? And how will you manage newcomers? How are you going to welcome newcomers? How will they access your school? I can't stress enough though, the data and having data-based decisions around your strategies is key to everything.

The next core component is around curriculum and instruction. Now, we know as good educators, that curriculum, instruction and assessment, all of those pieces go together and they're often developed together, even though sometimes they can be separate. I think it's important to remember that the more you're able to connect them together, the easier it is for families and for teachers to really understand the vision for your theme based instructional components of your school. You always

want to make sure for the utmost of success, that your magnet school has a direct connection to the priorities of the district. So your mission at your school should not be different from the mission of your district, other than your school can have its own theme based mission. You want to think about, so if the district is using a particular program, how does your school, how can your magnet school fit within that framework of this other program? I'm thinking about overarching district instructional practice. Make sure you're thinking about crosswalks at that school level. How do the standards of my state and also the nation, how do they all apply?

I always like to recommend also when you're thinking about curriculum and instruction and assessment, that over the course of the development of the school, you think about how can we develop our own internal magnet or theme-based standards? Maybe that's about how, so as one example, how do we want to set up some standards related to critical thinking for our students in the magnet school? Some might say the word standards is a little strong, so maybe it's, how can we have a rubric about kids decisionmaking? How might we have a rubric around the implementation of project-based learning? These are just examples. Okay. And the most important thing here is how do you have consistency and schoolwide implementation of the entire package of your curriculum instruction? And I always like to add assessment in there because it's such a core component of seeing how students are doing.

Let's think about partnership, that's another piece of that inner circle of the framework and partnerships. When you first start a magnet school, I think it's really important to define, what are different levels of partnerships? What kinds of partnerships do we want to have? Fewer partners, but with very, very strong ties can actually give you greater level of success. So if in your, pre-app, in your application and in your pre-thinking about this MSAP application, you might want to think, so how might we for this school, develop three very strong partnerships? And three is just a random number for me. But I do think it's important to say, less is and can be more for us, especially when we're just starting out.

Your initial year of starting a magnet school, you may have a lot of people who are interested in partnering and the reality is maybe they really want to be a vendor of the school. So that's why identifying those different levels of partnerships and being very clear about how a partnership is going to help the school achieve its goals and how might the school help the partner achieve their goals. I always think it's very important and it's nice to formalize those relationships by having some type of a memorandum of understanding. And also if you're able to sit with your teachers and your planning team and to say, what are the things that are going to be most important to us from a values perspective on relationships with partnerships? How do we nurture them and how do we make sure that they get better and they deepen over time because you want your partnerships to be as relevant as your magnet school is.

And just because this one is listed last, you have to remember that family engagement is part of that circle, which shows that at any given time, any one of these components might need to have a little bit more attention than another one. And family engagement is definitely one of these where you want to be very, very intentional about how your engaging families, you want to make sure that the engagement is authentic and meets not only the family needs, but also the school needs. But family's needs are important because when you have family engagement, your retention of students throughout your entire school for the whole pathway of your school. So if you are able to engage families in kindergarten and they feel as though their needs are being met and they are part of the school, they are more likely to have students come and stay through fifth grade, let's say, if that's the end of course, with that particular school. You want your family engagement to be equity based, meaning really figure out how is it that we can engage families where they are.

How do we make sure that we are reaching families who maybe are not able to come to school on a very regular basis because of life circumstances or their work schedules? And how do we keep family engagement focused on the learners within the school? How do we not only keep it about learners, but how do we keep it about learning? How do we keep it about learning? I was just talking to a school the other day and they were talking about how one of their... Now that they're able to have families back school, they want to do a, if you will, a CSI or a mystery night with families to actually teach families about all the stem components that their kindergarten through fifth graders are learning. I thought that was very learner focused, it's also learning focus. And of course they're going to have childcare and they're also going to have some refreshments for families, which by the way, you should not be using your MSAP funding for refreshments. So you may find a partner who'd be able to do that part of it. That's just a little tidbit for you.

So now let's move to the outer circle in this framework and we've covered the inside circle, which is really about if you will, the learners, keeping the learners and their families in the schools and the strength of the magnet school. Now we've got these elements that helped to raise up the core components of your magnet school. And those include things like leadership and its leadership and management at the district level, at the school level and also in the classroom level. You have to really think about how do we build leaderships with our teachers and how do we help them understand all the components that are required for the Magnet Schools Assistance Program funding. And you have sustainability, professional development. And I would say within sustainability and professional development, there's also this piece around capacity building because professional development and capacity building from that perspective can build sustainability.

You're going to think about theme integration, your use of data for planning and decision and then of course communication is critical. So let's break these down a

little bit. Let's start with leadership and management. The leadership and the management of these grants, remember it's 5 years. So within 5 years, you have to make sure you really have people who understand the vision that, if everything is focused on the mission of the school, the more that you can have collaboration, inclusive decisionmaking, shared decisionmaking and people really thinking about their collective efficacy together, the more that vision and mission come together, which helped to establish that school.

When you think about making sure that you've got that collective efficacy, you want to make sure you've got shared agendas so that everybody families, district, teachers and students and leadership within a school really understand, what's the goal that we're going for? What is it that we want to be focused on? We don't want to have these competing agendas. You also want to make sure that everybody understands what success will look like. What's the success criteria going to be? And how are we going to reinforce and lift each other up in order to see this magnet school be successful?

Then we move on to communication if we're going clockwise around the outer circle there, your communication should be both at a very high level, should be very strategic, as well as tactical. And early and in the beginning, you cannot over communicate. You cannot over communicate the vision of the school, the mission of the school, the requirements of your MSAP grant. And you have to really be on top of that. As time goes on, when we get to the stages of development and you move all the way on a continuum optimizing your school, those things can begin to lessen a little bit. But you want to make sure that you're continually sending those good, good messages about your school. You want to make sure you're still communicating what are the successes that the school is seeing and what are some obstacles or barriers and how do we overcome them together. So that goes back to that leadership piece. It goes back to that collaboration and the shared agenda. Communication falls right within that.

Now, data. I always like to say that you really need to base your application on the data of your district and the data perhaps of your neighborhood, the data of your county, depending upon what your context is. Regardless of all of that, once you have your grant, your data really needs to be about equity and it needs to be about being learner centered. Let's really delve in and think about how is it that we're measuring student success? Are we looking at the whole child? How are we looking at the whole child? How are we really thinking about equity and diversity from a deep perspective? And, I was talking before in communication about putting forth those great successes that you are seeing in your school and the improvement. Now, you shouldn't be fooled, because data is not simple but it can be very effect.

And so within your MSAP grant, there will be questions about data related to students and feeder patterns, the demographics of your school. And then should you be lucky enough and should you receive the funding and be awarded the

funding, you will have data that needs to be collected not only through your evaluators, but also for your annual reports that you will have to turn into the U.S. Department of Education. And so getting used to that data-based decisionmaking and data-based for planning and conversations with an equity lens will be very, very important.

Next is that theme integration. In some ways, this is what makes magnet schools different from other schools, in that you're really thinking about how do we bring to life a particular theme for our students while maintaining and integrating into the curriculum and the instruction of our particular school. And so you have to think about how do we set time aside to really think about the vision and the expectations we want for our students with consistent growth over time of that theme. You may not be able to achieve a hundred percent of theme integration in year one, but if you say, you know what, by years three and four, we really want to see theme integration into these core area subjects, as well as these electives or these other opportunities for students, you'll be more successful than saying, we're just going to jump into the deep end of the pool and we're going to put a hundred percent into this right away.

We want a hundred percent of things to be theme based. That might be difficult for teachers. It might be difficult for families. You got to think about how your professional development and your professional learning flows into your theme integration. How do we help teachers feel competent in integrating any particular theme? Now, themes can be considered for magnet schools and this is not a huge laundry list. But you will see schools that are focused on science, technology, engineering, math, the art, you may see schools that are focused on, for instance, environmental science or marine science. You may also see those that are focused on a particular part of the art. Maybe it's just visual arts and maybe it's just performing arts. So you have to pick, what's going to fit for your school, your context and your district.

And I always like to say that it's great if you're able to sit and think about what's the experience for the learner? What's the experience for the learners' families? Particularly when you're thinking about integration. Then we have professional development or professional learning. Have to remember the professional development, while it is about being able to think about your stakeholders, your teachers, their knowledge, their skills, and their attention to really good instruction and really implementing the theme. It also has to be about capacity building and it has to lean towards sustainability. So one example might be, how might we get a set of teachers to become, have a level of expertise in this particular element of our professional learning? Let's call it your theme because then those teachers will be able to teach other teachers and will be able to help you orient any new teachers into your school. And that's how you build sustainability.

Your professional learning should always be from a strength-based perspective. You want to make sure that you're balancing research and innovation and how do you do that? Well, guess what? By collecting the data. So how is this is working? How is this experiment working? What is it we want to learn from any new experiments that we're going to do in our school? We want to make sure that your professional learning and the professional learning plan that you put into your proposal is linked to your school, it's linked to your student data and it's linked to your theme. So all of those three pieces and also your teacher's professional learning goals.

Now we have the sustainability component. What's most important when it comes to sustainability is thinking about how do we ensure that this school is able to A, succeed and continue beyond any of the initial funding that you receive from inset dollars? How does this school continue and continue to succeed when any of the leadership of the school changes? How do we make sure that this school continues to serve students with high quality instructional practice that's innovative and relevant? So when you're thinking about sustainability, those are all the pieces that you have to think about while at the same time saying, how might we utilize our partners, the learning from our teachers and their professional learning plans and the skills of the theme based instructional coordinator at the school?

Now, please know, I'm not suggesting that every school has to have a theme based instructional specialist, so to speak. However, it can be helpful in the early stages of a school and everybody should be continually focusing on how do we make sure that we're able to sustain all of this work. How are we able to sustain and replace any equipment that we buy? So let's say that you make purchases around technology. How do you make sure that there's continued investments in that technology beyond the life of your MSAP grant? Hence why, when you go back up and to leadership and management, making sure that if you will, the digital learning specialists or the technology specialists of your district are part of your overall planning.

So now we've gone through the inner circle, right? We've gone through those components that are inside and very focused within the school. And now we've also gone through the elements that help to support your school. So they're going to feed into and lift up that inner core circle of this frame work. Now let's think about the stages of planning. When we think about stages of planning, there's five stages. We could go back for a moment. I'm just going to flip back here for a second for you. And if you think about it, we've got planning, that's where you should be right now. Early implementation, your full implementation and optimization. And if you think about this within the MSAP funding cycle, each of these stages should take you up through year five. So by the end of your Year 5, hopefully you are in that beginning or in that optimization stage. Full implementation to optimization can be realized within those 5 years.

So when you're in planning, you really need to think about making sure that you've got diverse groups of stakeholders forming some type of a magnet leadership team. It can be your design team when you're thinking about your planning process. How do we use this design team to really help shepherd the entire application and the school? I also think it's important that each school has its... So not only should there be this district-level magnet leadership team helping this planning stage, but having school-based planning teams can be very, very critical to your process. When I think about your theory of change and your theory of action, on your logic model, like what's going to be your or inputs, and then what are going to be the outcomes of what's going to happen in the middle there? Then also you may say, oh my goodness, this is so much how in the world am I going to create a 5-year implementation plan?

Just remember, an implementation plan is a living and breathing document. So you want to plan for what you want and implement what you can, as you move through your 5 years and through your 5-year process. Stage two, that's little early implementation. You feel like you're toe touching into a pool. You're starting to really feel like things are coming together. In order to be successful here in this in early implementation, you want to make sure that you've got an infrastructure that can help to support the school. So you want to make sure you've got processes in place that help you hire staff, get new staff, their professional learning plan that you've got your partnership starting. This can be very, very critical to what I would say is a solid foundation. This is where you're really starting to put forward that vision and the mission of the school. It might feel like it's all about taking care of things and hiring and filling out paperwork and doing reporting and getting materials and things like that. Yes.

And remember that capital A for And is about making sure or that you have an implementation team that really understands the vision of the school, the mission of the school, as well as the requirements of the grant. So I always like to say one of the first things you need to do as you are awarded dollars is to reread your application, share and reread that application together. You really, really are assimilating what you said you were going to do with where you are now and what you're going to do, particularly in that first year. Want to make sure you've got data systems and you want to make sure that you've got your enrollment management plan going.

Stage three, full implementation. And while it only took 30 seconds in this webinar to move from initial implementation to full implementation, it takes a lot more than 30 seconds. So let's really think about how is it that we can have by let's say Years 3 into 4. How do we have a fully functioning and integrated magnet program that it's a really strong structure, it's got policies, it's procedures, it's practices, and everybody understands what the goals of the school are, what the vision is, what the mission is. And you have every teacher, hear me, every teacher implementing their piece of your magnet school theme.

When you ask students, why is this a magnet school? What makes it a magnet school? They're able to tell you why. They're also able to tell you how the theme is implemented and what makes a magnet school different from another school. And you're actually seeing really strong progress, improving student achieve and their student opportunities. You're using your data on a very regular basis. And you're also right now, really into the sustainability planning of thinking about how do we make sure this school, the successful school, continues beyond the life of these federal dollars.

And then you move into stage four, which is the optimization of a school, which means that the school is resilient, it's flexible and by the way, even if leadership has changed, the school continually keeps being relevant. That you continually keep making sure that whatever changes you're doing fit your new context. That you're using your data in order to make decisions. And you're really thinking about how are you affecting students, families and the community. This is whole continuous improvement process. So those are the four stages of the framework and the magnet school development.

Now, when we think about what comes next, how do I wrap my head around all of these pieces? It's about implementation mapping. And implementation has a really a direct research base and a science to it. So when you're thinking about implementation mapping, you got to think about what's the change process that will happen? How will we, oh, by the way, how will we manage some conflict that is most likely to arise when we are being creative and innovative? How do we make sure that we've got really good processes for communicating? And how do we manage this entire project? So we're going to go through a few of those now. If you look at the framework, when you're on a MSAP Center website, you will be able to read these next slides a lot easier because they're sketched out in a grid form. And they're very detailed.

You have to remember that the five components of the magnet school, the ones that were in that inner circle of the framework, enrollment management, yeah. Enrollment management, all those things that are on the inside of the circle, they're not going to be moving forward in a very linear and equal step. They're not going to reach each stage at exactly the same time. So if you can think of someone who juggles and every once in a while, there's a different ball up in the air and some over to the side, that's what can happen with all of those components. So it's important to keep a handle on where is each component what's going on in each component, but know that they're going to develop at their own time.

So here, when we look at this planning map, you've got your diversity and equity, you've got your enrollment management, you've got your curriculum and instruction, the family engagement, and you've got your partnership. Oh, yes. Huh. I think those were all five of the inner circle components that we would be focusing on in the framework. So here is a map for you to really think about how,

during different stages, can I make sure I'm paying attention to each one of these components? So for example, when you're thinking about enrollment manage that leadership, that magnet team is identifying strategic solutions that are going to attract, assign, retain and graduate target student groups and achieve those student enrollment goals. So this is very high-level thinking here and it's very strategic this planning map. Also going to think about how do you vet partner organizations that want to join that leadership team.

Now, when we move along to the early implementation stages. Here's an early implementation map for you. So if we think about enrollment management, the example I used before, before you were planning strategies and really thinking about how is it that we can recruit and retain students. Here in the early implementation, you've installed your processes, facilitating, the sharing and the integration of the strategic enrollment management vision and agenda and a holistic approach to the work. These, you have moved from thinking about it to really beginning to install and get that working. If you look at the partnerships, my previous example, also at this point, you've got like a memorandum of understanding, you've got performance-based agreements. You know what the goals are, you know why this partner is to contributing to the magnet school and you understand how your school is supporting that particular partner.

Then when we are in full implementation, your strategic enrollment management infrastructure is integrating with all the other core components of the district. So there's supportive services for families, there's supportive services for students. You understand why students are staying at your school. You understand why students and or families may need to leave your school for a reason. So you've done exit interviews. So you really understand and you think, and look at all of that data for continuous improvement. When you're at full implementation, I'll go back to the partnerships as another example. And it's really about thinking about that partner. You have a mutually beneficial partnership that leads to shared vision, collaboration that the partnerships are diverse. They understand the diversity and the equity focus of your school and what those goals are. And they're helping to support those academic success pieces in your school.

And last, but certainly not least, of course, is that optimization. Remember you're on a continuum and the continuum starts from that planning to early implementation to full implementation to now, optimization. And at this point with enrollment management, your strategic enrollment management is enhancing the school's identity, the public image. People understand what the school is about and why the diverse learning environment is so important to the community. You've built loyalty through your relationships, through your predictability of processes and through your communication strategies.

When you move on to the partnerships again, the same example, the partnership is really like an integral part of governance, the school's culture. So I have one school that I work with and they have a local social services organization that is

one of their school's partners. And those folks, they sit on their building leadership team, they sit on planning meetings for students and they participate in professional learning with the teachers and the rest of the staff. So it's really an integral part of the school is governments and its operations, if you will. It really supports the identity of the school.

So I'm going to say, thank you so much for your time and attention. I encourage you to really delve deeply into this framework, really think about the components, the elements and then the stages and go through each one of these and use the framework as not only part of your application process. I know this is a pre-application webinar, but should you be awarded the funds, keep this framework at the forefront of what you do. You can use all the pieces to work with your magnet team. You can use the pieces to work with your district-level folks and also with your partners and with your families. There's beautiful little nuggets of information throughout it that can only be helpful. Thank you so much. And if you have any questions, make sure that you e-mail the U.S. Department of Education at msap.team@ed.gov. And thanks so much and really, I wish you all successful magnet school applications and implementation. Bye now.

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