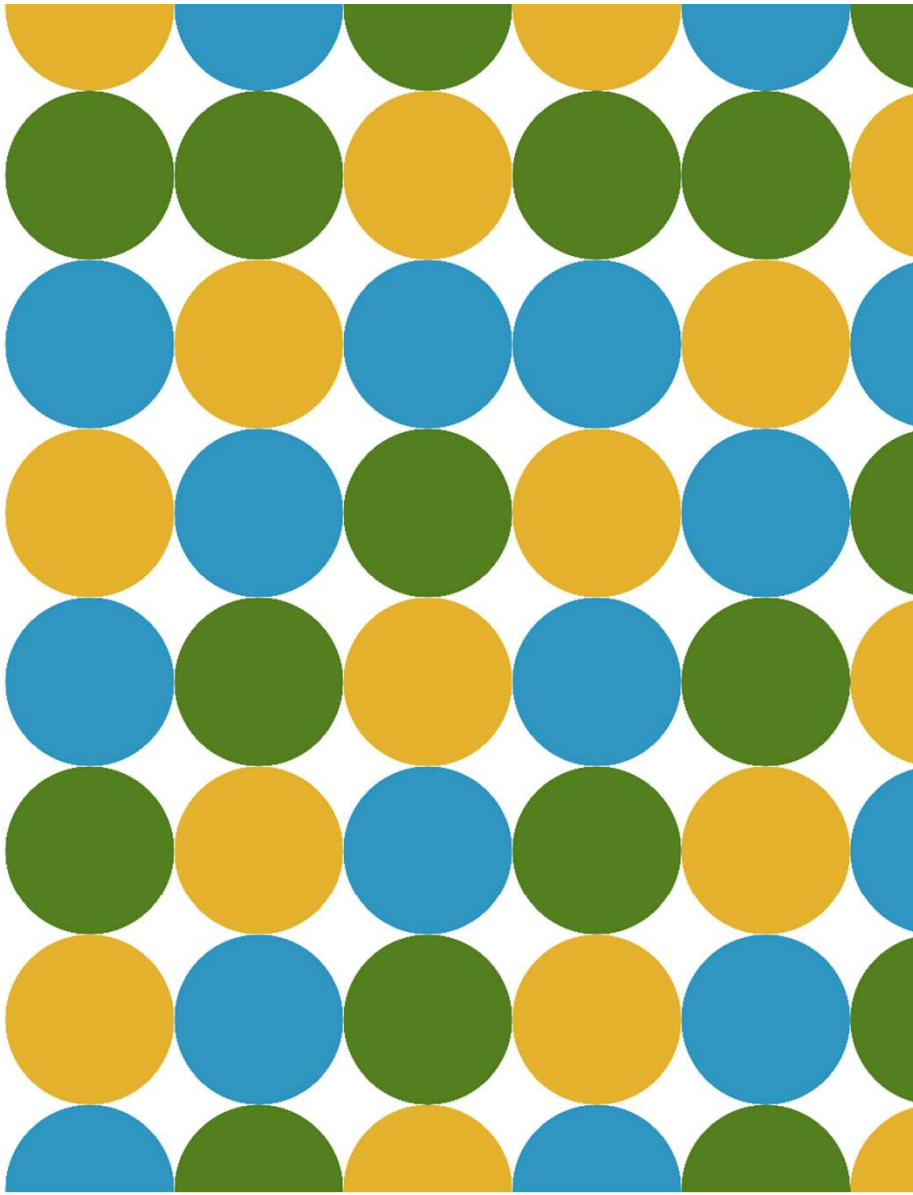
Inclusion & Accessibility Design Team

Meeting 1

December 11th, 2024

FOR OUR FUTURE WORLD
Bellevue School District Strategic Plan



Meet the Co-Leads

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Design Team Purpose:

To redesign the 504 and IEP processes and meetings to improve experiences for students, families, and staff.

Today's Objectives:

- Understand our team's purpose, objectives, and timeline
- Build community with one another
- Dive deeper into the 2024-25 Strategic Plan
- Plan for our next meeting

Team Norms

- Stay engaged. Don’t let your heart and mind check out.
- Be curious and open to other people’s perspectives and experiences.
- Listen to understand.
- Use strategies to ensure all voices are heard.
- Embrace experiences of non-closure.

Getting to Know You



Inside Outside Circle

Each Round: Share your name, role, and what brought you to this team

Round 1: Share a positive IEP/504 experience you've had. What made it that way?

Round 2: Share a challenging IEP/504 experience you've had. What made it that way?

Round 3: Describe a time you felt a strong connection or sense of teamwork during an IEP/504 meeting between students, families, and staff. What helped build that connection?

2024-29 Strategic Plan

Strategic Plan Design Process

Inclusive Design

Guiding Coalition

Collaborative Engagement

Inclusive Design

How We Work *Is* The Work

The process is where relationships are built.
Trust and collaboration are essential for effective social change, and these relationships are developed over time through shared experiences and activities.

Dr. Shawn Ginwright

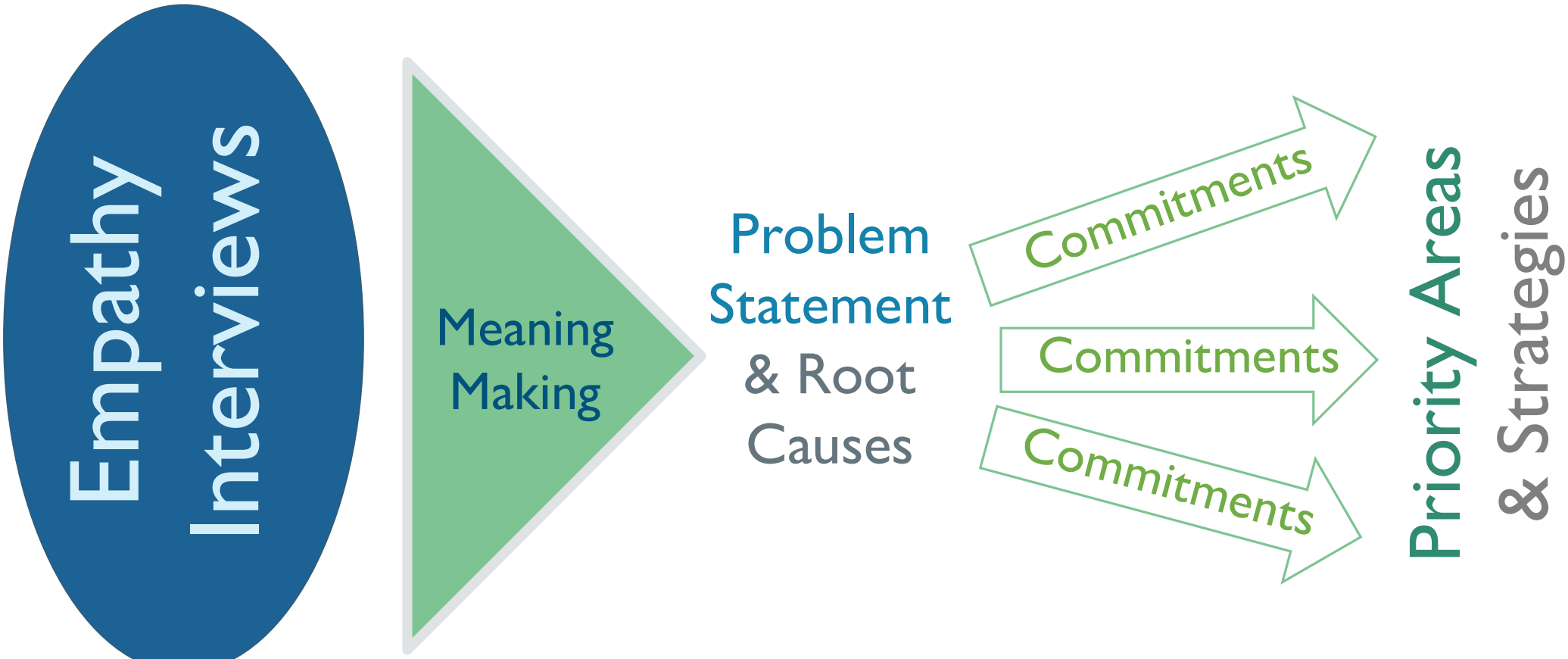


The Habits of Inclusive Design

Reciprocity	Inclusion	Empathy	Co-Creation
Using processes that lead to shared power and mutual benefit.	Bringing in diverse voices, building a sense of belonging	Understanding the views, feelings, aspirations, and needs of others	Working across difference to understand and create solutions.

What habit is resonating with you?

The Process


Empathy Interviews
Meaning Making
Problem Statement & Root Causes
Commitments
Commitments
Commitments
Priority Areas & Strategies

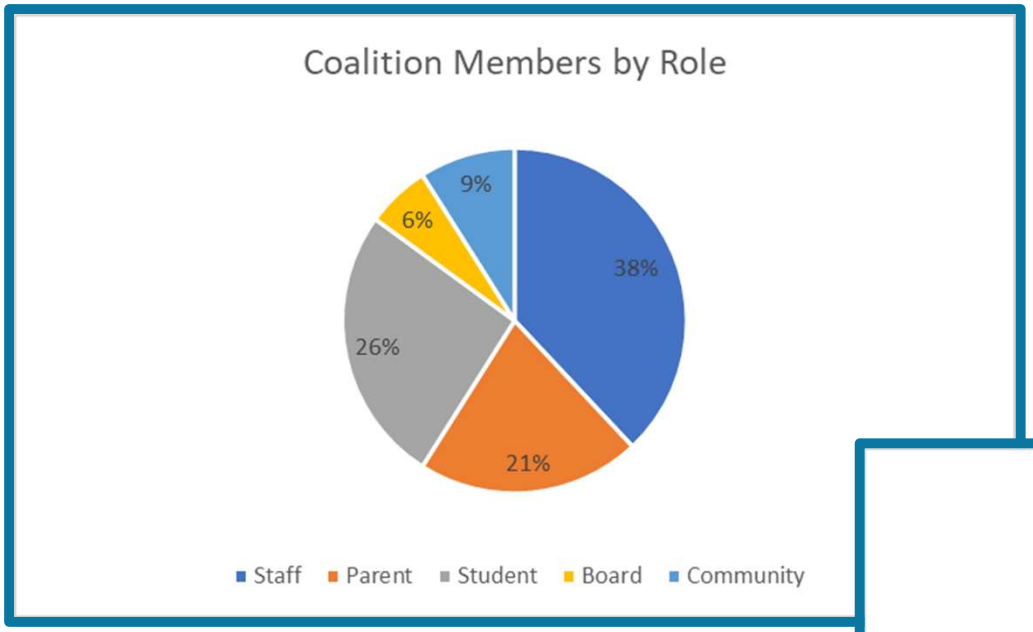
Including Diverse Voices

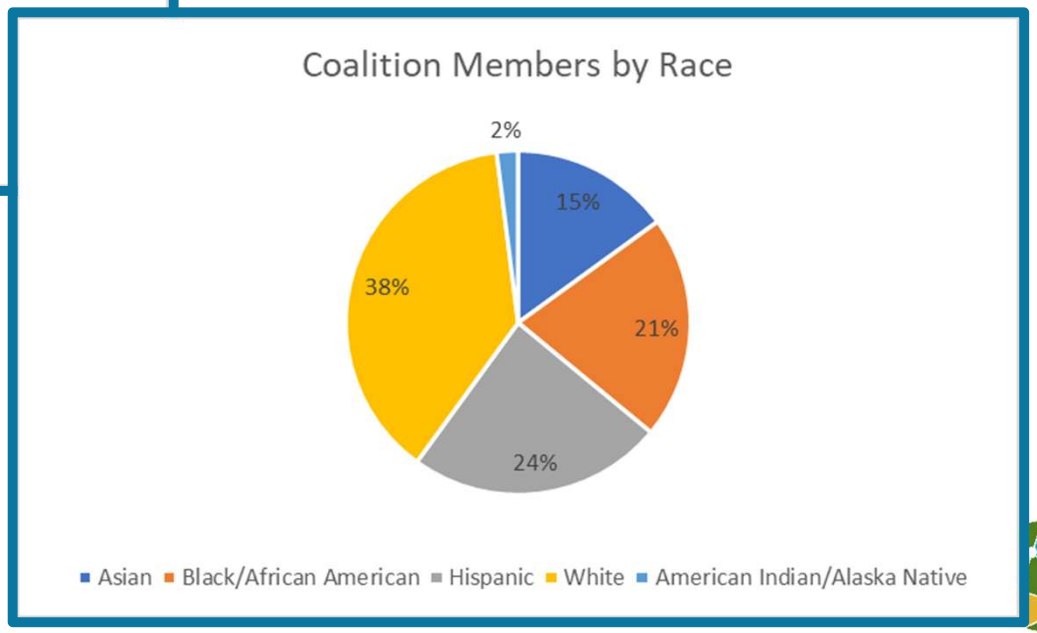
- 34 members
- Students, staff, family, and community members
- Selected through application, appointment, and sortition
- Superintendent and two School Board Directors
- Representative of our diverse learning community



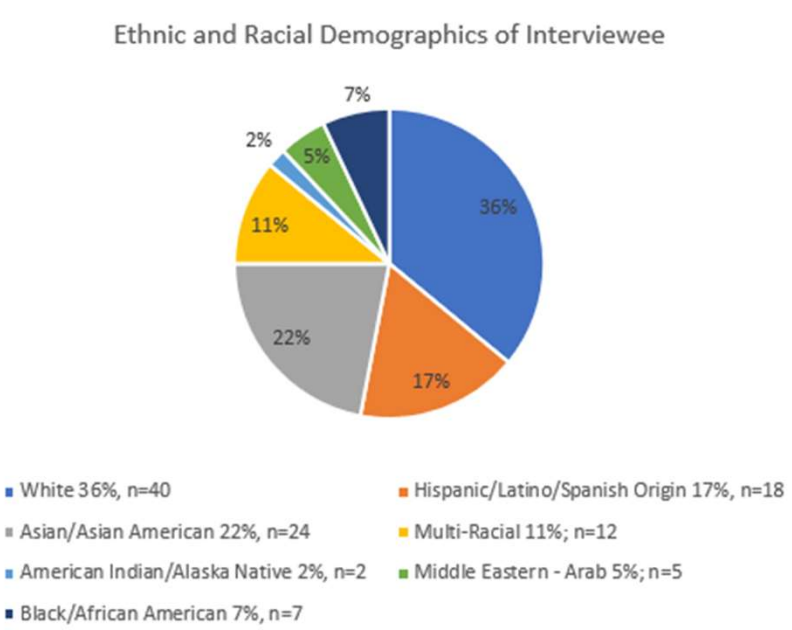


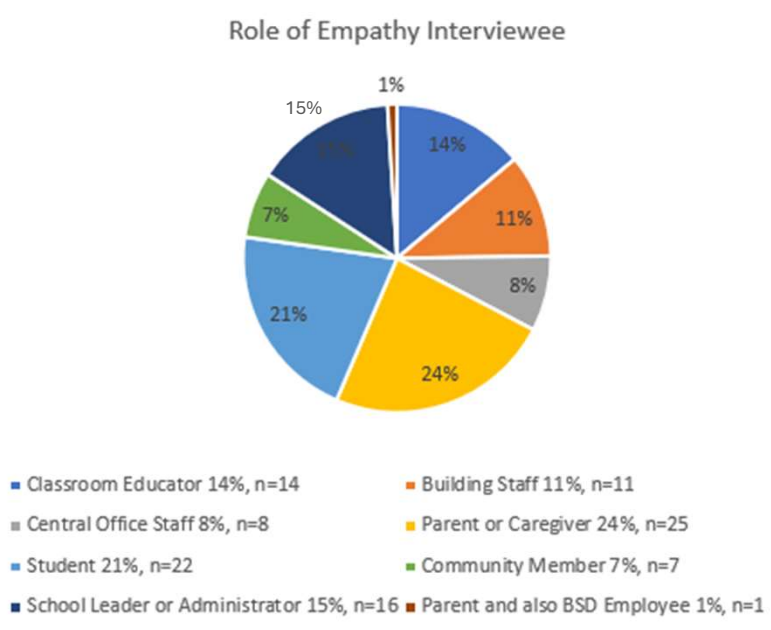
Guiding Coalition



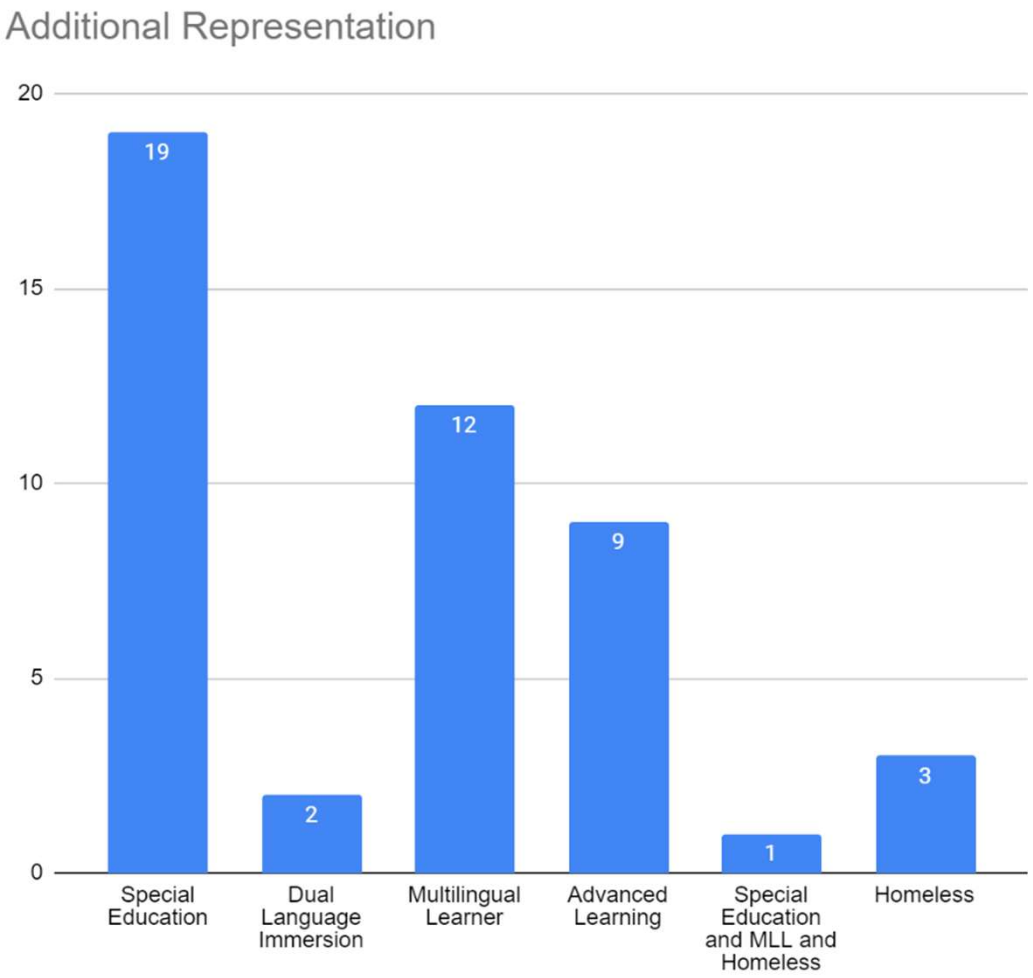


District Racial Demographics 2023-24	
Race	**Percentage**
American Indian/Alaska Native	0.1%
Asian	45%
Black/African American	4%
Hispanic	**15%**
White	26%





Listening to our Community



Intentionally Listening



Inviting Community to Share their Truth…
Empathy Interviews

Tell me about a time when…

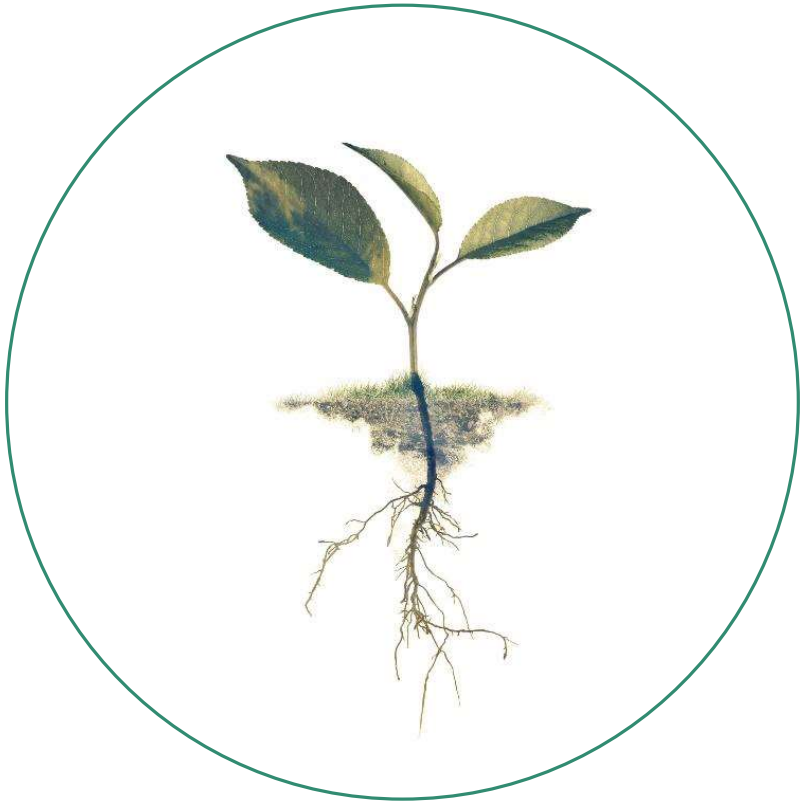
…school impacted your health or well-being
…your school or district understood your culture or background
…you felt successful at school
…you felt joy at school
…you were asked to solve a complex problem
…your school tried something innovative

Problem Statement

Each member of the diverse BSD community wants to feel heard, valued, and affirmed so that they can feel empowered to do their best work, but there is not yet an organizational culture that helps each individual experience a sense of belonging and support.

Root Causes

- The Bellevue Reputation
- Efficiency and Inequity
- Unresponsive Systems
- Transactional Relationships



Root Cause	Summary	Description
The Bellevue Reputation	Extraordinary aggregate outcomes, but intense stratification	The community has not yet figured out how to acknowledge and adapt its legacy as a district with extraordinary aggregate outcomes, but intense stratification, where certain kinds of performance and abilities are valued above others.
Efficiency and Inequity	System is not designed to be responsive to diverse needs	The system is organized to support efficiency in reaching these outcomes. The kinds of efficiencies prioritized tend to favor those who are already well-served by the system. The system is not designed to be responsive to the diverse needs in our community.
Unresponsive Systems	Systems are not organized to partner with students, families, and educators	District systems are not organized to partner with students, families, and educators to be truly responsive to these diverse needs. The competing pressures and priorities that come from our expectations and mandates stop us from investing in really getting to know our students, families, and the community.
Transactional Relationships	Relationships are often about compliance and implementation rather than empowerment, innovation, trust and agency	The need for an efficient system means relationships are often about compliance and implementation rather than empowerment, innovation, trust and agency. This is true of many relationships throughout the district (e.g. teacher to student, administration to teachers, educators to families, etc.)

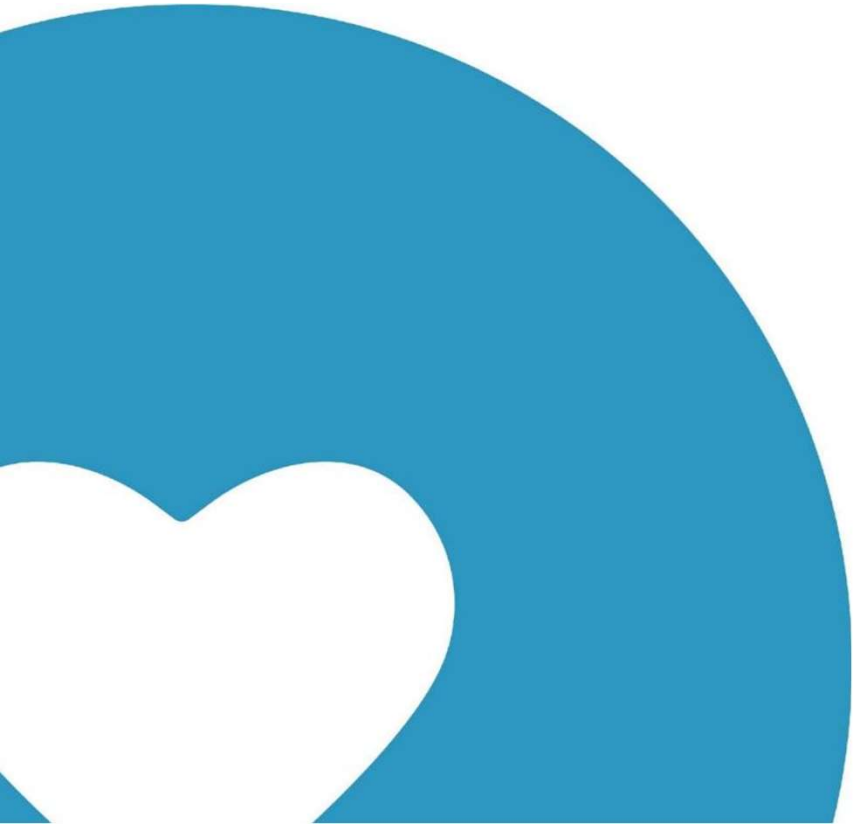
Turn & Talk

*What **connections** are you making to the **problem statement** and **root causes** based on your own **personal experiences** with Bellevue School District?*



Inclusion and Accessibility Design Team

We belong



Annual Plan Initiative:

Inclusion and Accessibility: Redesign the 504 and IEP processes and meetings to improve experiences for students, families, and staff; *evaluate and improve inclusion and accessibility in the classroom*

Goals/Expected Outcomes:

Students, families, and staff feel valued and heard throughout the IEP and 504 process

As Measured By:

- Empathy Interviews
- Surveys

Our Process: Phases of Work



Timeline



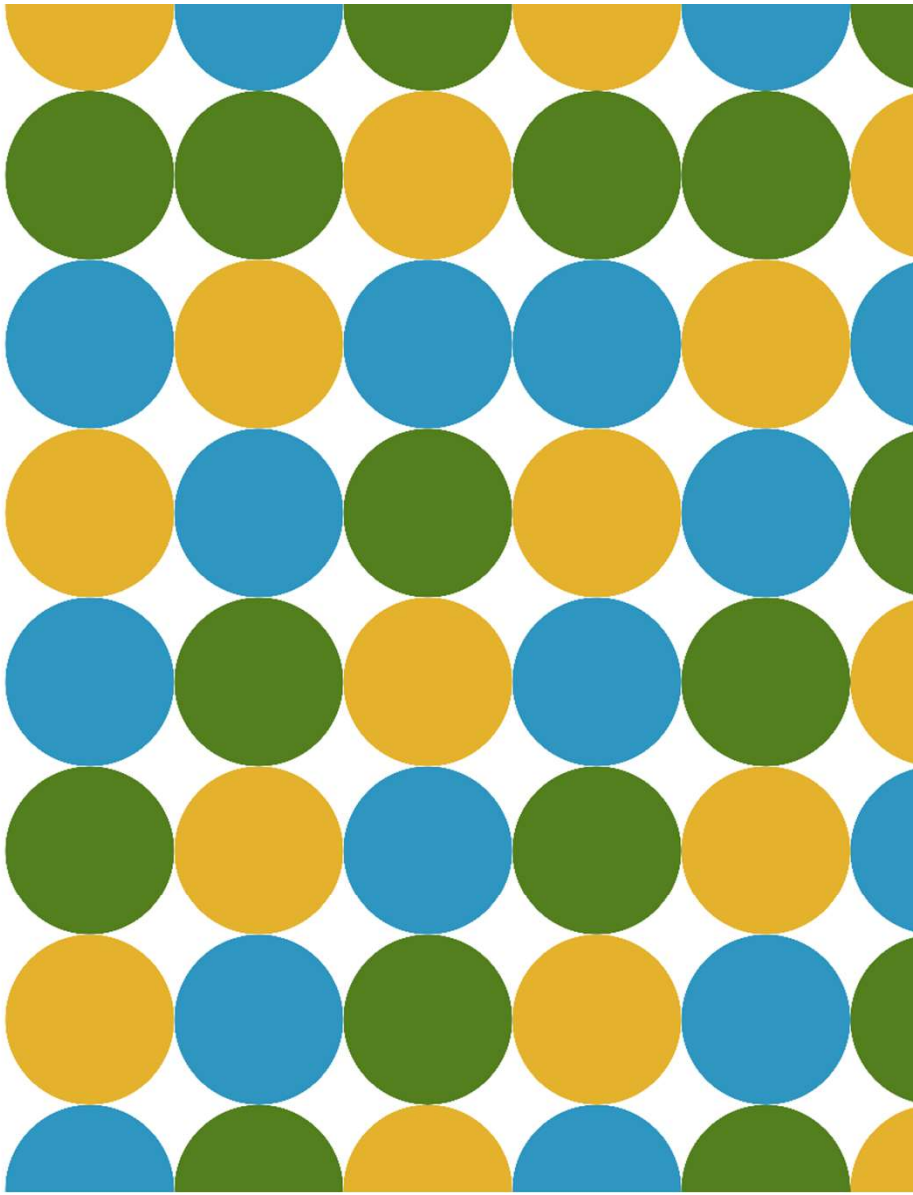
Build Team	Listen to Community & Make Meaning	Design	Listen to Community	Make Meaning	Share with Strategic Plan Coalition	Celebrate
December 11, 2024	January 30, 2025	February 27, 2025	March 27, 2025	April 24, 2025	May 21, 2025	May 29, 2025

• Understand team purpose and objectives
• Build community
• Dive into Strategic Plan
  • Problem Statement
  • Root Causes
• Understand Empathy Interview Questions and Process
	• Identify themes from empathy interviews
	• Draft a problem statement
	• Identify root causes
		• Draft commitment statements / vision for IEP/504 process	• Brainstorm ideas to address problem statement and root causes to realize the vision
			• Design prototypes (innovations and metrics)
				• Use community input to refine prototypes	• Share protoypes with Strategic Plan Coalition	• Connect to strategic plan measures
						• Begin planning next steps

December - January ❑ Conduct Empathy Interviews			March – April ❑ Return to interviewees and engage Community to "test" Prototypes	March-April ❑ Share prototypes with relevant leaders and practioners		May - Aug ❑ Prepare for implementation

Break

FOR OUR FUTURE WORLD
Bellevue School District Strategic Plan



Empathy Interviews



How will Empathy Interviews shape our work and leadership?

- They will build trust and understanding across lines of difference within the community
- They will help us establish a shared reality:
  - *How do diverse community members experience our systems, currently?*
- Guide our analyses and designs so that they are reflective of the needs, aspirations, and values of our community.



What is an empathy interview?

- An opportunity to understand the needs of community members
- One-on-one
- Strengthen Connections & Relationships
- Open-ended questions
- Uncover needs and aspirations



Interviewing Tips

ASK FOR STORIES, *NOT ADVICE*

BE CURIOUS - DIG FOR SPECIFICS

NOTICE & SEEK OUT EMOTIONS

A GOOD NOTE IS A QUOTE



ASK FOR STORIES, NOT ADVICE

This kind of question invites the person to tell a story. Stories tell us more about not just what is happening, but how they are feeling. Those feelings can guide us toward the identification of strengths and also help us create sharp problem statements.

Tell me about a time when your school or district learned something about you or your family that was helpful to you.

VS.

What could the school do to learn more about your family?

BE CURIOUS - DIG FOR SPECIFICS

Tell me about a time when your school or district learned something about you or your family that was helpful to you.

If they respond in generalities, such as: "I like going to student-led conferences. They help me really see what my child knows and is working on."

Try to nudge them to something more specific.

- "Can you tell me about your most recent student led conference?"
- "Can you tell me about a conference that ended up helping you know more or be better prepared to help your child?"

SEEK OUT EMOTIONS

Tell me about a time when your school or district learned something about you or your family that was helpful to you.

If their response is descriptive, but not sharing much about how they felt such as, “My son’s high school sent out a survey regarding class schedules during the pandemic. The principal provided options for traditional block scheduling vs alternate semester. Parents, students and teachers alike all made it very clear we did not approve. Within 48 hours, our principal announced that he heard us loud and clear, and that block scheduling would continue.”

Try to nudge them to share more:

- “How did it feel when you got the initial information, and then how did you feel after the principal responded to your input and others in the survey?”
- Repeat the last 4-6 words they say with a question inflection in your voice… It works… they will naturally go a little deeper… “block scheduling would continue?”

A GOOD NOTE IS A QUOTE

"IEP meetings can be difficult for parents, yet the knowledge teachers can glean from them is invaluable. One such meeting during the pandemic was so successful I felt heard. We haven't always had the best experiences advocating for my son's accommodations. *(In this meeting…)*My son was included, and they were genuinely concerned about his well being. It was beyond helpful, and frankly, a relief."

Versus:

Ms. Stakeholder reports that her children have been successful in school giving full credit to her student's teachers (teachers, coaches, paraprofessionals) throughout elementary and middle school.

Practice

My kids have been successful in school. I give full credit my child's teachers throughout elementary and middle school.

What do you want to know more about?

What questions might you ask to get at that?

ASK FOR STORIES, NOT ADVICE
BE CURIOUS - DIG FOR SPECIFICS
SEEK OUT EMOTIONS
A GOOD NOTE IS A QUOTE

Empathy

- Interview a Partner
- Dig Deeper
- Take Notes



Tell me about a time where you really felt listened to during a meeting about you or your student's learning.

Share a story about a time you felt your perspective and experience were valued.

Can you describe a time when you experienced shared ownership in your or your student's learning?

Whole Group Share Out

As a listener:

What key quotes or themes did you hear?

What can these quotes or themes teach us?

As a interviewee:

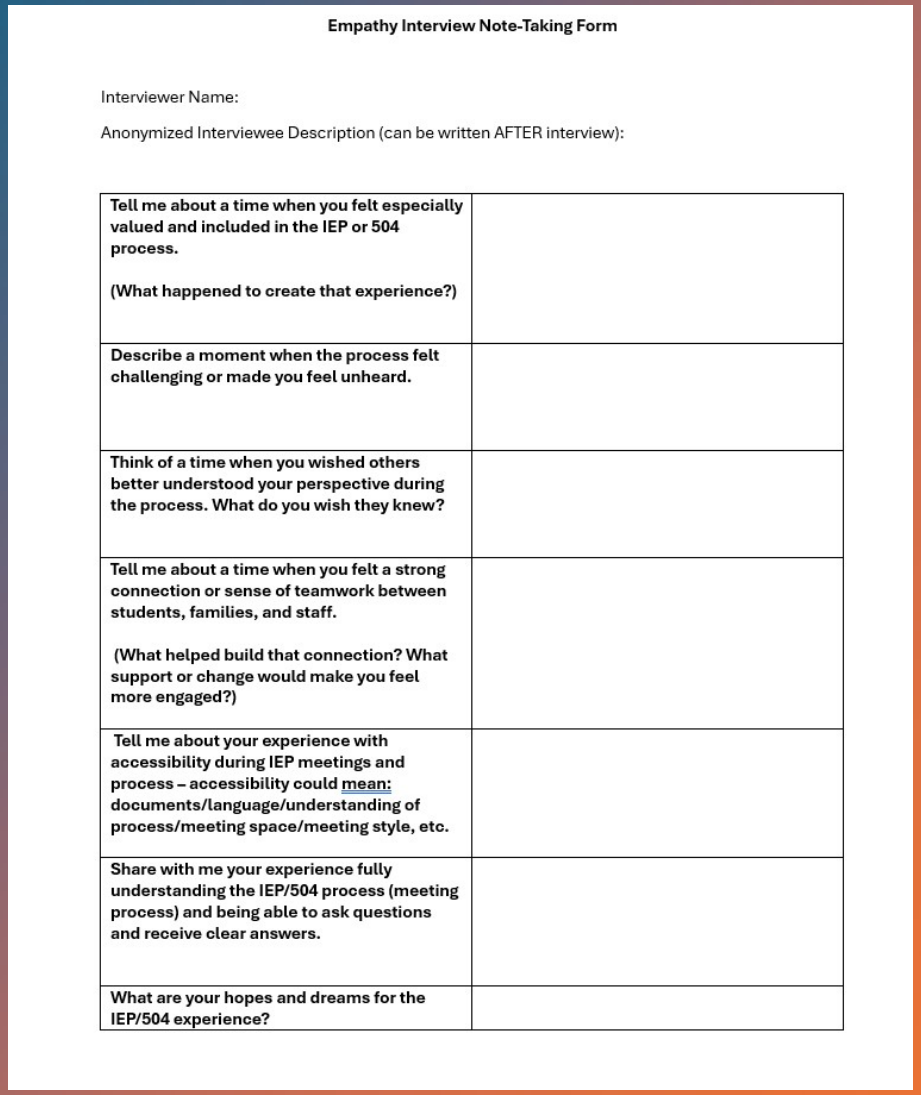
What helped you feel at ease
and open to share?



Homework

Before our next meeting on January 30th, interview 4-5 people

- Notetaking tool
- Form to upload



Empathy Interview Note-Taking Form

Interviewer Name:

Anonymized Interviewee Description (can be written AFTER interview):

Tell me about a time when you felt especially valued and included in the IEP or 504 process. **(What happened to create that experience?)**	
Describe a moment when the process felt challenging or made you feel unheard.	
Think of a time when you wished others better understood your perspective during the process. What do you wish they knew?	
Tell me about a time when you felt a strong connection or sense of teamwork between students, families, and staff. **(What helped build that connection? What support or change would make you feel more engaged?)**	
Tell me about your experience with accessibility during IEP meetings and process – accessibility could mean: documents/language/understanding of process/meeting space/meeting style, etc.	
Share with me your experience fully understanding the IEP/504 process (meeting process) and being able to ask questions and receive clear answers.	
What are your hopes and dreams for the IEP/504 experience?	

Walkthrough of the Template

- What does an empathy interview look like?
- Confidentiality
- Who should I interview?
- Starting the interview
- Choosing Questions

Closing Reflection

I see humanity as at the mouth of a long, dark tunnel. Right at the end, there's a little star. That's hope. But we don't sit at the mouth of the tunnel and hope the star will come to us. No we have to roll up our sleeves and climb over, crawl under and work our way around all the obstacles that lie between us and hope.

Jane Goodall



Where is the hope in 2024-2025 school year?

What do we need to climb over?

FOR OUR FUTURE WORLD

learn more at bsd405.org

Inclusion and Accessibility Design Team Meeting Feedback