

TECHNICAL PROBLEMS AND ADAPTIVE CHALLENGES PROTOCOL

Phase 4 / Step 3

This document is designed to be a tool for schools or design teams during implementation as they determine how best to approach the various challenges that they encounter in implementing their plans for a school redesign. This approach is best facilitated by a trained coach.

Preparation: Print out copies of the tool.

Materials: Copies of the tool, chart or whiteboard, markers, sticky notes, writing utensils

Timing: 50–60 minutes

Key Considerations: Ideally, groups should contain 4–12 people and have a set of working norms together. In establishing groups, consider DEI: diversity (of identity and perspective), equity (of voice), and inclusion (ensuring all participants, including those in noneducator roles, are made welcome).

Process

- 1. Brainstorm (5 minutes):** On sticky notes (one note per idea), staff should silently and individually brainstorm any current or anticipated challenges/problems arising from implementation, the change process, etc.
- 2. Share (8 minutes):** On a whiteboard or chart paper, the group members should share their ideas, by taking turns in a round, bringing one urgent idea up to the board until all urgent challenges are included. Then, everyone should work together to group similar and related challenges.
- 3. Sort (12 minutes):** The group should determine which challenges are adaptive and which are technical (see below) and rate the urgency for each of the challenges/problems identified.
- 4. Delegate (10–15 minutes):** Any problems that the group identified as “technical” should be assigned to a particular owner (who can be a member not in the group) to be tackled. This can be managed using an Action Planning Tool so as to note owners, deadlines, and other key considerations.
- 5. Prioritize (10–15 minutes):** Any problems that the group identified as “adaptive” should be considered more closely by the group. The group then should consider which persons (very rarely is an adaptive challenge “solved” by one person) should meet to unpack each of these challenges and determine which of the adaptive problems have first priority. For each problem, the group should also identify an initiator who will work to convene those who will be unpacking and addressing the identified adaptive challenge.
- 6. Debrief (5 minutes):** The group should reflect collectively on how the process went and how individuals feel about the activity and its outcomes, then review next steps.

Technical Problem <i>attributes</i>	Adaptive Problem <i>attributes</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Focused on one particular area of a school▪ An individual expert or small task force could solve the problem permanently if provided time and resources▪ Most people would agree on the source of the problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Impacts multiple areas / stakeholder groups in the school▪ No one is quite sure where to start to unpack this complex issue▪ Some people are in denial or do not wish to acknowledge it▪ Solving this challenge requires changes in beliefs, attitudes, roles, or relationships

