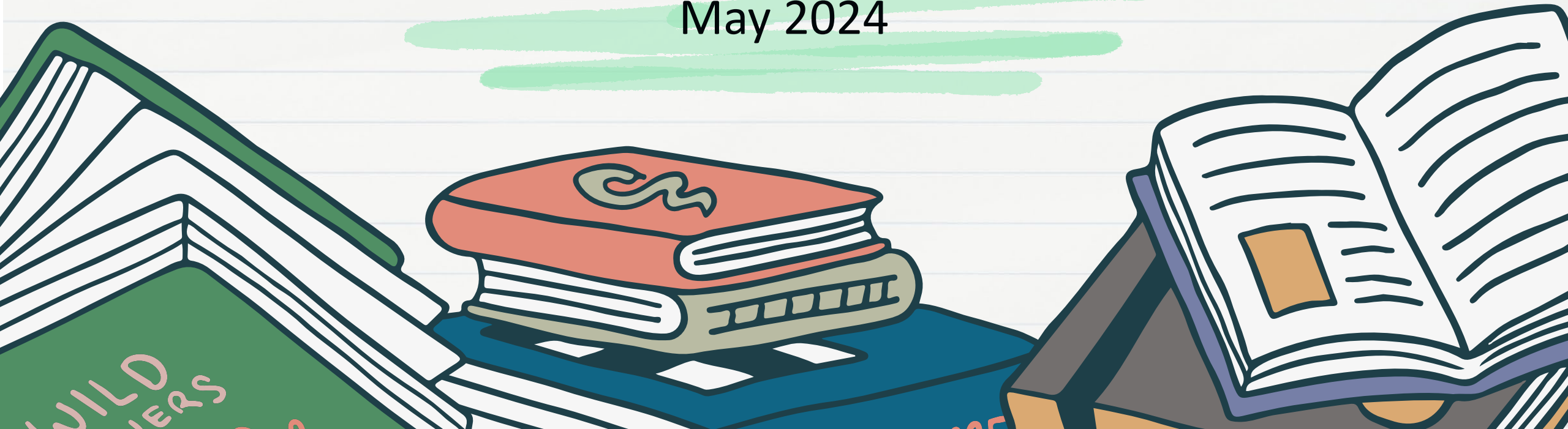# Reimagining Middle Schools
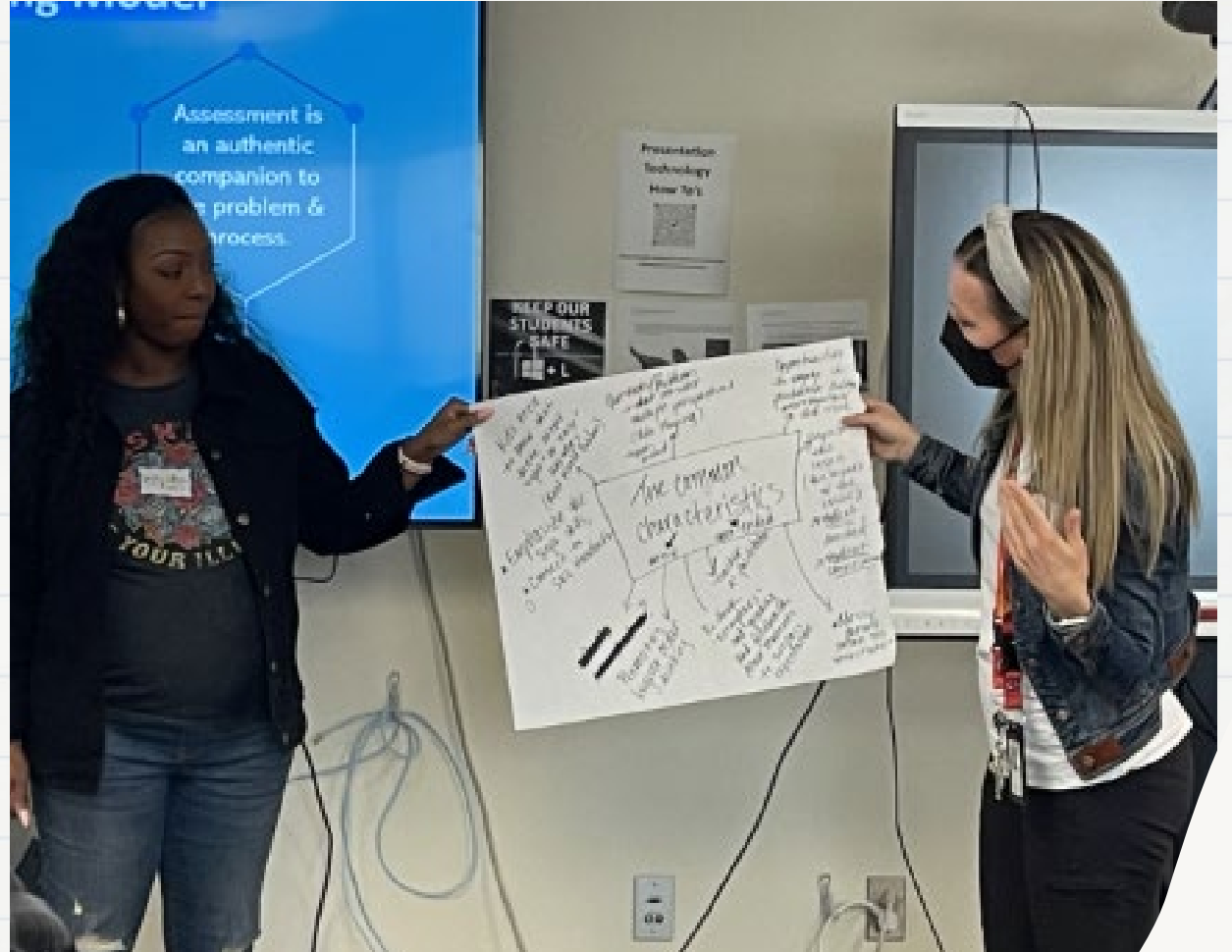
Spring Update

May 2024

Purpose & Objective

Share the RMS Design Team recommendations for the advisory and problem-based learning models

Agenda

- RMS Overview
- Advisory-Based MS Model
- Problem-Based Learning Model
- Affirmations/Questions/Comments
- Closing & Next Steps

RMS Steering Committee

2022-2023

The Team

The team included 32 members representing the comprehensive middle schools.

The Goal

The goal was to serve the developmental, social-emotional, and academic needs of middle school students by engaging students, families, and staff in restructuring the BSD middle school experience.
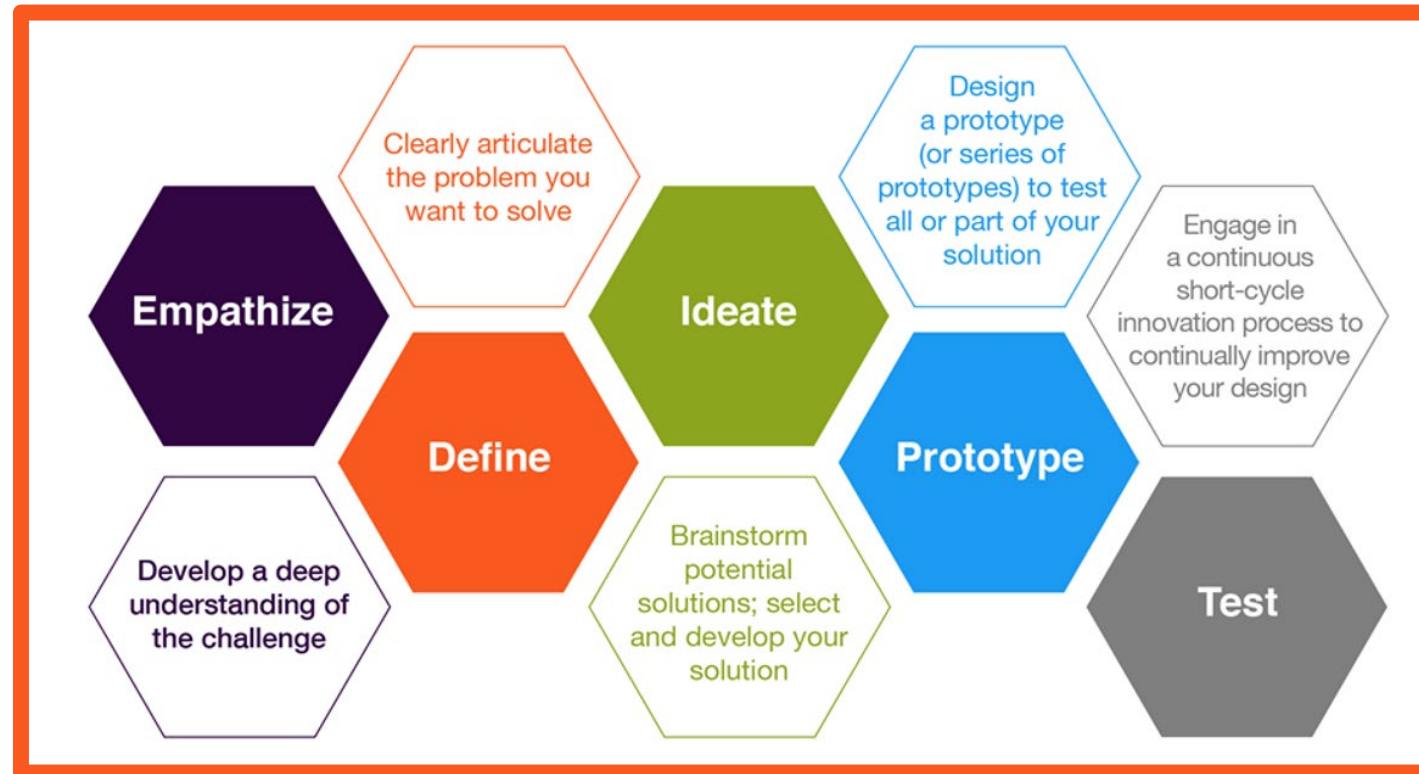
The Work

The team provided recommendations for a new reimagining middle school model using an Equity Design Thinking Process that centered stakeholder feedback.

Equity-Based Design Thinking

The RMS Vision

Redesign the middle school experience to offer a developmentally responsive, student-centered education

01 Rooted in relationships

02 Learning Environments & Academic Interventions

03 Social Interactions & Social-Emotional Needs

04 Meet students where they are

Opportunities

Advisory-Based MS

- the need for increased sense of belonging
- a lack of meaningful connections with peers and adults
- a need for breaks
- meaningful engagement and empowering student voice
- the transition process between levels does not meet students' needs (elementary → middle / middle → high school)

Problem-Based Learning

- a gap between skills taught and those needed for future success
- irrelevant instruction and use of time
- a lack of interactive learning environments
- meaningful engagement and empowering student voice

RMS Design Teams

2023-24

The Team

We formed two design teams representing educators, students & community members.

The Goal

Our goal was to serve the developmental, social-emotional, and academic needs of middle school students by engaging students, families, and staff in restructuring the BSD middle school experience.
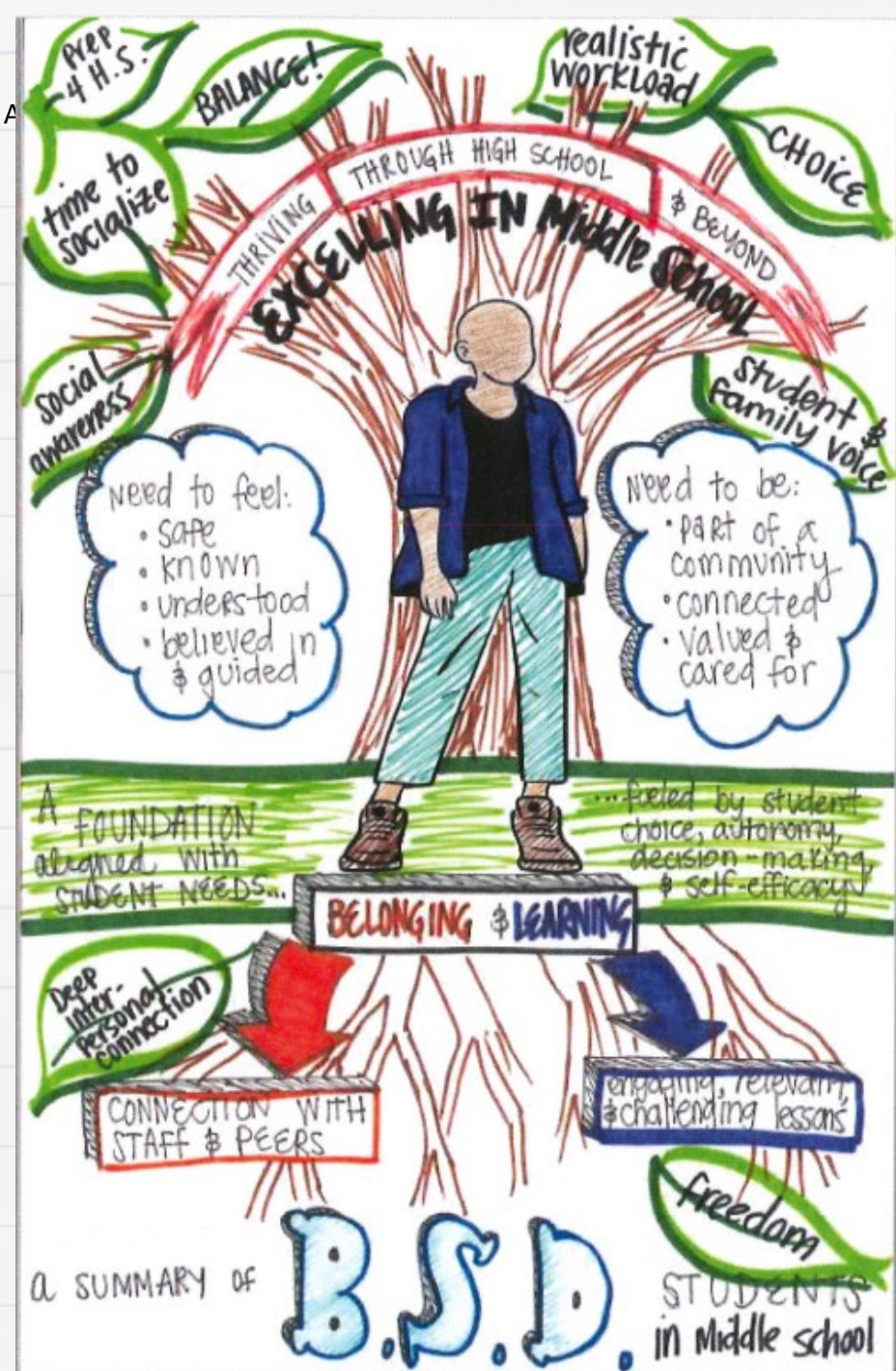
The Work

We developed recommendations for Advisory and Problem-Based Learning models using an Equity Design Thinking Process that centers stakeholder feedback.

Advisory-Based Middle Schools
&
Problem-Based Learning

RMS Advisory
Design Team

Overview

- Advisory Design Team & Vision
- Advisory-Based MS Model
- Connection to BSD's Priorities
- Student & Family Impact
- Our Recommendation

Meet the Design Team

Project Lead: Melisa Macias

Design Team Lead: Wendy Powell

Students: Keira, **Tyee**; Chase, **Chinook**

Parents: Courtney Baxtron, Beka Anardi

Teachers: Scott Backus, **Tyee**; Andy Colleran, **Tillicum**; Stacia Neal, **Odle**, Brendan Schimpf, **Big Picture**; Tracey Williams, **Tillicum**

Administrators: Susie Q Challancin, **Chinook**; Benito Levario, Jr., **Highland**; James Peterson, **Chinook**

Classified: Jessi Cassidy, **Tillicum**

Counselor: Ayana Carroll, **Odle**

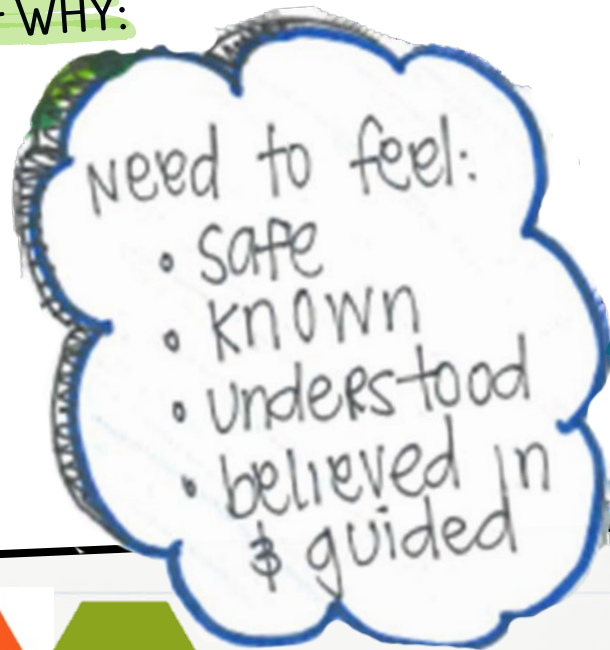ITCLs: Kalena Crafton, **Chinook**; Eric Sieberson, **Odle**

Supporting Members: Melanie McGee, Tom Duenwald

RMS Advisory Design Team Vision

Our BSD *Advisory-Based Middle Schools* will experience an inclusive culture of **support**, **connection**, and **empowerment** as they navigate change, find their voice, and share in collective joy.

Our WHY:

Options & Considerations Explored

- How much time per week to devote to Advisory – 1, 2, or 4 days?

- When during the day to schedule Advisory – beginning of day, middle or end of day?

- What content and experiences should we prioritize in Advisory?

Prototype

Potential Bell Schedule & Implications

Minutes

- 5 minutes from each class preferred versus extending student school day

When During the Day

- Morning
- More outreach needed to determine period schedule

Period	M/T/Th/F	W
Start time	7:45 am	7:45 am
Advisory	30 min	No Advisory
1 - 7	45 min	40 min
Dismissal	2:30 pm	1:20 pm
Tutorial	2:30 – 3:00	No Tutorial
Activities	3:00 – 4:00	No Activities

Period	M/T/Th/F	W
Start time	8:30 am	8:30 am
Advisory	30 min	No Advisory
1 - 7	45 min	40 min
Dismissal	3:20 pm	2:10 pm
Tutorial	3:20 – 3:50	No Tutorial
Activities	3:50 – 4:40	No Activities

Prototype

Prioritizing Student Needs – 4 Days/Week

Developing Pro-Social Behavior Skills

Leading for A Beloved Community

Activating Habits of Mind

Building Agency & Efficacy

**Explicit Grade Level Evidence-Based SEL Lessons**

Student-Led Community Building, Community Service Projects & Heritage Celebrations

Goal Setting & Reflection Advisor Check-in Executive Functioning Skill Building

School-Wide Expectations & Enrichment Lessons (e.g. Digital Citizenship, Safety & Security, Financial Literacy, Career Exploration)

Prototype

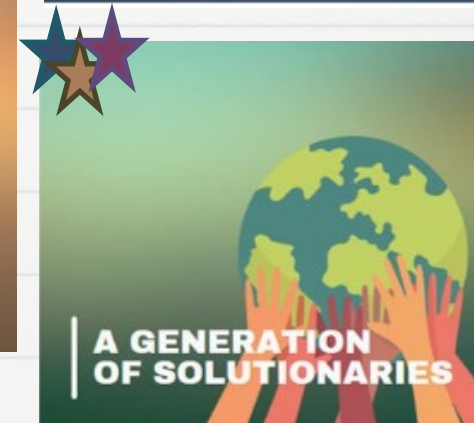# *Potential* Student Experience & Schedule for Advisory-Based Middle Schools
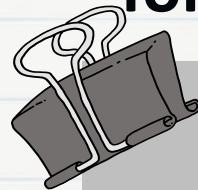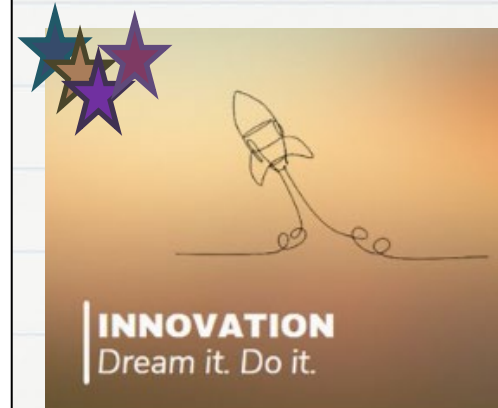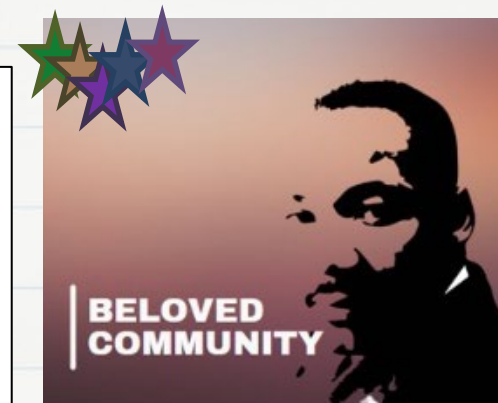
- 30 minutes per day

- 4 days a week

- 8 hours per month

Prototype

	Monday *Activate Habits of Mind*	Tuesday *Develop Pro-Social Behavior*	Wednesday	Thursday *Build Agency & Efficacy*	Friday *Lead for a Beloved Community*
Week 1	Goal Setting, Reflection & Advisor Check-in	Grade Level Evidence-Based SEL Lesson	no advisory	School-wide Expectations Project: Building our Student Handbook	Student-Led Community Building Activity
Week 2	Executive Functioning Skill Building	Grade Level Evidence-Based SEL Lesson		School Logistics: Safety & Security	Community Service Project Related to Heritage Month
Week 3	Goal Setting, Reflection & Advisor Check-in	Grade Level Evidence-Based SEL Lesson		Planning for Your Financial Future	Student-Led Community Building Activity
Week 4	Executive Functioning Skill Building	Grade Level Evidence-Based SEL Lesson		Becoming a Critical Consumer in a Changing Online World	Community Celebration (e.g., incentive: games & party)

BELONGING & LEARNING

Identified Needs Align with BSD's Strategic Priorities

- Increase sense of belonging & meaningful connections with peers and adults.

- Support student development of skills in a dedicated space & incorporate throughout the day.

- Address a gap between skills taught in classes & those needed for future success.

- Engage and empower student voice.

- Develop pro-social behaviors in the classroom.

- Enhance teaching practices and support shifts in the Danielson 2022 Framework.

BELOVED COMMUNITY

STUDENT & STAFF WELL-BEING

CULTIVATING JOY

EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

INNOVATION
Dream it. Do it.

A GENERATION OF SOLUTIONARIES

Connections to New Danielson

DOMAIN 1
PLANNING AND PREPARATION

1a Applying Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy
- Disciplinary Expertise
- Pedagogical Content Knowledge
- Knowledge of Interdisciplinary Relationships and Skills

1b Knowing and Valuing Students
- Respect for Students' Identities
- Understanding of Students' Current Knowledge and Skills
- Knowledge of Whole Child Development
- Knowledge of the Learning Process and Learning Differences

1c Setting Instructional Outcomes
- Value and Relevance
- Alignment to Grade-Level Standards
- Clarity of Purpose
- Integration of Multiple Aspects of Student Development

1d Using Resources Effectively
- Instructional Materials
- Technology and Digital Resources
- Supports for Students

1e Planning Coherent Instruction
- Tasks and Activities
- Flexible Learning
- Student Collaboration
- Structure and Flow

1f Designing and Analyzing Assessments
- Congruence with Instructional Outcomes
- Criteria and Standards
- Planning Formative Assessments
- Analysis and Application

DOMAIN 2
LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

2a Cultivating Respectful and Affirming Environments
- Positive Relationships
- Sense of Belonging
- Cultural Responsiveness
- Positive Conflict Resolution

2b Fostering a Culture for Learning
- Purpose and Motivation
- Dispositions for Learning
- Student Agency and Pride in Work
- Support and Perseverance

2c Maintaining Purposeful Environments
- Productive Collaboration
- Student Autonomy and Responsibility
- Equitable Access to Resources and Supports
- Non-Instructional Tasks

2d Supporting Positive Student Behavior
- Expectations for the Learning Community
- Modeling and Teaching Habits of Character
- Self-Monitoring and Collective Responsibility

2e Organizing Spaces for Learning
- Safety and Accessibility
- Design for Learning and Development
- Co-Creation and Shared Ownership

DOMAIN 3
LEARNING EXPERIENCES

3a Communicating About Purpose and Content
- Purpose for Learning and Criteria for Success
- Specific Expectations
- Explanations of Content
- Use of Academic Language

3b Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques
- Critical Thinking and Deeper Learning
- Reasoning and Reflection
- Student Participation

3c Engaging Students in Learning
- Rich Learning Experiences
- Collaboration and Teamwork
- Use of Instructional Materials and Resources
- Opportunities for Thinking and Reflection

3d Using Assessment for Learning
- Clear Standards for Success
- Monitoring Student Understanding
- Timely, Constructive Feedback

3e Responding Flexibly to Student Needs
- Evidence-Based Adjustments
- Receptiveness and Responsiveness
- Determination and Persistence

DOMAIN 4
PRINCIPLED TEACHING

4a Engaging in Reflective Practice
- Self-Assessment of Teaching
- Analysis and Discovery
- Application and Continuous Improvement

4b Documenting Student Progress
- Student Progress Toward Mastery
- Shared Ownership
- Maintaining Reliable Records

4c Engaging Families and Communities
- Respect and Cultural Competence
- Community Values
- Instructional Program
- Engagement in Learning Experiences

4d Contributing to School Community and Culture
- Relational Trust and Collaborative Spirit
- Culture of Inquiry and Innovation
- Service to the School

4e Growing and Developing Professionally
- Curiosity and Autonomy
- Developing Cultural Competence
- Enhancing Knowledge and Skills
- Seeking and Acting on Feedback

4f Acting in Service of Students
- Acting with Care, Honesty, and Integrity
- Ethical Decision-Making
- Advocacy

This is a comfortable space and [my advisor] is super nice and caring. She is understanding and fun. She helps people with whatever they need and can make people smile. The community is fun and nice coming from a perspective of a shy person (used to be).
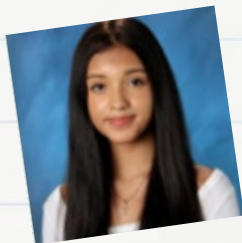Avani

I communicate with more people and have made lots of friends.
Amani
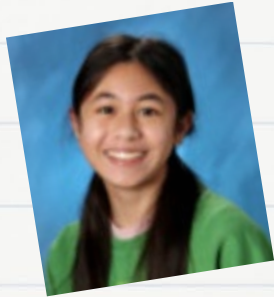
We learn a lot and help each other with things we don't get –
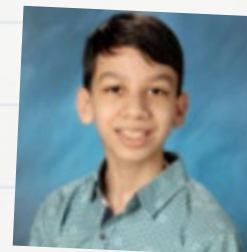Britanny
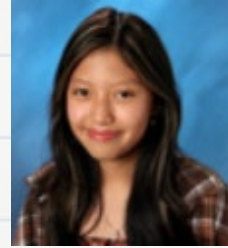
I've gotten sillier and joyful.
Marisela
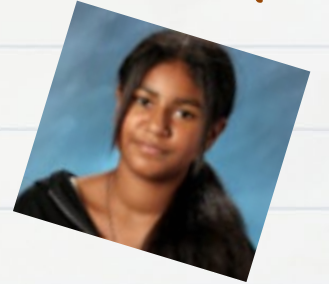
I am learning about life.
Jonathan

Thank you for all your love and kindness these past two years. We literally could not have done this without you. You played such an integral part in helping William come to school. I will forever remember and be thankful for your acts of love. Thank you thank you thank you.

Parent of 8th grade student with a 504 & New to BSD

I had a mom come to me to ask what to do when she was upset about something that happened to her kid at school. Because she and I already had a relationship, I was an easy person to approach. I was able to get her connected with the right person to help her solve the problem.

Chinook Advisor

Our Recommendation

The Design Team recommends shifting to an *Advisory-Based Middle School model*. This requires a shift in culture, mindsets, and practices as well as significant adaptive changes to our current systems and structures.

Advisory is not a "class", but a community. This is a change in how BSD Middle Schools partner with students and families.

What do we need?

A Commitment to support this shift to *Advisory-Based Middle Schools*

Align with District Strategic Plans & School Improvement Plans

DISTRICT RMS LEADERSHIP TEAM

Reallocation of **resources** to support successful implementation in 2025-26

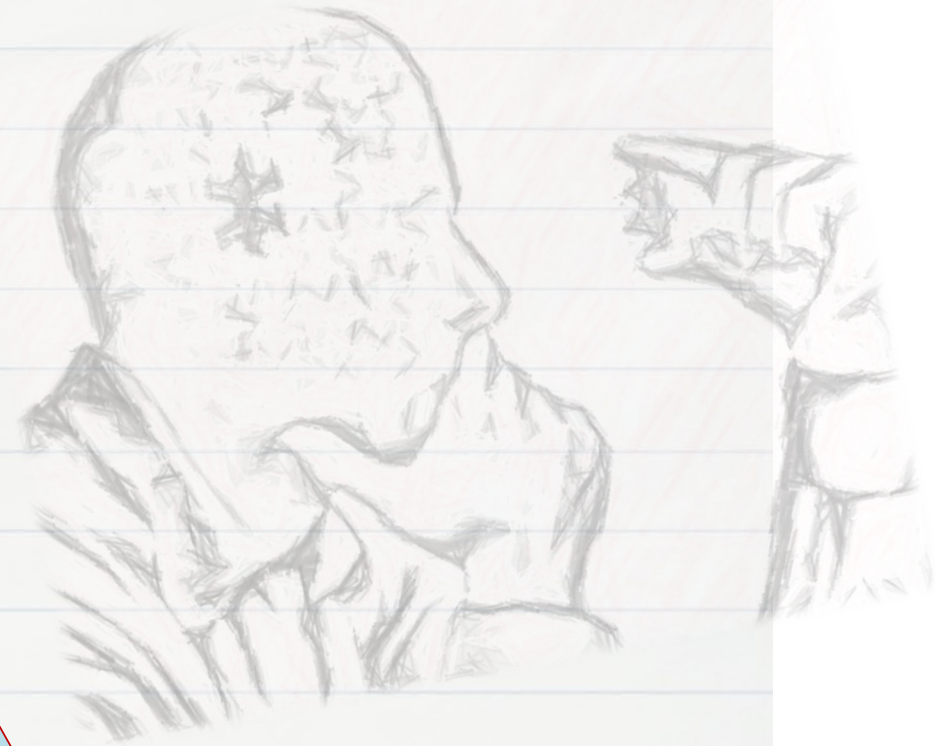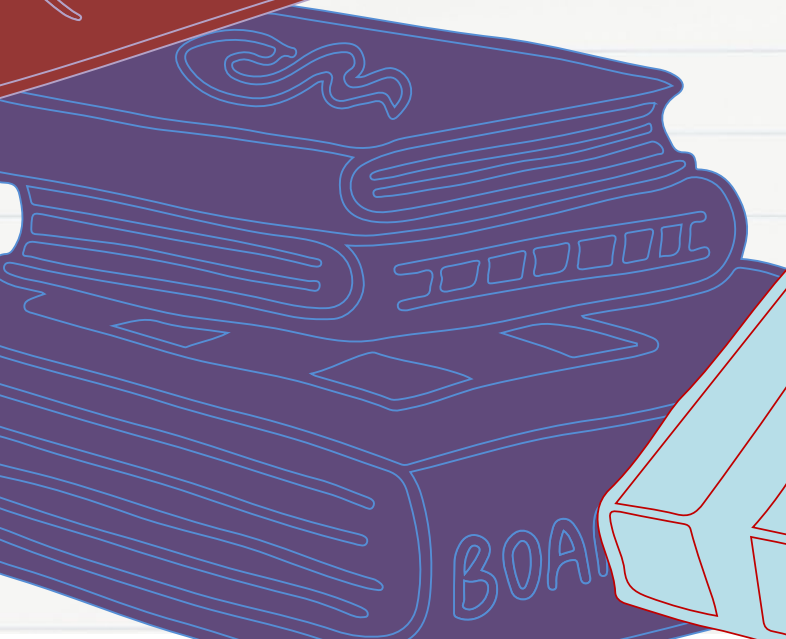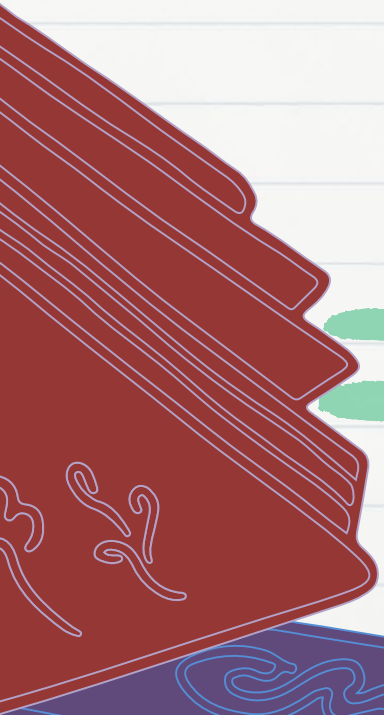**Form and support a District RMS Leadership Team; support buildings willing to explore resources in 2024-25**

Acknowledge & address stakeholder **concerns** while honoring contracts and agreements
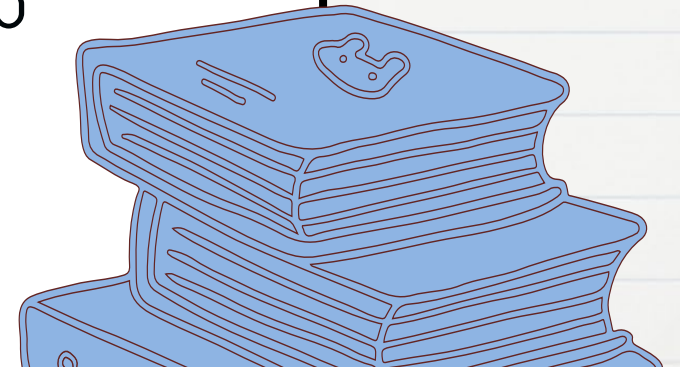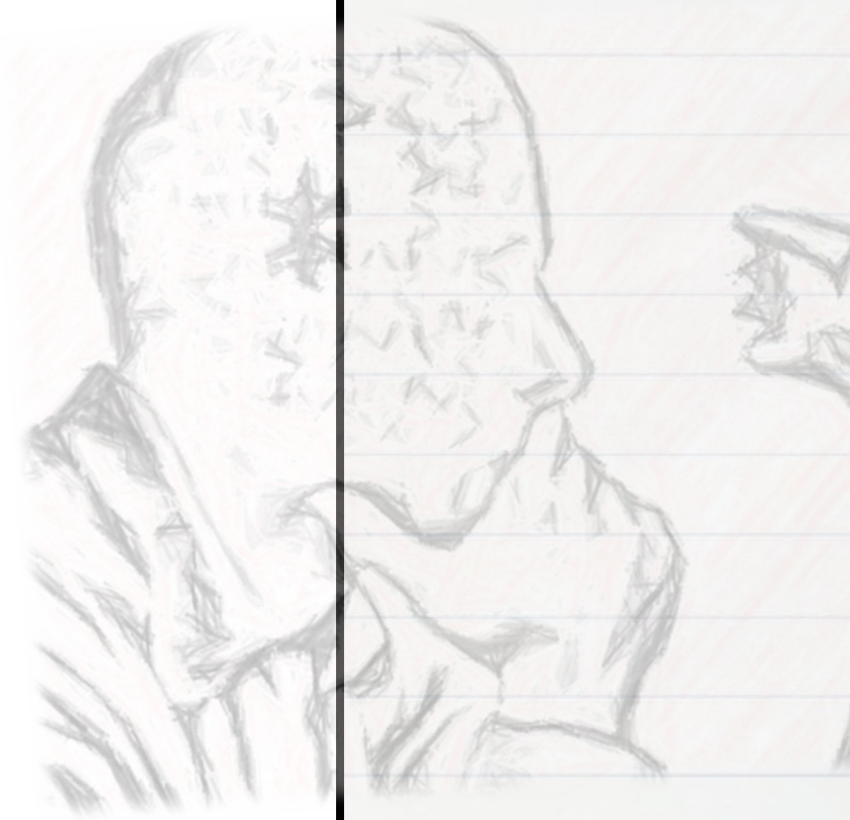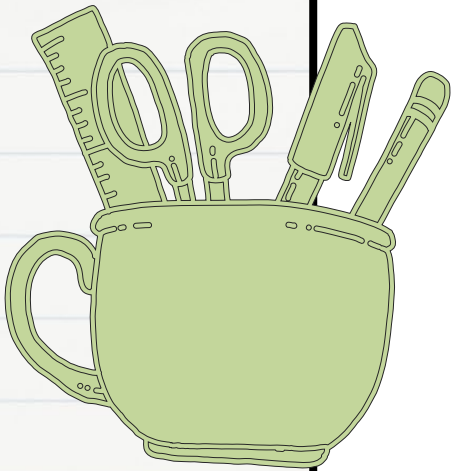
PBL

Design Team

Recommendations

Overview of Recommendations

Vision for Problem-Based Learning
The PBL Bellevue MS Model

- *Who* is on the Design Team?
- *What* is Problem Based Learning?
- *Why* Problem Based Learning?
- *How* does it build on /connect to our current framework?
- *Where* are we hoping to go?

Meet the Design Team

Project Lead: Melisa Macias

Design Team Lead: Tom Duenwald

Students: Ishaan (BHS), Rishita (NHS), Sahaj (SHS), and Evan (Chinook)

Industry: Carlos Villavieja

Teachers: Jeff Holzhauer (Tyee), Taylor Tillotson (Odle) Greg Clouse (Odle), Julie Metz (Chinook), and Manar Chaaban (Digital Discovery)

Administrators: Genisha Wea and Deborah Coney

Paraeducator: Laura Rinehart

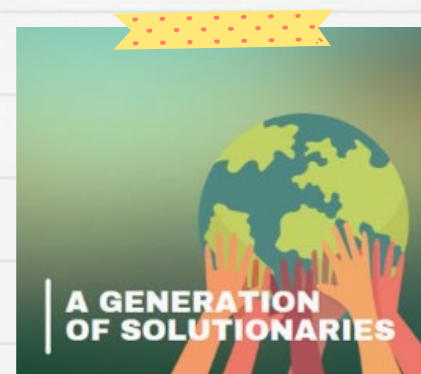ITCLs: Mathew Wright (BHS), Amy Yaeger (Highland), and Alicia Kallay (Tillicum)

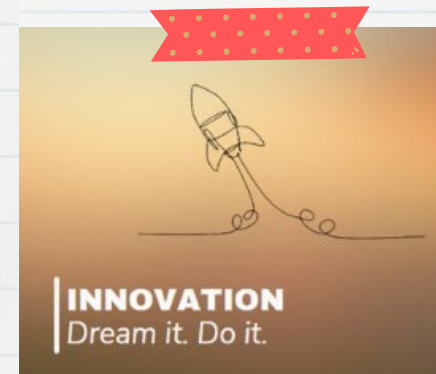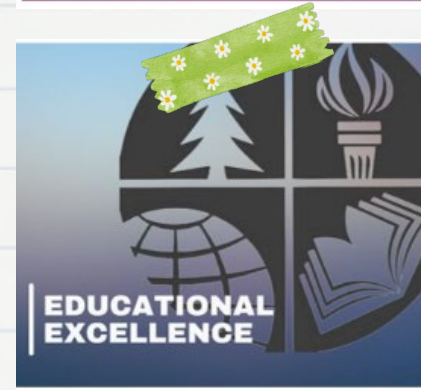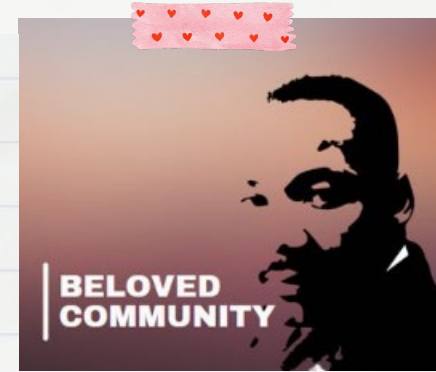Curriculum Developers: Alysa Palma and Amber Snapke

Characteristics of PBL:

- Challenging, real-world problem or question
- Sustained inquiry
- Authenticity
- Student voice and choice
- Reflection and revision
- Partnering with experts
- Public product

BELOVED COMMUNITY

STUDENT & STAFF WELL-BEING

CULTIVATING JOY

EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

INNOVATION
Dream it. Do it.

A GENERATION OF SOLUTIONARIES

Educators present a problematic/complex situation *before* instruction starts. As complex situations are presented, students choose how to engage the problem.	The problematic situation is open-ended and malleable, demanding reassessment throughout the learning process. As new constraints, information, and learning occurs, students are asked to look backwards and review to reevaluate their strategies. Reflection leading to adaptation is key.	Students are active problem-solvers, collaborators and investigators throughout the process. Teachers are both cognitive (skills) and metacognitive (thinking) coaches. PBL classrooms are often loud, engaged, and hands on; direct instruction is still utilized, just as needed.	Students demonstrate learning through authentic assessment connected to the problem and/or application of disciplinary skills honed throughout the process. Students share their learning publicly, in which results and product don't matter as much as the process and reflection. The adaptable skills they develop are transferable to other problems.

What might this look or sound like?

|			
Students are presented with exploring the impacts of deforestation on civilization. Students are tasked with writing a bill that directly refutes a new bill passed by state legislature.	Students establish and test a hypothesis, getting feedback from local experts in the field. Students use mini-labs or ladders of feedback to collaborate and rewrite proposals.	Teachers model interactive journals where individual and collaborative reflection occurs daily. Formative assessment guides teacher intervention with skills or concepts.	Rubrics and criteria for success are rooted in skills, not products. Instead of an "essay", a student is assessed on developing an idea using transitions, evidence, and rhetoric, with *the purpose* of refuting a bill.

Our VISION & WHY:
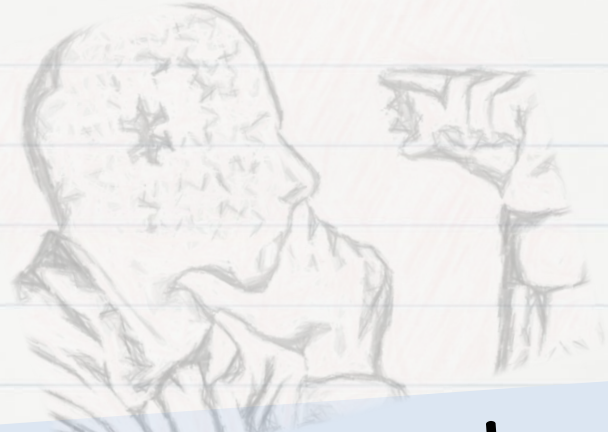
By prioritizing active learning, skill development, personalized instruction, and flexible learning environments, problem-based learning can be a powerful tool to reimagine middle school as a place where students are engaged, empowered, and prepared for the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century.

Reimagining while Reinforcing

SHS & Big Picture

Sustainability Ambassadors

CTE classes

Global Competencies, Creators of our Future World & Solutionaries

2022 Danielson Framework

Universal Design for Learning

AVID, SIOP, Reading Apprenticeship, *Thinking Made Visible* strategies
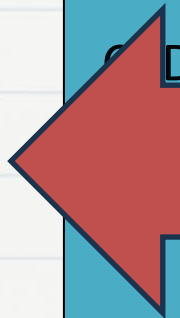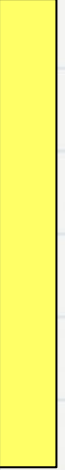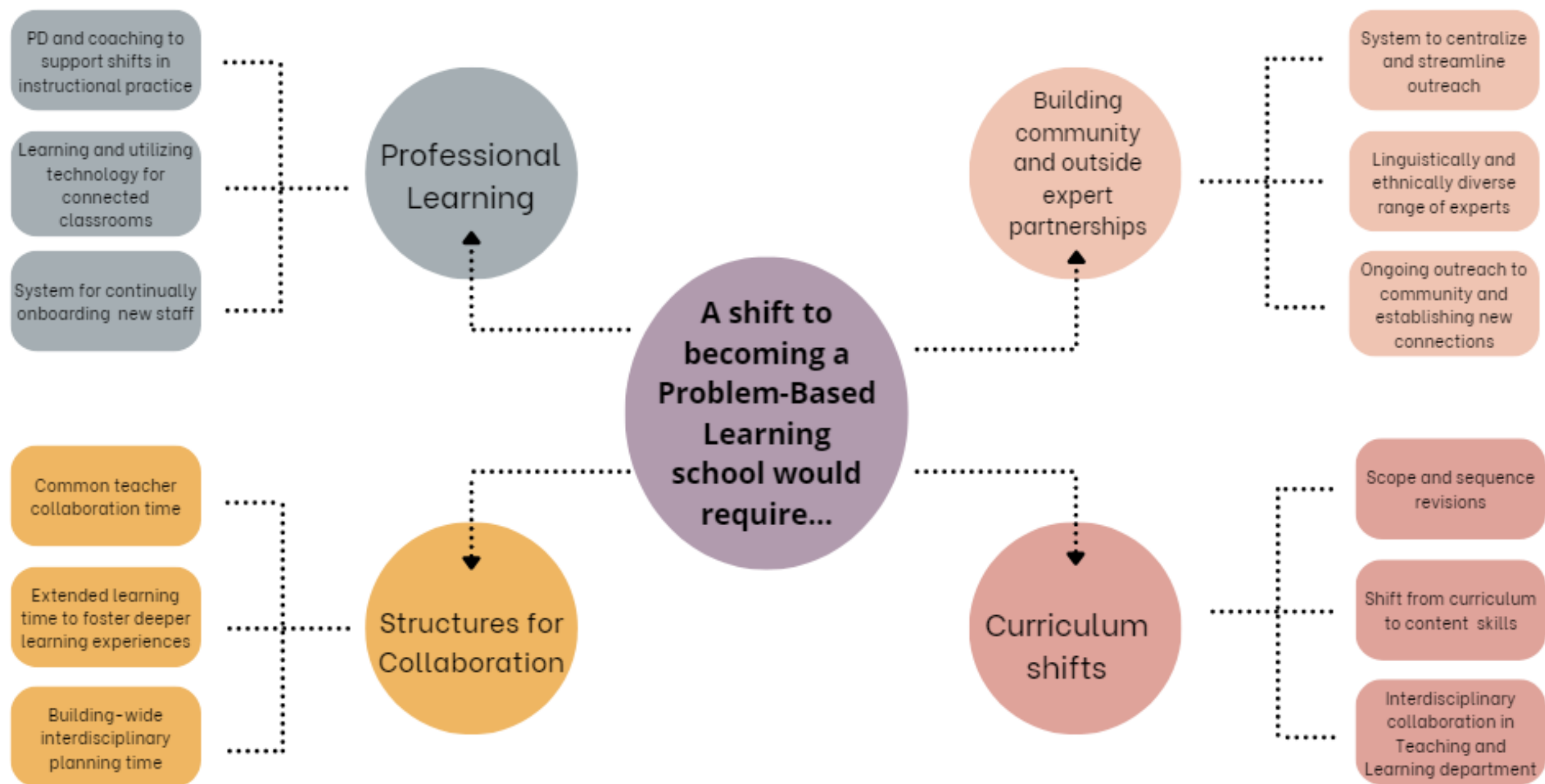
Cultivating a Pedagogy of Voice and Safir's 6 Simple Rules

DEI Stand

Teachin

1. Talk Less, Smile More
2. Questions over answers
3. Ritualize reflection and revision
4. Make learning public
5. Circle up
6. Feedback over grades

Professional Learning

- PD and coaching to support shifts in instructional practice
- Learning and utilizing technology for connected classrooms
- System for continually onboarding new staff

A shift to becoming a Problem-Based Learning school would require...

Building community and outside expert partnerships

- System to centralize and streamline outreach
- Linguistically and ethnically diverse range of experts
- Ongoing outreach to community and establishing new connections

Structures for Collaboration

- Common teacher collaboration time
- Extended learning time to foster deeper learning experiences
- Building-wide interdisciplinary planning time

Curriculum shifts

- Scope and sequence revisions
- Shift from curriculum to content skills
- Interdisciplinary collaboration in Teaching and Learning department

Where are we hoping to go?

01 *Collaboration and partnership with teachers, curriculum developers and community partners*
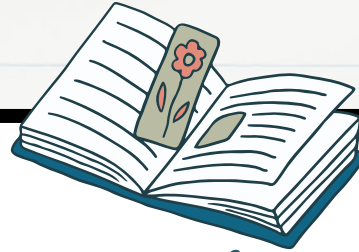
02 *System-wide focus on professional learning to support bold shifts in instruction and grading practices*

03 *Embrace the messiness as part of the change process*

Opportunities - Alignment to 2024-29 Strategic Plan

Problem-Based Learning

- a gap between skills taught and those needed for future success
- irrelevant instruction and use of time
- a lack of interactive learning environments
- meaningful engagement and empowering student voice

Advisory-Based MS

- the need for increased sense of belonging
- a lack of meaningful connections with peers and adults
- a need for breaks
- meaningful engagement and empowering student voice
- the transition process between levels does not meet students' needs (elementary → middle / middle → high school)

2024-29 Strategic Plan

Bellevue Reputation
extraordinary aggregate outcomes, but intense stratification

Efficiency and Inequity
system is not designed to be responsive to diverse needs

Unresponsive Systems
systems are not organized to partner with students, families and educators

Transactional Relationship
relationships are often about compliance and implementation, rather than empowerment, innovation, trust and agency
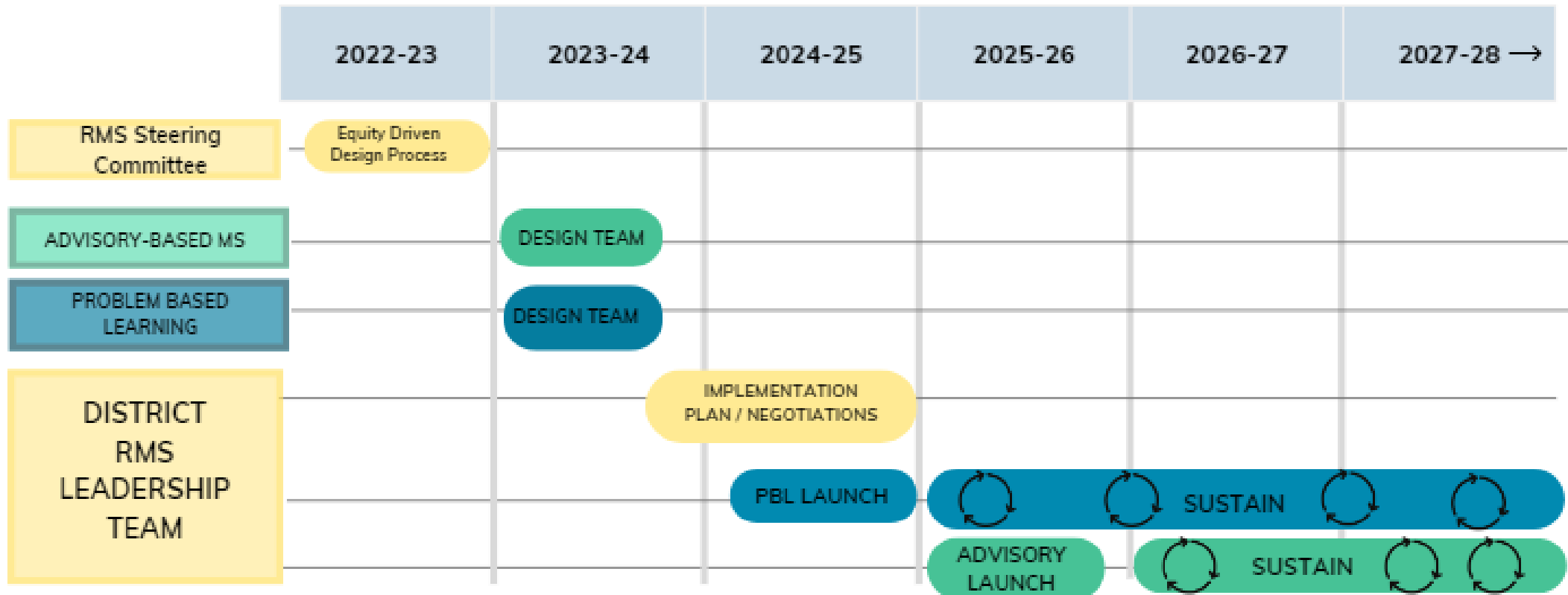
Bringing It All Together

Use a phased, staggered approach to implement PBL and Advisory-Based MS:

o *Launch RMS Focused Professional Learning (2024-25)*
o *Launch PBL (2024-25)*
o *Acknowledge & Address Concerns, Barriers and Risks*
o *Launch Advisory and expand PBL (2025-26)*
o *Sustain Advisory and PBL (2026-27 and beyond)*

RMS Timeline DRAFT

|	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28 →
RMS Steering Committee	Equity Driven Design Process					
ADVISORY-BASED MS		DESIGN TEAM				
PROBLEM BASED LEARNING		DESIGN TEAM				
DISTRICT RMS LEADERSHIP TEAM			IMPLEMENTATION PLAN / NEGOTIATIONS			
			PBL LAUNCH	SUSTAIN		
				ADVISORY LAUNCH	SUSTAIN	

District RMS Leadership Team

2024-2025 RMS Leadership Team Members
- Executive Sponsor
- Chief of Schools
- Steering Committee (SC) Chair
- Design Team Leads
- Project Manager
- 5 Middle School ITCLs
- 2 Developers
- 2 Administrators
- At large choice school representation

Consultancy Board
- Students
- Teachers / Staff
- Families / Guardians
- Community Members
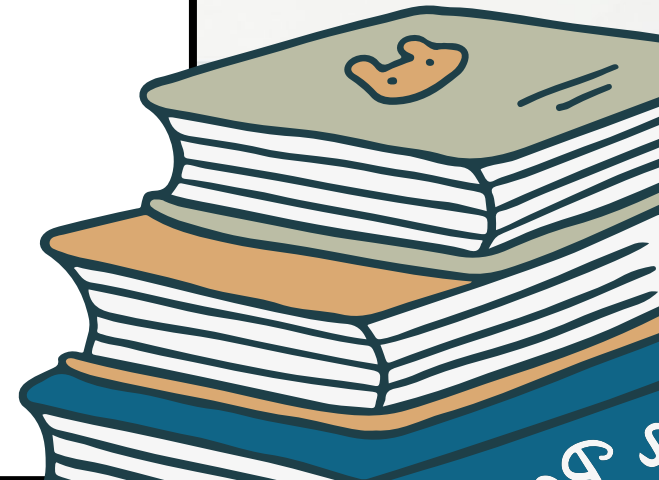
District RMS Leadership Team

Overall project goal:
Our goal is to serve the developmental, social-emotional, and academic needs of middle school students by engaging students, families, and staff in restructuring the BSD middle school experience.

Project deliverables:
Our team will lead and support **implementation plans** as recommended by Advisory and Problem Based Learning Design Teams. This includes:
- Determining and providing **professional development**
- Working with **stakeholders** and community partners to provide **resources** and **support**
- Gathering **feedback** from the Consultancy Board and the five comprehensive middle school communities

District RMS Leadership Team

In addition, the Team will focus on...

- Analysis of readiness
- Measures of success
- Risk mitigation
- Other requirements

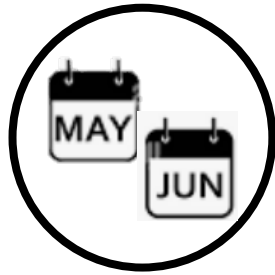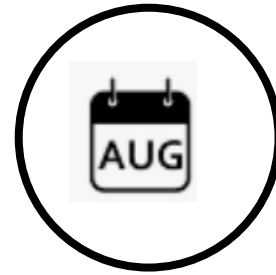All while continuously seek feedback from all stakeholders.

Next Steps

April– May 2024

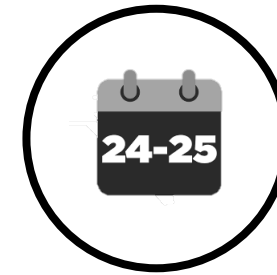Communicate to BEA, principals, educators and community

May– June 2024

Transition Meetings to District RMS Leadership Team

August 2024

District RMS Leadership Team launch

August 2024– June 2025

- Prepare the system and educators
- Provide professional learning
- Develop materials
- Small scale pilot

What have we heard so far...

Excitement around the potential positive change for students, staff and families

Multiple Concerns/Constraints must be considered and thoughtfully mitigated

What is the cost to do this well?

This work must be done WITH all stakeholders, not LEFT to them to figure out

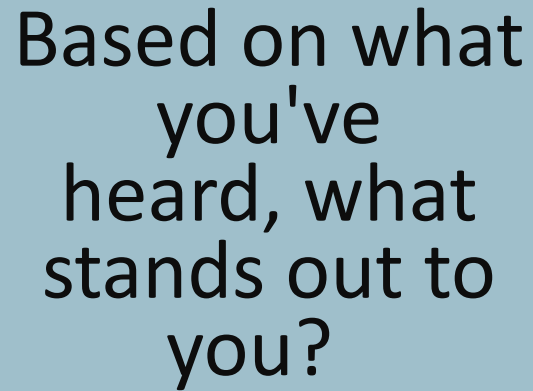**Timeline needs to be thoughtful and flexible**

Could we have different 'levels' of implementation?
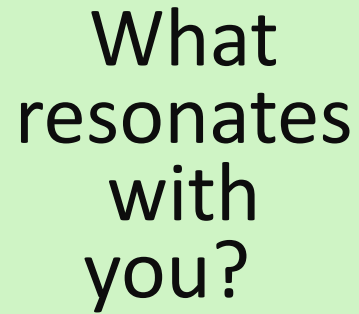
What will be taken off the plate?

What is the readiness level of our people & system for this kind of change?

Comments, Questions and Affirmations
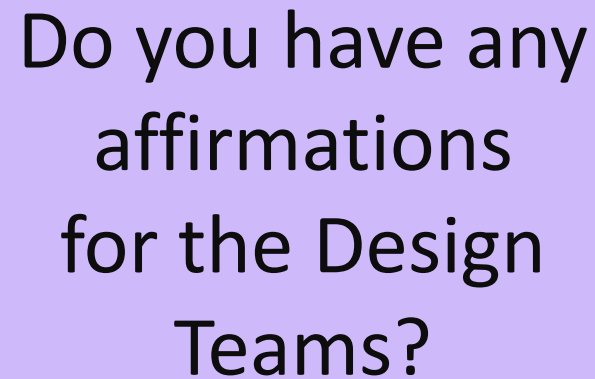
Based on what you've heard, what stands out to you?

What resonates with you?

What questions do you have?

Do you have any affirmations for the Design Teams?

Thank you!

Project Sponsor: Eva Collins and Sharon Kautz
Steering Committee (SC) Chair: Melisa Macias
RMS Project Manager: Melanie McGee

Advisory-Based MS

Design Team Lead: Wendy Powell
Teachers: Scott Backus (Tyee), Andy Colleran (Tillicum), Tracey Williams (Tillicum), Stacia Neal (Odle) and Brendan Schimpf (Big Picture)
Behavior Intervention Tech: Jessi Cassidy (Tillicum)
Administrators: James Peterson (Chinook), Benito Levario, Jr. (Highland) and Susie Q Challancin (Chinook)
Counselor: Ayana Carroll (Odle)
ITCLs (Instructional Technology Curriculum Leaders): Eric Sieberson (Odle) and Kalena Crafton (Chinook)
Parents: Courtney Baxtron (Odle) and Beka Anardi (Highland)
Students: Chase (Chinook) and Keira (Tyee)

Problem-Based Learning

Design Team Leader: Tom Duenwald
Teachers: Jeff Holzhauer (Tyee), Taylor Tillotson (Odle), Greg Clouse (Odle), Julie Metz (Chinook), and Manar Chaaban (Digital Discovery)
ITCLs (Instructional Technology Curriculum Leaders): Mathew Wright (BHS), Amy Yaeger (Highland) and Alicia Kallay (Tillicum)
Curriculum developers: Alysa Palma and Amber Snapke
Paraeducator: Laura Rinehart
Administrator: Genisha Wea and Deborah Coney
Industry: Carlos Villavieja
Students: Ishaan (BHS), Rishita (NHS) Sahaj (SHS) and Evan (Chinook)

To our partners ...Thank you!.
Parent Teacher Association
Bellevue Education Association
BSD Communication Department
Highland, Chinook, Tyee, Odle and Tillicum