A More Powerful Conceptualization of the Contributors to Youth Success

**Transformative Learning & Development**
- is the optimization of a learner’s ability to translate specific experiences and content into generalizable knowledge, competencies, and perspectives.

**Robust Equity**
- is the intentional counter to inequality, institutionalized privilege and prejudice, and systemic deficits and the intentional promotion of thriving across multiple domains for those who experience inequity and injustice.

**Thriving Youth**
- is a dynamic process that goes beyond well-being to include individual and collective growth in grounding and agency.

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**The powerful definition of learning is:**
- Broader than schooling
- Intertwined with development
- Adolescent learning and development is critical to individual and collective thriving

**Young people’s sense of themselves as a learner is:**
- Shaped by their experiences of having or building the competencies needed to respond, adapt, achieve
- Influenced by messages received from others
- Anchored in the confidence that they have the ability to develop and a key role to play in it
- Enhanced by their ability, as a part of belonging to an identified group, to make collective meaning of their experiences

**Leaders acknowledge:**
- Transformative learning & development can occur in all environments if the adults in these environments are intentionally equipped to optimize experiences the potential for learning in all contexts
- Transformative learning & development is youth-driven
- Transformative learning & development is culturally responsive

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**Robust Equity**
- Based on the basics – countering inequality and institutionalized privilege and prejudice, addressing contextual deficits, and creating conditions that support well-being
- But also multi-dimensional – mindful of overall thriving, and how well-being in one area (e.g., housing) contributes to well-being in others (e.g., health)
- Cumulative – rooted in historical awareness, with a commitment to long-term, complex change

**Young people’s sense of themselves as a learner is:**
- Influenced by the degree to which they and their peers have needed experiences and relationships
- Informed by their awareness and experience of how their groups are treated

**Leaders acknowledge:**
- Focus on thriving, not just surviving
- Create access and accountability working from the margins into the mainstream
- Surface and address complexity – across systems, across domains of development, and over time

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**A powerful definition of thriving is:**
- Strengths-based – more than well-being, resilience
- Multi-dimensional – reflecting growth or success in any number of domains from physical to economic to spiritual
- Linked to key internal and external characteristics and assets that interrelate to enable or thwart progress

**Young people’s sense of themselves as a learner is:**
- Summative, reflecting an overall sense of well-being and future success or growth
- Relational, reflecting an individual’s sense of connection to others
- Calibrated to cultural lenses and social networks
- Adjusted over time as experiences and perceptions change

**Leaders acknowledge:**
- Establish well-being as a threshold
- Affirm the importance of resiliency as a socially supported individual response to adversity
- Create explicit accountability for strengthening individual and group capacities to thrive

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