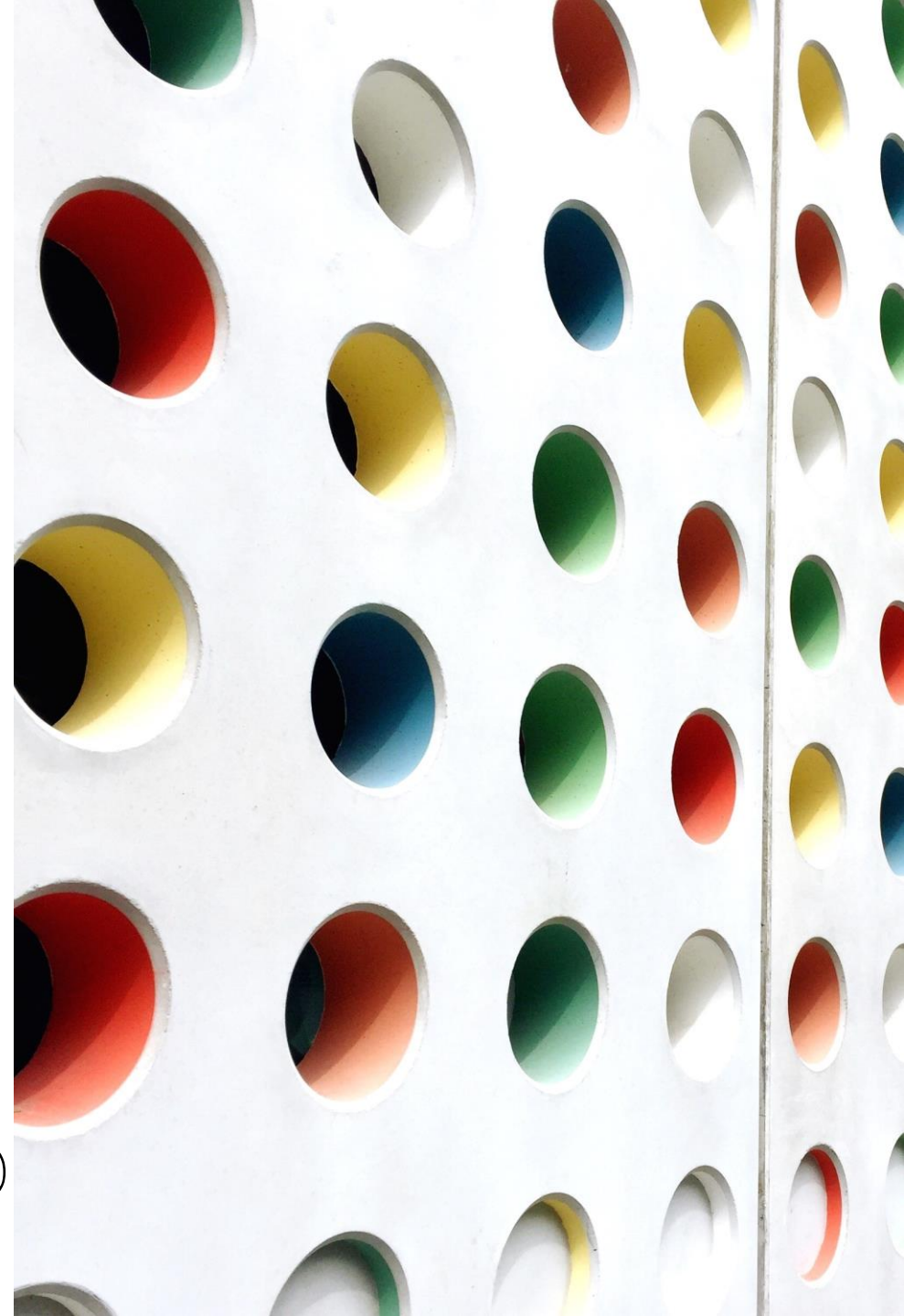# Reimagining Middle Schools

BELLEVUE SCHOOL DISTRICT

2022-2023 SCHOOL YEAR

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING #12 (3/9/23)

| TEAM #1	TEAM #2	TEAM #3	TEAM #4
Project Based Learning	Advisory/ Homeroom	Block Scheduling	Teacher Teams with Cohorts
Anna	Kalena	Tom	Regen
Valeri	Courtney	Annisa	Dan
Ishaan	James	Susan	G
Scott	Danielle	Mariela	Wendy
Nellie	Jesse	Sahaj	Susie
Welcome Marcus!	Davonia	Drew	Gabe
		Giovani	Mathew

Today's Objectives

WE PROTOYPE:

○ Using **staff feedback** and what stood out from the **Innovative School Visits**, we will **strengthen and refine** our four prototypes for reimagining middle school.

Community Agreements & Roles

Note Taker	Process Monitor
Drew (School Visits)	Self-Reflection
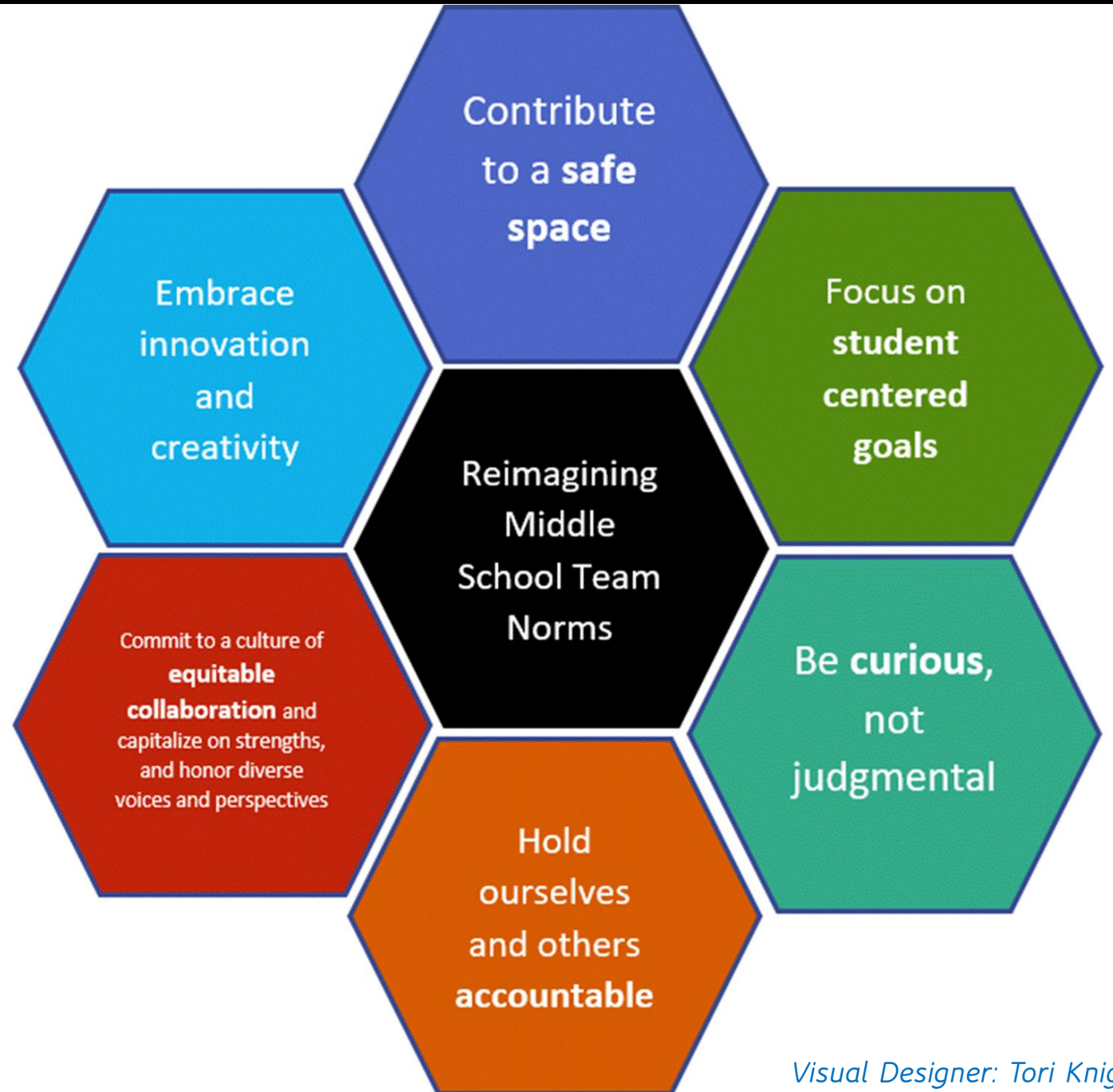
Visual Designer: Tori Knight

Parking Lot

Put your questions, comments, needs etc. here!

AGENDA

Welcome

Content: We PROTOTYPE!

Nuts & Bolts

Closing

Design39Campus (*San Diego, CA*)

Ellen Fletcher Middle School (*Palo Alto, CA*)

RMS School Learning Tours at Five Innovative Middle Schools
(January & February 2023)

Summit Atlas (*West Seattle, WA*)

Intrinsic School, Belmont Campus (*Chicago, IL*)

Odyssey Multiage Program (*Bainbridge Island, WA*)

School Learning Tours at Five Innovative Middle Schools

Who?	When?	Where?	Innovative Middle School?	Known For?
Jessi & Dan	January 30	Chicago, IL	**Intrinsic Schools-Belmont Campus**	Personalized learning & pathways (goal-setting & reflection; early postsecondary planning; career/passion exploration), cohorted "pods" of students & teachers, challenging core curriculum, high levels of staff/student ownership
Mathew & Tom	January 31	San Diego, CA	**Design39 Campus**	Design thinking, learner-centered, inquiry, technology, collaboration, global connections, Explorations (6-week 45-min/day electives driven by students)
Tori & Gabe	January 31	Palo Alto, CA	**Ellen Fletcher Middle School**	Daily 15-minute "Brunch" period; academic skill development in a "whole child" environment; promotes "innovation, creative thinking, intellectual curiosity, academic excellence, thoughtful change, and good citizenship"
Gaurav & Anna	February 3	Bainbridge Island, WA	**Odyssey Multiage Program (Grades 7-8)**	Multiage classes, self-directed learners (~40% independent learning), student "passion projects", close student-teacher relationships, high levels of family involvement (100 hrs/yr) including "Mini Classes" run by parents during school day,
Courtney & Melisa	February 9	West Seattle, WA	**Summit Atlas**	Personalized learning environment; "Every student is capable of college success"; Student success in "cognitive skills", "content knowledge", "habits of success"

Debrief School Visits

How did the schools go about meeting student needs?

What did you hear that would strengthen your group's prototype?

Optional Note Catcher Tool

- Record your thoughts and ideas as you:
  - Listen to tonight's two Innovative Middle School Visit presentations
  - Explore middle school staff prototype feedback (from last week's Staff Outreach Visits)

- Use your Note Catcher to help you participate in:
  - Quick debrief of tonight's school visit presentations
  - Strengthening & refining your subgroup's prototype (PBL, Teacher Teams with Student Cohorts, Scheduling, Homeroom/Advisory)

Optional Note Catcher Tool
Using School Visits and Staff Feedback to Strengthen and Refine our RMS Prototypes (March 2023)

	How did the school go about meeting student needs? What did you hear that would strengthen your group's prototype?
Intrinsic Schools Chicago, IL (Jessi & Dan)	
Design39Campus San Diego, CA (Mathew & Tom)	
Ellen Fletcher Palo Alto, CA (Tori & Gabe)	
Odyssey Multiage Bainbridge Island, WA (Gaurav & Anna)	
Summit Atlas West Seattle, WA (Courtney & Melisa)	

Optional Note Catcher Tool
Using School Visits and Staff Feedback to Strengthen and Refine our RMS Prototypes (March 2023)

After exploring the staff feedback on your group's prototype:

YOUR NOTICINGS: What in the staff feedback **stands out** to you?	
YOUR IDEAS: What specific modifications, tweaks, additions do **you recommend** your group make to strengthen your prototype?	

Intrinsic Schools – Belmont Campus

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

The Intrinsic School – Belmont Campus Chicago, IL

Jessi Cassidy & dan sakaue

History and Context

- Intrinsic School – Belmont Campus

- A charter public school in Chicago Public Schools

- Founded in 2013

- Serves grades 7 – 12. General education, Special Education, 504

- Funding: standard per-pupil allotment – no private fundraising

- Advisory, embedded SEL, C-Day, student-led conference
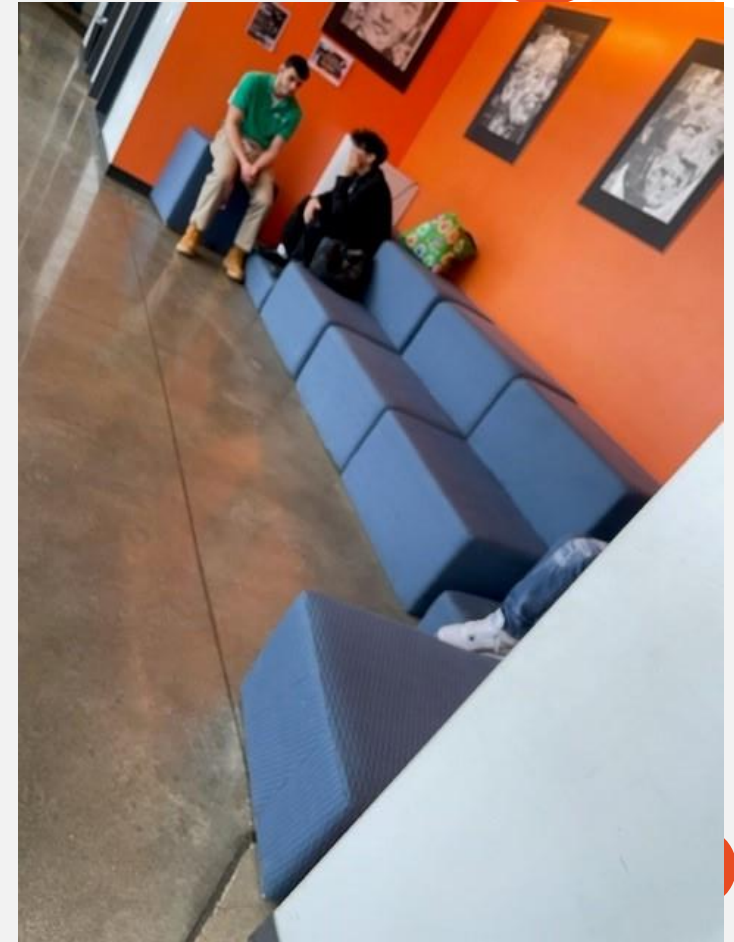
The Intrinsic School Community

ADMINISTRATION

- Principal
- Assistant Principals (2)
- Deans of Culture (3) (Dean of Students/Security)
- Assistant Dean of Culture & Athletic Director (1)
- Dean of Instruction and New Teacher Development
- Director of Special Education (between both campuses)
- Office Manager (1)
- Cross-campus Lead (Founder/CEO, Chief Learning Officer, Operations officer)

MISCELLANEOUS

- In-house substitute teachers (3)
- Social Workers (3)
- Advisory (MS – grade level specific, grouped by gender. HS – grade level and continues with same advisor through high school)
- EPIC Curriculum – incorporates SEL skills, problem solving, personal accountability and opportunities.

Office (1ˢᵗ Floor), School Crisis Support, Waiting Area

Office (2nd Floor): High School Teacher Prep Area, and Special Services Team

The Intrinsic School Community

STAFF

- Core middle school teachers (8)
- Performing Arts (electives) teacher (2)
- 33%+ in first or second year of teaching
- Teacher Profile
  - Teachers who want to be collaborative (with demonstrated success in the past)
  - Innovative – Type A Teacher
  - Comfortable with data
  - Flexibility
- Instructional assistants (7)

STUDENTS

- 1006 students (grades 7 – 12).
  - Grade 7: 159 students and Grade 8: 180 students
- 93.2% Latinx, 3.7% African American. 2.8% White, 0.2% Asian, 0.1% multiracial.
- 18% - 19% Special Education
- 48% female. 52% male
- From two elementary schools in the community
- Stable community
- Student-Teacher Ratio: 17:1

What makes the Intrinsic School "innovative"?

- Student-led conferences
- Summit platform (behavior, conferences, academics, curriculum)
- Four "core" classes: Literacy & Mathematics – 2 teachers + 1 special education teacher (50 – 60 kids)

    Science and Social Studies Teacher (four teams)

    Blended learning (50% of time + 25% of time (@ board (instruction)) adjusted, flexible grouping

- Priority – safety – Culture Team (a.k.a. security) Day-to-day incidences - Community partnership – communication – VERY involved parent community – Virtual involvement "We want families to be here"
- Social workers & counseling
- Furniture (seating)
- Block scheduling – flexible time

Use of Hall
Small Group Instruction, Teacher Preparation Area, and "Culture Team" position

Flexible learning spaces and Variety of Furniture

Wish you could have been there with us!

Design39 Campus
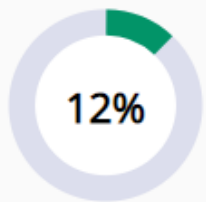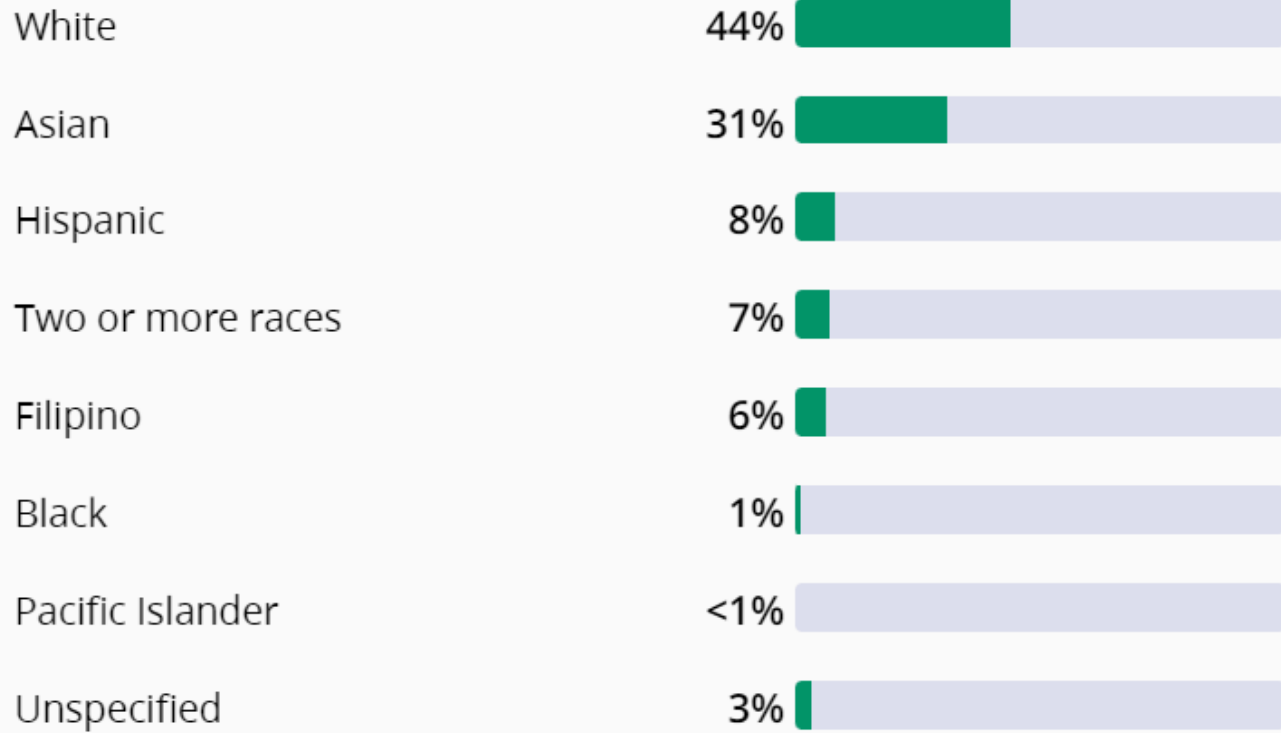
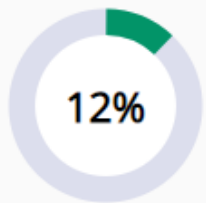**San Diego, California**

School Learning Tour Feedback

March
2023

White	44%	
Asian	31%	
Hispanic	8%	
Two or more races	7%	
Filipino	6%	
Black	1%	
Pacific Islander	<1%	
Unspecified	3%	

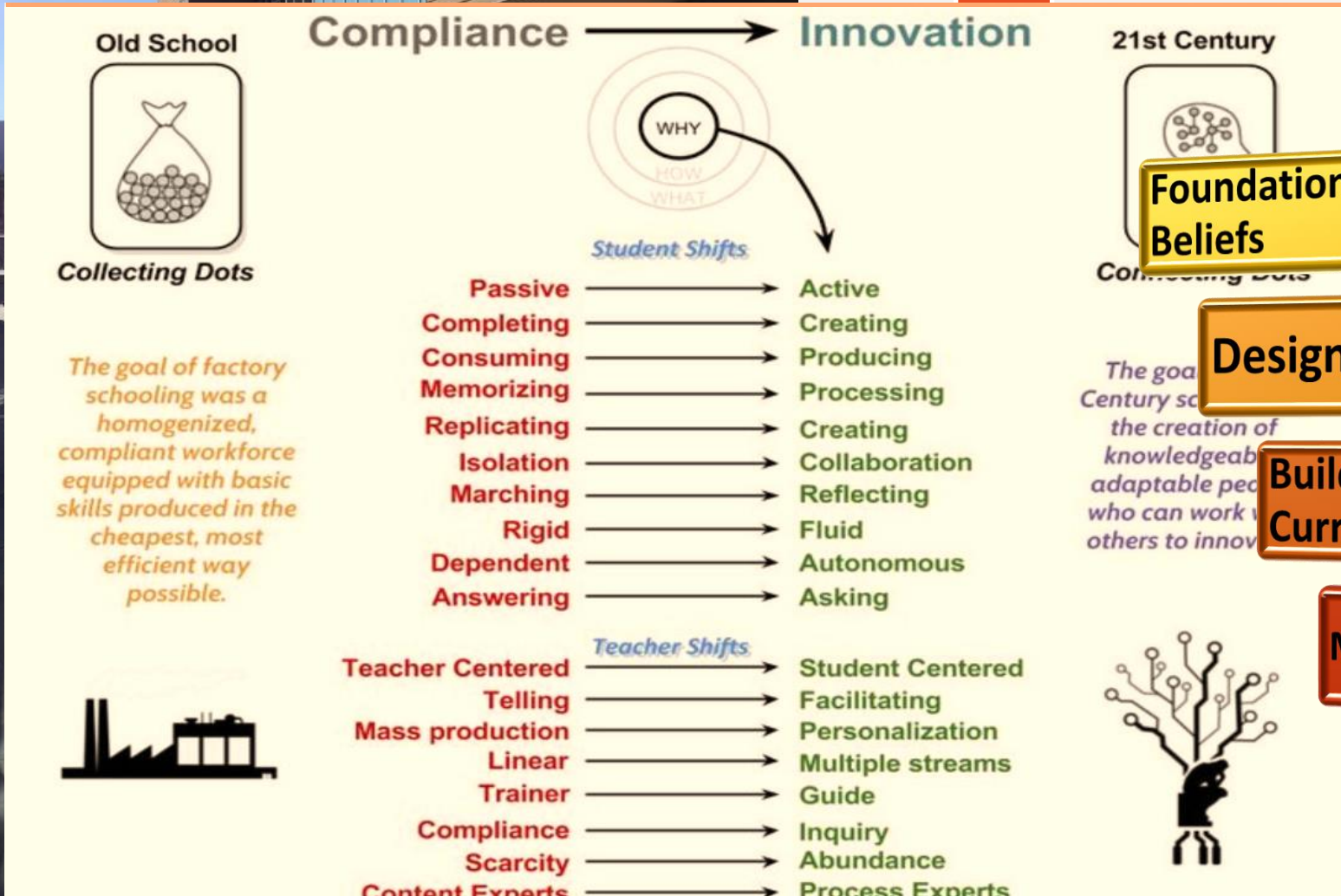12% Students learning English ?

12% Students from low-income families ?

Logistics

- **Kindergarten – 8; serving 1150 students**
- **Poway School District, San Diego CA**
- **Option school; trimesters**
- **Lottery entrance; neighbors affordable housing and affluent communities**
- **Diverse student body; reflects many of our BSD demographics**

Guiding Principles

Foundational Pedagogical Beliefs

Design Thinking

Building Dispositions via Curriculum

Moving Towards 21st Century Skills

OVERALL IMPRESSION

"Learning happens everywhere"
- **Flexible spaces**
- **Multi-use rooms**
- **Incorporating movement and physical space into lessons**
- **Creating intentional spaces for particular thinking in mind**
- **6-8 is time to EXPLORE**

"What I love is when they walk through the halls, they can see what's in their future"

- **Community centered**
- **De-privatization of teacher space**
- **Making thinking visible**
- **Showcase accomplishments**

" We've worked hard to flatten our leadership structures"

- **Empowered staff**
- **Consistent staff training**
- **Strong focus on collaboration**

OVERALL IMPRESSION

" In order to change what we do, we have to change the way we speak"

- **New terms/vocabulary as a shared language**
  - **Full staff buy in**
  - **Shifts mindset**
- **Rethinking assumptions**

Everything Speaks *def.* "The importance of the guest experience can be summed up in two words: everything speaks." The thought behind the quote is simple, service is manifested everywhere your organization touches the customer. Those touch points might include the cleanliness of your storefront, the friendliness of your staff, even the smell your customer associates with your organization will affect their perception of your brand. So, how do you make sure each touch point is inherent of the level of service you wish to provide? Understand that exceptional service requires meticulous planning. Develop a map indicating each customer touch point. Organize your people and infrastructure to support your design.

Exploration *def.* A time/class in the afternoon when kids can choose to try out or explore a type of learning, skill, or experience such as a specific art skill, a musical instrument, a computer skill, etc. This can develop into a Focus/Deep Dive if students choose to do so. The Explorations class meets every other day. TK-3 meeting days are opposite of 4-8.

F

Flat Leadership *def.* A system that allow all parties to be involved in the leadership structure. At D39C, the power lies within the pod. Decisions are not made top-down, rather they are made in the best interest of kids and not all ideas have to be "okayed" by the principal.

Flexible Recess *def.* There is no set time for recess. Kids eat when they need and recess can vary depending on day, experience, and needs of students.

FLL *def.* The FIRST® LEGO® League Global Innovation is designed to encourage and assist FLL teams to further develop their innovative solutions to real-world problems.

Focus Time or Deep Dive *def.* This is a time for kids to extend on their passions and explore more about their interests.

Block Scheduling

What We Saw:

- Different blocks for 6, 7 and 8th graders, incorporated into common schedule
- **Three – block days**; A and B blocks
- Collaboration time *every morning* for educators
- All 6/7/8 students have two LEDs, one for STEM and one for Humanities.
- After lunch, on B days, all 6/7/8 students have their workshop elective classes.

On A days, 7th grade students go to MiM as soon as school starts. After MiM, students attend their homeroom. Students then go to their second block teacher for either STEM or Humanities. When students get back from lunch, they have their final block of the day back with their homeroom teachers for STEM or Humanities again.

On B days, 7th grade students start in their homeroom class for STEM or Humanities. After that, students go to their second block, which is the opposite of their first block class. They finish B days with Workshop classes.

Block Scheduling

Main Takeaways:

➢ <mark>Block scheduling</mark> allows for greater focus and time spent in core classes, and opportunities for more movement throughout the day

➢ ... keeps electives in a tight window

➢ ... allows for a lot of wiggle room with collaborative or problem-based work

➢ ... allows for differentiation/supports for different learning levels and style (pop-in and pull-out)


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Teacher Teams / Cohorts

What We Saw:

- 6, 7, 8 – **150 kids all have core "pods" of four teachers** —Learning Experience Designers (LEDs)—each. The whole ethos is about being completely learner-driven, building collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking.

- One LED will act as their main teacher and will be part of a small team of teachers who will collaborate together and plan integration of curriculum and learning experiences.

- Collaboration is built into every day – one paid hour, student free, for teams to meet every morning (2x whole group, 2x small group, 1x with counselor/psych)

- LA/SS -> Humanities; Science/Math -> STEM

Teacher Teams / Cohorts

Main Takeaways:

➢ **Major opportunities for authentic, fully coherent/integrated collaboration with teacher teams**
➢ **Existence of teacher teams does not ensure teacher teams works well – needs facilitation/training**
➢ **Educators that are dual endorsed or that are comfortable/have experience with interdisciplinary work can thrive**
➢ **Coherence in teams allows for more flexibility with curriculum and addressing student needs**
➢ **Providing extra support/challenge/differentiation is doable, but needs a system**
➢ **Electives would be a challenge to incorporate in BSD**

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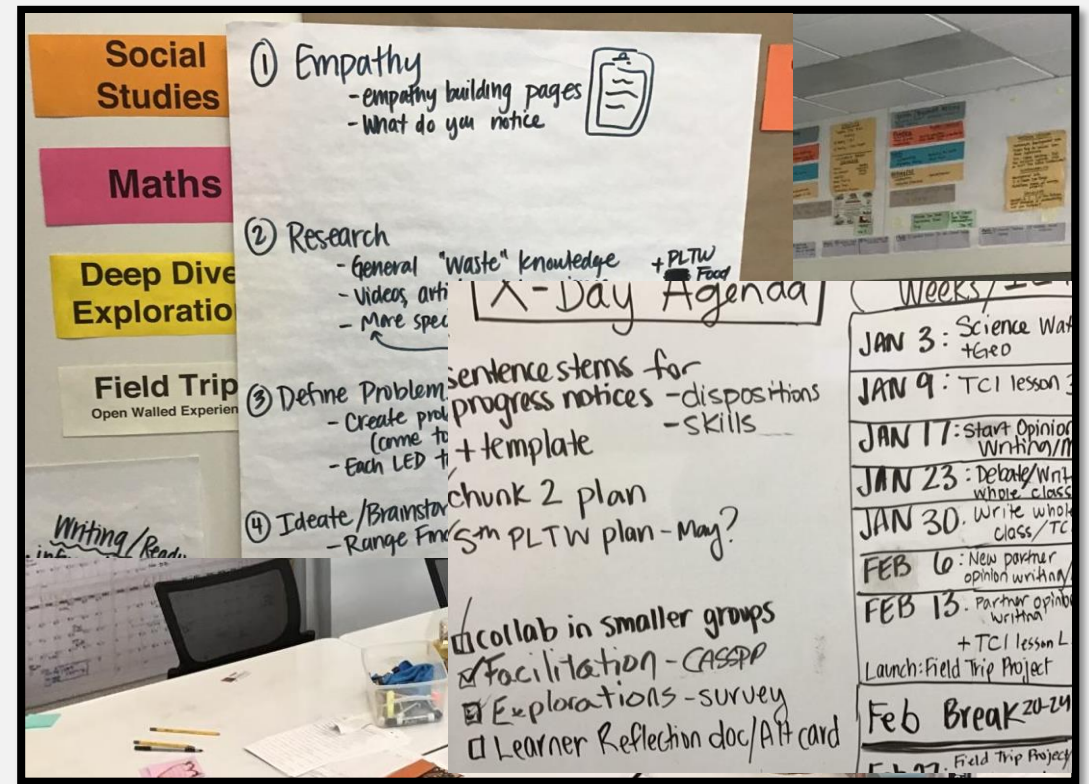
Project/Problem Based Learning

What We Saw:

- **The Design Process :** Empathy, Research, Define, Ideate & Brainstorm, Model & Prototype, Test & Evaluate, Publish & Produce

- **"Deep Dives" and "Exploration"** where learners select activities or topics we can really dive into

- Curriculum integration and personalized learning i.e., Genius Hour

- Frequent **Showcasing**

All middle schoolers choose two workshops per trimester, such as Photography, Journalism, Mosaics, Ceramics, and Robotics. The PLTW (Project Lead the Way) workshop is required one trimester per year and takes the full two hours of workshop time after lunch. In total, students get up to 5 workshop elective choices per school year.

Project/Problem Based Learning

Main Takeaways:

➢ **Complete de-privatization of classrooms – everywhere is a space for learning**

➢ **CONSTANT grant applications and building of opportunities through new tech and student needs**

➢ **Electives are incorporated by a few specialists, but MOSTLY facilitated by LEDs**

➢ **Whole-school buy in allows for cross-curricular and longitudinal projects**

➢ **Local businesses and volunteers frequently run/teach/facilitate learning**

➢ **Student work is showcased EVERYWHERE**
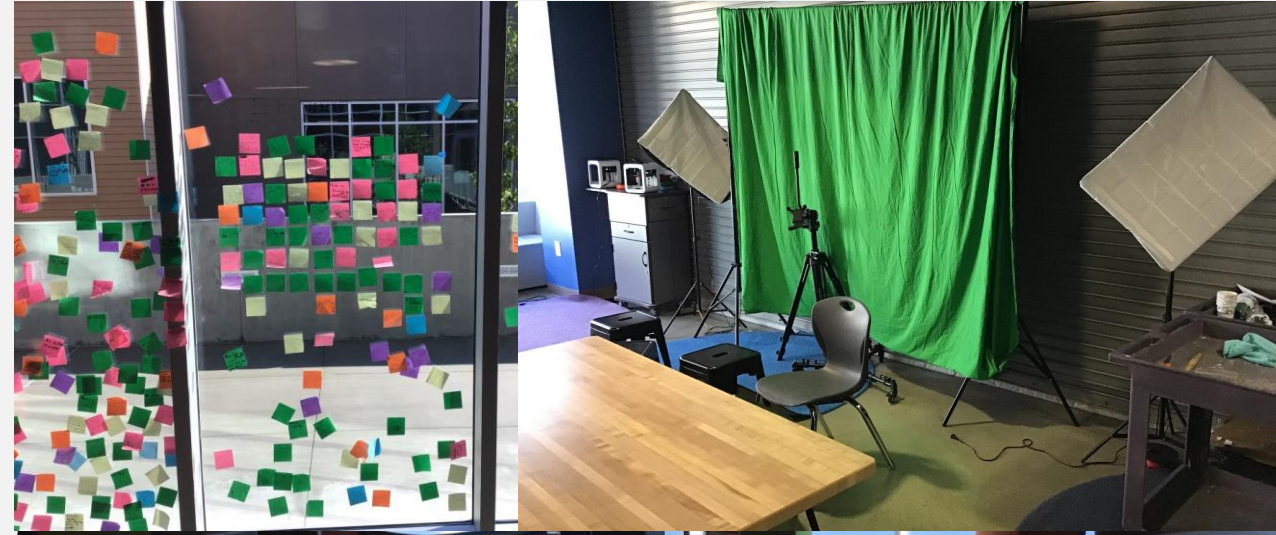
Advisory / Homeroom

What We Saw:

- Every morning students will go to the same homeroom teacher. The homeroom teacher will be one of their teachers in their pod.

- Focus for homeroom is differentiated by grade level and student needs:

6th graders have read alouds and do Second Step lessons. Second Step lessons are a digital platform that each 6th grader has (a digital journal). The Second Step slides are social emotional lessons about setting goals, adjusting to middle school, and learning to be an upstander to bullying.

7th and 8th grade students attend encore in their homeroom. Encore is a time to review/reflect on any homework you may have completed, or at least worked on. It gives you extra time to get things done.

Advisory / Homeroom

Main Takeaways:

- SEL is vertically aligned and based on the needs of each age group (building from elementary, focused SEL stops after 6th grade but ideas from it are supported and used in all classrooms)

- When students have many opportunities to work with other classes (mentor/support younger peers) they have a greater sense of ownership in the school

- Block scheduling and "podding" students creates and supports a lot of SEL

- Homeroom every morning allows for more opportunities for student check in

- Weekly collaboration time in pods with psych/counselors is another factor in supporting students' SEL

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Using space to promote thinking!

Thank you!

Debrief School Visits

How did the schools go about meeting student needs?

What did you hear that would strengthen your group's prototype?

Odle	purple
Chinook	Pink
Tyee	Yellow
Highland	Ivory
Tillicum	green

Data!

Thank you to those that came to help at schools during listening campaign!

❑ Paper copies of notes (see color key)

❑ Spreadsheet from the survey

❑ Summary notes from RMS members (Tillicum & Tyee)
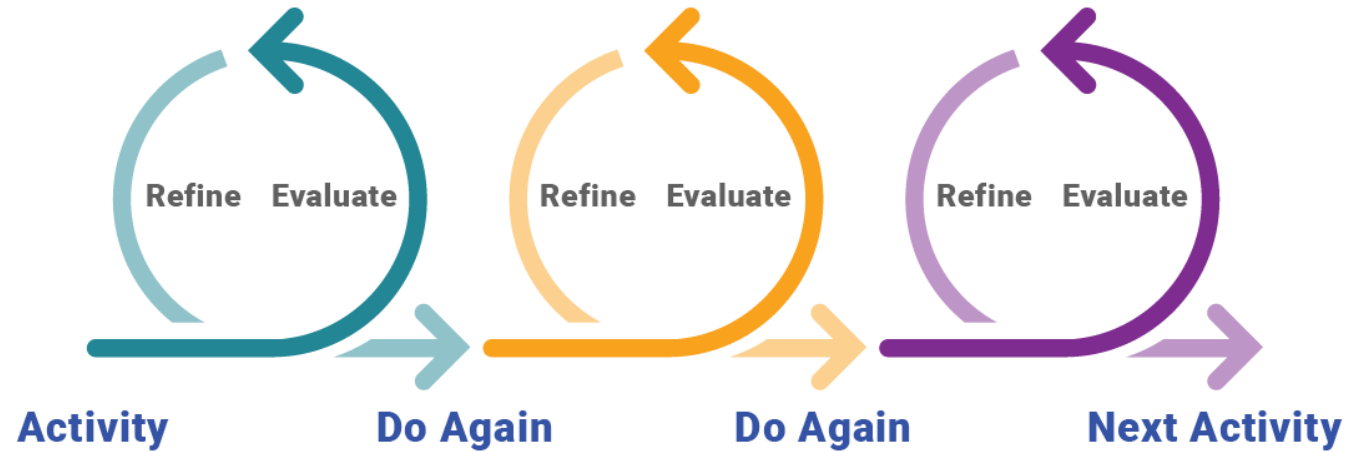
Strengthen & Refine Our Prototypes

- Step 1: Reread & discuss staff prototype feedback
  - What stands out to you?
  - Think about revisions
  - Consider including ideas heard during the school visit presentation

Strengthen & Refine our Prototypes

Refine   Evaluate

Refine   Evaluate

Refine   Evaluate

Activity   **Do Again**   **Do Again**   **Next Activity**

- Step 2: Strengthen & Refine
  - Tweak, refine, modify your group's prototype (via chart paper or the PPT presentation)
  - **Put talking points** (what you want us to say when we present) **in the NOTES section of your PPT slides**

Consider...

Implementation versus staying high-level & scrappy

Centered on students (vision)

Solving the problems (needs)

Common themes identified

How to refine

Refining vs. Changing the prototypes

Example

PBL prototype feedback:

Some staff expressed concern about how well **certain student populations**—especially those needing more support—would do in a PBL environment and wanted to hear more about how our PBL proposal explicitly plans for supporting these groups (students receiving Special Education services; students receiving MLL services; individual students who tend to struggle academically).

- ◦ "I wonder how we are ensuring supports for SPED/MLL the first year of implementation. The past few curriculum changes did not include supports for these students and they were not included."
- ◦ "I wonder how this would be designed/adapted for students with IEPs/students who are pulled for services—how would they find PBL momentum?"
- ◦ "Do middle school teachers have the capacity to design inclusive PBL units?"

Proposed way to strengthen PBL prototype:

Indicate that when done well and with appropriate training, PBL promotes different entry points and natural ways to differentiate ("When the proper supports and scaffolding are provided, students with learning disabilities are able to fully benefit from PBL approaches…")

Strengthen & Refine our Prototypes

- Step 1: Reread and discuss the staff feedback collected
  - Identify revisions

- Step 2: Refine
  - Tweak, refine, modify your group's prototype (via chart paper or PPT)

Time to work: 15 min

	Anna	Wendy	Darren	Drew	Melisa	
	Tillicum	**Odle**	**Tyee**	**Highland**	**Chinook**	**Additional**
Families - Guardians Listening Session	March 14 6:30-7:15 PM Library	March 15 6:30- 7:15 PM Commons	March 16 9:30-10:30 AM Library	March 14 6:30-8:00 PM Library	March 13 9:00-10:30 AM Room 1402	Family Advisory Committee March 13 4:00-5:00 PM Virtual
Students Listening Session Targeted Circles	Special Education	Black Student Union	Leadership Class	MLL/Dual Language	Advanced Learning	Student Advisory Committee (virtual)

Nuts and Bolts

Next Meeting- **March 23** at WISC ADAMS

What is coming up: We TEST our prototypes

Closing