**APPENDIX E**

**CROSSWALK FOR EQUITY PRINCIPLES AND ACADEMIC TEAMING**

In *Designing for Equity: Leveraging Competency-Based Education to Ensure All Students Succeed* (2018), Sturgis and Casey introduce nine equity principals in a framework to guide districts and schools to create an equitable system that effectively serves all students. Descriptions of these nine principles are included on the left side of the table below. We specify how academic teaming supports and aligns with each of these principles in the right column of the table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equity Principles</th>
<th>Equity in Student-Led Academic Teaming</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Nurture Strong Culture of Learning and Inclusivity</strong></td>
<td>Students build strong social bonds with their peers and experience belonging in their academic teams.</td>
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<tr>
<td>District and school cultures ensure all students and adults, especially the most marginalized, feel safe and respected. They are intentionally designed to build trusting relationships that promote positive identity and enable direct and productive feedback. Adults regularly share their own learning and model a growth mindset for students. Students unfamiliar with a school’s dominant culture may lack fluency in the social cues and language that educators use to interpret students’ readiness for learning. Acknowledging the existence of a dominant culture is important in order to open dialogue regarding student communication and engagement. Students are supported in becoming independent learners. Educators have the autonomy to be responsive to students as they progress, and distributed leadership strategies empower staff to make decisions based on what is best for students.</td>
<td>Academic teaming structures are designed for social bonding—students work in diverse teams with norms that ensure every student has the chance to contribute equitably to their team, can feel safe through peer support, and can develop a growth mindset. The teacher can focus on monitoring teams and develops a heightened sense of student needs. In high-functioning academic teams, students meet each other’s needs with limited teacher guidance and experience self-actualization through caring for their peers as much as they care about themselves.</td>
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2. Engage the Community in Shaping New Definitions of Success and Graduation Outcomes

Districts and schools engage their community in creating a shared vision of what students need to know and be able to do for future success. They take proactive steps to be sure that all voices—particularly those that have been historically marginalized—are included and elevated. Through these dialogues and leveraging research about the learning sciences, districts and schools define well-rounded competencies that all students will master upon graduation. Their definition of student success includes but is not limited to what it means to be college and career ready: they integrate academic knowledge, the skills to transfer and apply that knowledge, and a set of lifelong learning skills that enable students to be independent learners. Because students have different strengths, interests, and aspirations, districts and schools may allow for multiple pathways to success and multiple methods of demonstrating success. However, they balance this flexibility with rigorous commitment to ensuring all pathways and all demonstrations are equally reflective of the competencies that define success. Beyond simply defining success, districts and schools create a culture of learning in which all stakeholders internalize and value their shared vision of success and commit to shared accountability for ensuring that all students achieve it.

Academic teaming outcomes create a vision for the community of all students building the skills they will need to be successful after graduation.

In their academic teams, students work toward becoming college and career ready through developing and deepening academic skills, social-emotional skills, and 21st-century skills. Rigorous team tasks give students the opportunity to apply and transfer their skills and knowledge to various real-world contexts across all subjects. Since students become naturally engaged in the challenging academic work and have autonomy with their teams, their self-motivation increases, and students can develop into lifelong learners. Schools can showcase these positive student outcomes in order to collaborate with the community to promote a vision around the power of academic teaming. Students are empowered to assert their voices in the classroom, which can translate to asserting themselves to make a positive difference in their schools and communities.
3. Invest in Adult Mindsets, Knowledge, and Skills

Leadership values and supports the ongoing growth of adults. Trust is actively nurtured. Structures provide ongoing opportunities for nurturing growth mindset and self-reflection. Adults deepen awareness of their own cultural identities, seek to understand their students, and proactively address bias. Teachers are supported in building their professional skills in the learning sciences, instructional strategies, knowledge of the domains, learning progressions, and equity strategies, including cultural responsiveness and Universal Design for Learning.

Schools that implement academic teaming engage educators in instructional coaching, instructional rounds, and professional learning communities.

The benefits of student-led academic teaming give schools a vision to rally around as they engage in the transformation from traditional instruction to academic teaming. This process of change is self-reflective by nature and can help build growth mindset in educators. School leaders who have successfully shifted their schools to academic teaming align their support systems so educators can give each other feedback and collaborate on teaching practices and analyzing student evidence. Teachers are better able to understand students on a deep level and to evaluate their own preconceptions of students when teachers are gathering minute-to-minute student evidence and discussing this data with other teachers. Teachers can more easily see themselves as agents of transformation as they analyze evidence of their impact on students’ learning and lives.

4. Establish Transparency About Learning, Progress, and Pace

Learning cycles are explicit and transparent so that students, families, and other key stakeholders know what students need to learn, what proficiency looks like, how they will be assessed, and how they are progressing. Teachers work together to use data on student progress to respond to students and to inform their professional learning.

Student-led academic teaming involves transparent learning targets made accessible to students and a constant stream of student evidence for teachers to use in verifying student progress.

In classrooms that implement student-led academic teaming, the teacher provides standards-based guidelines (learning targets and success criteria), which are posted in the classroom for all students to see. Students use the success criteria to track their own progress and their teammates’ progress toward learning targets with autonomy. Academic teaming creates a constant feedback loop amongst students and between students and the teacher; teachers gather student evidence on a daily basis. Teachers then use this student data to inform lesson planning and make on-the-spot instructional adjustments. The shared pedagogical philosophy, shared language, and shared vision that academic teaming provides helps teachers stay in sync when collaborating in their professional learning communities.
### 5. Monitor and Respond to Student Progress, Proficiency, and Pace

Individual student pace and progress are closely monitored, as are trends over time by individuals and cohorts. Student progress is measured by growth along a learning continuum. Strategies are personalized to ensure each student sets and sustains a pace of learning that leads him or her toward graduation, with supports in place that ensure all students reach proficiency.

Academic teaming helps all students reach proficiency through access to peer coaching, teacher support, and tools for self-tracking.

Academic teaming structures ensure self-tracking, peer tracking, and teacher tracking with transparent success criteria to measure each student’s learning progress. Students learn to support each other in their academic teams, and the teacher has more time to spend with individual students who need extra support. Teachers can make on-the-spot adjustments to ensure all students are on the path to proficiency and graduation. Students can access more support through academic teaming than they could have accessed in a traditional classroom.

### 6. Respond and Adapt to Students Using Continuous Improvement Processes

Districts and schools use data on student progress to create agile organizations that can respond to student needs, drive continuous improvement, and ensure that students are successfully reaching proficiency each step of the way. Data can also be used to seek out inequitable practices, identify and examine bias, and challenge predictability of success based on demographic factors.

Teachers who implement academic teaming use leading student data to make on-the-spot adjustments.

Academic teaming makes student evidence visible—when students are discussing and debating the academic content, teachers are able to observe students’ thinking. Teachers can adapt instruction in a timely manner to keep all students on track, which narrows the daily learning gap and in turn narrows the achievement gap. Teachers can also make well-informed decisions about how to group students based on daily student data. Teachers who begin to use academic teaming are often surprised by how well their historically low-performing students learn in their teams, leading to confrontation of biases.
### 7. Develop Shared Pedagogical Philosophy Based on Learning Sciences

Districts and schools are designed around shared and explicit pedagogical philosophies based on research in the learning sciences, including neuroscience, engagement, motivation, and child/youth development. Important pedagogical approaches to include are school designs that support consistent relationships, Universal Design for Learning, culturally responsive strategies, and nurturing the skills for student agency.

**Schools that implement academic teaming use research-based strategies around a shared pedagogy.**

Academic teaming has the power to transform schools and districts by uniting educators under a clear and proven pedagogical model. Academic teaming is based on research in educational neuroscience and is backed by field results with proven increases in achievement, social-emotional skills, positive behavior, engagement, and student ownership.

### 8. Support Students in Building Skills for Agency

Agency allows individuals to take purposeful and meaningful action in pursuit of their goals and aspirations. It is a vitally important aspect of lifelong learning, and it is actively cultivated in competency-based systems. Schools are designed to develop the mindsets, motivation, and skills that comprise agency. Mindsets include a belief in one’s own efficacy and locus of control to affect change. Motivation includes a genuine purpose for learning, intrinsic motivation, and persistent effort. Skills include self-regulation, metacognition, social and emotional skills, and specific academic behaviors. Culture and learning environments offer students multiple opportunities to practice and receive feedback in developing mindsets and skills.

**Academic teaming allows students to lead their own teams, drive their own learning, and develop autonomy.**

Student agency and ownership are bedrocks of academic teaming. Teachers give student teams autonomy as they work on highly engaging, challenging team tasks. These tasks are designed to be purposeful, offer multiple opportunities to master skills and knowledge, and promote productive struggle, building resilience and confidence. Students have the opportunity to set learning goals and develop their intrinsic motivation as they step up to take accountability for themselves and for their teammates. Teaming structures such as norms explicitly teach students the skills for conflict resolution and self-efficacy.
| 9. Ensure Consistency of Expectations and Understanding of Proficiency | Academic teaming allows all students to experience rigorous instruction with clear expectations.  
Expectations of learning targets and rigor are moderated with all students being held to the same high standards, including demonstrating mastery and fluency in the foundational skills.  
Students who may not have previously been active participants in their own learning are able to access learning targets with their academic teams through high teacher expectations, consistent support, and multiple chances to demonstrate proficiency. All students can experience rigorous learning and frequent feedback through academic teaming. |

Adapted from Sturgis & Casey (2018). Please note: the nine principles and their descriptions (left column) are the work of Sturgis & Casey; the alignment of these principles to student-led academic teaming (right column) was done by the authors of this book, independently of Sturgis & Casey.