

Why Big Ideas for ESSER II

- We believe our staff, students, and community have ***innovative ideas that can, when supported, help us address learning loss and other challenges brought on by COVID-19.*** The infusion of significant federal funds gave our district a great opportunity. By trying new things, we hope to increase student engagement, create meaningful and relevant educational experiences and address persistent inequities in opportunities and outcomes.
- This process ***embodies our values of honoring creativity and agency of our amazing staff and community.*** Those closest to the problems have many possible solutions; by lifting up the ideas of our MMSD community we are better able to find new, bold ideas that increase the academic success of our students. We also can showcase how our district leads the country in bringing Liberatory Design and other innovative processes into 4K-12 education.
- This ***process promotes building small, learning fast and making intentional decisions.*** We know that the more ideas we try, the more learnings we will gain that will help us make strategic decisions to support student learning. When we build small, rough prototypes we are less attached to the idea and are more focused on the learning and outcomes. By rapidly testing out Big Idea prototypes we are able to quickly gather evidence on whether an idea is desirable, feasible and/or viable. Rapid build-measure-learn cycles help teams reflect and make intentional adjustments on how to progress forward (persevere, pivot or stop).

How ROCKiT and R&I are supporting this work:

- Project management of the entire BIG Ideas project, while working closely with Budget, Planning & Accounting, Dr. McGregory and school and central office leaders connected to these projects
- Coaching each BIG Idea team through the innovation process to determine if an idea is desirable, feasible and worthwhile, which includes project management, data collection, and connecting teams to resources (people and items) to support their BIG Idea
- Organized and trained Innovation Council members in the process, their role and how to give feedback that will drive the work forward

What happened during the 21-22 SY (Phase 1: Can we do this?):

- 14 ideas funded to ***create and test their prototypes***, with coaching from ROCKiT for Build-Measure-Learn cycles to learn if the idea is desirable, feasible and worthwhile
- Teams ***presented twice to the ROCKiT Innovation Council*** (six person team that provides feedback and assistance to teams to drive their work forward) in December and May. Teams shared the work they did, what they learned from testing, and asked the Council for feedback and support.
- In May the Innovation Council made recommendations to Dr Jenkins and Dr McGregory on whether to continue to fund ideas in phase 2. **9 of 14 ideas were funded for phase 2.** 5 projects stopped.
- During phase 1 (2021-22 SY) BIG Ideas prototypes impacted **1159 students and 537 staff.**

What's Coming in 2022-23 SY (Phase 2: Does it improve?)

- 9 of 14 teams will ***continue to test*** their prototypes to learn if their idea improves MMSD. R&I Strategists will continue to coach and support these teams with data collection.
- **Four projects have converted to CO departments** (now integrated into regular workflow) over to MMSD central office departments,
- In December 2022, the ideas that have not been converted will pitch their work to central office departments and school leaders in hopes to have their projects funded beyond the 2022-23 SY.

-----INDIVIDUAL BIG IDEA PROJECT UPDATES-----

Barbershop (East HS):

Project Description: The Intro to Barbering Course is designed to give students an opportunity to learn about the career of barbering so they can make an informed career decision and start working toward their career in barbering early on.



*"I really learned how to get the fundamental things down. The more you do basketball, the more you get better, the more reps you put up shots (is like) the more you take that shot with the lining, whatever you're doing, fading, it's just going to look better...It really helped me understand the business, how to manage a business, how to run a business and how to promote my business."
-East Barbering student*

What they did in 21-22 SY:

- East HS ran the Barbering course each semester.
- 17 students participated over the 2 semesters.
- They worked with the City of Madison and Secondary Programs to start an internship program with JP Hair Design.
- MMSD lobbied the state and got Harry Bernard, an MMSD SEA, an WI trades teaching license to teach Barbering

Key learnings:

- Students desired this learning opportunity
- The barbering course is feasible within MMSD systems and structures
- Due to Harry being an SEA, Special Ed students were only allowed to take the course. They learned that the course needs to be opened up to all students interested in learning about Barbering

22-23 SY plan + goals:

- Run 2 sections of the course each semester that is open to regular education students
- Measure if students enrolled in this course gain skills in barbering and entrepreneurship and their ability to determine if they want to continue in the career path of barbering/cosmetology.
- Start working with Central Office CTE to expand this project across MMSD and build out a MMSD Barbering Lab

Project-Based Learning (Shabazz HS & West HS):

Project Description: Through project-based learning (PBL) methods, this BIG Idea purposefully engages students in real-world and relevant projects in order to create a rich and meaningful educational experience for roughly 110 Shabazz students and 3 West HS students.

What they did in 21-22 SY:

- Over the 21-22 SY 10 PBL learning labs were offered to all Shabazz students (106) each semester.
- Students engaged in over 100 weekly field experiences and community connections tied directly to learning lab content.
- Built out classroom and learning spaces at Shabazz to create more connected and enriching learning experiences.

Key learnings:

- Students engaged in this educational experience and found the PBL model a valuable, engaging and enriching learning experience
- The PBL learning lab model was feasible within Shabazz and MMSD systems and structures (i.e., daily schedule).



22-23 SY plan + goals:

- Continue to strengthen this educational model
- Expand to West HS to test an independent study PBL model
- Finish building out/improving outdoor and indoor learning spaces at Shabazz
- Find MMSD (central office or school) funding for after the BIG Ideas grant ends

"These activities helped me to get more connected to the class and the subjects on a deeper level than I already was"

-Shabazz Student

Mission Possible-Robots (Student Services):

Project Description: This project is using robots as a way to provide inclusive school experiences for scholars who are homebound unable to engage and interact with their peers in person.

What they did in 21-22 SY:

- They provided inclusive school experiences through robots for 7 scholars (5 elementary + 2 high school) with chronic health conditions.
- This experience improved the school experience for students who are medically fragile and have connected them in new ways to their school communities.
- They connected with the robotics company to support them in working out technology glitches.

Key learnings:

- Students, families, and teachers using the robots appreciated the connection the robot created between students and classrooms.
- Teachers with robots in their classrooms need more training and support around teaching with a robot.
- Overseeing robots is a full time job. Student Services has now dedicated 1.0 FTE to oversee and manage the robots in MMSD.
- Cost savings for MMSD: \$600,000

22-23 SY plan + goals:

- Measure the impact the robots has on student academic goals
- Deploy 12 robots to students with chronic medical needs
- Continue to hone the robotics training for staff, students, and families so they feel prepared to use the robots for teaching/learning



Akira Recording Studio (Toki MS):

Project Description: By creating a recording studio at Toki Middle School, they hope to create a place that excites and engages students in the recording arts as well as a space that elevates and amplifies student voice.

What they did during the 2021-22 SY:

- They set up satellite recording studio spaces at Toki MS while they waited for technology to arrive and a space at Toki to be set up with electrical drops, soundproofing foam, etc.
- 117 songs were created by Toki students over the spring semester and one student was featured on Devil Radio (92.7 FM)



- A student leadership team of 38 students was created to help co-develop and co-design the physical space and the philosophy behind the studio.

Key learnings:

- Students desired this experience: An average of 15 students each day are using the makeshift-satellite recording studio.
- 3 guest artists were able to come to Toki to support this program and want to come back
- Managing the studio space along on top of regular teaching duties was challenging. The team learned that they needed more support with space so that it was accessible to students and classrooms throughout the day

22-23 SY plan + goals:

- Hire a full time music teacher to support the recording studio
- Further collect data on student use of space and music and composition skills
- Connect with music teachers and schools around MMSD that are getting or interested in recording studio spaces to share learnings, curriculum and other helpful programmatic learnings
- Find MMSD (central office or school) funding for supporting the space at Toki after the BIG Ideas grant ends and to determine if the idea should/can scale to other MMSD school sites

Youth Action Team (Toki MS & FYCE):

Project Description: The Youth Voice & Vision Team (YV²) seeks to provide funds to student-driven ideas & initiatives, through the Youth Action Fund, while providing the team the opportunity to engage & develop youth project management skills, change power dynamics and decision-making processes within MMSD schools.



What they did in 21-22 SY:

- 14 Students leaders and 10 staff at Toki Middle School engaged with their classmates to determine a few projects to launch that would increase safety, sense of belonging and community at Toki MS.
- One of the projects the Youth Voice & Vision team accomplished was making the gym bathrooms more inclusive and welcoming. The team worked with MMSD Building services and the Youth Voice & Vision Team project to plan, lead, manage and execute this work.

Key learnings:

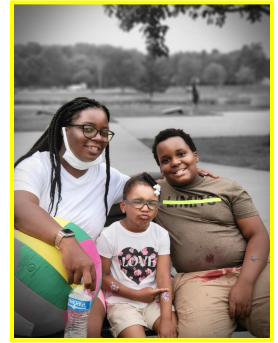
- Student driven projects can happen! Students at Toki planned, managed and completed 4 projects in collaboration with Toki staff and MMSD Building Services
- Toki staff liked being able to effect change with students at Toki MS
- This team needs to be explicit around how this youth voice initiative differs from others; that YAT is a team comprised of adults & youth that actively & collaboratively work together to co-construct spaces/systems/structures to better impact the educational experience for all students, but in particular our BIPOC Youth, our LGBTQIA youth/students, our Non-traditional leaders

22-23 SY Plan + Goals:

- Expand to three additional school sites (Jefferson, Whitehorse and Sennett) to test this model in different settings and to learn its impact on a school's culture
- Collect data on how this idea impacts student project management, budgeting and facilitation skills and how it impacts student perceptions on school climate
- Find MMSD (central office or school) funding for this work after the BIG Ideas grant end

Wrap-Around Approach-Transformative Justice (Thoreau ES):

Project Description: Working in conjunction with Urban Triage and West High School, Thoreau Elementary's BIG Idea is to transform the culture of their school by providing culturally responsive mentorship opportunities for staff, students and families to increase school engagement, achievement, and sense of belonging for Brown and Black students and their families.



What they did in 21-22 SY:

- Thoreau had 42 families actively involved: 8 students were set up with academic support, 9 students were set up with social emotional support, 26 families were set up with community agency, and 7 families were involved in Thoreau's PTO
- The team worked with two focal classroom teachers and planning activities, opportunities, and field trips for students
- Thoreau partnered a new community organization for this work due to contractual concerns with their last partner

Key learnings:

- The organization originally partnering on this project was not the best fit for the long term trajectory of this work.
- The larger Thoreau staff need to be more largely and intentionally integrated into and active in the project this year.

22-23 SY plan + goals:

- Explore and grow a partnership with Urban Triage to support staff capacity building on fostering and strengthening relationships and supports with families
- Launch mentorship programs for staff, students and families through weekly tutoring and mentoring opportunities for students, monthly family engagement activities, and professional development opportunities for staff
- Launch a "Tiers of Engagement" component to SSIT & planning meetings to more effectively and efficiently support students and families of color
- Find an MMSD central office department to support and fund this work after the BIG Ideas grant ends

Anti-Racist, Civically Active, Student-Designed Curriculum (Sandburg ES):

Project Description: This project is attempting to disrupt and begin to dismantle traditional ways of teaching, systematizing high-quality academic experiences for our students, centering students of color, anti-racist pedagogy, and student civic action. This idea includes an intentional investment in Black educational excellence by giving students power in their schools through curriculum development and leadership opportunities.



What they did in 21-22 SY:

- Created an anti-racist and civically active curriculum for all 3rd-5th graders at Sandburg Elementary
- The team created a new, culturally responsive student leadership criteria to select and invite students to participate in the leadership cohort
- The team build out a leadership cohort for 39 students of color at Sandburg. Each group of students met once a week with their teacher to preview lessons, give feedback and input, and learn and practice how to be student leaders.
- Hired a 1.0 LTE REACH teacher to cover teachers while they met with their student leader cohorts

Key learnings:

- The structure of the REACH teacher pushing into classrooms worked well systemically, although it was difficult to protect that time during a staffing shortage.
- Students and teachers really valued the intentional leadership cohort time to build relationships and reflect on learning related to leadership skills and content.
- Teachers appreciated the curriculum and how engaged their students were in it.
- Students in the leadership cohort felt valued and affirmed for being selected and grew in their leadership skills.

2022-23 Plan + Goals:

- Measure the impact the curriculum and student leadership cohort has on student academics and engagement
- Work with the Advanced Learning Department to think about how this project could fold into the work of the Advanced Learning department
- Find MMSD (central office or school) funding for after the BIG Ideas grant ends
- Create a repository of resources for teachers and a scope for the student leadership group time over the school year

Parent Liaison (Mendota ES):

Project Description: This project was created to test out a 12 month summer liaison position (normally 10 month) at Mendota elementary with the goal of providing year-round support that can strengthen and expand school-family relationships in order to improve academic outcomes for the historically marginalized.

**What they did in 2022 Summer:**

- The Mendota Parent Liaison worked with 9 of 21 focus families (43%) and 13 of 27 focal students (48%) over the summer to provide support and give out important MMSD and enrollment information.
- Hosted a family engagement opportunity at Vera Court community center where families could learn about MMSD, Advanced Learning opportunities, gain free resources and books about Mental Health and Wellness, and engage in fun challenges with their scholars.

Key learnings:

- Families desire consistent communication in ways that are approachable, digestible and allows for them to ask questions and give feedback (home visits, texts, phone calls).
- Families are waiting for opportunities to speak to them and learn about what they are going through + where they are at.

22-23 SY Plan + Goals:

- Increase the number of students who complete the enrollment process before the school year begins; increase parent involvement and connection to specific school sites; support classroom teacher preparedness to support our students on day 1.
- Gather data on parents' sense of connection and belonging, communication experience, and special circumstances that the school should be aware of/ can support (so that teachers may effectively plan support at the onset of the school year.)

MTI CENTRS (MTI & PLLD):

Project Description: To design and deliver an experience for ALL staff to support their unlearning and relearning of a shared and inclusive history including both struggle and resistance in order to discover and dismantle systemic racism in our schools and community.

What they did in 21-22 SY:

- Invited all MMSD staff members to engage in the course
- Organized 19 facilitated small groups (7 site based and 13 cross site) for over 400 staff members (over 3,300 hours of professional development) and hosted affinity spaces for staff of color
- Delivered the course to 48 hourly employees, who don't always get to engage in these types of PD opportunities
- Trained and supported facilitators with resources, weekly communication and office hours

Key learnings:

- People were able to prioritize this work, even while balancing other PD requirements and engaging new curriculum.
- They identified the need to develop a component that connects the coursework to staff practice and potentially student learning/ outcomes to answer the question: *Does teacher learning and growth as anti-racist educators impact student belonging, engagement and relationships in class?*

22-23 SY Plan + Goals:

- Build continuation and application model for how to transfer the learnings to the course into the professional space (classrooms, schools, department)
- Engage more administrators in this work/ course
- Determine the MMSD PD plan and funding streams for after the BIG Ideas grant ends

-----**PROJECTS THAT HAVE STOPPED**-----

In Pursuit of Sunshine (June 2022): This project has officially stopped with the graduation of the student leaders. However, the goal and work of this project has been folded into the Project Based Learning project at Shabazz and will continue to be tested in a structured Project Based Learning independent study at West High School.

ALL In (June 2022): Due to many feasibility hurdles, this project has stopped. We learned in our prototype testing that MMSD, at this time, could not execute on this idea.

Coalition for Leading Anti-Racist Schools (Dec 2021): This project has stopped their partnership with the BIG Ideas. Due to ESSER 2 grant stipulations and requirements, this team has decided to look for funding elsewhere.

Black Girl Magic (Aug 2021): Black Girl Magic ran a variety of summer enrichment opportunities for Black girls in MMSD that were funded through this grant. Although these projects were successful in many ways, due to a variety of concerns these teams decided to stop their work.

Teenzine (June 2021): This project never got off the ground because the creator of the idea (MMSD community member) did not have the time to invest in this project and was concerned about intellectual property rights.

**FOR QUESTIONS or MORE INFO REGARDING ANY OF THE BIG IDEAS PLEASE REACH OUT TO
LEIGH VIERSTRA: lkvierstra@**