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for the Advancement of Teaching

Understanding the User Experience: Empathy Tools & Techniques

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SESSION OVERVIEW

Objectives

- Recognize how a user-centered approach helps build empathy for others' experiences
- Appreciate the value of user-centered techniques in improvement efforts
- Practice conducting an "empathy interview"
- Learn how High Tech High utilized empathy interviews in the Mathematical Agency Improvement Community (MAIC)

Norms

- Be present
- Listen to understand
- Defer judgement
- Share the air
- Equity is the center
- Honor confidentiality

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WHAT IS A USER-CENTERED APPROACH?

- Explicit understanding of users, their tasks and environments
- Active participation of users
- Iterative process of refinement
- Consideration of the whole user experience
- Multidisciplinary skills and perspectives

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DISCUSS WITH A NEIGHBOR

- How did your definition align with the one given in the video? What was similar? What was different?
- What struck you about this video and why?
- Why would empathy be important in improvement efforts?

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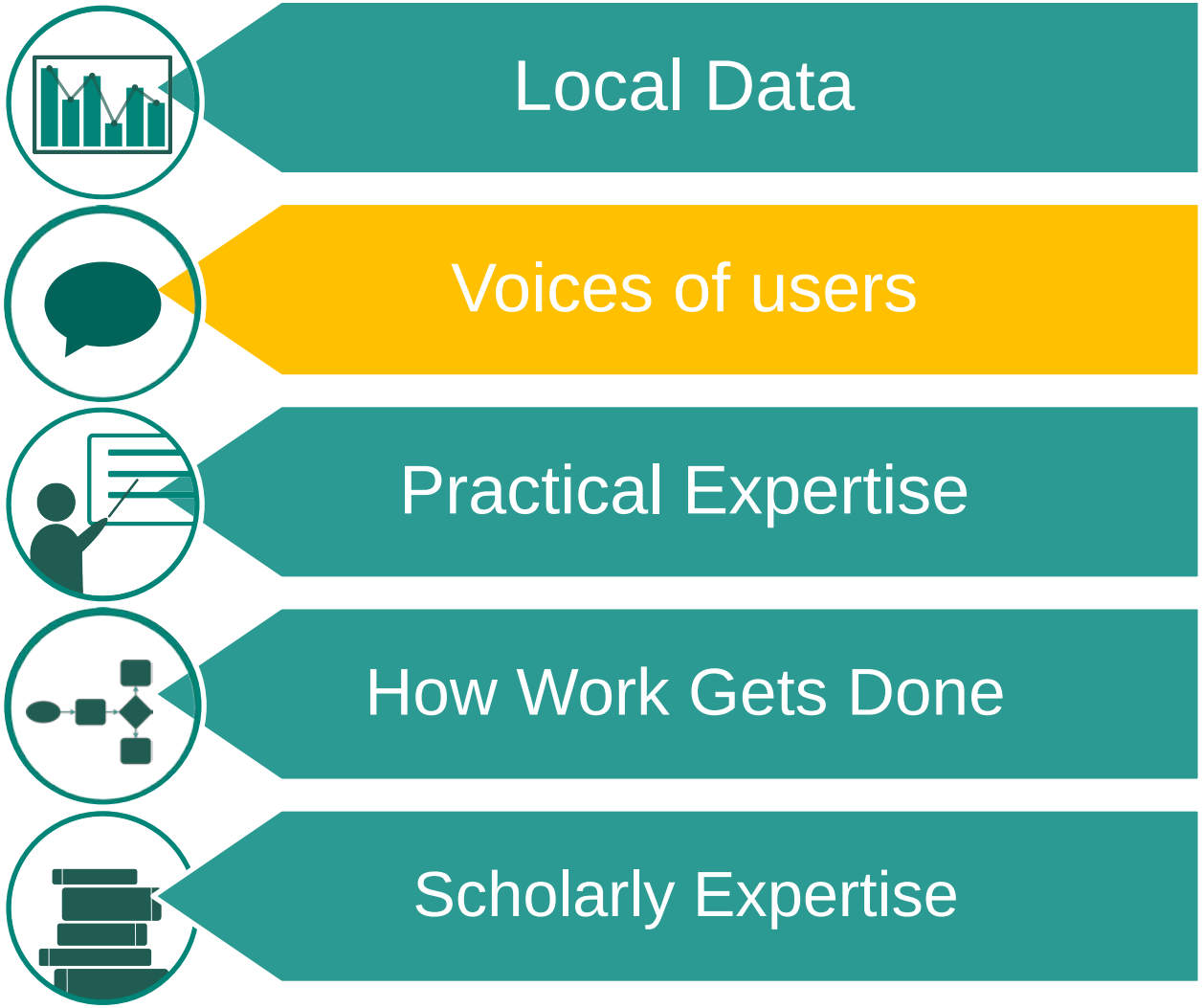
Types of Knowledge to Bring to Our Understanding



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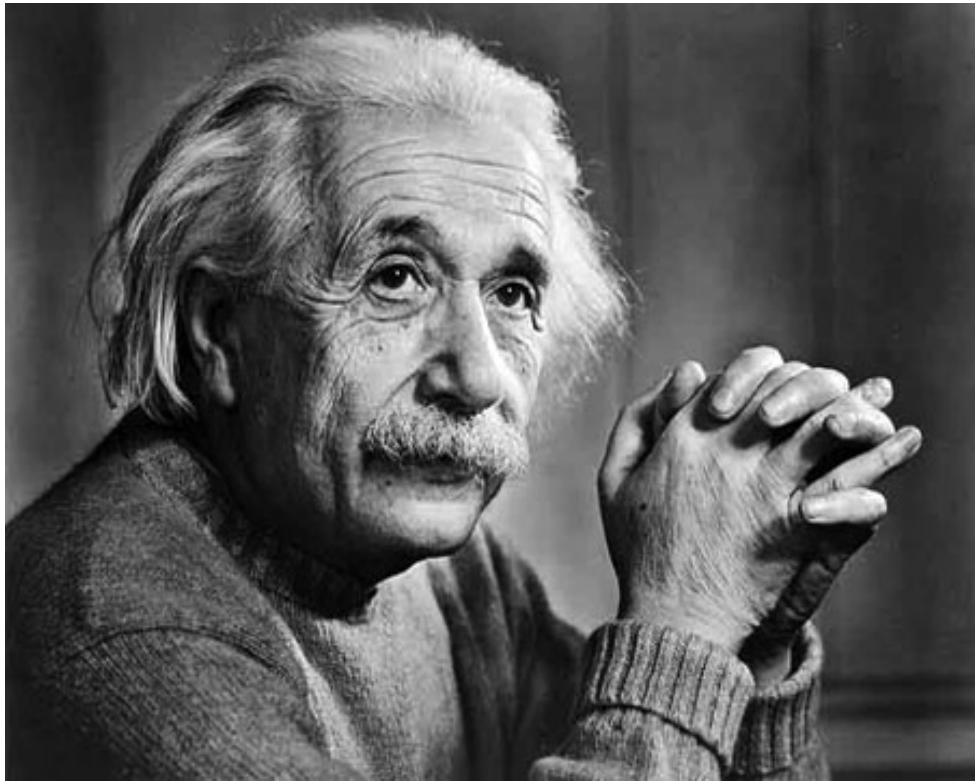

“If I had an hour to solve a problem, I’d spend 55 minutes thinking about the problem and five minutes thinking about solutions.”

-Albert Einstein

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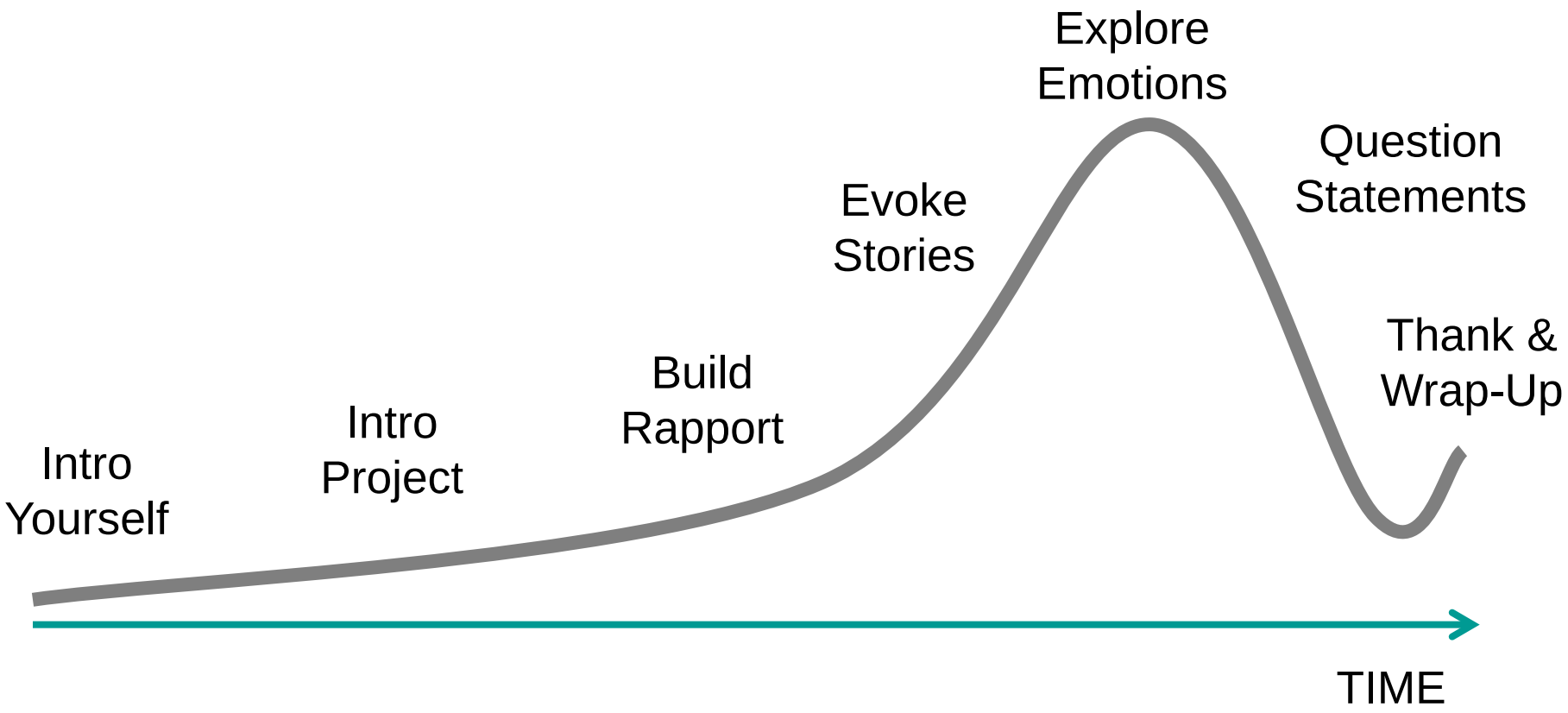
SOME TIPS FOR CONDUCTING AN EMPATHY INTERVIEW



Adapted from Michael Barry

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OUR IMPROVEMENT SCENARIO

Purpose: To **understand someone's experience** with math, and the **factors that supported or hindered** their mathematical success.

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PREPARE FOR EMPATHY INTERVIEWS

With a partner:

- **Question selection/creation** (5 min)
  - What questions would you like to ask?
- **Organize and predict** (2 min)
  - What order will you ask them?
  - What is one thing you think you will hear?

Each of you will interview someone new!

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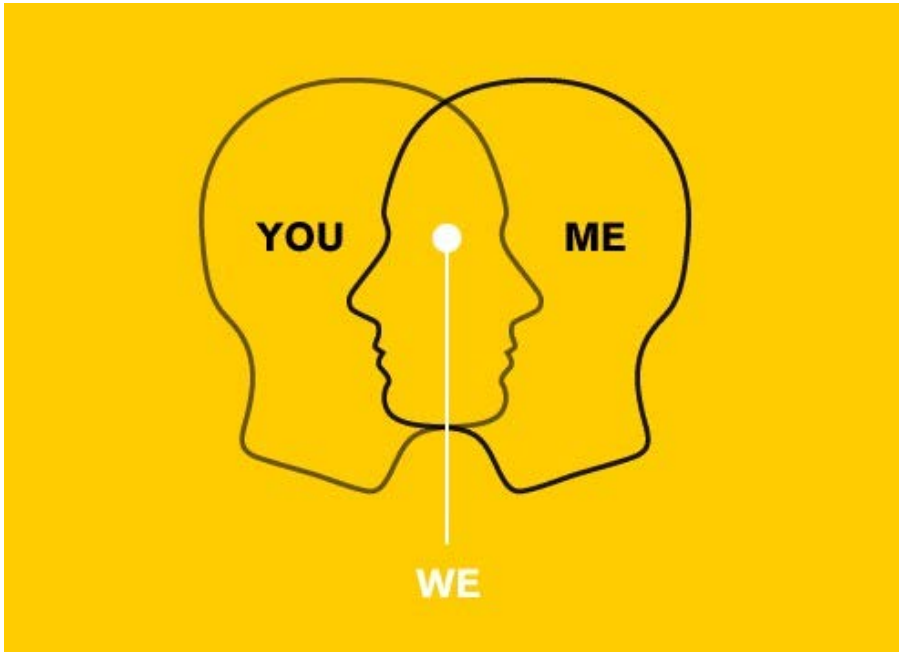
CONDUCT OUR EMPATHY INTERVIEWS

(8 MIN EACH)



Pair up with another pair. Swap partners.

- Seek to understand, not confirm
- Listen and PROBE
  - “Tell me more...”
  - “What was that like for you?”

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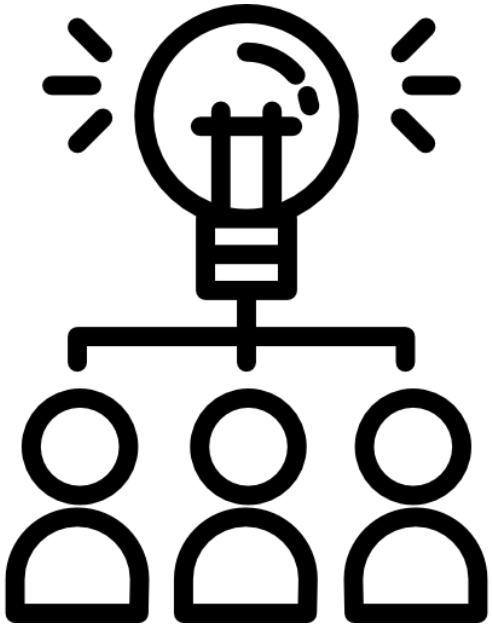
DEBRIEF: SHARING ROUNDS

Groups of 4. Designate a facilitator/timekeeper.



New person starts each round. Share the air.

Content (2 min): What *is one thing that struck you* about your partner's math experience?

Process (7 min): How did it feel to be the *interviewer*? To be the *interviewee*?

Takeaways (3 min): What is an *idea, question or next step* you are taking with you?

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THE NATION'S FIRST GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION WHOLLY EMBEDDED IN K-12 SCHOOLS

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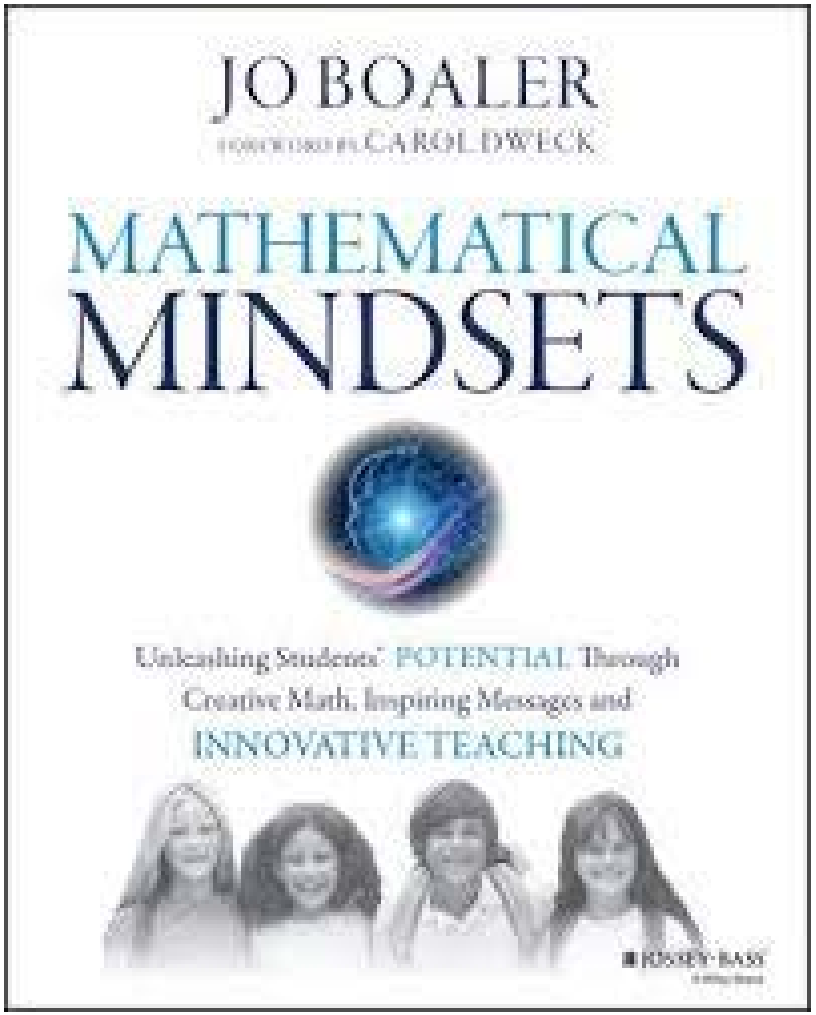
IMPROVING STUDENTS' MATHEMATICAL AGENCY AND SUCCESS



- **Foster growth mindsets**
- **Create inclusive, equitable mathematical learning communities** through productive group work and status interventions
- **Shift mathematical discourse and assessment to be more student-centered**
  - "You, y'all, we" instead of "I do, we do, you do"

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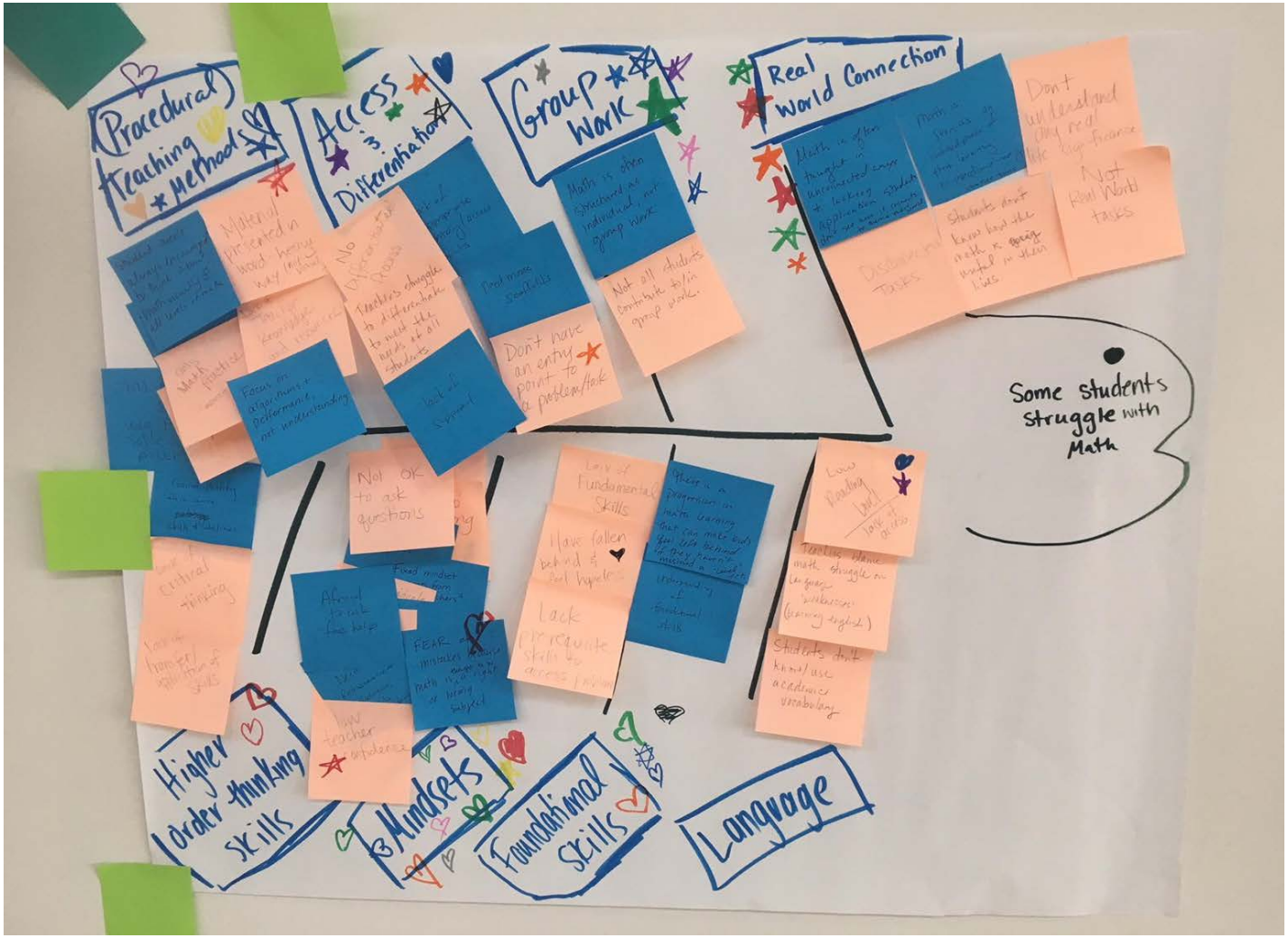
HOW DID TEACHERS IN MAIC USE WHAT THEY LEARNED?



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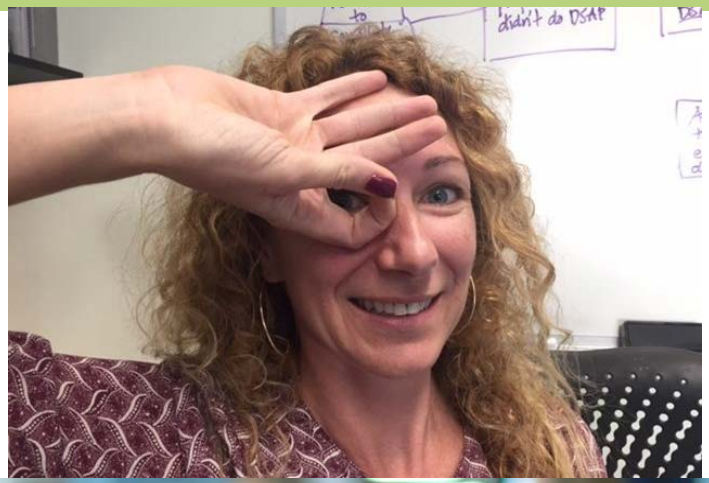
EXPLICIT MINDSET/STATUS INTERVENTIONS
A CULTURE OF GRAPPLING & DISCOURSE



Abolishing the phrase
“I’m not a math person.”

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Questions?

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RESOURCES

Center for Research on Equity & Innovation (CREI) at the High Tech High Graduate School of Education
Protocols: https://hthgse.edu/CREI/protocols/

Hasso Plattner Institute of Design (Stanford's d.school): https://dschool.stanford.edu/

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JOIN THE CONVERSATION!

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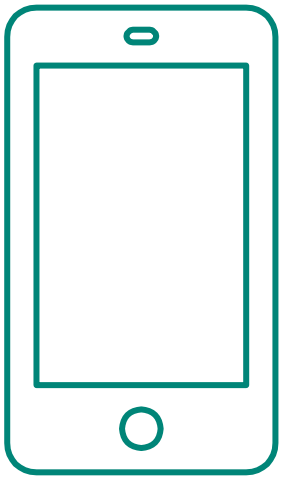

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Thank You!

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