

Exploring the Foundations for Young Adult Success: A Thought Leader Conversation with Camille Farrington
September 17, 2019

- Ian: [00:00:01](#) Good afternoon and welcome to today's Thought Leader Roundtable, a conversation on readiness. Today's conversation is part of a regular series of explorations of the key questions of what does it mean for all young people to be ready for life's demands at every stage, and what's it going to take to get there? Karen Pittman, president and CEO, The Forum for Youth Investment leads lively and candid conversations with some of the most influential, boundary pushing leaders working to improve the lives of children and young people in the United States. Today's session features Camille Farrington with the University of Chicago Consortium on School Research. The conversation will focus on the foundations for young adult success framework. Karen and Camille have had a series of wonderful conversations starting last August on a Thought Leader Roundtable and we were delighted to feature her as a plenary speaker at the most recent Ready by 21 National Meeting in Seattle.
- Ian: [00:00:51](#) This conversation is going to build on those previous ones and explore the importance of equity. A little bit about our presenters, Karen Pittman is president and CEO, The Forum for Youth Investment and a respected sociologist and leader in youth development. Prior to co-founding the forum in 1998, she launched adolescent pregnancy prevention initiatives at the Children's Defense Fund, started the Center for Youth Development and Policy Research and served as senior vice president at the International Youth Foundation. Camille Farrington is a senior research associate at the University of Chicago Consortium on School Research. Her work focuses on policy and practice and urban high school reform, particularly classroom instruction... sorry, particularly classroom instruction and assessment, academic rigor and academic failure.
- Ian: [00:01:38](#) Camille Farrington is a national expert on the role of non-cognitive factors and academic performance. There are only a few slides for today's session, we will be accepting questions and comments via the chat feature, which is available either at the top or the bottom of your screen. Today's session is being recorded. Later this week, it will be sent to everyone who registered and also posted to the forum website along with any

additional resources that are mentioned. It's now my pleasure to turn over to Karen.

Karen Pittman: [00:02:05](#) Thanks again. Welcome Camille, it's always great to have you in person or on the phone.

Camille F.: [00:02:11](#) Thanks, I'm delighted to be here Karen.

Karen Pittman: [00:02:15](#) We have been on this journey for a while and you know that since you introduced the framework Foundations for Young Adult Success back in 2015, that the forum has probably been one of its most sort of diligent and enthusiastic users. We use it in all of our presentations on readiness. I think we may be the first people that animated it for you, if we could have slides that build on it. But your shop is really incredibly prolific. I'm just curious, since this started in 2015, is it just the forum or has this framework really proved to have lasting value? How has it evolved since it first came out?

Camille F.: [00:02:59](#) Well first of all, we greatly appreciate all the work that the forum has done in promoting the ideas in the framework. We do as well see both across K-12 and out of school expanded learning spaces that I think the ideas in the framework really resonate and particularly I think expanding beyond just a list of competencies to really be thinking about identity and agency as critical outcomes that we care about in young people in their development. One of the ways that the framework has evolved and partly just the way we have shifted in how we've used it has been that as we work, whether it's expanded learning settings or inside schools and most of our work is inside schools.

Camille F.: [00:04:06](#) As soon as people start thinking about this notion of expanded competencies and identity and things like mindsets and values and integrating social and emotional aspects into academic and cognitive work, immediately it goes to well what... Are educators prepared to do that? And what do we do to support the adults who are teaching and working with youth in order to achieve these broader goals? We've found that the... We now started shifting the framework to think about its application to adults and think about professional identities and the values that adults bring to their work and to be thinking about... We think about self-regulation mostly in terms of norms and how you want to show up in your work, whether with adult colleagues or with young people. All of the foundational components that matter for young people matter equally when we think about working with adults and supporting their professional development. We've kind of shifted to talk quite

often0 thinking more in professional learning settings than just in people's learning settings.

Karen Pittman: [00:05:33](#) That's a really interesting sort of way to use this. I like that a lot. We'll copy that as we go out into the field. I'm curious especially as you're working as you said primarily in school settings, when we look at the wonderful words in the graphic and especially this idea of agency. How does that resonate with frontline staff, whether they're teachers or youth workers? How do they interpret agency?

Camille F.: [00:06:02](#) I think that's a good question. I think there's many, many answers to that, that... I think there's some folks who kind of innately understand that that's something that really matters. I think for a lot of teachers and educators, people who work in school settings with youth, they got into teaching because they really wanted to make an impact on young people's lives and they really wanted to help them navigate some often at times it's thinking about their own upbringings and their own schooling experiences and they wanted to help young people kind of navigate what is sometimes can be traumatic settings for youth and particularly for youth of color, low income youth. I think there's some educators who just kind of get it on a gut level what it means to really develop young people's leadership and voice and agency.

Camille F.: [00:07:03](#) But I will say that schools as institutions have developed in ways that don't lend themselves easily or readily to young people's agency and quite the opposite in most traditional school settings, young people are very passive recipients and really kind of put in the role of being very passive recipients. Things happen to them. Knowledge and information happens to them and they often have little active role or active control or power over any of that. It's a real challenge for educators to kind of navigate the traditions and the expectations and the structures that are in place that really work against youth voice and youth agency. It takes I think a lot of rethinking some fundamental things about school to really be able to do that in a really impactful way.

Karen Pittman: [00:08:16](#) Do the K-12 educators then sort of have to rethink or think about sort of critically their own... how much agency they have?

Camille F.: [00:08:24](#) Absolutely, absolutely. I think that, yes, I think that the more the educators are kind of in touch with that, thinking about that and thinking about ways that they can exercise their own agency, the more they're in a position to be able to really do

things and act on behalf of their students, absolutely. There's... because I think at face value it's kind of like, well I can't do that because there's all these things around me that prevent me from doing that. It's like I can't give my students more voice, I can't give them more power because there's all kinds of things around me that prevent me from doing that. It does really require adults to kind of interrogate their settings and figure out what they can do and what options they do have.

Karen Pittman: [00:09:10](#) I think I can imagine that that starts, if you've got the time to do it, that really starts to unpack a lot of issues that can sort of bubble up into the administration and policy spaces in terms of creating the space for young people and adults to actually sort of move towards agency.

Camille F.: [00:09:29](#) Exactly.

Karen Pittman: [00:09:30](#) As I'm looking at the particular graphic that you have for us to sort of look at the framework, it's one in which you've got the sort of the act and reflect verbs sort of pulled out and bolded. I know that in our work when we have time and we sort of show those and people talk about them, they really are incredibly engaging for people to think about on both the act side, which is the sort of the encounter through contribute and then the reflect side, how rarely they do all of those things and how sometimes even if they're good on the action they're not doing on the reflection. I'm wondering, since you've been using this for a while, any specific examples of how just sort of putting those up and making them visible have helped people think about, not just the kinds of skill sets and mindsets they're building, but how they're actually creating opportunities for young people to act and reflect?

Camille F.: [00:10:27](#) Yeah. There's some a few different examples that I can think of that, places where that have used this really brilliantly. But I'll say that even when we all know that reflection is important, it's the thing that is always the thing we cut out because we don't have time and quite often goes by the wayside. I would like to think about just challenging all of us to think about how we can kind of build in more opportunities to facilitate the reflection of young people, but also colleagues and peers. I think it's a gift to give to somebody else, to really provide opportunity for them to reflect on something that's important to them, something that they're grappling with and give them opportunities to kind of think it through with, have a listening ear to do that. Just that act is just so critically important.

- Camille F.: [00:11:40](#) One thing I know we'll probably talk further about some of the different reports and organizations who are really trying to focus in on the science of learning and development, starting with the National Commission and the National Academy of Science, recent report on The Promise of Adolescence and The Science of Learning and Development Initiative that we hear all the time about the role of relationships and environments in supporting people's development. One of the most critical pieces of that is in providing space for reflection. When we were talking about young people having agency that the way that we are agents in our own development is because we make meaning of things and we then respond to that meaning.
- Camille F.: [00:12:44](#) If we don't have the opportunity to make meaning of things, then a lot of really rich experiences kind of don't really get their hooks in us because we just haven't had the opportunities to kind of think about them and incorporate them into how we think. In whether it's in school settings, out of school settings or just professional settings, providing space for people to really kind of reflect on things they're thinking about is really critical.
- Karen Pittman: [00:13:13](#) I think it's been interesting. We'll shift in a minute to sort of talk about all of these new reports that have come out over the past year. But we've got questions coming in and there are a couple of them I can answer. And then one that I'll give to you. One is that we will sort of send out both the web link so people can download the report and the infographic and we'll also sort of send out after the call is over, the set of slides that we have that actually animate, the graphics so folks can have that. And then there's a question, and the question starts with, I'm a huge fan of the framework, can you provide some examples of where the framework has been used to advocate for a more friendly policy environment that allows for adults and young people do engage in developmental experiences? Any examples of where this is actually elevated up to change policy, whether it's administrative policy within school districts or whatever?
- Camille F.: [00:14:15](#) That's a great question. Truthfully, I wish I had a better way of knowing some ways where those things happen because oftentimes they happen outside of our awareness and knowledge. I'll run into people who say, "We love your framework and this is what we've done with it." But unless I happen to run into them, I never know, I'll never learn about a lot of ways that [inaudible 00:14:41]. One thing I'll say is if you're out there and you're using the framework that are raised, please do get in touch and let us know what you're doing

with it because it would help me to answer these kinds of questions.

- Camille F.: [00:14:53](#) But a couple of places that I know it has been... I know places where it's been implemented in organizations to be thinking about and one place got to think about is our local friends, The Network for College Success here at the University of Chicago, that partners with Chicago public schools and a network of high schools in CPS. They have been really actively using the foundations for young adult success to interrogate their own practice with their schools. That's a place where they have really been thinking also about their work with adults because that's primarily who their audience is. Thinking about this notion of professional identity and what does it mean for adults to have agency and all of those kinds of things. That would be a practice place. Most of the places, most of the examples I can think of are far more practice examples truthfully.
- Karen Pittman: [00:15:59](#) But I think having practice examples bubble up to the point that you really have sort of organization or network wide policies that should have changed how things are done is important. I think it is a direct... It's one of the ways that this framework I think sort of lends itself to that kind of work.
- Camille F.: [00:16:20](#) Actually, I could... One other thing that I should absolutely call out here in Chicago is, so there's an organization in Chicago called Embarc Chicago. It's a non-profit that was founded by teachers in a Chicago public high school. Over the last... First they were just kind of taking their own students out on what they were calling journeys and just kind of taking them out into the city to get to know people and places and just encounter new things. And then they on their own really developed a kind of series of action and reflection experiences for young people. And then as more and more teachers saw what they were doing, they eventually left their classroom teaching jobs and started this organization Embarc Chicago, it's E-M-B-A-R-C, and now they partner with high schools all over the city running a class in those high schools and then also taking groups of students out on again, on these journeys around the city. And most recently, Chicago just opened a brand new high school in the neighborhood of Anglewood and which is historically very disenfranchised, under-resourced community, that now just has a brand new, beautiful, beautiful high school that is the neighborhood high school for that community. And embark has been part or partnering with Chicago public schools to make that an experiential kind of experientially focused high school. All of the students in that high school will be participating every

month in these journeys and Embarc has done a really brilliant job of incorporating action and reflection.

- Camille F.: [00:18:22](#) They.. as I said, they kind of developed that on their own and then when we came out with Foundations for Young Adult Success, they said, "Now this is... it's brilliant." and puts a framework and a kind of research base behind what we intuitively were knowing to do. And then they've been taking then that the developmental experience we and really, very intentionally incorporating that into all of their journeys. And I've had the pleasure to go on some of those before and they really kind of hit all 10 of these things just interwoven really beautifully throughout a couple hour experience. I would hold that up as a really awesome example of how that has been impacted policy at the school.
- Karen Pittman: [00:19:14](#) That's great. You should write these up. I know you have plenty of [inaudible 00:19:17] so let's go ahead and shift gears since you've mentioned that the many things that have come out. You like me, we're on the SEAD commission, this National Commission for Social, Emotional and Academic Development. You're on the Sold advisory group, that's S-O-I-d, The Science of Learning and Development Alliance as a part of that advisory group. The forum has actually recently joined as a principal partner of the Sold group. and then, you know, even before all of these things have emerged, you've been deeply immersed in the Science of Learning and Development itself for many years, and now we have reports coming out from both of those groups. We have the National Academy of Medicine's Report about how the brain science in adolescence and how we should be building that into policy.
- Karen Pittman: [00:20:14](#) How do you see all of these things connect? I mean, there's something about just the time was right and everybody's sort of jumping in to really sort of have these conversations. Each one is taken a slightly different approach to bringing the science of how learning happens into a space since you've been in all of these, how do you see them connecting? How do you explain them to people when inevitably people say, "How are these things different or the same?" And what part or bottom line, things that seem to connect all of them? What should we take away from all of this energy in this space?
- Camille F.: [00:20:49](#) I do see them as really parallel, really parallel and oftentimes, largely overlapping efforts. And as you say, they each kind of had a different genesis and maybe a slightly different cast of characters involved. And oftentimes have a particularly... like

the National Academies, particularly kind of disciplinary approach or in that case focusing specifically on adolescents. Oftentimes it has more or less of a kind of neuroscience basis depending on which organization to which effort.

- Camille F.: [00:21:35](#) But I think that important thing is more to focus on the ways in which they're aligned and the ways in which the message of each of these is fundamentally the same. And that is that, one we have learned a lot about learning and development in the last 20 years, and that all of it points in very much the same direction about the integration of social, emotional, academic cognitive development as being a mutually constituted process.
- Camille F.: [00:22:20](#) And that you can't really think about separating out one piece of that, which is I think what schools try to do often is to separate out the... particularly high schools, to try and separate out the kind of academic or cognitive piece away from broader social, emotional and identity development, and that those things are just intricately connected. And then the other really important thing that is shared across all of them is just the importance of environment and relationships for young people's development.
- Camille F.: [00:23:02](#) And there again, I think it really shifts our attention well, content and curriculum and instruction are important pieces of academic learning that, they aren't actually the most important pieces and the most important pieces are the broader context, and that opportunity for developmental experiences that young people have around that content because if you have just the content and the absence of the opportunity to really experience and act upon and reflect upon, in a really active way, does it matter what you're trying to teach because it will not be learned. And I think it's just the integration of all of those, the idea of the brain as adaptable and plastic and the importance of environments and contexts and relationships.
- Karen Pittman: [00:24:03](#) Good. I know that certainly as we were on the Sold commission or so the Sead commission together, and then more recently as I've been working with the science learning development group, that the general idea that all of this understanding about how learning happens and the integration between social and emotional and cognitive development, the importance of relationships and really sort of paying much more attention to how we're thinking about the settings where young people spend their time.

- Karen Pittman: [00:24:38](#) All of that gets turned into... and all of this is important because we care about equity. Talk about that. I know you all have started a new project on equitable learning and development. What's... equity is becoming sort of like collective impact one of those words that you have to say in a sentence or two, when you get too far into a conversation. But for you, when you think about the science, when you think about The Foundations for Young Adult success and what we know about what it takes to get young people to a place of competence and integrated identity and agency, how do you explain how equity fits in? And talk a little bit about the work that you're now about to do to tease this out.
- Camille F.: [00:25:23](#) Sure. Thank you. One hand we can say, and like drawing from the science, we can say that equity is... well what we can say what causes inequity is kind of two things. One that particular groups of young people, depending how they're situated depending on race, class, geography, just have less opportunity for development than other people. And less opportunity translates into developing less of the competencies and less of the kind of attributes of... that would help them to be able to kind of gain, reach their full potential is probably the easiest way to say it.
- Camille F.: [00:26:21](#) Less opportunity as a is a big thing. The second thing is that they have more... many young people have more of other things. They have more risk, they have more stress, they have more exposure to environmental toxins. They have more of the kind of bad things that interact with development and shape development in a way that is not good for young people's wellbeing. And again, those are related to poverty and racism and kind of structural inequalities, and the socio-economic system largely, less of opportunities for good development, more exposure to things that are risks to development end up... that ends up at the developmental level with inequities.
- Camille F.: [00:27:15](#) But I think... that's kind of from the scientific perspective, but I think we also need to kind of step back and just recognize that the broader social structures and particularly institutions, public institutions of schools were designed with an assumption around inequitable distribution of society. There were designed at a time when race and class really dictated who got opportunities in school, and who was expected to succeed, and were built, not accidentally to help some folks get ahead and others go behind, but really intentionally to privilege white people specifically, at the detriment of communities of color.

- Camille F.: [00:28:14](#) And that all of the structures in place in schools and in the broader society will continue to make that so unless those structures are intentionally dismantled. I think that it's not just as simple as saying, well, we need to provide more opportunities for young people and protect them from... make sure that they have less of these risks factors. But we really do need to kind of fundamentally rethink and transform structures of schooling and broader structures in our social systems that would allow every young person to actually reach their full potential and act on behalf of their communities to help their communities reach their full potentials.
- Camille F.: [00:29:17](#) I don't think we can just do business as usual and just kind of provide a few more resources and make that drastic of a difference. I think it really calls upon us to undertake a very near... a very new and different kind of social project.
- Karen Pittman: [00:29:34](#) Yeah, I can't agree more with all of that. I also feel like the... this sort of recent push on the science and getting very specific about not just sort of generically what defines sort of a quality user developmentally appropriate learning environment for young people. But also, especially from the science of learning and development work the understanding that young people come in with their prior experiences, they can't leave out the door. And even if you think you've designed a perfect learning environment, perfectly experienced for one group of young people, young people coming in with cumulative experiences may interpret that environment differently.
- Karen Pittman: [00:30:21](#) You may not see the capacity that they have. They may look like they're not motivated because they have shut down because this doesn't feel like a safe environment for them. It feels like we also have an opportunity to not just, as you said, talk about do we need to offer more of things, but also be much more vigilant about testing out whether what we define as more or we define as better actually is interpreted that way by young people themselves.
- Camille F.: [00:30:53](#) Yeah. I think that the... one of the most important things that adults can do... and this gets back to the notion of agency and voice, is that we need to be able to understand young people's experience of place in any given place. And that requires, one that there's opportunities like structured opportunities for us to solicit that information and to really be listening. And then it requires that we actually respond to that. And oftentimes what I see is really, really well, meaning adults, who've worked really hard in creating spaces, whether these be in school or outside

of school for the benefit of young people. And when they open up opportunities for voice and voice that here is critical of that space.

Camille F.: [00:32:02](#) I think that adults tend to get in a really, either defensive or like let me explain to you why this is good for you to kind of mode without really hearing and responding to the lived experience in that place of the young people that are trying to serve. It's really hard to share power and when you feel like you really have put a lot of effort into making things a particular way. But it's... we're called upon that to do that. We're called upon to do that if we're really going to do right by young people and that we're working on behalf of.

Karen Pittman: [00:32:46](#) I think that's such an important point. And that... and I know you're working with organizations in which you're sort of pushing them to sort of ask those questions and not just assume that because the thing that was carefully crafted should be good for all kids, it actually is good for all kids. Since that whole idea of all and average is one that we're now we're never challenging. But I also think especially... we talk about the National Academy report coming out, sort of focusing on adolescents and I'm about halfway through reading that 400 page book [inaudible 00:33:23] all the way through it. But I think, one of the things that came out in it was... that was really interesting was, when you look more sort of at what the brain is doing in this sort of next big spurt.

Karen Pittman: [00:33:41](#) Adolescents are intentionally wired to actually be risk takers. That's what from a sort of a, evolution perspective, we actually need the younger generation to not just assume that the way it was done as the way it needs to be done, but to go out, explore, try new things, fail because that innovation is what sort of keeps us moving forward. Sort of knowing that it's not just... we think of it as a bad thing, but it's very clear that they need that kind of relationship. They need risks, they need to see things that are relevant. And as you said, we don't set it up that way at all. As I'm... again still sort of looking at the key words around act and reflect. I wonder, have we... when we talk about social emotional learning and we clearly all have the idea that we have to integrate the social, emotional and cognitive into the content, and not just a separate class on one day a week.

Karen Pittman: [00:34:45](#) We've got that idea that we need to integrate, but I still sometimes feel like the emphasis is on teaching the skills rather than giving young people an opportunity to actually critically apply the skills and that they're especially important in

adolescence. Your example of, we asked you to reflect that you reflected and you didn't like what we did.

- Camille F.: [00:35:07](#) Right.
- Karen Pittman: [00:35:07](#) That's an important part that we have to prepare for.
- Camille F.: [00:35:11](#) Yeah, now that's exactly right. And then notion of adolescents wired to be risk takers and they're also wired, to respond to novelty. The opportunities to... I think one of the most important, well all of them are important, but starting with that... with encounter, I mean, just the opportunity to do new things, go new places, be exposed to new ideas that, that's what the adolescent brain is hungry for, what it most responds to. And yes, they're wired to give us grief. They're wired to really push the envelope and push up against whatever we've gotten comfortable with. Yeah, I think that, that's exactly right. And again, I think that... it's interesting, we've been talking a lot about adolescents and that's my favorite topic but, when we think through the developmental arc of... from early childhood up through late adolescence, that the reflection role of adults really shifts over time and that early on, it's... all the way along, it's an important rule for adults to provide opportunities for these action experiences.
- Camille F.: [00:36:45](#) Opportunities to encounter new things, opportunities for young people to tinker with new... again, whether it's material things or ideas roles, ways of being, opportunities to make choices, opportunities to practice and develop competencies and skills and then opportunities to really contribute to things bigger than themselves. And adults can play really critical roles in setting up those structures and opportunities. And that's true whether we're talking about a three year old or an 18 year old.
- Camille F.: [00:37:19](#) But the role of reflection and how an adult facilitates reflection in young people really changes over time a lot. And early on, three, four, five year olds, we are often kind of narrating the world for them and we're telling them, we're describing things, evaluating things, connecting things talking about how they might envision things, we're trying to do all of that work for them and kind of explain to them how these pieces fit together. One thing that I think happens oftentimes is young people move into the middle grades and then up in into adolescents, into high school, is that that we still are playing the role as if they were three or five, four or five years old.

- Camille F.: [00:38:02](#) We're telling them how all these things fit together. We're really... over time the role of adults is to ask questions and to step back and give the space for young people to construct their own answers to that. And if the answer they're constructing is something that challenges us, then I think it's on us to engage in conversation then with young people around like why does that challenge us?
- Camille F.: [00:38:34](#) And in some cases it could be, you kind of made meaning of that in a way that's going to be harmful to you. And I want to be able to reflect that back and maybe offer an alternative narrative that might be a different way to make meaning of something. But in other cases we need to step back and say, you understood this or you're making meaning of it in this way. And that's actually an opportunity to push us, for us to evolve in our own thinking. I think that as young people get older, it just really takes much more of that sharing power notion of relationship to really kind of co-construct understanding.
- Karen Pittman: [00:39:17](#) Yeah, I know that you're... I mean, that makes perfect sense. I know you're working with Rob Jagers at CASEL, that's Collaborative for Academic, Social Emotional Learning and his concept of sort of transformative SCM. And again, sort of back to back conversation of equity. And I'm going to get you to tell us more about what you're doing with the equity and development project before we run out of time. But in that space, that idea of actually helping young people build and practice these [inaudible 00:39:52] so that they actually can analyze their own environments, which as you said, were... if we're talking about schools and many other environments were actually designed in some ways to... inequitable. And so acknowledging that we're not just having people build skills so they can sort of better integrate academic content, we're actually having them... or as you said, talking about novelty.
- Karen Pittman: [00:40:19](#) If we're giving young people things to grapple with, which really have deep relevance for them, because it's allowing them to bring a more analytic frame into the things that they see going on that they don't understand, that seem inequitable, that both accelerate skill building and sort of raises issues. Whether that's happening in school or it's happening in youth organizations or it's happening in community organizations, having us as we're thinking about, as again sort of looking at what it means to really sort of build a set of integrative competencies towards an integrated identity, that agency that's directed towards understanding why things aren't working well is often an important one and an overlooked one, I think, as we're thinking

about... Sort of if we think too much about, as you said, sort of the teaching of the skills as opposed to having young people really find novel ways to use them.

Camille F.: [00:41:25](#) That kind of gets into some of the notions that we're looking to explore in this new project. Actually if you can go to the next slide and I can say a little bit more about this equitable learning and development project. It is something that we are working on with the National Equity Project and with Casel and it's a three year project that just launched in July. On one hand the end results, one of the end results is the idea to think like, kind of rethink some of the existing youth frameworks out there, so including the foundations for young adult success where we kind of think about, I kind of think about it as like 2.0 of that. If we bring in the work of Casel and Rob Jagers particularly around transformational SEL. We also bring in the work of National Equity Project, which brings in a real kind of structural critique around equity and particularly racial equity in the United States as well as real attention to process and what does it mean to be in relationship with people across difference and how do you do that?

Camille F.: [00:43:04](#) If we bring those lenses to think more broadly about about youth development, so what does that look like? Thinking about what it looks like for young people, creating, whether it's another framework or re articulation of some of our existing frameworks. And then we also want to think about then what are the implications for adults in the larger system. So young people are set within systems that also have adults in them and that also have policies and structures in them. So if we kind of take a step back and think more holistically about this whole picture then what are the implications specifically for adults? And here I think we talked about at the top of the hour with thinking about adults integrated identity and agency for adults and the values that adults bring and the knowledge and skills and the mindsets and the, again self-regulation, in terms of how adults are showing up in a setting. We think about, well, what are the kinds of experiences and opportunities, not only that young people need, but that adults and educators working with young people need. Then what's the picture that emerges from that? We really want to think collectively across our three organizations about that.

Camille F.: [00:44:35](#) If you go to the the next slide we have planned over the course of the next three years, a series of convenings, both national and more kind of locally focused convenings to co-create this broader vision of what an integrated equitable system would

look like. We are working with a couple... a few different networks of school districts because we want to have school district partners that are both helping us think about like, well, what are the problems they're trying to solve? And then as we are developing frameworks to really be able to provide feedback, test things out, see how they work and kind of do some iterative testing over the next three years in[inaudible 00:45:35] schools, different places all over the country. But we also really... One of my big goals over the next three years is just to model. First to discover and then to model an alternative process for adult development.

- Camille F.: [00:45:54](#) I really wanted to touch on something you said just a few minutes ago, Karen, around this notion of kind of collective inquiry into problems. I firmly believe that adults and young people working together to understand something and to unpack something and to push the edges of something. It could be questions like, how do we redesign high schools in ways that really take seriously the notion of identity development agency for young people. If we collectively set on that question and engage in collective inquiry around that, I think it's the engagement with people across race, class, levels of power in a system, that it's that collective inquiry that is the process whereby we will develop the competencies we need to engage together with each other in those kinds of ways.
- Camille F.: [00:47:00](#) We really want to kind of set up just the structures and opportunities for all different kinds of folks with all different kinds of lived experience and different kinds of expertise to come together to figure things out and all sorts of just figure out what are the structures that would facilitate that kind of work.
- Karen Pittman: [00:47:24](#) As you're doing this, is it your intent to sort of have this... You've mentioned several sort of district networks. As you're bringing those district networks together or in the national convenings, will there be opportunities to involve the broader sort of set of organizations that are focused on learning and development, whether those are after school, out of school, community programs, or is this just focused on K-12?
- Camille F.: [00:47:50](#) It will be more broadly focused than just K-12. Although we probably will have a primary focus on K-12. But we recognize first of all that all of the young people that are in schools spend most of their time, not in schools and so involving families and communities and other kind of youth serving, youth development organizations in collective inquiry and problem solving is a really critical thing to do. I also think a lot of the

expertise resides outside of schools and so it's important also to get a broader group of folks in the mix. Karen, that's why you're on our advisory circle for this project is to hold us accountable to doing that.

- Karen Pittman: [00:48:41](#) Well, I'm glad we got you on the record, probably for that. You've talked about this sort of collective inquiry. How do you see involving young people themselves in this process?
- Camille F.: [00:48:56](#) Let's say... How do we... Well, so it's interesting. We have both... We have a youth... So you are part of the adult advisory circle. That includes, right now we have 15 members, it might get up to as many as 20. And then we also have a youth advisory circle. There'll be a group that both advises us on the project over the course of the three years and participates, we'll have youth participation in all of the convenings. We really also just want to really center on young people's experience and so we'll be engaging young people in helping us figure out innovative ways to represent young people's experience to broader groups, whether it's these district networks or whether it's in the context of these regional convenings to make sure that we're really problem solving for young people's real experience in schools particularly.
- Camille F.: [00:50:00](#) One of the things that I really think is important for the field more broadly, it's not just... One, we... We definitely need models and visions for different ways of doing things and different ways of conceptualizing structures and processes inside of schools. But we also need, I think to document how marginalization happens to young people. We want to understand across the kind of intersecting identities that young people bring into the school, which then has very siloed ways of responding to that. So for example, a young person could be a person that... A young person could be a person of color, an English language learner, maybe receiving special education services. They're involved in teaching and learning they're... They might be in sports, but all of those, all of the adults are organized to address just one little aspect of that person.
- Camille F.: [00:51:09](#) There's the special education department that doesn't talk to the equity department, that doesn't talk to the teaching and learning department, that doesn't talk to the physical education department that doesn't talk to many other folks who might actually interact. It doesn't talk to anybody outside of the schools in the broader community or in larger learning environments outside of the schools. We really want to make sure that we ask young people to help us understand how all of

those things are intersecting aspects of their identities and what it feels like to be in a school where that's so fragmented and to understand the processes whereby young people who too often come into schools, hopeful and happy and looking forward to a future, walk out of schools feeling like there really isn't any good place for them. Wanted just be able to document how that happens and get folks to working collectively on how to make sure that doesn't continue to happen.

Karen Pittman: [00:52:21](#)

I think that's really important. One of the questions and lots of questions are coming in now where Ian and I are trying to track them. That came in earlier, it was sort of a question about how? Even just sort of using the foundation for young adult success framework, if it's been useful in helping young people sort of shift their personal narrative and think about their own identities. I will direct people back with lots of links to not just the infographic with the whole report in which you talk about this idea of integrated identity and how hard it is for young people who are essentially not white, male, to really create that identity. We had probably, I don't know, six, eight months ago we had Keith Hefner maybe even longer than that from youth communications on one of these thoughtful interviews.

Karen Pittman: [00:53:13](#)

For people that don't know youth communications for years, they put out several sort of newsletters and magazines written by and for young people and in particular young people who were a sort of connected to the juvenile justice system, were coming out of child welfare or foster care, et cetera. One of the things that they've done to speak to your point about sort of marginalization, they found that as they were working with schools and adult learning centers and youth organizations that were wanting to talk about social emotional learning that young people were saying, "But there's no stories about us." "There's nothing that sort of suggests that we actually can have agency and can overcome the kind of problems that we have." They went back through their compendium of stories that had been pulled together over the decades, coded them, found them and then started to put together both facilitation guides and essentially sort of storybooks that are really stories about young people who are in these marginalized spaces really using their social emotional competencies to tackle a problem and succeed, and it was very well received. I think it's so important that you're moving into that space.

Karen Pittman: [00:54:37](#)

Of course you're getting people excited and so our question is, are these going to be closed meetings? Are they going to be open meetings? Especially when you get down to sort of

regional, how will people be involved? I'll say that the forum is also currently working with the National Urban League, as you know, to really think about how to really find mechanisms to give communities more ways to sort of have these kinds of conversations and stories. We'll be working with you on that. How are you thinking about sort of the road show for this as it's implied in the regional networks and convenience?

Camille F.: [00:55:15](#) I think in the first year, so the first convening we'll be in Chicago in February. In that one I think we're trying to keep it restrained and focused and really trying to kind of curate a particular set of folks that maybe never get a chance to sit down together, but really to kind of bring together people across, as I say, with different kinds of substantive expertise or different kinds of lived experience and to really focus in on this question of, well what's the broader picture of what young people need and how adults can contribute to that. And then from that, I think in part it's just going to be an experiment for us to see what's the most effective way to support that kind of collaboration in a really intensive two day thing.

Camille F.: [00:56:19](#) And then from that, I think that's really going to inform what happens in subsequent meetings and whether those are larger or smaller and whether we are... Then try and, if we ourselves can't do lots and lots of these in a lot of different places, how can we partner with other organizations in order to kind of support this model of convening in broader places. It's all very much kind of a learning process for us. One thing that we would love to do is just, if folks are interested in the project we'd love to hear from you and we can keep you in the loop as we develop things.

Karen Pittman: [00:57:07](#) That's terrific. Well, we're coming to the end of the hour. As always the time went quickly. For folks on the line we have generated a long list of things that we've talked about on the call that we will send out the links to... et cetera so that you know about them. We will continue, we'll obviously send out the information so that those of you who are interested can get directly in touch with Camille. We'll do our job to stay in touch with Camille as an advisor on this project and bring that information back out to you. Camille with one minute left before I turn it back to Ian, I'll ask you the hard question that came in about halfway through the call, which was, there are so many different sort of school redesign projects going on out there. What's your sense of why they haven't worked and why? Focusing on the kinds of things we've been talking about for the last hour is a better approach.

Camille F.: [00:58:07](#) I think that one of the reasons... Well I think a lot of things have worked. First of all, I think they've worked in kind of smaller spaces. I think that we need a critical mass of folks, kind of a thousand flowers blooming to some extent to really push on the broader system. I think we do need to just really recognize that we can't really take incremental improvement approach if we really are serious about delivering on equity now to young people who are currently growing up. And so that it really does require a much more systems transformation way of thinking. And it requires recognizing that we have a lot of kind of racist structures and policies in place that operate in a way that we don't even recognize them for that.

Camille F.: [00:59:18](#) We need to kind of break the silos and really get in conversation across all these different lines and we need to put at the center of that young people's experience. I think that that's maybe the most important thing that we have not yet done sufficiently is really put seriously young people at the center in terms of designing around and involving them directly in the process of doing their work.

Karen Pittman: [00:59:46](#) Well, that's a perfect way to end a great conversation. Thanks as always, Camille and I will hand it back to Ian.

Ian: [00:59:53](#) Thank you very much to both Camille and Karen for this very thoughtful conversation. Just wanted to let you know that we have our fall lineup is shaping up quite nicely. Our next conversation will be on October 30th. The discussion will be on kernels of practice and SCL featuring Stephanie Jones from Harvard university. The next one will be on December 5th focused on summer learning with both Rand and the Pittsburgh public school system. Lastly, I wanted to just mention that we've landed on a date and location for the ninth annual Ready By 21 National Meeting that'll be held April 15th to 17th, 2020 in Louisville, Kentucky. We're very excited to be going back to Kentucky. We hope to see many of you there for these types of thoughtful conversations. Thank you very much and have a wonderful afternoon everyone.

Karen Pittman: [01:00:47](#) Thanks all.

Camille F.: [01:00:48](#) Thank you, Karen.