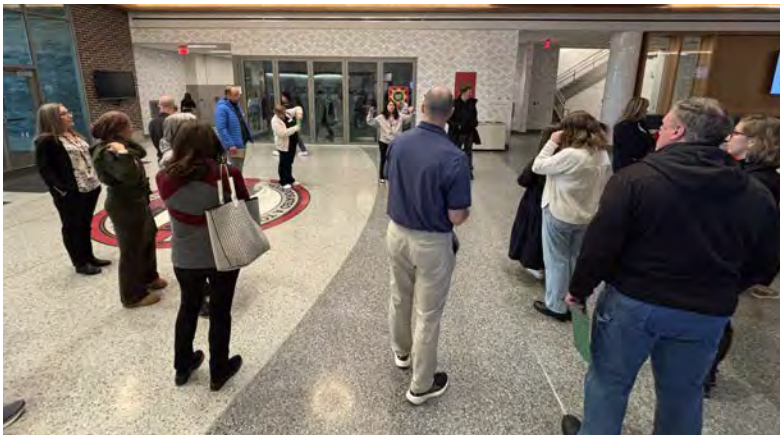










MEDFORD HIGH SCHOOL

Educational Visioning Report

January 2026

MLP
INTEGRATED DESIGN

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview

In the fall of 2025, members of Medford Public Schools participated in a series of Educational Visioning sessions facilitated by Educational Planner Mike Pirollo and Educational Consultant Paul White from My Learning Place Integrated Design, Inc., in collaboration with SMMA Architects. Each session was part of a collaborative process designed to inform the Medford High School Building Project and align future design decisions with the district's educational priorities.

Through interactive workshops, structured protocols, and reflective discussions, participants engaged in a step-by-step process aimed at capturing high-level thinking around the following:

- Educational, Architectural, and Community Priorities
- Developmental Traits and Needs of Grades 9–12 Learners
- Current and Reimagined Student Experiences
- Vision of Teaching and Learning, Including Practices, Programs, and Structures
- Vision of Learning Environments that Support Belonging, Engagement, and Growth

Throughout the process, participants shared thoughtful insights about how students experience Medford High School today, what adolescents need to thrive, and how learning environments, schedules, and systems can be intentionally designed to support both academic success and social-emotional wellbeing in the future. The following summary highlights the key themes and outcomes that emerged, reflecting Medford's collective vision for a future-ready, student-centered comprehensive high school.

Overarching Project Goals & Priorities

The visioning process surfaced a clear set of guiding educational goals that will shape future planning and design decisions for Medford High School:

- A school where every student, educator, and family feels seen, valued, and belongs
- A welcoming and accessible community hub that supports learning, engagement, and connection during and beyond the school day
- Learning experiences that are purposeful, relevant, rigorous, joyful, and connected to the real world
- Flexible, purposeful, and human-centered spaces that support collaboration, movement, and multiple modes of teaching and learning
- A Place That Centers Student Voice, Agency, and Leadership
- A future-ready building that is adaptable, sustainable, and able to evolve with changing student needs and educational practices

Together, these goals define a shared vision for Medford High School as a connected learning community that prioritizes equity, coherence, and opportunity for all students.

Developmental Considerations & Impacts

Participants closely examined the developmental characteristics of high school learners, emphasizing the importance of environments that balance independence with structure, social connection with emotional regulation, and energy with purpose. Students in Grades 9–12 were described as highly social, emotionally sensitive, and increasingly motivated by peer relationships, identity exploration, and authentic learning experiences.

At the same time, participants noted the continued need for predictable routines, clear expectations, supportive adult relationships, and accessible systems of support. These developmental insights translated into implications for scheduling, programming, and space design, including the need for intentional transitions, mentorship structures, flexible learning zones, opportunities for movement, and spaces that support both collaboration and quiet reflection.

Teaching, Learning, and the Vision of the Future School

Across all sessions, participants articulated a vision for teaching and learning that is active, student-centered, and connected to real-world application. They envisioned a Medford High School where students regularly engage in project-based, interdisciplinary learning experiences that foster curiosity, problem-solving, collaboration, and strong academic identities.

Educators emphasized the importance of flexible scheduling, time for collaboration, and instructional practices that elevate student voice and agency. Participants also highlighted the value of internships, capstone experiences, community partnerships, and pathways that allow students to explore interests, develop independence, and prepare for college, career, and civic life within a comprehensive high school model.

Design and Physical Space Implications

Participants described a future Medford High School facility that is welcoming, adaptable, and intentionally organized to support both learning and wellbeing. Key design implications include:

- Flexible learning neighborhoods that foster connection, collaboration, and student identity
- Instructional spaces that support hands-on, project-based, and interdisciplinary learning
- Centralized gathering areas that build community and support informal learning
- Calming and restorative spaces that promote regulation, wellness, and student support
- Clear wayfinding and accessible support spaces that help students navigate the building with confidence
- Opportunities throughout the building to showcase student work, creativity, and achievement

The building is envisioned not only as a place for instruction, but as an active contributor to school culture, relationships, and daily student experience.

Community Vision

Ultimately, the Medford High School community envisions a school that places students at the center of every decision. A school that values belonging, coherence, and opportunity. A school that prepares young people not only academically, but socially, emotionally, and ethically for life beyond graduation.

The future Medford High School will reflect the district's commitment to equity, adaptability, and community, serving as a source of pride and possibility for students, families, and the City of Medford for generations to come.

LAUNCH & INITIAL LISTENING

Overview

On November 12, 2025, members of Medford Public Schools attended a meeting with Educational Planner Mike Pirollo from MLP Integrated Design, Inc., along with SMMA Architects. This meeting was part of the visioning effort for the Medford High School building project. The goal of the meeting was to identify educational, architectural, and community goals and priorities.

Part 1 - Educational, Architectural, and Community Priorities

In Part 1, participants were given questions used to help them identify educational, architectural, and community priorities on individual sticky notes. After sharing their individual responses, participants grouped and categorized like-ideas to identify overarching project goals and considerations as documented below:

Project Goals:

- A school where every student, educator, and family feels seen, valued, and belongs
- A welcoming and accessible community hub that supports learning, engagement, and connection during and beyond the school day
- Learning experiences that are purposeful, relevant, rigorous, joyful, and connected to the real world
- Flexible, purposeful, and human-centered spaces that support collaboration, movement, and multiple modes of teaching and learning
- A Place That Centers Student Voice, Agency, and Leadership
- A future-ready building that is adaptable, sustainable, and able to evolve with changing student needs and educational practices

Overarching goals, descriptors, and related individual responses are documented in the pages that follow.

Goal 1: A school where every student, educator, and family feels seen, valued, and belongs
Design a school where every student, educator, and family feels safe, represented, valued, and proud to belong, with spaces that visibly reflect the identities, cultures, *history*, and lived experiences of the Medford community.

- Seen and heard
- Belonging
- Sense of community and belonging
- Every student is valued, seen and supported. They feel "I belong here" when they are in the space.
- Everyone sees themselves in the space and feels a sense of joy, power, and purpose
- Students and families need to see themselves represented in the school
- Students are represented in their learning / curriculum and their spaces
- Building that shows / exemplifies culturally affirming values
- Culturally affirming in physical space & teaching and learning
- Displaying artwork and information about diverse cultures / language / religions
- Teacher diversification
- Safety
- Feel comfortable in and proud of their spaces. Spaces would ideally be purposely designed for function and aesthetic so members of the school community feel they are welcomed, and see themselves reflected in spaces
- Welcomed, safe, inspired, proud, and easily able to navigate the building
- I want students and teachers to feel represented and seen in the school – artwork, murals, decor, green spaces, nature, outdoor learning spaces, windows and natural light, etc.
- A place we can be proud of
- School spirit
- All students are Mustangs! You are part of Medford alumni.
- Family – We should make sure to market the mustang logo and family feeling in all spaces

Goal 2: A welcoming and accessible community hub that supports learning, engagement, and connection during and beyond the school day

Create a welcoming, accessible community hub that supports meaningful use beyond the school day by organizing the building into clear public and private zones that are secure, easy to navigate, and intentionally designed for community, alumni, and city use.

- Community
- Community spaces
- Community center vibes re: parent / family classes, opportunities
- Connection to city programs, resources, supports
- Community space that is safe, flexible, and accessible; hub / parent information, arts, athletics, CTE shops for community, alumni, students
- Better connections with community and alumni (heart of community)
- A sense of community for students, staff and the entire Medford community
- Open space for community learning
- A space all can feel comfortable in during and after school hours

- Large enough spaces to school events / assemblies to build community
- Showcase student work, facilitate opportunities for caregivers to come into the school for community events / showcases of student activities
- We need to continue the idea that we are not just a school but a community center for all groups to use and feel like it is their own space
- Offering English language classes and supports for non-English speaking families
- Offering night time or flexible class opportunities for students who are working
- A way to get information they need about events and community quickly
- Signage that allows community to access space and programming
- Connected to and able to support K–8
- Early childhood ECC space to provide universal PreK

Goal 3: Learning experiences that are purposeful, relevant, rigorous, joyful, and connected to the real world

Support joyful, challenging, and academically rigorous learning that increases student knowledge through hands-on, project-based, and interdisciplinary experiences that build curiosity, strong academic identities, and pride in learning.

- Joy
- Joy, pride, energy
- Joy and excitement; energized
- Purpose
- Powerful
- Struggle – learning
- Creativity
- Application
- Project-based learning; not a project in a unit
- Relevant, hands-on projects
- Hands-on and project-based learning opportunities
- Student-led Instruction
- Student choice
- Curiosity
- Strong academic identities “I am a mathematician. I am a scientist.”
- Challenged and purposeful
- Teaching to grade level
- Modeling
- Exploring
- Elective opportunities that meet student need and real-life learning
- Functional space for all students that mimics the real world as much as possible
- Functional Space! For art, music and theater – spaces that replicate the real world
- Implementing SEI approach and PBL into classroom instruction

Goal 4: Flexible, purposeful, and human-centered spaces that support collaboration, movement, and multiple modes of teaching and learning

Design flexible, student-centered spaces with clearly defined purposes and features that extend beyond traditional classrooms, paired with professional learning that supports educators in aligning instructional practices to fully and consistently use these spaces as intended.

- Flexible big and small spaces
- Flex spaces that are not single use
- Facilities that are inclusive and inviting
- Seamless blend of outdoor space with indoor space
- Green spaces and natural light are important
- Students need to move
- Spaces to work together in small groups or large groups
- Spaces that students can work together outside of classrooms through programming and offer space for this through the new building... ie labs, lecture halls, theatre, gymnasium
- A space that allows classrooms to engage in project-based learning. This includes flexible spacing to allow for this. We also want a space that allows students to engage in multidisciplinary opportunities
- I echo the notion others expressed about small group / presentation spaces that could allow for presentations of projects to feel more 'real world'. Functional breakout spaces for small groups
- Rooms that allow for smaller stage performances and presentations
- Students would love to have study rooms like in a real library
- Classrooms / shops that allow students to feel part of the learning
- Places that students can have ownership for
- Feeling of community (no isolated silos)
- Space that fosters community and collaboration

Goal 5: A place that centers student voice, agency, and leadership

Design learning environments and decision-making structures that intentionally center student voice, choice, and leadership, ensuring students meaningfully shape their learning experiences and that adult-driven decisions do not limit opportunities for student expression, advocacy, and agency.

- Lots of student voice
- Set goals and track progress
- Space (and time) to monitor progress
- Discourse, debate, disagreements
- Advocates
- Change agents
- Empathy / perspective taking
- Compassion – I want students to not just develop a sense of understanding and empathy for others and different backgrounds/cultures, but I also want them to feel empowered and equipped to help others
- In terms of belief, opportunity: students from all walks of life should feel encouraged to pursue numerous opportunities in this school and be supported throughout their growth process. They feel welcomed to try anything and that they are personally supported
- Medford High is your starting point – you can rely on us. We are your support

Goal 6: A future-ready building that is adaptable, sustainable, and able to evolve with changing student needs and educational practices

Plan a resilient, adaptable building that evolves with changing educational practices, student needs, technology, and community growth while prioritizing accessibility, sustainability, and long-term care.

- Commitment to: maintenance, care, and prioritize keeping the building new
- The building will have to be able to support growth not just in numbers but what will technology look like in 5–10–50 years
- Larger spaces, ability and openness to adapt to newer technologies and be able to implement them as things change
- The building needs to account for changes in education approaches
- It also needs to be able to grow with the population and have a strong technology infrastructure that allows for growth
- Technological advancements in mind, spaces to fit the needs of students in the modern day, plan for building upkeep in the long run
- Universal design re: linguistic access
- From the student support perspective, providing more individualized supports for students have been increasing for the past decade – and continue to increase
- Students would know who and where to go to for support
- Support staff throughout the building and easy to access for students and teachers
- Having bright, open and accessible spaces where they feel calm
- Mapping and visuals to know how to get where they need to go
- Having space near classrooms (smaller hubs) that allows students to self-regulate and take breaks as needed
- Welcoming and safe spaces for house administrative office and counseling suites
- Valuing the community in shared spaces designed for comfort as well as productivity, thoughtful design of AP / support staff spaces in relation to students' location

VISIONING 1 OVERVIEW

On December 9, 2025, members of Medford Public Schools attended a meeting with Educational Planner Mike Pirollo and Educational Consultant Paul White from MLP Integrated Design, Inc., along with SMMA Architects. This meeting was part of the visioning effort for the Medford High School building project. The session focused on understanding the developmental needs of Grades 9-12 learners and the spaces, structures, and experiences needed to best support students in a future Medford High School.

Part 1 – Current Student Experience Mapping

In Part 1, participants mapped a typical daily experience for current high school students, highlighting academics, transitions, social-emotional supports, and student life. Groups identified strengths, uncertainties, and pinch points in the current experience.

The responses from the Current Student Experience Mapping are document in the pages that follow.

ARRIVAL

Bus (6:50)
- Gym - play sports (30 mins)
- 7:40 HR
  - talk to friends/teacher
  - look at Attendance, not Announcements
- Do not eat school breakfast

LEARNING BLOCKS

- Good experiences in class (ELA)
  - Do work/activities (forget to turn in)
  - * 20 students
  - more mixed languages spoken would help
  - more English practice in Electrical shop

Math - too fast
↳ discuss Math, partners (2)
- Quizzes on Fridays

History - not much speaking by students
- Do Now
- Activities
  - Same movement

TRANSITIONS/PASSING

- too short
  ↳ have to run
- Electrical things in locker, rest in backpack
- One stop @ locker 5th period

* change in Electrical

LUNCH

Caf 3 - eat quick (5 min)
↳ Gym to play soccer

LEARNING BLOCKS

Bathroom during class

Electrical
↳ up and moving
↳ Hands-on
↳ circuits on paper, then in practice
↳ individual, but Collaborative

- goes fast

DISMISSAL

Outside is overwhelming
- wait for 2nd or 3rd bus (outside).
- Fences made it worse

Bus is crowded, stand (10 minutes home)

AFTER SCHOOL

Tuesdays
- English help
- Optional, writing

Some homework

Table 1

Medford High School
Student Experience Mapping | December 9, 2025

ARRIVAL

- Socializing
- Go to caf - go to breakfast
- Lots of walking around
- Grab & Go Cart
- Free for all
- Loud / Overstimulating - Caf
- Switch HR to a different period

LEARNING BLOCKS

- Difficulty sitting in one spot
- Repetitive cycle
- Looks forward to shop
  - Comfortable place
  - Always doing something different
- Interactive / Hands-on
  - Not consistent in all classes
- Likes real life experiences - Bio Tech

cell phones

TRANSITIONS/PASSING

~~bathroom / hall / locker / to~~

- Getting away from chaos
- Only 3 minutes for transition
- Horrible - passing time
- Backpack / Lockers
  - too heavy
  - not using
- Traffic
  - Using cell phones slows down flow

LUNCH

- Doesn't eat lunch
- Stays in shop
- More variety in meals
  - dully mushy, prison like
- Loud
- Long lunch lines, by the time you get food there is only 5 min to eat

LEARNING BLOCKS

- CTE Shop - now → loves being in there
- More tired - drained
- Music while learning in class
- Having electives

DISMISSAL

- Cattle gates for buses!

AFTER SCHOOL

- Chaos on bus

2

Medford High School
Student Experience Mapping | December 9, 2025

ARRIVAL

-7:30 - Bus

- HR (phone) distributed all over but assigned by grade level

LEARNING BLOCKS

- Lack of elective choice
  - classrooms ~~classes~~ are grouped by subject
- Laptop work
- Sitting a lot (do not like)
- Science classes offer more movement b/c of labs
- Excessive note taking
- No use of outside space

TRANSITIONS/PASSING

- Packed hallways/stairs lockers etc.
- Walking all over the building to get to various classes
- Not enough time to use bathrooms
  - ↳ which bathrooms are available?

LUNCH

- good lunch time after P.5
- long lines
- longer time needed @ lunch
- choice of cafe

#3

LEARNING BLOCKS

- Academic Enrichment after lunch is a good time b/c it allows for catch up time.
  - ↳ councelor time if needed
- Majority of day is spent in independent work or fragmented group work
- teachers appear to be pulled in multiple directions (rules etc.)
- ~~[illegible]~~ end of units projects → tests

DISMISSAL

- Friends or bus
- Not a good flow to bus

AFTER SCHOOL

- lack of student space for in btwn school & sports (to hang)
- bring all stuff to fields
- homework feels connected to learning but can be done quickly / on the fly

~~Laptop work~~

Medford High School
Student Experience Mapping | December 9, 2025

ARRIVAL

WAKE-UP
DRIVE/WALK TO SCHOOL
TRAFFIC OVERWHELMING (MEDFORD SQ)
BREAKFAST OR DRNX
NO EARLY SOCIALIZING
EAT BREAKFAST IN SHOP / HOMEROOM OR FIRST PERIOD
NOBODY STANDS FOR THE PLEDGE

LEARNING BLOCKS

Home Room → CTE Shop (Health Assisting)
Short walk, not the case for all students
Longer travel ~~time~~ distance to class make it difficult to get to class on time - more stressful. Can't use restroom, locker

No complaints about shop
2nd/3rd - helping work with underclassman
4th/5th - Shop to themselves
6th/7th - Soph in shop - interactive

- Focus on mastering standards and skills - Provided directions and then the students work on it until they can prove it to the teacher

- Academic, just a normal classroom

TRANSITIONS/PASSING

LUNCH

steady time earlier in the career
now, 30 min of lunch (less w/ passing)
Cafe lines are huge
microwave lines are huge
practically no time to eat
just take a quick walk & back to class

early lunch is hard
now 12:18 → more convenient

Eat lunch in cafe 2 - greater cafe 3 vs locker
Lose this space

planning on using Senior Lounge next year → seems a reach

(7 periods, shorter lunch, no language)
Period was intended to be an extra, but that is not what happened)

LEARNING BLOCKS

→ 2 periods after lunch

→ shop → assist w/ grade 10 in shop.

→ teacher discussions & challenges my thinking
→ class feels challenging
→ engage topics.

DISMISSAL

→ parent pick up or MBTA bus.
Busses are challenging w/ overcrowding on earlier buses.

→ very cold outside to wait for buses.

→ wait on benches outside of library.

AFTER SCHOOL

→ work used - Sunday.

→ 2x week go home

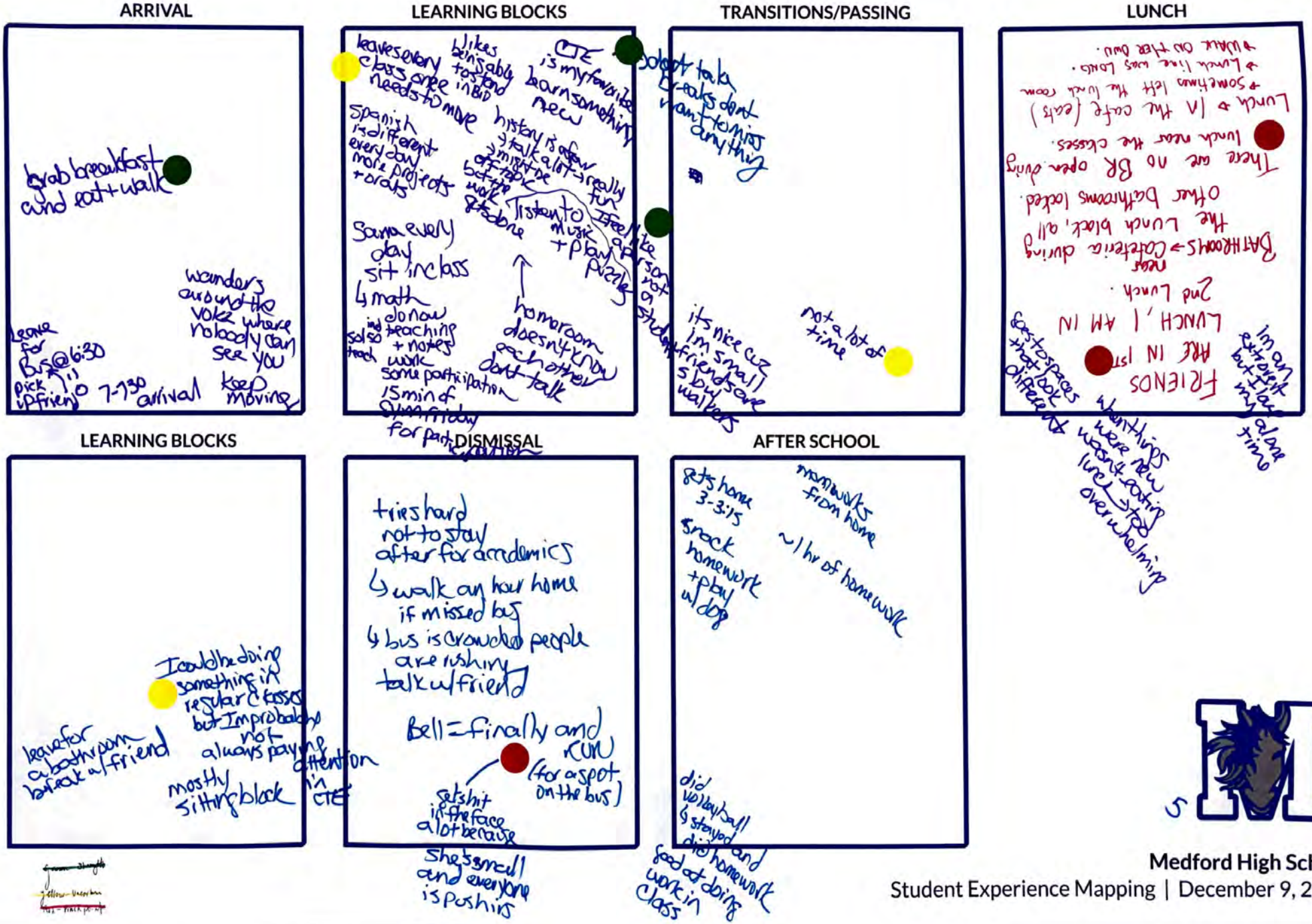
→ to work MBTA on bus in Stoneham

→ joined DECA after school

→ Cheerleader

→ not able to attend after school events b/c of school / work.

Medford High School
Student Experience Mapping | December 9, 2025


ARRIVAL
grab breakfast and eat + walk
wanders around the voke where nobody can see you
leave for Bus @ 6:30
pick up friend
7-730 arrival
keep moving
LEARNING BLOCKS
leaves every class one min b/c needs to move
likes being sat by friend in BIO
CTE is my favorite learn something new
Spanish is different every day more projects + orals
history is often y talk a lot + really fun y might be off task better work at home
Same every day sit in class
listen to music + play puzzle
I feel like a person not a student
4 math do now teaching + notes solved work some participation 15 min of Study Friday for part
homeroom doesn't know each other don't talk
TRANSITIONS/PASSING
don't talk breaks don't want to miss anything
its nice cuz im small I have friends so I slow walkers
not a lot of time
LUNCH
FRIENDS
ARE IN 1st
LUNCH, I AM IN 2nd Lunch.
BATHROOMS → Cafeteria during the Lunch block, all other Bathrooms locked.
There are no BR open during lunch near the classes.
Lunch → In the cafe (eats) → Something left the lunch room → Lunch line was long. → Walk all the way out.
I'm on extra but I'm in a class
Sometimes I want to stay in class but I can't
Sometimes I want to go out but I can't
Sometimes I want things to be new but I want to stay over whelming
LEARNING BLOCKS
I could be doing something in regular classes but I probably not always paying attention in CTE
leave for a bathroom break w/ friend
mostly sitting block
DISMISSAL
tries hard not to stay after for academics
↳ walk an hour home if missed bus
↳ bus is crowded people are rushing talk w/ friend
Bell = finally and run (for a spot on the bus)
Sets shit in the face a lot because she's small and everyone is pushing
AFTER SCHOOL
gets home 3-3:15
snack homework + play w/ dog
homework from home
~1 hr of homework
did volleyball & stayed and did homework
good at doing work in class
Medford High School
Student Experience Mapping | December 9, 2025

ARRIVAL

7:20
Socialize w/friends in Cafe 2
HR @ 7:40
Carry everything on-person

LEARNING BLOCKS

Mostly sitting
Listening
Some Communication in certain classes
Structured similarly
Instant activity openers
Classes 1-5 till lunch
Computer-Use
HW → almost all online
Teachers absent → LH

TRANSITIONS/PASSING

CRAMPED
STRESSFUL
Passing time depends on class location
No time to go to Locker

LUNCH

Eat in Cafe
Bring Lunch
Sit w/ same group @ same table
Go for Walk
Cafe is Warm
Look forward to Lunch

LEARNING BLOCKS

After lunch
Math > most work
Bio ← feels like forever! but enjoy it
Tired
Need to be very focused
Lab work

DISMISSAL

2:33
Out side door to bus
Love MBTA
Bus lines not great
Takes longer to get home since bus railings installed

AFTER SCHOOL

Won't hang out here if no reason to
Warm → Walk to Sq.
Cold → bus to Sq.
Help from Teachers
↳ scheduled

Table 6

Medford High School
Student Experience Mapping | December 9, 2025

ARRIVAL

Wake up EARLY!
bus is too early so arrive by car – always late.
All MPS schools have same (or very sim.) starts
If bus, too early – 1 hour.
→ Rushed + anxious
Usually no breakfast
→ meet up with friends in Library – eating permitted? Unclear.

LEARNING BLOCKS

1-2. History/ELA (double block)
[really likes this format → comfort with the class]
Unique class - short break between classes.
3. Science - always late.
4. AP Art - awesome
Work on your own (10 mins)
[Lunch (1st) – feels too quick w/ long lines. 3rd flr. Lunch [from last yr. 6 mins. less]

TRANSITIONS/PASSING

3 minutes - go from 1st flr C to 3rd flr. B - always late.
No locker use - carry all stuff with her (Ella)
Backpack is heavy!

LUNCH

LEARNING BLOCKS

5. Math - hardest - PreCalc Honors - large class (26) – cramped → stressful
Test-taking - has extra time but feeling left behind when last person to hand in. [First H math class] so also feels in catch-up mode.
6. Art [M, T, Th] II → fun wishes could be everyday [W-Fr.] Photography. No darkroom - missing out – not engaging.
7. [M, W, Fr.] Guitar - fun.
[Tu, Th] Gym.

Likes this schedule - fun @ end of day

DISMISSAL

~~Existing~~
Depends on sports, theater
Can use time for art if there is in-between
Bus/car conflict
School bus – 1 shot to catch it.
MBTA Bus - more options both on site and on Wintrop.

AFTER SCHOOL

Soccer - every day
Opportunity for extra help - 30 mins.

7

Medford High School
Student Experience Mapping | December 9, 2025

ARRIVAL

- Gets to school early, and socializes with friends in car (10 mins)
- Puts jacket in locker
- Akward HR experiences (sit in silence) → phone use inhibiting socialization
- Likes HR teacher

LEARNING BLOCKS

- English - put phone away, annoying but not that big a deal. Feel like a little kid bc need to give phone to teacher. Does allow for engagement. Discussion but mostly only.
- Psych - friends in class. Take notes - vocab heavy. Get to talk to friends - don't need to hand in phone, but they don't bc of expectations/respect for teacher. May be bc of content (AP class).
- Electives (Yearbook, Gym) - working on kids Corner. Enjoy as a break from Academics.
- AP Stats: enjoy that work done in groups.
- no movement breaks. Sit most of day.
- Honors Anatomy: bored - don't really like. A lot of teacher talking, Stand & deliver/ lecture. Will stand at desks.

2 hardest classes

TRANSITIONS/PASSING

- late (always) to Anatomy, from Math. Not enough time.
- used to have 5 mins - now 3 mins.
- crowded in stairwells; in certain areas.
- don't get the chance to take a moment between classes - just going from class to class.
- no time during passing to use bathroom
- B-building bathrooms nice but never open.

LUNCH

- Senior cafe w/ friends is nice - except when it's not mold.
- Previous years, didn't have friends in same lunch.
- would sit in Cafe 1, bc was quiet & could sit alone, but sometimes felt "like a loser" w/o friends.
- School lunch: like it. some days are better than others.
- Servery experience is bad - if lunch is good, line is crazy. Need to really push.
- Spend alot of time in line.

LEARNING BLOCKS

- Elective Academic enrichment no friends in class Solo work bored and lonely.
- Sleepy after eating
- Spanish back with friends, more talking. Enjoys rigor.

DISMISSAL

- Speak to parking lot.
- Misses senior privilege of leaving a few mins early to parking lot. Does not want traffic.

AFTER SCHOOL

- Sometimes hang around after school
- Soccer: stay at school to get ready. Hang out in Trainers' Room. All sports hang out in trainers Room bc its co-ed.
- tennis: practice at 3pm. Leave immediately from school, get coffee, change at community bldg near courts.

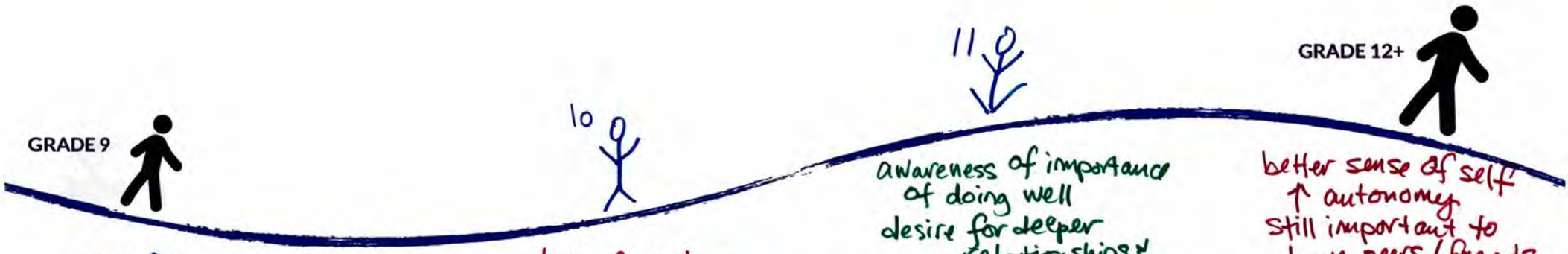
Part 2 – Understanding the Learner

In Part 2, participants examined research-based developmental characteristics of students in Grades 9–12. Through structured discussion, groups identified defining academic, social-emotional, physical, and behavioral traits across grade bands.

This work highlighted both similarities and key differences across ages and prompted reflection on implications for instruction, organization of the school day, and learning environment design.

Responses from the learner profile charts are documented below.

High schoolers are...



need for motion + breaks

prefer small groups = group themselves

← CTE decision is made

Built-in breaks - scheduled

Academic choice →

desire for autonomy
resist authority / developing sense of self
looking for group opps.
HIGH ENERGY

---

awareness of importance of doing well
desire for deeper relationships & 'fitting in'
individuality but with need to fit in
↑ critical thinking
better self regulation

Schedule flexibility

better sense of self
↑ autonomy
still important to have peers / friends
desire for 'real world' skills (financial)

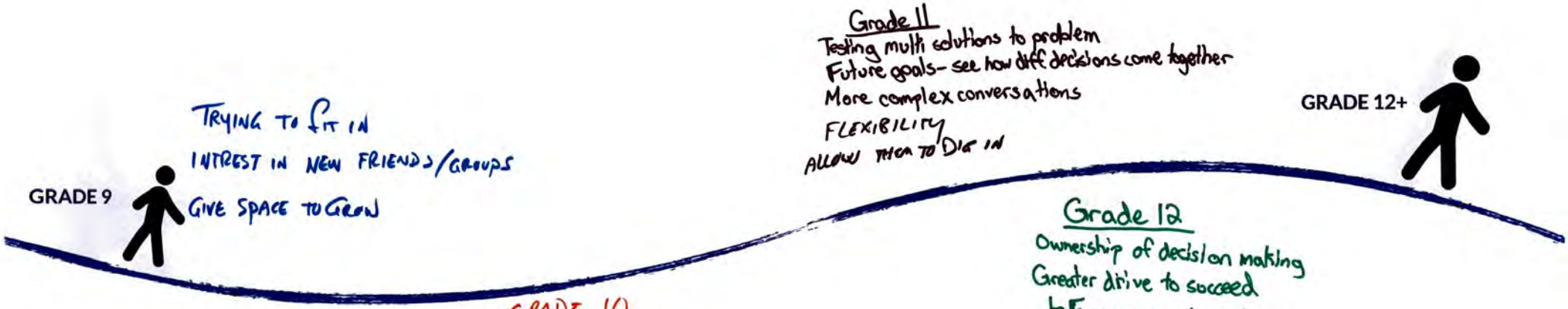
Breaks that are self-selected

Allowing for early release if teacher is out.

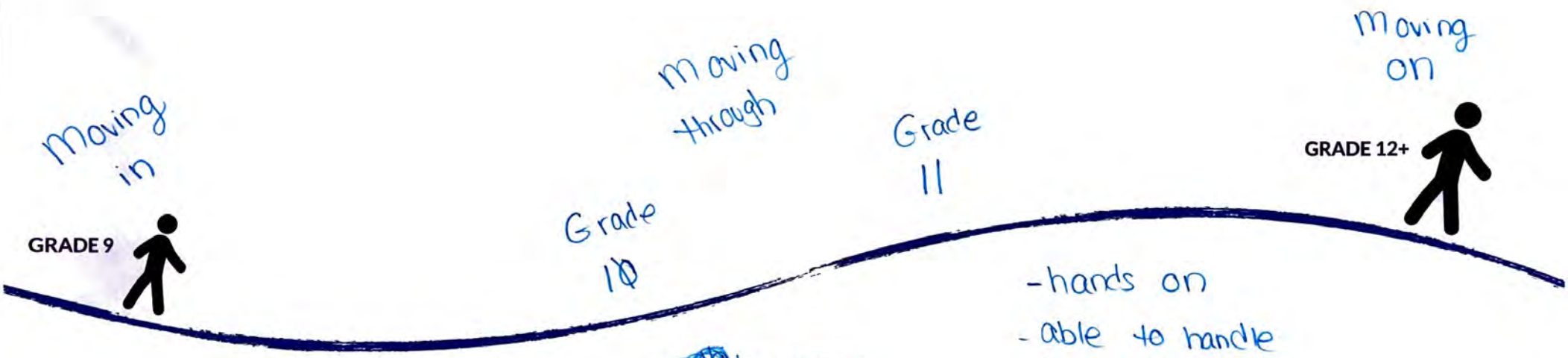
← More access to snacks / food →

Co-mingled the academic + CTE "sides" of the school

High schoolers are...



High schoolers are...



- make mistakes in learning
- Learning how the building works or things
- defined spaces to push against in a good way
- perception is huge!
- opportunities to learn through discovery
- becoming more mature
- heightened awarness of after
- hands on
- able to handle bigger projects
- academics becoming more relevant

High schoolers are...



Communal Spaces

Areas to collaborate

Designated Quiet Space

Lesson Planning

Time to socialize

more library time

Soft furniture/sitting areas

High schoolers are...

- Social dynamics central.
  - care what others think
  - influenced by peers

GRADE 9



- Need movement to assist learning
  - → small cooperative groups helpful to enable risk taking w/ learning
  - → enjoy tackling big ideas

- Solving problems using Logic
- Empathy
- Self Reflection
  - Self-awareness
  - Self Regulation

SELF CONFIDENCE
EXPLORING NEW INTEREST
PROBLEM SOLVING
CRITICAL THINKING
INCREASED CREATIVITY

GRADE 12+



- defined sense of self
- self-advocacy, autonomy
- enhanced empathy
- comfort / ability w/ analysis, self-expression abstract concepts

Students need
- More choice
- capstone / internship
- real life learning



High schoolers are...



- Shorter attention spans
- Transition
- Comparasion

I thrive in a english classing coffee shop

- movement all the time
- grap work
- mental movement I'm not intrigeded enough to listen + learn
- Something new every where
- want to self learn taugh with not taugh to
- spaces are not warm like in elementary → teachers aren't comfortable in their own space

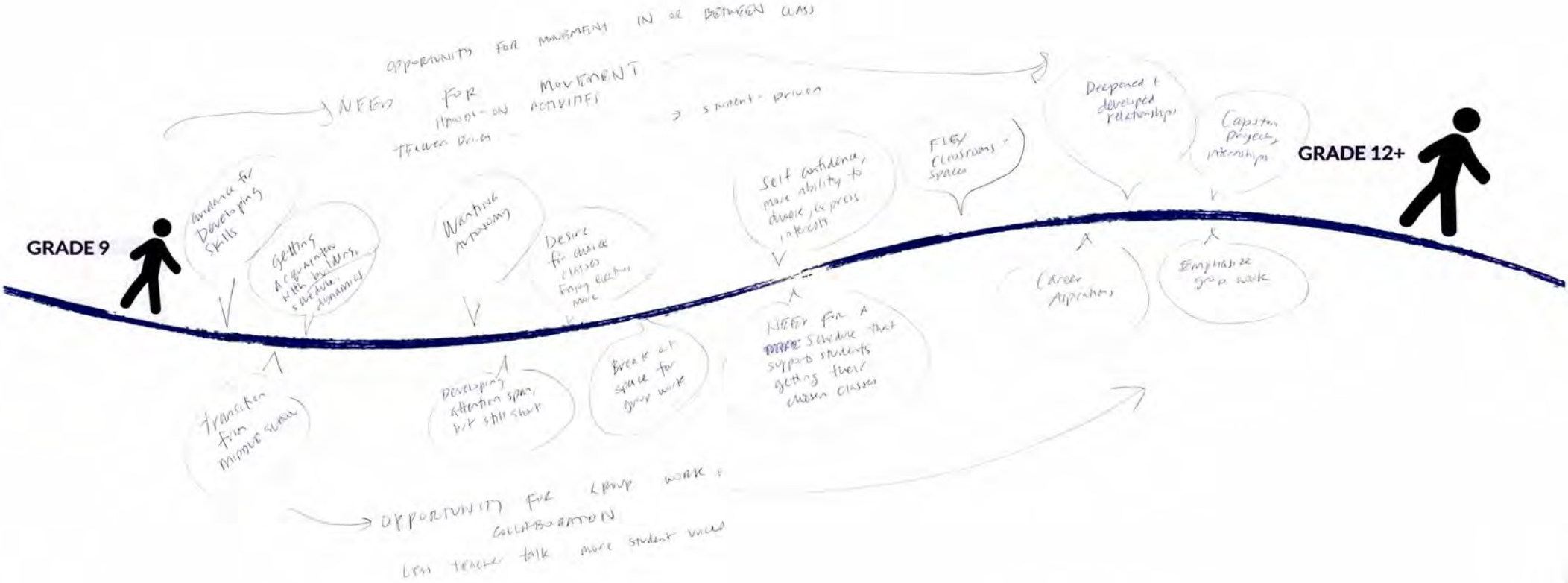
Grade 10
- You find your people
- Many Physical change

Grade 11
- You know who you are
- Arriving as adult sized

- More ability to be academically focused
- Adrift and worried about whats next
- Need to be prepared for future
- Adult sized need for fitness

need a different kind of schedule than 9+10
different class structure + depth 'shop like'
so everyone wants to be there

High schoolers are...



High schoolers are...

Part 3 – Developmental Traits to Bold New Experiences

In Part 3, participants shifted from understanding developmental traits to imagining bold new educational experiences inspired by those traits. Using a graffiti-style protocol and dot-polling, participants generated ideas for innovative approaches to learning and student life.

Responses are documented in the pages that follow. Categories are named and defined in bold, with group-generated category titles underlined. Bulleted items capture all participant responses, and the numbers in parentheses indicate the number of votes received through dot polling.

Transitions Are Stress Points: ***Passing times, lunch, arrival, and after school are more than "in-between" moments – they shape whether students feel safe, connected, and included.***

Adaptable Passing: More Flexible Periods (20)

- Transition time
- Times between class to socialize (3 minutes to get to class and 5 to socialize); more spaces like senior's café to each lunch in and to make it more comfortable
- Longer passing times - in acoustically appropriate corridors
- Longer passing time and gathering spaces
- Provide 'break room' connection opportunities between classes
- Longer passing times so students can socialize or use bathroom
- Need more time in between classes
- Gathering spaces
- Give a longer transition time – even 3-4 minutes
- Passing time – we are way too spread out in the building

Collaborate Space and Time (5)

- Make places of transition also places of gathering at multiple scales
- Quiet spaces – passing time extended by 1-5 minutes
- Re-instate a separate area for buses and parent vehicles; sperate lanes of egress for faculty arrivals / departures
- Move spaces where students can feel safe; right now it's only cafeteria, library and halls
- Clubs meet during lunch or a WIN block
- You are welcome to the school with a warm common area
- Extra minutes added, move quiet spaces, cafes, bigger libraries, nap room
- Gathering spaces, soft furniture, and time to connect
- Extra time passing period / lunch
- Cohort team / team community spaces
- Can there be many spaces within a space at lunch
- Alternative spaces, quiet cafeteria, games
- What if we have more quiet gathering spaces for students to gather before and after school; student work highlighted on walls
- Have school lunch be longer so you have time to mingle and get a sense of belonging while also being able to eat
- Modulate between assigned seats and free choice at lunch so people can meet new friends
- Lunch– not one big space, smaller spaces, round tables, charging stations, snack opportunities, open all day

Teacher Presence (3)

- Adults visible in areas so that students see and adults are available
- Teacher presence in areas outside their own classrooms
- Home staff support these moments by being present, friendly, not just authority
- Teachers present in hallways
- What if during transitions staff greeted students in hall? – 3 second check-ins

Miscellaneous (1)

- Choreography is important
- Ability to go to the bathroom or grab a snack here
- Structure transition options as safe places and routines
- All of 1 grade in one section of the building
- School considers topics for students to look for / talk about during these moments and connected to our core values; make it a game / team activity
- Time stamps on student learning one class; an ETA to next location based on schedule; then teacher can weigh that if student arrives late; could also have time stamp in-out of bathroom
- Advisory moved to middle of day when kids are awake – opportunity to engage and connect

Need for Recognition & Agency: ***Students want their voices to matter – authentic opportunities to lead, contribute, and showcase their work build engagement and ownership.***

Real World Opportunities: Create Times and Structure, Build Community Partnerships (23)

- Internships for all students, not just CTE
- Project-based activities which connect to real world situations like student options
- Partnerships with community organizations or businesses and real-world experience for all kids
- Real world projects for the community
- Projects that are useful, celebrated, shared beyond MHS-greater community or MPS
- Opportunities to participate in big learning projects / teach the class things they learned and get feedback on how they can improve

Student Voice: Lesson Design to Incorporate Student Voice and Discourse (4)

- Let students teach – give topics and let them create lesson that is authentic to them and resonates with peers
- Opportunities for student teachers within classes and between classes; students helping students learn
- Give students the chance to teach the class or a small group; use student ideas and wording
- Take into consideration student opinions, interests, and needs
- Team environments and projects where students lead and participate

- Activities that demonstrate individual student strengths
- Student voice included regularly in building decisions, displays, lunch menus, field trips
- Allow multiple ways for student voices to be recognized
- Teach should ask what the students want to improve in their class
- Monthly assemblies for students to discuss the school and their thoughts almost like the city government does
- Some form of debates

Students Showcases / Capstones: Develop for Graduation (4)

- Students showcase to the larger community
- More opportunities to present their work, not just hang it on a wall

Create Opportunities to Display Student Work (2)

- Shared display, physical work
- Showcase student work
- Student's work is displayed; spaces feel welcoming to all
- Space throughout the school to show off students work
- Student showcases at the end of the year in advisory
- Walls are full of student art and change all the time
- Show student work and build up their confidence
- Feature student work throughout the building

Questions (1)

- Alternating group roles during group work
- Content should include meaty discussions centered around moral and ethical themes with multiple possible outcomes
- Monthly advisory mash-ups – students break into 8-10 different groups to discuss how life is treating them
- Class level collaborative art projects (standards aligned, of course)

Culture and Identities: Encourage Representing of Students in School Building

- Class décor designed by students
- Representations of students' work, student designed spaces, and dedicated student creative spaces (think the John Lennon mural in Prague)
- Classrooms each have a space for a class to decorate and make their own and share into across periods
- Passing time after period 2 should be extended – 15 minutes to allow bathroom, socializing time, reset backpacks
- Student galleries and opportunities to showcase
- Rotating museum type displays throughout the entire building

Peer identity & Belonging Drive Choices: ***Friends and peer groups strongly influence behavior, motivation, and self-image. When students feel they belong, they thrive; when they don't' learning and confidence suffer.***

Project-based Creative Learning (15)

- Project-based learning; not just in CTE but everywhere
- Offer options for students to feel they belong – from types of activities to welcoming spaces
- Lesson planning should repeat a sense of belonging for students; the curriculum should help them be better versions of themselves
- Doing projects / being creative while also learning

Student Choice: Students Leadership / Ownership (5)

- Choice in grouping and seating
- Students choose groups for projects / activities
- Ability to pick courses they connect with
- More autonomy with class section
- Students can pick their lunch block
- Project-based learning and choice-based learning
- Give more interactive advents, projects, and community projects
- Alternate pairing and groups to meet new people

Mentorship (3)

- Peer mentoring
- Working with adults as mentors or workshop-style learning environment

Variety of Activities: Opportunities (1)

- Access to clubs and afterschool activities
- Clubs and student activities that foster belonging

Student Sharing (1)

- Get to know the students more; have friends with project-based learning
- Opportunities to share a sense of self to find ways to identify new cohorts and strengthen existing ones (in classes)

Building-Wide Connections

- Bridge gap between grades
- More cross-content course opportunities
- Some level of scheduling with a friend is considered

Collaboration

- Collaboration on projects
- Homeroom / advisory team building and challenges
- More collaborative learning; some CTE shops already have older students teach the younger ones; kind of make the class feel like a sports team

- Facilitating and teaching students on how to work collaboratively

Student Representation and Ownership

- Ability to see themselves in the school
- Students' names and about them displayed on walls of the classroom (What do they value? What matters?)
- Peer teaching and ownership of space
- Students are valued members of class; build community, display works in progress, name student contributions and connect to big ideas

Heightened Emotional Sensitivity: ***Adolescents feel stress and emotions deeply, and strategies for handling them are still developing. Small experiences can feel very big.***

Create Freshman "Onboarding" Experience That Builds Team Environment (14)

- Freshman seminar
- Ninth grade starts with team building
- Defined freshman cohorts that allow for closer bonding, teacher collaboration, and a sense of identity in core classes

Creation of Peer Mentor Structure as Part of Academic Experience (10)

- Peer mentor 12th-9th grade bridge
- Peer to peer counseling; potentially among different grade levels
- Big brother / big sister program between older and younger students
- Just say "hello" and smile

Use of Advisory (9)

- Advisory curriculum
- Support opportunities and safe spaces
- Discussions of moral topics allows safe exploration and expression of feeling with a teacher to settle guard rails
- Advisory moved to mid-morning to allow a small break from chaos of the day
- When a teacher connects and tries to understand a student by their name not category
- More instructional convos / meeting opportunities to hear students' thoughts, ideas, and voices
- We should have or feel the need to talk comfortably with them / adults with trust
- More direct involvement with counselors – build class advisory time, get into classrooms more
- More time for teachers to interact – one on one basis
- Weekly independent check-in with each student to discuss goal for the week and check emotions

Teaching Emotional intelligence (2)

- Small breaks – Jenga time
- Create safe spaces for reflection or quiet (pods)
- Having safe spaces for managing stress
- Multiple opportunities for practicing coping strategies

- Stress management options and tools
- All teachers and staff receive RC training to be able to effectively build emotionally safe environment and be able to effectively support individuals
- Show students how they could handle their emotions – allow for them to share feelings
- Empathy – teaching for social-emotional learning and social justice might help
- More opportunities to express self through projects
- Having safe people and place to go to when help is needed whether that be teachers or friends

Classroom Environments Built by Students (1)

- Time in class to decompress after lunch which can be very stressful
- Classrooms have a variety of learning spaces
- For class discussions, have guidelines that help regulate emotions and participation (help ease uneasiness felt with discussions)
- Quiet spaces
- Smaller class sizes
- More places to eat lunch

Peers Help Lead Through the Hard Moments

- Student-led restorative circles
- Lesson planning should reflect a sense of belonging for students; the curriculum should help them be better versions of them
- Students are valued members of class, build class community – display works in progress, name student contributions and connect to big ideas

Developing Independence: ***Students want more freedom and responsibility, but still benefit form clear routines, structure and supportive adult relationships.***

Providing Student Agency: Social-Emotionally, Academically, Physically (13)

- Senior Capstone
- Provide choice
- Provide agency through choice – academic choices before senior year
- Student voice and choice
- Have different routes to choose from so it feels like freedom but in a structured way
- Staff mentor programs – students formally choose a teacher (could be advisory). This can change every year instead of being assigned
- Choice boards for assignments
- More freedom of movement with ability for adults to see ins / outs
- Engage students to help – like in elementary school, pass out work, collect, etc.... take it to the next level where students pay a part in deciding rating / class assignments
- Increase elective time and allow students to propose and vote new electives
- Teacher being facilitator not manager
- Student-led activities with less obvious teacher oversight
- Students develop their own learning activities that still meet the state framework requirements
- Independent projects with daily standup goal sheet and weekly progress presentation to track progress

- Give more choices
- Student voice encouraged
- Choice board with clear instructions and expectations and / or provide opportunities for students to decide
- Earlier choice for study within the academic course – independence / independent projects
- Graduated freedom of choices from freshman to senior year
- 11th and 12th grade schedule in universally-like CTE with deeper exploration
- Class choice
- Opportunities for inquiry experience with adult support
- Teaching the elements of independent learning in 9th
- Built in free choice periods or scheduled breaks
- Allow students to vote on menus
- Students should be able to learn how they work like listening to music; every student has their own way of focusing

Building Blocks Agency (3)

- More collaboration with teachers; deeper student and teacher relationships to help determine plans
- Student / teacher collaboration on what the structure and freedom should be
- Student-led classes (like older kids helping with 9th grade rotations)
- Work as individuals within a group

Provide Clear Expectations but Support Independence (2)

- Provide clear expectation but support independence
- Clear expectations with room for student choice
- Having clear expectations while also getting creative freedom

Miscellaneous

- Teacher and counselors address students more individually not just ones who 'stand out'
- More grade level teacher teams to allow for alignment of students and policy

across core classes; students have less to remember about the environment and more room to make

- Routines – lunch, engage norms, come back to whole group

Desire for Social Interaction: ***Students are highly social- they seek frequent opportunities to connect, talk and collaborate with peers throughout the day.***

Social Connection and Collaboration: Teaching with ILS (9)

- Time aside from lunch to talk with peers and go to workspaces
- Longer transitions to allow for social interactions
- Club / activity time built into the day
- Project-based learning in all subjects will make this not focal part of the day
- Communal spaces for gathering
- Gathering common spaces
- Collaborative common spaces for students to access
- Collaborative work opportunities across all content areas
- Groups, tables, teachers foster safe environment so all students feel able to share their voice and make connections
- Allow areas for natural collaboration to occur; areas that facilitate studying, working, socializing as groups but can be monitored
- Like groups at lunch; specific table for discussions or topics (sit here if you to want to talk about…)
- Collaborative learning opportunities that allow all students to succeed
- Using strategies that allow students to interact
- Social time like gathering around the bubbler, when students perhaps have current events available for discussion
- Built in moments even if they are few minutes in the schedule for students to be able to connect
- Hands-on partnered activities
- More time to socialize in between classes / longer lunch periods
- Classes where you can choose peers
- Students should have one day in a week; one period to use to socialize
- Sharing projects with peers

Classroom Practices (6)

- All classes first 5-8 minutes – predictable welcome and routine, moments of interaction and fun, moment to highlight student voice, structure RAM
- Lesson design leverages academic discourse between students
- Phone moments – 5 minutes at the end of class
- Hands-on activities; more student collaborate
- Having time built into each class where students are learning and sharing with others (Socratic seminar, teach the class)
- Choose the quietest person in the room to lead
- Cross class debate or seminars – two 9th grade classes arguing about punishment in the 57 bus, for example
- Group work – especially with people you may not have an interest with

Responsive Classroom (5)

Whole School Community (2)

- More breaks, longer lunch, clubs and activities during the day
- Change time of advisory to later period; make advisory more student-orientated
- Community events / assemblies
- Interdisciplinary classes, mixed grade levels, when possible, to widen their networks
- Ability to combine classes within subject areas or outside to allow collaboration (I.e., Biotech and science)
- Responsive Advisory Meetings
- Scheduling – lunch causing stress, semester based 'clubs'

Self-Regulation: Need For Time 'Off' Learning (1)

- Built in break time for social 'nodes' in building
- Flex block
- Each class should have at least 10 minutes of break to refresh for next class
- Flex blocks
- More flexible space opportunities and break out spaces in the classroom
- Outdoor break time plus optional activities
- Longer transitions at class exchanges
- Longer transitions
- Common areas – mixed areas and flexible spaces

Need for Movement & Physical Energy: ***Adolescents can't sit still all day- they learn and regulate emotions better when movement is built into their routines.***

Lesson Design: Intentional and Consistent Movement as a Critical Part of Each Class (16)

- PBL – assignments that get students up out of seats
- Hands-on projects
- Center work rotating in classroom; flex seating
- Build in learning that requires movement activities
- Changes to how time is allocated in class and throughout the school day
- More ability to work with different groups by rotating like 'speed dating' activities
- Teachers are using adult learning techniques around immersive learning
- Classroom lesson design needs to include opportunities for flexible movement including repositioning furniture to match
- Doing activities that include movement – even just being allowed to stand up for a minute
- Break periods; no sitting in same place for a long period of time
- Building movement into classroom instruction
- Allow for individual, pair, group work moments in which students interact in different ways
- Start with a centering activity
- Mimic on immersive theater experience / scavenger hunt where students go between learning topic destinations
- Planning lessons that incorporate movement
- Fun, moving around learning environments so students feel engaged and included

- Interactive learning structures are the norm – students enter room, first five minutes review and get settled, play a game
- Thinking of scene in the movie *Dead Poets Society* where professor Keating is having the boys recite sonnets and kick the football at the same time; how can we do more of this? Kickball quizzes?
- Class walks while discussing topics

Space and Furniture: Flexible, Varied That Adapts to Student Needs During a Class (12)

- Free range classrooms, limited seating, more bean bag chairs
- More flexibility within a class for teachers to incorporate movement and activities; make it easier to use outside spaces
- Campus setting that allows movement but maintains security
- Standing desk for students
- Standing desks also in class; we have debates to move from one side of the room to the other
- Optional style of seating and standing
- Allow standing in class to work or choosing seats anywhere in class
- Outdoor classroom
- Common space that students can access through the day
- Different learning set ups within the classroom that are easy to move, break down, etc.
- Standing classrooms; more writing, less typing
- Flexible classroom spaces / locations
- Flexible seating / counter spaces

More Frequent PE Class (3)

- Gym / physical education classes more often for CTE students
- Daily PE and movement break
- More PE / movement frequency
- Students should have a class for exercise everyday

Educating About Benefits of Movement Throughout the School Environment

- Focus physical education on functional movement
- What if there was signage about the stairs? Like "Climbing these stairs twice, a day = one hike"

Exploration of Identity: ***Middle and high schoolers are trying to figure out who they are – exploring interests, values, cultural identities and possible futures.***

Increase Exposure to Opportunities on Diverse Topics, Perspectives, Curricula and Career Paths (13)

- Provide formal and informal learning opportunities
- Provide different interests and opportunities
- Exposure to career by collaborating with industry and business
- More communication between schools so students are better prepared to choose CTE or not in Grade 8
- Greater connection to community / careers through exploration or internship

- Curriculum addresses cultural identities of students and opportunities
- Opportunities to see self in different spaces / curriculum
- Opportunities to visit a variety of businesses, museums, community spaces or to bring these partners into the building
- Content needs to be clear, actionable goals and tasks; connected to the real world and authentic
- More opportunities to take classes you want to focus on in the future (more choices); being able to switch out if it doesn't suit you
- Showcase all clubs / groups so these students are seen
- Establish affinity groups with flexible membership model
- Mini explore classes or rotations through shorter rounds of classes with different instructions
- Shorter classes – 1 month, not a semester to be exposed to more topics
- Present diverse topics and diverse perspectives without judgement
- Assemblies for people with personal experience to express and teach students about themselves and how to navigate life
- Community expert series throughout the year – bring in people (parents / communities) to talk about different paths
- Career or practical focused exploration of academic courses; what does someone do that does this for a living?
- What is my why? To start school and have students build pathway to work on that why to the school year

<u>Create Student Voice in Curriculum</u> (9)

- More work for middle school students on high school transition
- Middle school electives become opportunities to sample opportunities to diminish paralysis by analysis when choosing CTE / high school path in 8th grade
- Class choice based on individual goals / interests
- Student voice and choice in the books they read in class
- Allow students to come up with the assignments
- Interest pathways in many assignments, books topics, etc.
- Allowing options in assignments (I.e., posters or essay)
- Choice of classes and learning adventures
- Student voice
- Student voice in courses
- Survey annually of courses
- Allow them to implement the thing they are into like a picture of something as long as it supports the topic
- Students should have more opportunity to choose what subject they want to do – to fit in what they want in the future

Guidance: Create Dedicated Particular Time for Guidance (1)

Advisory Curriculum

- Advisory groups during school day are more frequent and are interest based
- Add a guidance period weekly; counselor per class
- Smaller advisory groups
- Opportunity for reflection
- More time in day to explore clubs, groups, etc. (maybe learn about offerings in advisory)
- The Get Better Assembly is very impactful; similar programming around other identities / understandings

Part 4 – Spaces That Support Development and Belonging

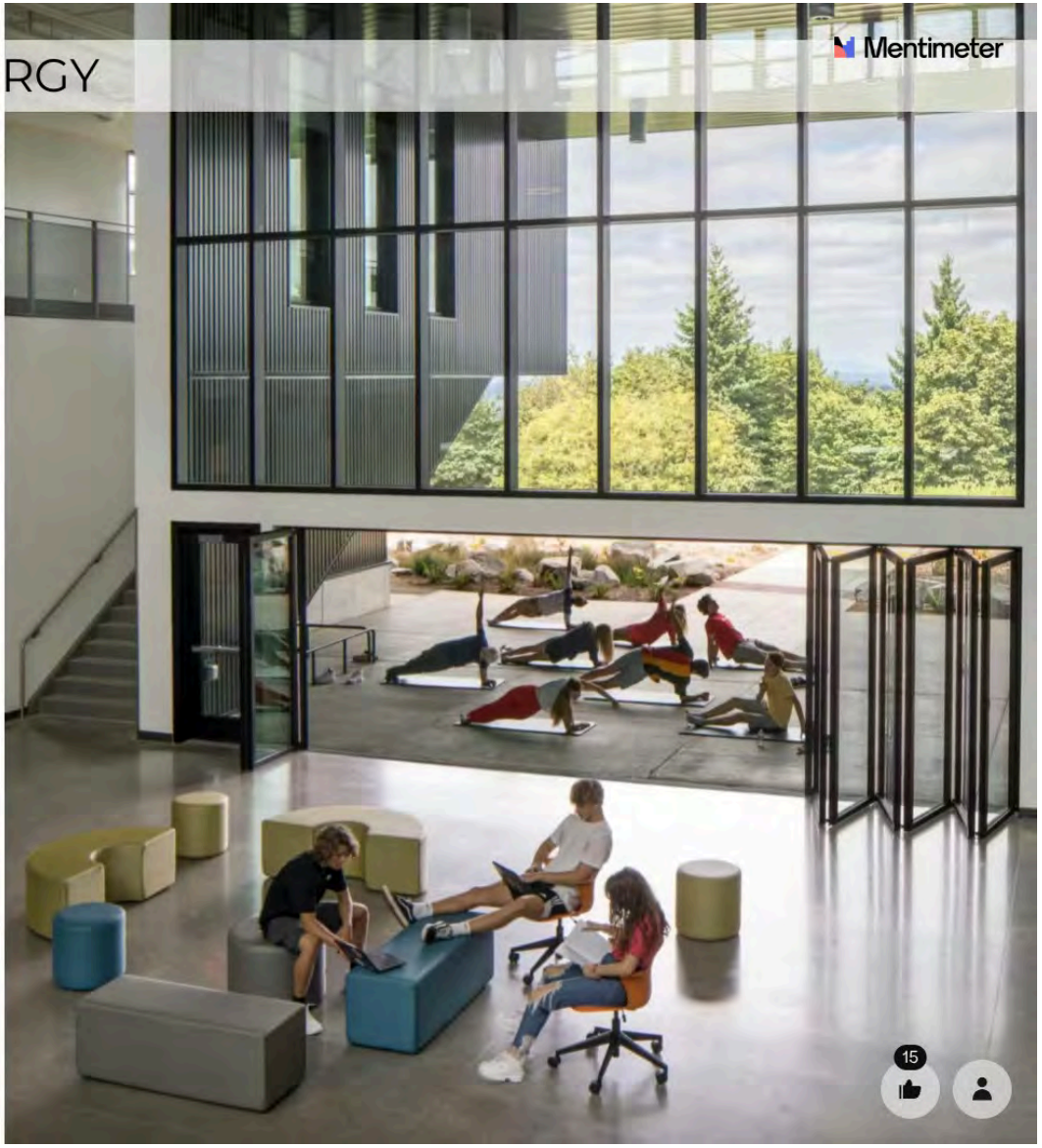
In Part 4, participants explored how physical spaces can support adolescent developmental and social-emotional needs. Through discussion of precedent images and related prompts, participants reflected on how spaces can foster movement, social connection, emotional regulation, independence, identity, and belonging. The conversation reinforced the role of both instructional and informal spaces in shaping the student experience.

Participants' responses are documented in the pages that follow.

NEED FOR MOVEMENT + PHYSICAL ENERGY







NEED FOR MOVEMENT + PHYSICAL ENERGY



Mentimeter

15


NEED FOR MOVEMENT + PHYSICAL ENERGY
Mentimeter
13

Mentimeter

What kinds of learning or wellness experiences become possible when students are able to move more freely throughout the day?

They can focus better when they need to.

Students are happy

Opportunities to move throughout the day provide students with a chance to process the experiences they have had in the more structured parts of their day

-more energizing and engaged

Comfortable students can focus better.

students feel like they have some agency

Centered and focused

Use of Creativity, imagination, freedom.

1 38

Mentimeter

What kinds of learning or wellness experiences become possible when students are able to move more freely throughout the day?

Kids tend to be more open to trying to learn new more complex things. Kids could become more social and less irritable.

Collaboration Better physical posture More energy Focus Self-regulation

Students feel more ownership and agency in their learning when they are provided opportunities to move that fit their learning style.

It instills agency and makes students direct themselves to what helps them best - not only to focus but what interests they have.

They feel trusted

Students are less antsy, physically and mentally and can engage better.

Less wasted time in zoning out. Less stress, more warm energy.

Movement opportunities More energy Engagement

1 38

Mentimeter

What kinds of learning or wellness experiences become possible when students are able to move more freely throughout the day?

A chance to find and recharge your mind with 3+ minutes of quiet, if desired

change in environment can make the day feel less dull and less of a feeling of repeating the same day

Growth mindset

Brains don't go "numb", less chance of falling asleep or losing focus, regulate stress, learn faster, and engage more naturally with peers and teachers

We'd be teaching healthy habits for the world after college We'd be be creating natural self-regulation and reducing the need for 'breaks'

Students have a chance to self-regulate. Students feel comfortable/safe and therefore are ready to learn. Students energy stays up, social interaction occurs, learn to be social humans.

Ability to focus on class activities while being in motion and interacting with other students and the teacher without being restricted to a desk

Open to creative ideas, problem solving, collaboration. Generate better health and wellness, less stress or stress management strategies. Opportunities for reflection

1 38

Mentimeter

What kinds of learning or wellness experiences become possible when students are able to move more freely throughout the day?

More authentic opportunities. Students that are able to move are more focused and engaged in the content rather than rushing to just finish.

Students feel less anxiety about being rushed point to point in a defined time frame. Students could have opportunities for meaningful interactions as they move throughout the school.

Higher level of engagement

Students would most likely stay in their classes longer.

more sense of choice and freedom for students

Helping students see the mind-body connection in a world that is constantly asking them to ignore their physical cues

Movement reduces fatigue - keeps kids more active and attentive and able to participate

Students choose what works better for them and that might vary from day to day

1 38

Mentimeter

What kinds of learning or wellness experiences become possible when students are able to move more freely throughout the day?

Can passing time be turned into a part of the PE/wellness experience? Increase the time ... gamify the activity to incentivize it

Supports different types of learners and thinkers that we're often trying to "control" or make fit a mold. Allows for collaboration to happen more easily, quickly.

They can better collaborate between subjects.

Flexible seating within a class helps kids stay in class, focused, and engaged while teachers monitor and provide SEL support as well as academic. Balance of movement within a building and ADA comp

Helps build upon students' interpersonal skills as well as empower their intrapersonal skills.

More focus or straightforward learning. A person may be able to keep themselves entertained while with understanding and digesting. Flexible seating like rocking chairs could help with self soothing.

Opportunities for: Movement Hands-on activities Student choice

- have an open mind - less stress -more focus on the task at hand - able to just take a breath and get work done

1 38

Mentimeter

What kinds of learning or wellness experiences become possible when students are able to move more freely throughout the day?

You can demonstrate your learning using your whole body. A dramatic reading of a story becomes that much better when you move.

Opportunity to step outside can relieve stress

Importance/benefits of movement throughout the day in any activity or environment

Students perform better when they are not focused on controlling their body to fit into one specific spot. Students can hear words said by a teacher if they are not thinking about how uncomfortable

Collaboration & Team work Development of academic identity for students Sense of Belonging Active engagement, not passive Increase in achievement

One kind of learning that become possible when students are able to move freely is that they can do more wealthy exercises and have a more wealthy life.

Students will feel more relaxed and self regulated through opportunities such as being able to stand when necessary. This also creates a sense of belonging.

A student would need to self regulate or the movement can become a distraction. The type of class matters, difficult in a lecture hall, easy in CTE.

1 38

Mentimeter

What kinds of learning or wellness experiences become possible when students are able to move more freely throughout the day?

Freedom to move

- biology(actually doing outside learning biology like for example photosynthesis, plants, interacting with the outside world. etc) - a space for outside relaxation, meditation.

The entire energy of education changes. Though it may not be about movement specifically, but more what the idea of movement represents. So an actively engaging experience might capture the idea of mo

Students don't feel as controlled and feel like they have more of a choice, it becomes more comfortable.

1 38

DESIRE FOR SOCIAL INTERACTION



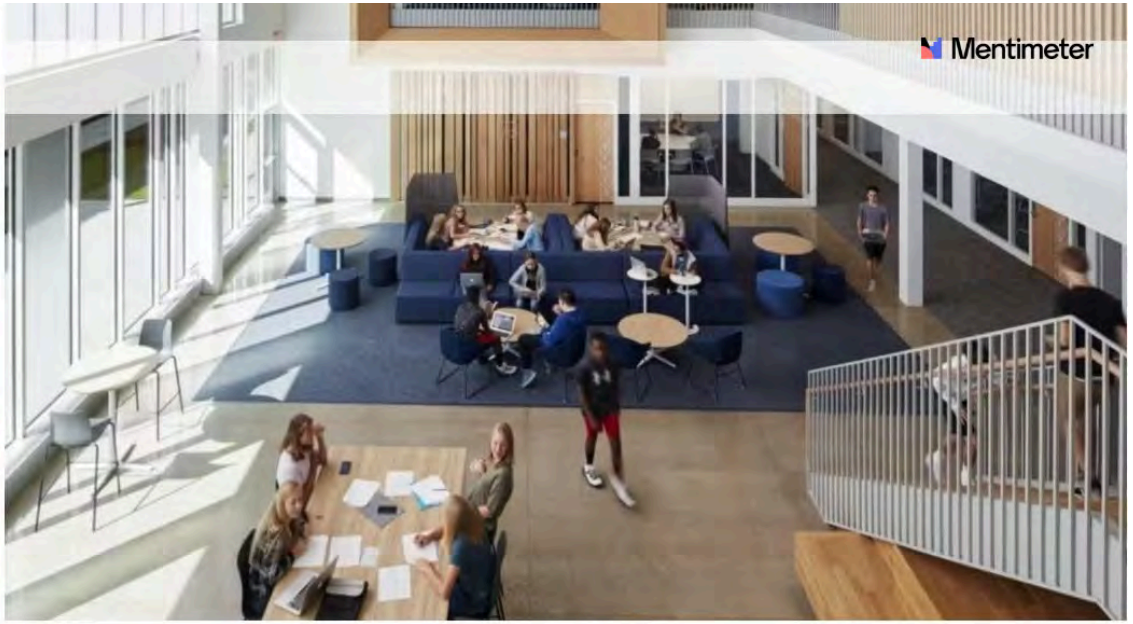






DESIRE FOR SOCIAL INTERACTION









Mentimeter

What experiences become possible when students have frequent opportunities to connect and collaborate, both during structured and unstructured times?

Students develop relationships with one another and figure out how to problem solve without teacher's direct guidance.

more productive, focused time

Student connections

Transferable learning

They try to connect with each other more. It gives a sense of choicd as well. I think students will feel more comfortable and be more friendly.

Learn from each other

Self regulation

More collaboration time

1

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Mentimeter

What experiences become possible when students have frequent opportunities to connect and collaborate, both during structured and unstructured times?

Opportunity for self-regulation that begin to feel natural, rather than accessing regulation strategies when we've hit critical stress-mass

facilitate meeting new people and making new friends

Expand collaborations with other classes.

Dramatically increased project based learning. Socializing within a task which mirrors many experiences in the working world

Increase in engagement and attendance

When students have stronger social connections, and are able to self regulate as needed; they are more likely to take academic risks in their class; even if on a small scale at first. It builds trust.

More enjoyable lunch or free time

More individualized projects or connections between classes

1 39

Mentimeter

What experiences become possible when students have frequent opportunities to connect and collaborate, both during structured and unstructured times?

Develop genuine connections. Feel a sense of community responsibility for the space.

Fills the desire to be social during the school day

Better lunch experience with choice of seating and level of interaction

Less interruptions during class time

Students will feel like their wants and needs are valid and important.

A sense of belonging and connection based on chance encounters

people coming together for new ideas

Earlier identification of student-wide issues and better approach to be proactive rather than reactive to address problems.

1 39

Mentimeter

What experiences become possible when students have frequent opportunities to connect and collaborate, both during structured and unstructured times?

Students feel ownership of school experience, feel connected with the school community, and feel pride.

If there were varied seating in one space for lunch then students could get what they need socially while being monitored for developmental safery

It gives a chance for students to help teach each other new things, expand interests and social groups. I think isolation will decrease.

Provide periods during the day for clubs to meet or guidance / advising

Breaking of cliques because students actually collaborate throughout the day in class. They truly build understanding and connections with their classmates

Sense of belonging and excitement to come to school.

More comfortable areas to work or socialize

Socialization opportunities

1 39

Mentimeter

What experiences become possible when students have frequent opportunities to connect and collaborate, both during structured and unstructured times?

New friends, new confidence, new relationships, more engagement and joy.

Huge opportunity for more project based learning

Improved student and staff relationships
Opportunities for choice

Increased confidence, self-awareness, empathy. Built in club time.

School becoming a more enjoyable place for kids to attend.

Students have time to reflect on learning, share with each other, and apply (through conversations) to the larger world. Also empowers students to define their downtime experience.

Making friends and creating a better study environment for students can lead to improved grades.

Belonging

1

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Mentimeter

What experiences become possible when students have frequent opportunities to connect and collaborate, both during structured and unstructured times?

They might solve problems faster, build social confidence, feel more supported by their teachers, curiosity might spike in these spaces compared to a normal classroom in which we are used to.

Less class cutting

Collaboration, helping each other, allowing different people to exist in one space whether shy or social. Allowing space for group projects to occur

Choices to work and thrive alongside each other or be alone.

Students will likely use time to structure their day/lunch. They may know they have built in time for reflection. Increased focus during class time

A better atmosphere for school in general. Kids would be willing to learn. It could increase participation and focus. Children won't feel trapped. Kids would view school as interesting and fun

During unstructured time/after school: students have a chance to do their homework, meet with friends to collab on projects, etc.

Happiness as we are social by nature

1 39

Mentimeter

What experiences become possible when students have frequent opportunities to connect and collaborate, both during structured and unstructured times?

Comfort, natural community

Students will be more motivated to get up in the morning and come to school.

- more application and higher grades students will care more

Allowing students to expand the opportunity to explore new interests. Allow students to feel a sense of belonging in formal and informal spaces.

Preparing students for college and career readiness where choice is a big component and also how to manage time.

Unstructured structure.

More awareness of other students if the places for connection have student display opportunities

Students will feel more free to express themselves and not try and supress their unique qualities.

1 39

Mentimeter

What experiences become possible when students have frequent opportunities to connect and collaborate, both during structured and unstructured times?

A experiences that become possible is that they can learn how to be more sociable doing a collaborate work.

It would be good if the student get to choose who they sit with or work with and change it up frequently. Collaborating classes could be switched frequently so as to form different groups.

Having an open space connected to classroom departments allows for intergrade communities of practice as well as provides collaboration among tea hers and students

Students could be more engaged in their work. More useful work could be accomplished.

More socialization opportunities

1 39

Mentimeter

What concerns might adults have about giving students more autonomy in social spaces, and what supports or routines could help make this work well?

kids not going to class	Release of power	Security	Supervision
Adult supervision	Supervision and expectations	Clear expectations for student behavior	kids missing out on learning — could be solved by involving learning while providing more autonomy

39

Mentimeter

What concerns might adults have about giving students more autonomy in social spaces, and what supports or routines could help make this work well?

Class attendance

Going to require a sense of trust between students & teachers about effective use of the space.

Respecting the spaces

Adults are control freaks! I say this with love. Worry about on-task behavior, releasing the routine structures we may have been using for years.

Developmentally, not all kids are ready for this I supervised autonomy. I am concerned about bullying as well as other addictive behaviors going unchecked

Safety / students leaving where they are supposed to be. Who is supervising / taking attendance or if we even need to .

Building trust that students will make good choices

Not focusing on school-related work and instead just socializing

39

Mentimeter

What concerns might adults have about giving students more autonomy in social spaces, and what supports or routines could help make this work well?

People will need a mindset shift

Some teachers fear a lack of control. With strong modeling, students can safely practice being productive in these more open social settings. This will set them up for success in the real world.

Respecting all who use the spaces

Craziness, out of control behaviors, less control

Staff is fearful that students will cause trouble or wander off.

Increase duties for Istaff

An assumption that students will be unsafe. We need to start allowing students to have more autonomy and choice by providing students with course offerings that appeal to them.

Students not staying in task.



Mentimeter

What concerns might adults have about giving students more autonomy in social spaces, and what supports or routines could help make this work well?

Concern about mischief. Ensure adults have line of sight and are visible to students.

Loss of control. Clear expectations will be needed. Implementation of Responsive Classroom at HS could help set and model these expectations

Could be used in the wrong way like skipping, distracting other students, Students making tik tok dances in these spaces

All of the adults would need to commit to monitoring and providing support

Adults may be worried about the lack of supervision.

Blurred lines between what students can have autonomy in versus what needs to still stay in the hands of staff (to ensure safety, teaching of standards, etc).

Peer conflict, missing classes because not paying attention to time

They could possibly think that kids would take advantage. Students may not do work or pay attention. It would have to increase the school day or diminish class time.

39

Mentimeter

What concerns might adults have about giving students more autonomy in social spaces, and what supports or routines could help make this work well?

Control would require completely different tactics, shedding of the idea that the job of teachers is to instruct, and forcing a facilitative skill set that appears very counter to how education works.

kids not being supervised— more sense of trust and respect within school culture

Concerns: Lack of control, unpredictability, students "taking advantage" of their freedom. Supports: Mentors, advisors, close connections between students and staff.

Plans for students who need more support in theses spaces

I think they might worry about how responsible students will act with those privileges. Students may have to be taught social ques and how to be considerate of others and how to improve social setting

Kids might get off task if they aren't being supervised, social drama might build up without exclusion, some students might dominate while quieter ones kind of "stay back"

The concern that adults have to give autonomy to student is that they won't do their work correctly. Give autonomy to students can work well when all the students wants to do the right thing

Lack of control, staff would need to passively support students in some situations, allowing students to navigate challenges independently

39

Mentimeter

What concerns might adults have about giving students more autonomy in social spaces, and what supports or routines could help make this work well?

- they make break rules and do things they are not supposed to

Productivity?

Loss of control

Creating structures to increase student accountability

Need to know that students are doing their own work, not just "borrowing " from the smart kids. Use AI to find similarities.

Students need to feel more engaged and excited about class in order for them to stay in class. If that is the case then students would be using communal spaces appropriately and at approximate times.

There are changes to the instructional time that are required. Teachers need to be or have flexibility built into their work day. Class and course schedules may need to be aligned in different w

Control happens through empowerment rather than direction.

39

Mentimeter

What concerns might adults have about giving students more autonomy in social spaces, and what supports or routines could help make this work well?

Create a safe environment in where students are also responsible for their wellbeing and not just the adults- but some behaviors come from home, so it's hard

Reconsider what adult supervision looks like. Adapt to new routines that may be louder, quieter, more independent or more collaborative than what has happened in the past

You need to begin with overarching structure of expectations that ultimately provide the freedom to engage in a more autonomous space

Students might choose to skip or leave classes to socialize at pre-set meeting times. Building the social time into extended passing times and into class time would help and provide a bit of presence

Not a concern about autonomy but more like time on learning- we are bound by the state laws and the CBA articles

Security may be a concern but may be unfounded if data shows otherwise

Consistent routines across the school - from staff to staff are necessary in order to maximize the autonomy in social spaces to make them most effective.

A balance of autonomy and direct adult interaction would be good. If a student proves autonomy is effective, less adult interaction will be needed.

39

Mentimeter

What concerns might adults have about giving students more autonomy in social spaces, and what supports or routines could help make this work well?

Students need to have a sense of ownership over the space which means being responsible for the space.

Trusting students

Having the same routine repeating every day can be underwhelming

Encouragment in a learning environment is powerful and very helpful

Student abuse of privileges would need to be tempered by established routines

39

Mentimeter

On a scale of 1–5, how much opportunity do students currently have to move during a typical school day?



Almost none

Frequent & Intentional

31

Mentimeter

What is one small, realistic change that could increase meaningful movement, collaboration, or autonomy by one point on that scale?

New furniture

Project based learning

One opportunity in each class to get up even for a few minutes

Lesson plans integrating movement

Every lesson /class should include at least one opportunity for movement

Design a portion of your lesson with movement in mind.

Change in teachers' practice

group work

31

Mentimeter

What is one small, realistic change that could increase meaningful movement, collaboration, or autonomy by one point on that scale?

Well designed lessons that incorporate movement

Bigger space, comfortable space.

Increase PE opportunities

moving around as part of class. as little as being able to to stand while working or move to another part of the room.

Include movement in teaching strategies in classes

New furniture

Incorporate movement into lessons/activities

PD for teachers about building movement into classes

31

Mentimeter

What is one small, realistic change that could increase meaningful movement, collaboration, or autonomy by one point on that scale?

Allow fitness center use throughout the day

A few minutes longer break between classes.

Shared learning hallways in addition to separate classroom space.

Utilizing other spaces in and out of the building that are more suitable to a particular lesson. Getting students on their feet to lead classes

Increasing collaboration expectations in. Each class

Change in teacher practices

Integrating movement in lesson planning

Get up and switch things up with group discussions like we did this morning.

31

Mentimeter

What is one small, realistic change that could increase meaningful movement, collaboration, or autonomy by one point on that scale?

Curriculum tweaks

Having a space to be outside our classroom that doesn't disturb other classes.

Teachers building this into their teaching

10+2 instructional planning
Within classroom collaboration/groups and movement

going outside more.

Create a policy that students do not need to sit in desks but can work where they are most productive in the classroom as long as it is not disruptive

10-15 break for students; perhaps after lunch to socialize, walk, stay in the gym, library.

pair, small group, interpersonal activities



Mentimeter

What is one small, realistic change that could increase meaningful movement, collaboration, or autonomy by one point on that scale?

Encourage projects that are active either physically or mentally.

Tunable lighting levels and colors, and similar sensory spaces

31

IDENTITY + BELONGING









Mentimeter

What experiences or messages should students regularly encounter in school that help them feel seen, valued, and part of a shared community?

You belong here.

100% agree that a display of work in progress!

The process matters as much as the end product. Make posting WIP a part of the daily routine.

Their work / murals should be one the walls.

Their own work on display

you are important to the community

The student run art gallery is amazing!

You matter -- what matters to you?

1 33

Mentimeter

What experiences or messages should students regularly encounter in school that help them feel seen, valued, and part of a shared community?

Student's heritage and background should be represented throughout the school.

Student work

Process over perfection

That their opinions matter and their work is important

Their picture on the wall

Peer mentoring would be great.

Allowing time for SEL check ins.

Identity, feel them selves reflected in images, quotes, etc

1 33

Mentimeter

What experiences or messages should students regularly encounter in school that help them feel seen, valued, and part of a shared community?

They should be able to see their work, and their identities reflected back in the school

They need to feel noticed, real representation, roles that matter as students and as individuals, chances to speak and care from the adults around them.

A gallery of aspirational people who reflect our students' identities is also critical

They should feel like we believe in them.

Some specific art that represents the community on school walls, and projects, work done by students.

Students create the school. Their identities inform the school's identity.

Student work

Student work displayed

1 33

Mentimeter

What experiences or messages should students regularly encounter in school that help them feel seen, valued, and part of a shared community?

Representation of different cultures.

Seeing other student's projects and work on display.

Maybe pictures from our community events on the digital screens around the building

Representation of their own cultures and identities

Art, schoolwork, ongoing projects, screens with info and achievements

Accepted for who they are and have it represented throughput the school

stuff that connects to them/ their own work

Internships and hands on out of school experiences should be available to all

1 33

Mentimeter

What experiences or messages should students regularly encounter in school that help them feel seen, valued, and part of a shared community?

Seeing their work and accomplishments displayed. Being regularly invited to participate in designing and redesigning our spaces, processes, and policies.

They should feel like they are missed when they aren't here

Having spaces for rotating murals

Students should be involved in the ownership and maintenance of the building.

We should regularly see work on display and progress over perfection

Nothing about them without them.

It's okay to do mistakes, with your mistakes you can learn.

Accessible and inclusive signage, items on display and classroom materials. Various types of student work.

1 33

Mentimeter

What experiences or messages should students regularly encounter in school that help them feel seen, valued, and part of a shared community?

Pride in space, a sense they contribute (their work) to the fabric

Work and projects on display Messaging created by them Clubs, activities, sports Cultural representation

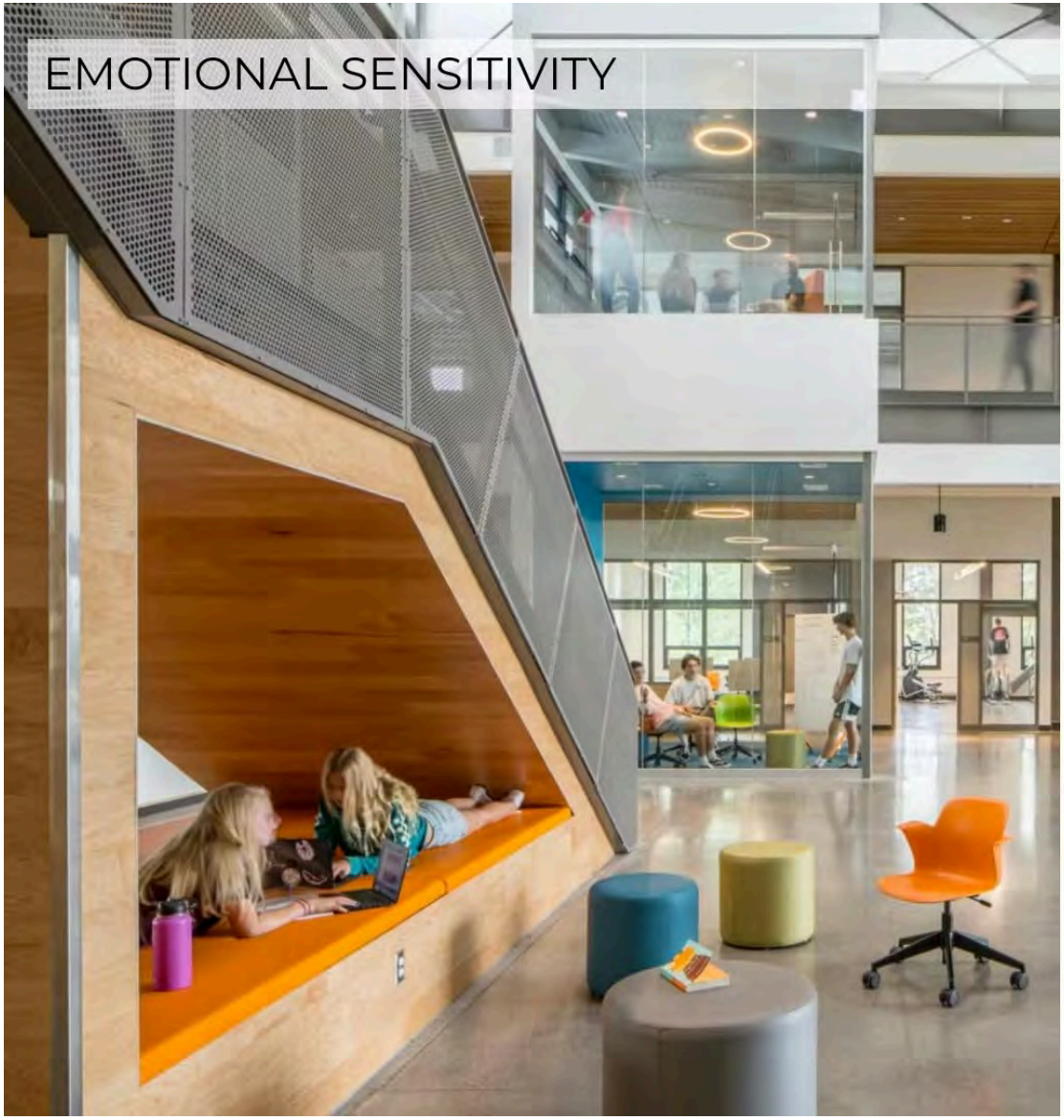
Celebrating all holidays and teaching about different traditions

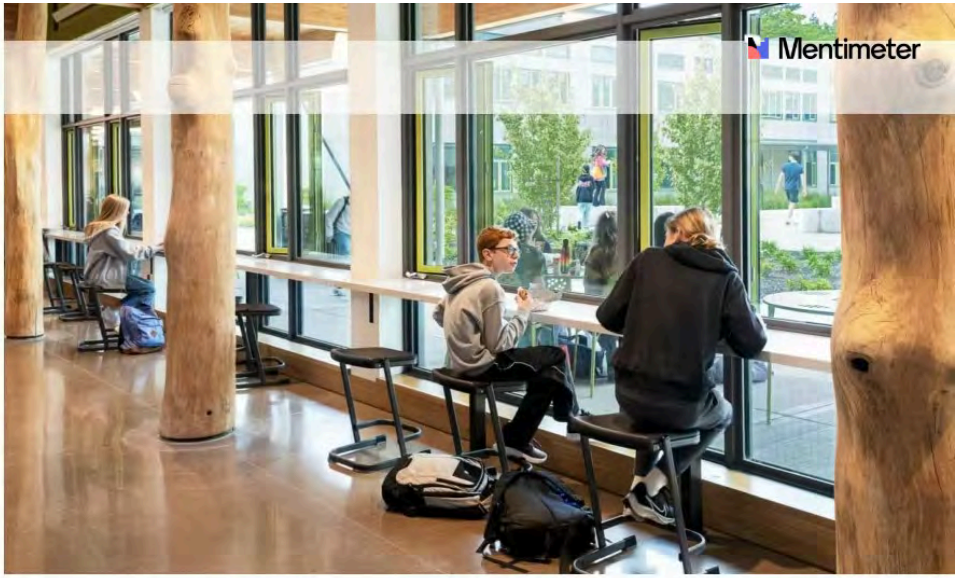
Teachers who look like the students

Welcoming entry ways
Learning spaces and informal spaces that they can occupy and are expected to occupy.
Teachers who embrace a sense of belonging.

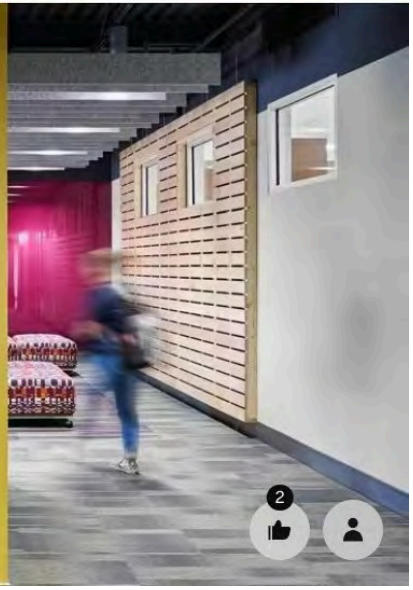
1 33

EMOTIONAL SENSITIVITY









Mentimeter

What kinds of daily experiences or supports would help students manage stress, emotions, and social pressures in a healthy way?

more time for lunch

Flex block

Resources, reminders, visuals

Teacher availability

longer transition times and access to bathrooms during those times.

Meditation/yoga opportunities

Consistent strategies that all staff are aware of to help students manage stress reaction responses - if it's shared amongst the school, it can become part of the being.

Starting each class with a brief circle before diving into academic lesson. This will create culture, build trust and reset from transition

2 33

Mentimeter

What kinds of daily experiences or supports would help students manage stress, emotions, and social pressures in a healthy way?

A flex or WIN block.

They need culturally sustaining practices during class. They need opportunities to make mistakes

Break rooms in the school for teachers and students.

Music during period transition like at Disney World

Calm room or sensory room

more schedules time with guidance set aside; not just students having to reach out for help

Ability to take a break without asking for the bathroom or nurse

Flex period like WIN

2 33

Mentimeter

What kinds of daily experiences or supports would help students manage stress, emotions, and social pressures in a healthy way?

A safe place or adult for kids to go to

Short reset moments that are built into the day Access to someone "neutral" Opportunities to talk things out before they explode

Friendly and welcoming staff, teachers, Admin, all.

We can't expect students to manage emotions that they're not "allowed" to have — meaning, we need adults who can model coping strategies as well as room for big feelings to come and go

Great professional development is step one.

A few minutes to debrief and relax or a block a week to try and get home work done or just a free period.

Opportunities to vent. Opportunities to step outside. Built-in time with counselors

Regular advisory with curriculum. Peer mentors with built in time for connection and activities.

2 33

Mentimeter

What kinds of daily experiences or supports would help students manage stress, emotions, and social pressures in a healthy way?

A study time / break period built into the day that is not lunch

Music or other media

Time to work on independent projects in a classroom of their choosing.

Having safe and supportive alternative activities for students to choose during times available in their day- before, during and after school

Students need a lunch space that meets their needs that is emotionally and physically safe

Flexible spaces/time to self-regulate

Safe caring adults that students can relate to and the ability to access these adults when they need.

Multilingual counselors

2 33

Mentimeter

What kinds of daily experiences or supports would help students manage stress, emotions, and social pressures in a healthy way?

I think we should help them realize that they don't have to feel anxiety

Outdoor time, games, movement, high lights low lights

Room filled with sensory swings

Often clear a sense of expectation and responsibilities. can provide a sense of comfort.

Outdoor time, games, movement, high lights low lights

Commitment to team building everywhere. Freshmen, and in class, and at lunch etc

Time to meet with teachers in response to the daily lessons

Music, outdoor spaces to sit, study or relax.

2 33

Part 5 – Reimagined Student Experience

In Part 5, participants reimagined a future daily experience for students by revisiting current experience maps and proposing big-picture shifts informed by developmental needs and belonging.

Each group shared a short pitch highlighting key shifts and the systems, culture, or spaces needed to support them. Their reimagined experiences are documented in the pages that follow.

ARRIVAL

Bus (6:50)
- Gym - play sports (30 mins)
- 7:40 HR
  - talk to friends/teacher
  - look at Attendance, not Announcements
- Do not eat school breakfast

LEARNING BLOCKS

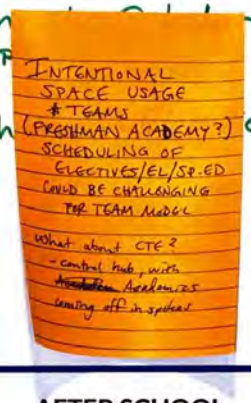
- Good experiences in class (ELA)
  - Do work/activities (forget to turn in)
  - * 20 students
  - more mixed languages spoken would help
  - more English practice in Electrical shop

Math - too fast
↳ discuss Math, partners (2)
- Quizzes on Fridays

History - not much speaking by students
- Do Now
- Activities
  - Some movement

TRANSITIONS/PASSING

- too short
  ↳ have to run
- Electrical things in locker, rest in backpack
- On[illegible] - 5th
- * ch[illegible]cal



LUNCH

Caf 3 - eat quick (5 min)
↳ Gym to play soccer

LEARNING BLOCKS

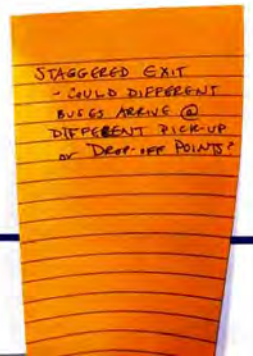
Bathroom during class

Electrical
↳ up and moving
↳ Hands-on
↳ circuits on paper, then in practice
↳ individual, but Collaborative
- goes fast

DISMISSAL

Outside is overwhelming
- wait for 2nd or 3rd bus (outside).
- Fences made it worse

Bus is crowded, stand (10 minutes home)



AFTER SCHOOL

Tuesdays
- English help
- Optional, writing

Some homework

Table 1

Medford High School
Student Experience Mapping | December 9, 2025

ARRIVAL

- Socializing
- Go to Caf - go to breakfast
- Lots of walking around
- Grab & Go Cart
- Free for all
- Loud / Overstimulating - Caf
- Switch HR to a different period

LEARNING BLOCKS

- Difficulty sitting in one spot
- Repetitive cycle
- Looks forward to shop
  - Comfortable place
  - Always doing something different
- Interactive / Hands-on
  - Not consistent in all classes
- Likes real life experiences - Bio Tech

cell phones

TRANSITIONS/PASSING

Ice Breaker to Start class
Time to socialize decompress & connect

- from
- tes for
- ing time
- Backpack / Lockers too heavy / not using
- Traffic
  - using cell phones slows down flow

LUNCH

Creating a Safe / Alternate Space that is Quiet or Seperate from lunch room

- un meals
- prisonlike
- Lou
- Long "by the time you get food there" it only 5 mins to eat

LEARNING BLOCKS

- CTE Shop - now → loves being in there!
- More tired - drained
- Music while learning in class
- Having electives

DISMISSAL

- Cattle gates for buses!

AFTER SCHOOL

- Chaos on bus

Moving advisory to mid morning

2

Medford High School
Student Experience Mapping | December 9, 2025

ARRIVAL

- 7:30 - Bus
- HR (Phone) distribu... all ove... but assi... by gra... level

LEARNING BLOCKS

- Lack of elective choice
- ...ing a ... do not like
- ...ence classe... movement
- Excessive note taking
- No use of outside space

TRANSITIONS/PASSING

- Packed ...ways/stairs
- Wa... ...ver the ... get to ...
- Not enc... to use ba...rooms
  - ↳ which bathrooms are available?

LUNCH

- good lunch time after P.5
  - long lines
  - longer time needed @ lunch
- choice of cafe

#3

LEARNING BLOCKS

- Academic Enrichment after lunch is a good time b/c it allows for catch up time.
  - ↳ councelor time if needed
- Majority of day is spent in independent work or fragmented group work
- teachers appear to be pulled in multiple directions (rules etc.)
- ~~[illegible]~~ end of units → Projects → tests

DISMISSAL

- Friends or bus
- Not a good flow to bus

AFTER SCHOOL

- lack of student space for in btwn school & sports (to hang)
- bring all stuff to fields
- homework feels connected to learning but can be done quickly / on the fly

~~Laptop work~~

Medford High School
Student Experience Mapping | December 9, 2025

ARRIVAL

WAKE UP
DRIVE/WALK TO SCHOOL
TRAFFIC OVERWHELMING (MEDFORD SQ)
BREAKFAST OR DRNK
NO EARLY SOCIALIZING
EAT BREAKFAST IN SHOP / HOMEROOM OR FIRST PERIOD
NOBODY STANDS FOR THE PLEDGE

LEARNING BLOCKS

Home Room → CTE Shop (Health Assisting)
Short walk, not the case for all students
Longer travel ~~time~~ distance to class make it difficult to get to class on time - more stressful. Can't use restroom, locker

No complaints about shop
2nd/3rd - helping work with underclassman
4th/5th - Shop to themselves
6th/7th - Soph in shop - interactive

- Focus on mastering standards and skills - Provided directions and then the students work on it until they can prove it to the teacher

- Academic, just a normal classroom

TRANSITIONS/PASSING

LUNCH

steady time earlier in the career
now, 30 min of lunch (less w/ passing)
cafe lines are huge
microwave lines are huge
practically no time to eat
just take a quick wash & back to class

early lunch is had
now 12:18 → more convenient

Eat lunch in cafe 2 - greater cafe 3 vs teacher
~~Lose this space~~

planning on using Senior Lounge next year → store closed

(7 periods, shorter lunch, no language)
7 period was intended to be extra, but that is not what happened)

+ Longer lunch period
↳ Don't have to rush

LEARNING BLOCKS

→ 2 periods after lunch

→ shop, assist w/ grade 10 in shop

pp. 11 → 2 periods after lunch
→ teacher discussions & challenges my thinking
→ class feels challenging
→ engage topics

DISMISSAL

→ parent pick up or MBTA bus
Busses are challenging w/ overcrowding on earlier buses.

→ very cold outside to wait for buses

→ Wa... of...

Stations for Bus pick ups instead of one entrance for all buses.

AFTER SCHOOL

→ work Wed - Sunday.

→ 2x week ~~go~~ home

→ to work MBTA on bus in Stoneham

→ ...

→ C...

→ M... ...ol / work.

Specifically →
· A/B week opp. to take a Language and elective block.

Medford High School
Student Experience Mapping | December 9, 2025

ARRIVAL

grab breakfast and eat + walk

wanders around the wake where nobody can see you

leave for bus @ 6:30 pick up friend 7:11 7:30 arrival

keep moving

LEARNING BLOCKS

leaves every class once needs to move

Likes being able to stand in back

CTE is my favorite learn something new

Spanish is different every day more projects + drafts

history is okay I miss a lot of school so I'm behind on the work

I talk a lot → really fun

I feel like I'm not a student

Same every day sit in class

math do now teaching + notes also work some participation 15 min of Quiz Friday for part

homeroom doesn't really do each other don't talk

listen to music + play puzzle

TRANSITIONS/PASSING

talk

breaks don't want to miss anything

its nice cuz I'm small I have friends save seats walk

not a lot of time

LUNCH

FRIENDS ARE IN 1ST LUNCH, I AM IN 2nd Lunch.

BATHROOMS → Cafeteria during the Lunch block, all other Bathrooms locked.

Cafe no BR open during class times

IN the cafe (eats) then left the lunch room

line was LONG. Old timer duo.

I'm an extrovert but I like my alone time

I'm on extra spaces that took different

everything were new wasn't eating lunch → overwhelming

LEARNING BLOCKS

I could be doing something in regular classes but I probably not always paying attention in CTE

leave for a bathroom break w/ friend

mostly sitting block

DISMISSAL

tries hard not to stay after for academics

↳ walk an hour home if missed bus

↳ bus is crowded people are rushing talk w/ friend

Bell = finally

gets shit in the face a lot because she cannot hear and everyone is pushing

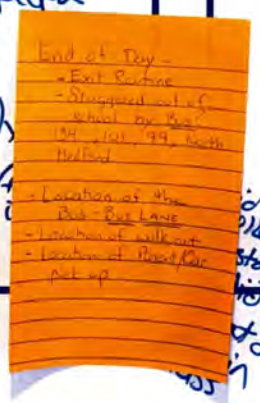
AFTER SCHOOL

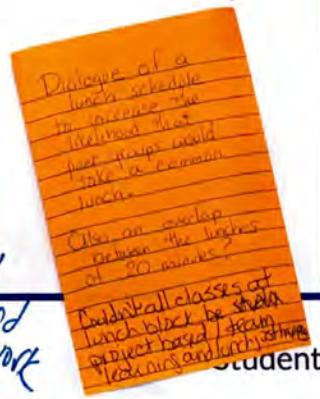
gets home 3-3:15

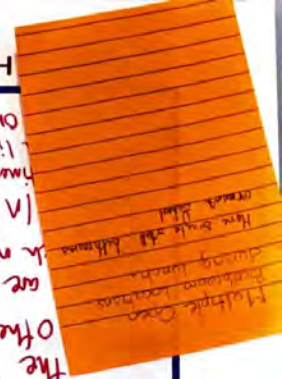
snack homework + play w/ dog

homework from home

~1 hr of homework









Medford High School

Student Experience Mapping | December 9, 2025

ARRIVAL

7:20

Socialize w/ friends in Cafe 2

HR @ 7:40

Carry everything on-person

LEARNING BLOCKS

Mostly sitting
Listening

Some Communication in certain classes

Structured similarly
Instant activity openers

Classes 1-5 till lunch

Computer-Use
HW → almost all online

Teachers absent → LH

Freedom & where you go - based on grade?

Reconfigure schedule
- flex time?
- mid day snack?

TRANSITIONS/PASSING

CRAMPED
STRESSFUL

Passing time depends on class location

No time to go to Locker

LUNCH

Eat in Cafe
Bring Lunch
Sit w/ same group @ same table

Go for Walk
Cafe is Warm

Look forward to Lunch

LEARNING BLOCKS

After lunch
Math > most work
Bio < feels like forever! but enjoy it

Tired
Need to be very focused

Lab work

2:33
Out si
Love
Bus li

Takes longer to get home since bus railings installed

AFTER SCHOOL

hang out here if o reason to

Warm → Walk to Sq.
Cold → bus to Sq.

Help from Teachers
↳ scheduled

Table 6

Medford High School
Student Experience Mapping | December 9, 2025

ARRIVAL

Wake up EARLY!
bus is too early so arrive by car – always late.

Add more breakfast carts – left out ~~thru~~ 2nd period

Access to snack carts all day

LEARNING BLOCKS

1. 2. History/ELA (double block)
[really likes this format → comfort with the class]
Unique class - short break between classes.
3. Science - always late.
4. AP Art - awesome
Work on your own (10 mins)
Lunch (1st) - feels too quick w/ long lines. 3rd flr. Lunch [from last yr. 6 mins. less]

TRANSITIONS/PASSING

3 minutes - go from 1st flr C to 3rd flr. B - always late.

Increase amount of passing time - 5 mins. (It helps to walk around)

5 minute grace - mini-advisory - for ?'s, review agenda

LUNCH

Move spots to eat lunch - Variety.

LEARNING BLOCKS

5. Math - hardest - PreCalc Honors - large class (26) - cramped → stressful
Test-taking - has extra time but feeling left behind when last person to hand in. [First H math class] so also feels in catch-up mode.
6. Art [M, T, Th] II → fun wishes could be everyday [W-Fr.] Photography. No darkroom - missing out - not engaging.
7. [M, W, Fri.] Guitar - fun.
[Tu, Th] Gym.

Likes this schedule - fun @ end of day

DISMISSAL

~~Evening~~
Depends on sports, theater
Can use time for art if there is in-between
Bus/car conflict
School bus - 1 shot

Add a 'late bus'
- North Medford Yellow Bus
- Make the BUS (MBTA) PASS easy to obtain

AFTER SCHOOL

Soccer - every day
Opportunity for extra help - 30 mins.

7

Medford High School
Student Experience Mapping | December 9, 2025

ARRIVAL

- Gets to school early, and socializes with friends in car (10 mins)
- Puts jacket in locker
- Akward HR experiences (sit in silence) → phone use inhibiting socialization
- Likes HR teacher

LEARNING BLOCKS

- Days have variety – not the same schedule each day. Waterfall schedule possibly

away, annoying but
Feel like a little kid
to teacher. Does
Discussion but worries only.
. Take notes - vocab
friends - don't need
they don't be of
teacher. May be bc
gym) - working w/ kids
Corner. Enjoy as a break from Academics.

2 harder classes

- AP Stats: enjoy that work done in groups.
- no movement breaks. Sit most of day.
- Honors Anatomy: bored - don't really like. A lot of teacher talking. Stand & deliver/ lecture. Will stand at desks

TRANSITIONS/PASSING

- late (always) to Anatomy, from Math. Not enough time.
- used to have 5 mins – now 3 mins.
- crowded in stairwells; in certain areas.
- don't get the chance to take a moment between classes – just going from class to class.
- no time during passing to use bathroom
- B-building bathrooms nice but never open.

LUNCH

- Senior cafe w/ friends is nice – except when it was moldy.
- Previous years, didn't have friends in same lunch.
- would sit in Cafe 1, bc was quiet & could sit alone, but sometimes felt "like a loser" w/o friends.
- School lunch: like it. some days are better than others.
- Servery experience is bad – if lunch is good, line is crazy. Need to really push.
- Spend alot of time in line.

LEARNING BLOCKS

- Elective Academic enrichment no friends in class solo work bored and lonely.
- Sleepy after eating
- Spanish back with friends, more talking. Enjoys rigor.

- Academic Enrichment can occur in areas like the Senior Cafe. can check in with teacher at beginning & end of period

DISMISSAL

- Spreads to parking lot.
- misses senior privilege of leaving a few mins early to parking lot. Does not want traffic.

- Staggered dismissal time (seniors first)
- 5 minutes?
- used to have this

AFTER SCHOOL

- sometimes hang around after school
- soccer: stay at school to get ready. Hang out in Trainers' Room. All sports hang out in trainers Rm bc its co-ed.
- tennis: practice at 3pm. Leave immediately from school, get coffee, change at community bldg near courts.

Medford High School
Student Experience Mapping | December 9, 2025

Part 6 – Closing Reflection

In Part 6, participants concluded the sessions by reflecting on beliefs, values, and priorities they hope will guide the future Medford High School. The collective beliefs, values, and priorities are documented in the pages that follow.

- Giving students ownership of their educational experiences
- No repetitive cycle for classes
- Student overall health and safety
- Human centered learning spaces that align with the development and needs of the high school students
- Student-centered in an authentic way
- The high school feels like home for students and the community
- This school has to be a guide – good teachers and student relationships
- MHS is your launchpad
- Engagement and joy
- Adaptive and flexible to students' evolving needs
- Innovative; equity
- Every student matters
- Setting students up for success socially and academically and with work
- That the learning environment provides a space for our students to learn how best to be a learner
- Sense of belonging
- Student-first mindset
- The creativity and uniqueness of an individual
- Provide more autonomy to students while supporting them, emotionally and academically, on this journey
- Pride
- Relationship building
- Nothing about them without them
- Flexibility and adaptive in thought and space
- Movement and trust; independence
- All students feel seen, heard, and valued creating a community
- Resiliency, flexibility, inspiring
- Preparing students for their future after high school
- Teachers are powerful designers who must design opportunities for students to develop intellectual and social identities by prioritizing discourse
- What does a unified / comprehensive Medford HS look like?
- Kids find their home away from home
- Student life and input
- Exploration together
- The vote needs to stay the vote: AB-week for most, C for some
- New ideas
- Comfortable learning spaces
- Students having a sense of belonging
- Every student deserves, is entitled to, and grows best when the adults believe in their capacity to do hard things
- Adaptability should guide the new building's design; adaptable for individuals, and by the administration in the future to support changing paradigm

VISIONING 2 OVERVIEW

On December 17, 2025, members of Medford Public Schools attended a meeting with Educational Planner Mike Pirollo and Educational Consultant Paul White from MLP Integrated Design, Inc., along with SMMA Architects. This meeting was part of the visioning effort for the Medford High School building project. The session focused on defining what powerful teaching and learning should look and feel like in a future Medford High School.

Part 1 – Learning That Sticks

In Part 1, participants reflected on experiences where learning felt meaningful and lasting. Through discussion and shared descriptors, participants articulated core values related to powerful learning, establishing a foundation for the day's work.

Participants' responses have been clustered by category and are documented below.

How We Define Learning

- Learning is when you are able to connect and apply new knowledge to real-world scenarios
- Opportunities to take safe risks in order to grow by acquiring knowledge and skills to do your personal best
- A process of exploring new information and finding out what / how it sticks or matters in your life
- The internalization of information
- Ownership of knowledge
- Perseverance / productive struggle
- Meaningful / intrinsic
- Short-term vs. long-term
- 'Aha' moment
- Critical thinking
- Resiliency
- Deeper understanding through engagement and application
- Learning has real-world applications that build on previous experiences and give students some agency over creativity and outcome of task; it is understanding and applying vs. memorizing facts and dates
- To be able to teach it to someone else
- To be able to ask questions
- Engagement with the opportunities
- Having a deeper understanding of content, relationships, self, surroundings than what one had before

How We Define Success

- Application to real-life beyond testing
- Problem solving
- The ability to apply (use, share, etc.) learning
- Willingness to take risks and continued growth and personal achievement
- Inspiration / motivational
- Application of knowledge
- Ownership of knowledge
- Do grades define success? How do we measure?
- When students can apply what they learn in the world and they can see how learning helps meet their dreams

- Confirmation by seeing students practice and apply what was taught which leads to self-affirmation and positive identity
- Being able to apply what you have learned in real life; recognize and respectful
- Articulation or demonstration of progress and understanding
- Confidence and readiness
- Success is the ability to understand and apply the concepts from class / life; being able to explain concepts in students' own words and pass on that knowledge at some future point
- Taking something you learned and use it in your own life
- Feeling like you accomplished something
- Internal / from the students' perspective not in a grading sense

Part 2 – Hallmarks of Learning

In Part 2, participants examined research on effective teaching and learning, including learner-centered practices, interdisciplinary approaches, and key instructional shifts. They then reflected on strengths, growth areas, and barriers to implementation before moving on to the next activity.

Discussion points from the whole group conversation are documented below:

- Use of planning time (need more space to do so)
- Departmental silos
- Lack of interdisciplinary courses
- Lack of common planning time
- Belonging and wellness (good but need more)
- Need more real-world connection
- Amount of limited time with students for academic classes
- Too much teacher talk and lecture – need to make a mindset shift
- Equity and inclusion – barrier is schedule
- Do we remove tracks; it's a district thing, not a HS thing
- Navigating the "system," even more challenging for English learners

Part 3 – Identify & Mindset

In Part 3, participants examined what it means for Medford to operate as one comprehensive high school with a shared identity, values, and culture of opportunity. Through collaborative dialogue, participants explored the student and teacher experiences that should define daily life in the school, identified practices that would bring this vision to life, and named existing systems that must be reconsidered.

The questions and responses from the collaborative conversations are documented below.

Question 1:

What does it mean for Medford to operate as one comprehensive high school, and what kind of mindset and day-to-day experience should this create for students and teachers?

- Stop identifying as 'Voc' vs. MHS
- No silos
- Offer CTE elective options to non-CTE track students
- CTE students access to AP classes
- Entire school should be Chapter 74
- Students choose a concentration
- Create a cohort / community
- Blend academics with concentration
- Refinement of schedule for CTE / academic
- One name for the HS
- More community knowledge of CTE
- All freshman takes CTE exploratory
- When we talk about interdisciplinary collaboration, let's include CTE
- Advising model needs to be adjusted
- Equal opportunity for all students CTE / fine arts electives for all semester-based
- Not CTE vs. MHS – admin rolls and title of school still show division
- Should be all MHS with a concentration in CTE or Fine Arts track; this needs to be reimagined
- Student experience should focus on readiness for future, not just CTE shops
- Print school / shared community experience
- All students should focus on same main courses with a focus on these interests or intended path (I.e., electrical, robotics, etc.)
- Same vision, consistent policies, students' choice, access to courses, same schedule
- Consistency / transparency, authentic application of learning, onboard, shared goals, team community of practice, leveraging expertise shared ownership
- Student-centered
- Multi-disciplinary Project-Based Learning
- Student voice and choice
- What does integration look like; overlapping thematic units / interdisciplinary
- Improved outcomes: attendance (staff and students), staff and students enjoying coming to school
- Continuity of curriculum is more engaging
- Cohesive mindset of the students and their day-to-day experiences (Is their time valuable? Do they want to be there?), CTE want to work with hands, some just want a place to hang out
- Have students find a place to belong
- Offer opportunities to belong; find their place
- Teacher mindset – mentor rather than authoritative
- Cohesion
- Integrated spaces both CTE and academics
- Open-minded
- Schedule enhancement
- Electives that incorporate CTE, STEM
- Staff integration (meetings, collaboration)
- Adjacent placement and location of instructional spaces

- Relationship building during lunch and facilitation of social opportunities (cliques)
- Unified vision
- Process vs. outcome
- Teacher practitioners
- Flexible mindset
- Understanding / appreciating differences
- Collaboration
- Ego death; there's no one right way
- Student first mindset
- Openness to change
- Same schedule
- Teachers doing both
- Community building
- Same opportunities for all academics to look like current vote
- Interesting options: academically, finance team
- Leaving Medford
- Flexibility to take breaks
- Feeling part of a small community
- Open campus
- Teachers are facilitators, mentors, and cannot instructors
- Every class is rigorous
- Final projects instead of exams

Question 2:

What programs, routines, or instructional practices would bring that experience to life and demonstrate that Medford is truly operating as a comprehensive high school?

- All classes have relation to real-life
- Connect to community
- Cross-disciplinary class; CTE and academics
- Career connected to learning for all subjects
- Full professional development to learn how to cross pollinate CTE and academics – influence one another
- Retain pride in 'the Voc', respect history and people's connection to it
- Include community-based independent studies
- One schedule
- Hire more teachers
- More space (OSHA)
- High school kids taking CTE mini class or exploratory
- Internships especially with community partners for Tufts, Lesley, or BHCC
- Computer programming classes should count towards your language requirement
- Relationships with academics and CTE bio-tech / science
- Co-op work experience for all, not just CTE
- Academic discourse (identities); authentic real-world applications
- Shift decision making (CTE vs non-CTE) to middle school
- Equal opportunities to join programs or course of choice regardless of lottery or class size

- Access to courses, shift in elective programming, more interdisciplinary projects, independent study opportunities, work studies, internship, whole school routines to provide students time to settle, Project-Based Learning, staff training and PD, team approach change in language, consider use of pathways
- Cross content collaboration
- Ability for staff and students to communicate with peers and colleagues
- Schedule flexibility for taking full CTE and CTE electives
- Full adoption of PBL to support academic and CTE teaching / learning in comprehensive model
- Flexibility in classrooms and shops for future readiness – in terms of space and curriculum
- Student opportunity to select CTE model – choice and long-term participation
- Meeting and greeting to begin class
- Transitions – more time
- Peer shadowing for teachers to shift practices (cross departments)
- Staff coaching for support
- Student leadership opportunities – for their peers and to inform and educate teachers
- HQIM and PBL equal transferable skills
- Thematic / interdisciplinary units
- Intensive options for academics / electives to try out new things; exposure
- Collaboration between disciplines
- Capstone projects for services
- In-level the 9th grade
- Interdisciplinary options and collaboration
- Programs are connected and complexity of projects can be elevated
- More relationship building
- Lunch is more dynamic; maybe tied to project-based learning
- How to create ways to bring common interests together
- Bingo / scavenger hunt rotational style start to the year
- We start with intentional team building

Question 3:

What current systems keep Medford operating as "two school," and what do we need to let go of, redesign, or create to truly become one comprehensive high school?

- Make teacher meetings inclusive – CTE and academics
- Lunch – integrate both CTE and academic lunches
- Training for best practice for IEPs, 504s for all teachers
- A-B schedule vs. C schedule – inequitable – need to revise and reimagine
- More teachers would be needed to retain A-B to offer all options to CTE
- Choosing CTE limits options
- CTE lead to college
- The CTE stereotype is no
- Old thinking keeps up apart
- If you want to make CTE an elective, make it a separate class with its own teacher

- Bring back industrial arts
- Getting guidance on board with CTE – college
- Systems keeping us as two schools
- One name
- One schedule or a schedule that everyone follows
- School based community challenge: go eat lunch with someone you don't know or Fells Day multiple times a year
- Intentional design of where classrooms go; can we group ones together?
- Community mind-set (college vs. career); community still believes CTE does not equal college
- Course offerings (AP / language / honors); still not available to all students, specifically CTE students
- To truly operate as a comprehensive HS
- Schedule A and B week, space in programs, teaching capacity, increased CTE opportunities, share vision for community, more integration / collaboration, independence
- Need to define "comprehensive" learning models to be brought into alignment
- Inability for teachers to communicate with each other – silos
- Time, pace, schedule for teachers in CTE is more predictable and calmer
- Hitting content standards
- Let go of perceived division
- Schedule is still a problem
- Mini-CTE programs – not committed but able to learn and experience the program
- Student-first design
- Schedule – shop vs. class week, especially for wellness
- Choice – pick one: CTE or academic
- Outside core academics; structure electives to include CTE and more student voice
- Build courses of study with students
- Audit and reorganize course selection process
- Office spaces unified and integrated
- Enhancement of house model for some teaming
- ABC schedule / academic schedule; space (small)
- Adaption of schedule to allow interdisciplinary skills with Voc (drama and carpentry)
- Two different measurement systems for CTE vs academics
- Rotations for arts / humanities and CTE
- Artificial barriers removed; more efficient use of teacher time
- Schedule
- Adults resist change
- Union contracts
- CTE are closer to non-CTE classes
- Create interdisciplinary classes
- Display student work
- A and B week schedule experience is different and confined
- We would need to create other programs that can operate A-B
- Lack of majors hinders flattening out A-B vs. C enrollment

Working in small groups, participants synthesized major themes from the conversations as documented above and developed guiding educational principles for the building project. Dot polling was then used to identify the principles most critical to unifying Medford as one comprehensive high school and guiding future planning.

The guiding educational principles are documented below. Numbers in parentheses indicate the number of dot votes received.

To truly operate as one comprehensive high school, we believe Medford should:

- Audit / review / reimagine how we organize plan and build elective offerings for students; need STE / Stem offerings for all, need course of study for students, need student voice in this work (15)
- Teacher and student mindset should be focused on process and practice as much as content (13)
- Medford should leverage community partnerships to provide students more opportunities outside of the classroom – internships (11)
- Have a schedule that allows students to take high-level CTE courses / programs and high-level academic coursework (10)
- Offer opportunities for students to have choice (8)
- Schedule flexibility; more choice for students and co-op opportunities for non-CTE students (7)
- Involve the entire community (go beyond the building) (6)
- Shifting mindset of what failure means (6)
- ALL students have opportunities for authentic application of learners / project-based learning (4)
- Skills-based promotion / leveling; unweighted electives to promote high-interest subject areas outside of academics (4)
- Comprehensive means: create a single model, concentrations / clusters with common subject in those areas (3)
- Embrace interdisciplinary learning and a major driven model for all students; all students have a thing they do three periods of a day or some portion of majors adopt A-B to level out the demand (3)
- We are one school community that provides a variety of academic, social-emotional opportunities and skills to be successful beyond all of MHS (3)
- Flexible, student-centered mindset – openness, embraces change and collaboration (3)
- Have a shared lived vision for community (3)
- Create equal access to electives regardless of program of choice – CTE vs non CTE (3)
- Provide staff and students access to high-level instructional materials and time to learn how to use them efficiently (1)
- Students build the skills to navigate their next steps independently (1)
- Full adoption of PBL to support academic and CTE teaching / learning (1)

- Look to weave CTE programming throughout the building (1)
- Leverage schedule to build routine, collaboration and belonging — lunch activities and individual randomized offerings for location, class meetings / greetings to begin period, CTE for staff, staff flexibility and cross department opportunities (1)
- Opportunities for collaboration across disciplines (1)
- Medford should work towards collaborative efforts with our master schedule – common planning (1)
- Begin the process of changing the educational model
- Create opportunities to build community as part of the school year
- Medford should develop a shared understanding and language around any / all pathways towards graduation
- Better data around student-demand / interest and ability to respond
- Adaptability as a district / school to respond to student interests, learning styles
- Not change anything; students choose CTE or MHS – both are thriving; where are we failing? It ain't broke, don't fix it!

Part 4 – Learning Environments in Action

In Part 4, participants explored a range of learning environments and reflected on the experiences these spaces could support. Through live polling via Mentimeter and discussion, participants identified patterns across environments and considered what shifts would be required to make these spaces successful at Medford. Participants' responses are documented in the pages that follow.

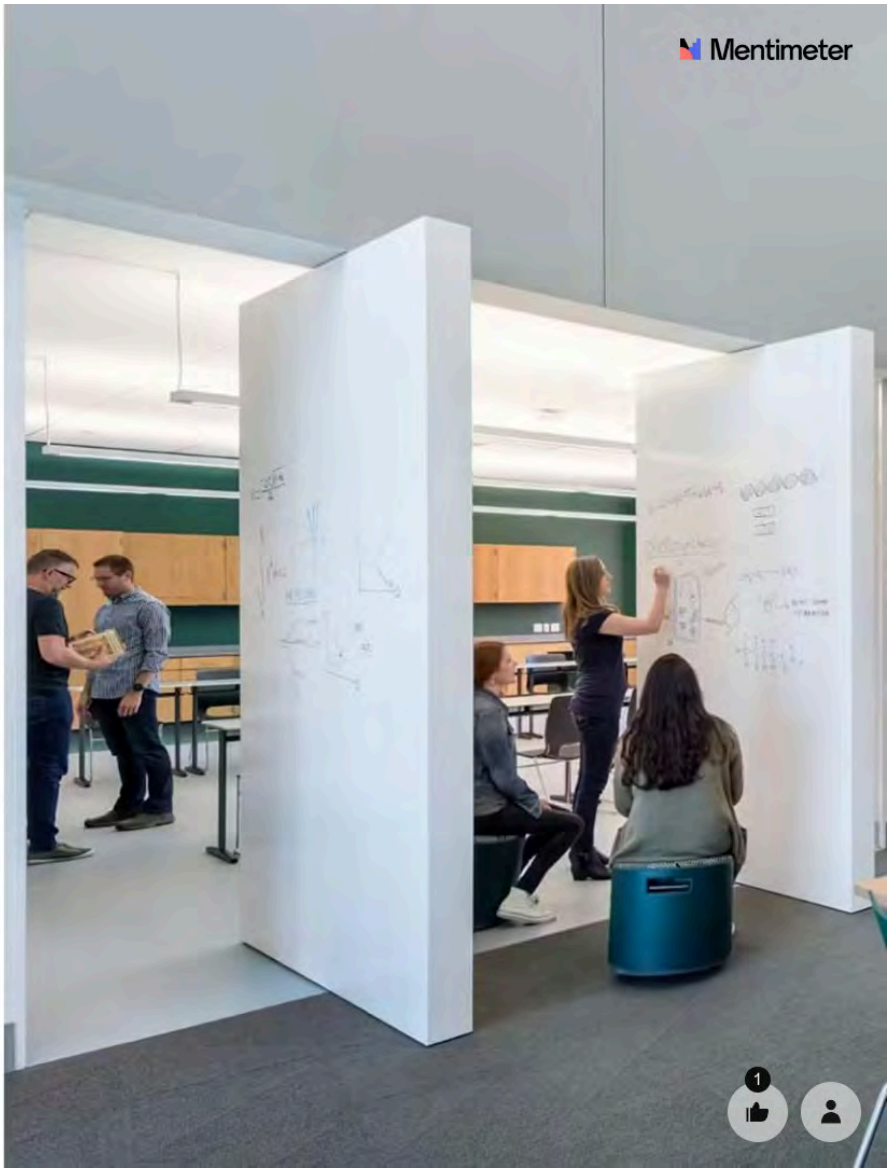
Mentimeter

When you picture the ideal comprehensive high school building, what one word comes to mind?



35

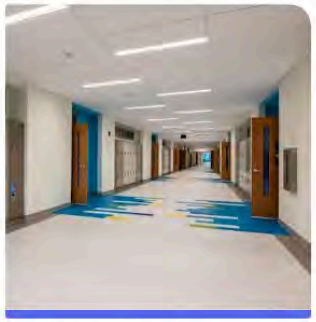
BUILDING ORGANIZATION



Mentimeter

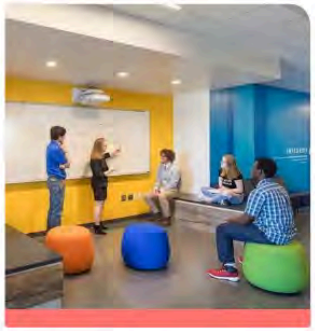
Which level of building organization feels right for Medford students?

0



Traditional Corridor, No Breakout

1



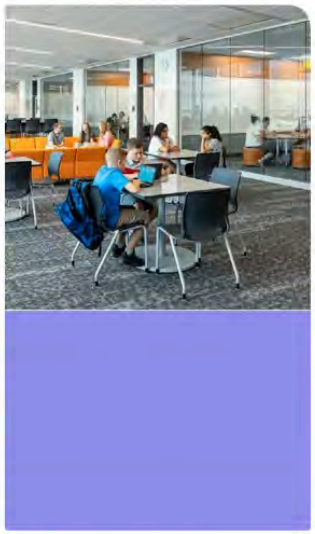
Small Corridor Breakout

4



Destination Breakout

22



Collaborative Learning Communities

1 27

COMMONS & COLLAB ZONES



Mentimeter

Under what conditions do shared commons or collaboration zones genuinely add value to learning and when do they not?

When the time spent there is productive and not destructive

They have to be spaces where students can focus with minimal distractions

When there is a clear plan for how they are going to be used.

Proper structuring adds value. Last minute "space change" does not.

With professional development to support them

When teaching staff has been trained on the best way to use the space

They can't be near the caf to be effective. Destinations work for things that a given class would use every now and then vs Full collab spaces are needed to do PBL

Add value when they support a variety of learning styles.

2 33

Mentimeter

Under what conditions do shared commons or collaboration zones genuinely add value to learning and when do they not?

When the classroom activities include project based learning that would benefit from collaborative learning spaces

Allows for students across grade-levels and disciplines to interact and help one another. Gives students some more autonomy and choice as to where they work best - with teacher still as support.

+ when there's trust between administrators, teachers, and students - when you're doing a state testing

Collaboration between peers and teachers add value, under-utilized space due to time constraints detract

Shared vision/purpose

IF you are just using them to physically spread out they add less value. If you ware using them for a specific purpose then they're beneficial.

When the expectations are clearly defined, and all parties involved understand and respect the flexibility.

When you're doing project work with others and during free periods when you don't want to be confined by walls but do want a place to sit. They do not work when they are not respected.

2 33

Mentimeter

Under what conditions do shared commons or collaboration zones genuinely add value to learning and when do they not?

When they are used purposefully to provide authentic learning and promote academic discourse AND are guided by shared norms NOT randomly

When needing a place to sit and have independent learning or even collaborative it is helpful to have that area to work and get things done

Collaboration zones genuinely add to learning because they will enjoy more the places.

When staff trust students and students respect the space

When the activity is purposely designed for collaboration. When students are sent to those spaces without clear expectations/instructions.

They do when they are intentionally used for instructional practice to build the understanding and culture of what they are meant to be used for

They do not work when staff use these spaces just to send students to another space, but cannot keep eyes on them or help support them in the learning process.

When used appropriately and effectively

2 33

Mentimeter

Under what conditions do shared commons or collaboration zones genuinely add value to learning and when do they not?

If there are too many teachers sharing a space it might be hard to fully utilize it.

They add value when brainstorming and are seeking to feel open and free. They take value when it becomes overwhelming with distractions.

They add value when there is a shared understanding about best practices and teachers are equipped and expected to intentionally make use of them. . They don't add value when they are an afterthought.

If 6-7 CTE programs are collaborating on a project, a general meeting space for students to review plans and safety etc. would be nice

When expectations are set for collaboration and project based learning. When students know they can have ownership in the space.

The use of the space is determined— they don't just turn into places where kids go "for a break" because there are designated spots for that.

Add value when they are intentionally used and incorporated into teaching techniques to allow discussion that may otherwise not happen

Interdisciplinary learning, group work, and additional project workspace (paired, small group, or individual)

2 33

Mentimeter

Under what conditions do shared commons or collaboration zones genuinely add value to learning and when do they not?

Not helpful when they are underprogrammed and under supervised

When both students and teachers have training in how to use them effectively. Change takes practice. When staff/school has an agreed upon set of norms to provide opportunity for all staff to use it.

When they do they are open and conforting for students when they are working together on projects, but when they're not used right it's when you see student skipping classes in these Spaces

When they are used for student collaboration, project work, and full-class activities, they are useful. When they are a hangout area for students cutting class or a meetup area, they are not.

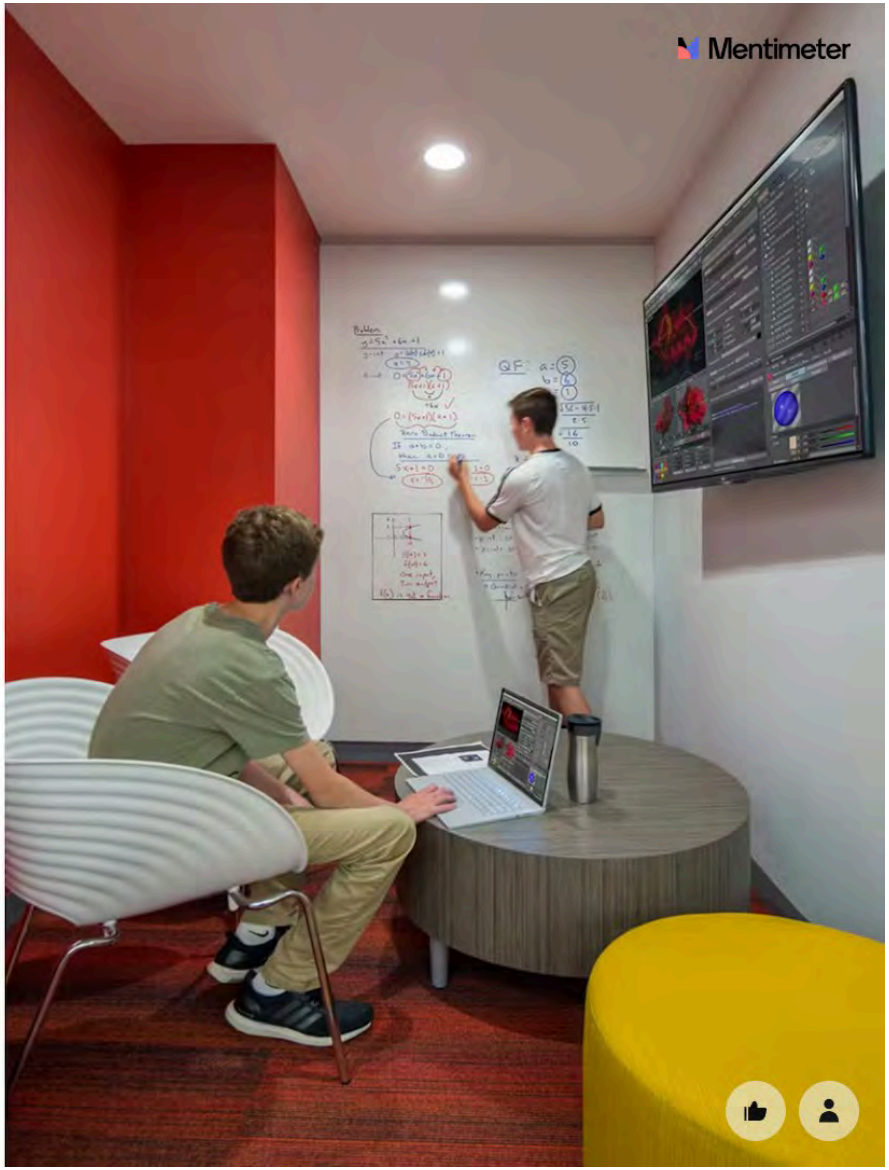
When students have work that would benefit from independent spaces

When a specific module to a particular group is being taught.

Change in teaching practices

2 33

FOCUSED LEARNING & SUPPORT ZONES



Mentimeter

What specific student experiences can we support with quiet, focused, or smaller spaces and why?

Space for alternatives to the caf

Small group instruction

Students can work better independently or in small groups without the distractions of the other groups or their peers.

Different learning methods

Idependent work, big project working etc.

Some students need to be a bit removed from the crowd in order to focus - removing distractions

small group/individual instruction or reteaching

Those mentor / advisor relationships we've been talking sbout

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Mentimeter

What specific student experiences can we support with quiet, focused, or smaller spaces and why?

autonomy within collaboration

Escape from the crowds and moment of reflections, small group collaborations

Emergency care planning/training with teachers for students with chronic medical conditions

Independent workspaces . Additional time for activity work, smaller group work, quiet workspace

Social emotional, special education, EL support. Centers

A close by area for a student to take a moment without having to walk through halls. Allows for me to keep checking in while giving them their space

Honestly, these make me very nervous. I have been in schools with this design and it ends up being an inequitable and unsafe experience for students

Spall spaces can feel safer. Small groups give opportunities for students to take risks. Students can work independently and safely on work with access to materials during the school day.

1 31

Mentimeter

What specific student experiences can we support with quiet, focused, or smaller spaces and why?

Reading groups, group project planning/brainstorming, paired discussions

Tutoring, a place to take a break or paired up studying.

Work area to focus and study. Peer to peer or small group collaboration. Independent work. Regroup or calm down area

Intervention and support spaces

This could support moments when children are over whelmed in class and just need a quiet space to themselves. It'll help productivity

Project space

A focus. area does allow for individualized attention - SEL, academic, or individualized project pathway

If someone needs to time to finish everyone's is the class is over with then the kid can have a quiet easier place to finish without distractions, or if a kid needs a minute away from class

1 31

Mentimeter

What specific student experiences can we support with quiet, focused, or smaller spaces and why?

It can support team building and collaboration across grades and/or classes

Students my not be able to handle the stimulation of a large class, but can very much keep up the pace and workload, if afforded some space and solitude

White space for alt learning styles

A specific experience is that they can focus more for do his activities in this the place.

Extended test takers, small brain/emotional break, quiet focus, brainstorming sessions, team building, pull out services

A good task has an element of "productive struggle," but that looks different for every kid. In some moments of productive struggle, students may need to spread out materials, put on focus music, etc

Different student learning styles, students that need quiet spaces to focus. Or students who need extra time or those who need more challenging activities

Used for students who struggle with a given concept could have direct instruction, 1 teacher to 1-3 students whilst the others continue with their assigned projects.

1 31

Mentimeter

What specific student experiences can we support with quiet, focused, or smaller spaces and why?

I am not sure I see the value of small spaces.

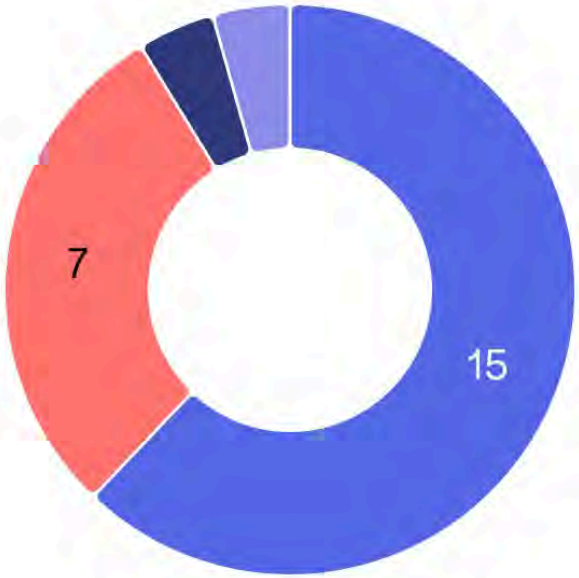
Reteachong, small group instruction, test taking

Space could be used for students who are making up work from missed days of school

1 31

Mentimeter

How essential are smaller, focused learning and student support spaces to daily teaching and learning at MHS?



15	Essential & frequently needed – integrate throughout academic areas, between or near classrooms for max access
7	Important but used more selectively — a limited number per academic area is sufficient
1	Occasionally useful — one or two centralized support areas can meet the need
1	Not essential — flexible classrooms can meet most needs

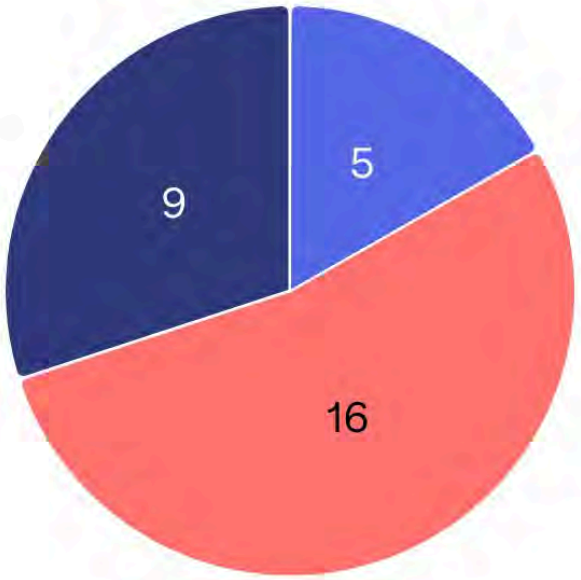
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TEACHER ORGANIZATION



Mentimeter

Which model best fits Medford's vision for collaboration and connected learning?



5	Departmental – Single subjects (English, Science, etc.)
16	Hybrid – Clustered subjects (i.e., English & Social Studies)
9	Interdisciplinary Neighborhoods – Connected multi-subject spaces

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Mentimeter

What is the purpose of CTE in Medford, and how does its purpose change if it's integrated vs. clustered?

The purpose is to provide an educational experience that prepares students for a 'track' of careers. That purpose also can be used to benefit the school community at large if integrated

Give students hands on experience and career readiness. Only some should be integrated(biotech and science for instance)

To offer options of interest to students. Integrated could offer more learning opportunities to more students in both academic and cte subjects

Integrated - shared school vision and routines as well as community Clustered - program specific and autonomy within space, not much school collaboration

CTE provides an additional pathway for students. I'm not certain that integrates works.

The purpose will always be real-world skill acquisition, and frankly the academic side of things could do more of that 🙃

To prepare the next generation of workers and to ensure they are prepared. Ingested keeps it from being isolated and leave the kids from seeing their non voc friends. It leads to student complex

CTE opens up more options for students in terms of skills and in terms of connection to real life. I don't think integrated vs clustered in terms of physical location matters. It's about mindset.

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Mentimeter

What is the purpose of CTE in Medford, and how does its purpose change if it's integrated vs. clustered?

The purpose is to provide s with authentic learning and real world application to accelerate successful entry into a vocational field. No change if integrated.

CTE programs aim to deeply educate students in areas they may be interested in applying later in life. The purpose of CTE shouldn't change based on the location of the classroom.

Support students to be work-ready when they finish school. Integrating will provide more opportunities for all students to learn skills needed for daily activities.

To expose and prepare students for careers in real world training. Integrated better demonstrates and celebrates community connections.

CTE has evolved. Before it was more job training, but now many CTE students attend college, first. Moving forward perhaps it is both job training and elective/enrichment for all students.

CTE in Medford is preparation for trade with some opportunity for a college pathway. I could see some shops, such as Biotech and Robotics, integrated with academics.

More chances to communicate and work together with the community. For example culinary could be near the caf so they can make food in the caf for students sometime a week

It becomes part of the overall community which is less siloed and allows opportunities for coursework and real life applications to work hand and hand

1 28

Mentimeter

What is the purpose of CTE in Medford, and how does its purpose change if it's integrated vs. clustered?

Integration...Provide students with more opportunities and provide real-world experience.....

Integrated MAY help break down the public perception that CTE is a trades only/ non-college track and open the doors to a more comprehensive high school

Its purpose remains intact but the possibilities become heightened if it's integrated throughout the building. And visibility of a true comprehensive HS. But must be fine with care and intention

If integrated, we can offer enrichment for all students.

CTE provides a model for community and deep learning. One way to create synergy is to expand this model to other departments.

The purpose of CTE it's to give the students the opportunity to have a work, And the purpose of the clustered it's that will not be a mass.

Strong connections to build skills for future trade. If it is integrated, will it be less of a strong small community feel?

To offer training in technical, construction and allied trades. Integrated would strengthen said programs.

1 28

Mentimeter

What is the purpose of CTE in Medford, and how does its purpose change if it's integrated vs. clustered?

I think it should be strategically clustered. What should be preserved is the "learning community" aspect. And, I think that should be spread out to the "academic" high school as well.

It allows for kids to be apart of a community and understanding what it would be like to actually pursue this choice of CTE as your actual career. If it's integrated you can have more collaboration

Integrated empowers students that are in CTE instead of isolating them.

CTE is a track to train the future workforce of America. Keeping the A/B schedule is essential to the "dirty hands" shops because Co OP is such a vitally important aspect of their training.

Job training and certification. If integrated, it would better mirror the diversity of society versus creating an isolated (perhaps stratified) community.

The purpose of it is so students get to experience real life situations instead of being stuck in classrooms for 7 hours straight

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Part 5 – Closing Reflection

In Part 5, the session concluded with an individual reflection via Mentimeter on key takeaways from all visioning conversations. Specifically, participants were asked to consider one bold move and next step for the district to take to implement their intended educational vision. These reflections (documented in the pages that follow) will inform subsequent visioning work and support alignment between educational vision and future design decisions.

Mentimeter

What's THE ONE bold move or next step you think Medford should take to bring today's vision to life?

Expand this exercise to the full community

Do multi block interdisciplinary courses next year for seniors

Vote to pay for it

Clarify our vision cte and academic integration at MHS - what instructional focus aligns us.

We should absolutely survey more of the community about this stuff, and specifically make sure it's translated into Portuguese, c Spanish, Creole, and Arabic

Keep involving multiple voices and perspectives to drive this work.

More collaborative work in classrooms. More student voice.

Making the high school and the vocational school one big community.

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Mentimeter

What's THE ONE bold move or next step you think Medford should take to bring today's vision to life?

Look at collaborating and creative scheduling now

Pilot what we want - even within the space we have.

PD for teaching instructional strategies. We need to start from the basics.

Look at the model of CTE education at Medford and try to mirror that approach in academic classes.

Extend this to all faculty and staff.

Change the culture today, start building the common spaces now, try new things in this building. Use this building as a training ground for the new place.

PD on collaborative teachers practices

Somehow find a way to honor student choice.

1 24

Mentimeter

What's THE ONE bold move or next step you think Medford should take to bring today's vision to life?

Use this exercise more frequently

Get all stakeholders involved to create a unified vision and purpose

Involve more of the children who will be experiencing what we are trying to make

ALL STAFF should receive Responsive Classroom training as it supports our GLEAM initiative, focuses on community, and gives strategies to start integrating best practices years in advance of opening.

Start collaborating now.

Rooftop study spaces / classrooms.

Audit the schedule to see how we could leverage more flexibility and student choice in electives and courses of study to provide more holistic opportunities for all.

Start a discussion with teachers/ leaders re: scheduling and Ed planning

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APPENDIX

Sign-in Sheets

Goals & Priorities Session – 11.12.25

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Visioning 1 Session – 12.09.25

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Visioning 2 Session – 12.17.25

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Program Workshop 1 Session – 01.09.26

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Shadow Day Debrief

Medford HS Shadow Day Feedback

ENGAGEMENT & JOY
When do students seem most engaged, confident, or joyful?
What sparked that moment? What conditions (teaching moves, space, relationships, etc.) made it possible?

From what I observed, the students were engaged in the task assigned by the teacher.

1)Student left their seat to talk with a classmate - not about academic topic
2)A deer walked by outside
3)A student asked a question about turkeys that he realized sounded off and began a joyful chuckle
4)A student volunteered an answer, made it into an appropriate joke, students and teachers laughed.

Students had/made/took the opportunity to talk to each other

Students seemed to be experiencing the most joy when they are given opportunities to wokr together or free time to socialize in the classroom or hallways. Teachers who asked questions that related to their lives created environments where they seemed joyful. We also had the opportunity to observe an AP art class and it was pure joy. The students were so exited to be there and the space had music on and there was positive conversations between students and teacher while they were learning skills and receiving feedback.

Students seemed most engaged/confident/joyful in the second period I observed. There were very clear routines that the teacher had obviously established within the classroom: students did not have a specific place to turn in their phones yet devices were not an issue, all students immediately had their notebooks out and ready for notes, and the class began with a moment of class community wherein they shared updates going on in their lives. The teacher move of establishing consistent routines paired with the physical environment adorned with artwork, music, and ambient lighting made the space comfortable to all and encouraged classroom camaraderie and participation. There were define moments where the teacher asked-student answered, but the teacher did guide students through at a comfortable pace.

-Teacher cues to group up and cues to talk to one another
-Clear directions and collaboration built into tasks explictly
-Windows (able to see deer outside)
-Students encouraged to share experiences and link them to content
-Positive teacher relationships with students
-Clear expectations with appropriate scaffolding

The first class (Spanish II honors) we saw was every engaging, interactive, lots of movement, and project work. Kids were having fun and laughing. In the second class (cosmo rotation) the teacher was absent, but the kids still knew what to do and the other connecting class sent over upperclassman to assist.

Most engaged when in History brainstorming on a summative project and English while working on a crossword to review vocabulary. The joy seemed to vary from student to student and class to class. A few seemed to like the challenge in math, some seemed to enjoy the topic of early unions in History, most seemed to like the game aspect of the crossword in English (but this was also the least rigorous work). English seemed to have the set routines and relationship that help to foster a happy classroom. Well established expectations.

When the students were engaged, confident and joyful, it was directly a result of the relationship with the teacher and students. The activities were fun and students were willing to take risks, be wrong and share their thoughts. In addition, the lessons all allowed for the students to move out of their seats.

The key word I'd like to call out here is PLAY. When the process of learning was made into a game with its own underlying rules, players and outcomes, I saw students flourish. And being in the role of a student, I found myself more engaged. A crossword puzzle to decipher synonyms of words, having a turn at correcting a sentence and then shouting out a number to determine the person whose turn it is next; In the English class we experienced, everyone was invested, everyone was engaged and unafraid to be wrong. Play is a crucial idea in the design of k-2 schools that I've worked on previously and should have a place in High schools too.

Teachers were most engaged and joyful in the EL classroom - there was affirming teaching practices, joking around with students, and mutual culture.

I did not see a lot of joy in other spaces. Very teacher-oriented, or constant bickering with other students. Students not involved with problems were frustrated by those moments. There were quick moments of joy during classroom passing times in the halls when kids saw friends.

Most engaged/confident/joyful: When kids saw a deer out the window, when students talked about their lives when asked by their teachers. They were engaged when talking about their own traditions and when asked to engage. They were in a room with natural light and the desks were set up in a large discussion circle.

Medford High and Vocational Technical High School, Medford, MA

BARRIERS & PINCH POINTS
When do students hit friction – academically, socially, emotionally, or physically?
What made the moment challenging? Was it related to clarity, pacing, support, transitions, or space?

Travel time between classes is too short, not enough time to use the bathroom between classes.

1)Because fo space and class set up, teachers had to walk around the inside of the circle to conference with students leaving their back to the outside
2)Teacher stuff takes up a LOT of space reducing even further the flexibility of the classroom space
3)The pinchpoints we experienced were within the classroom and not moving between classes.

The hallways are a pinch point - they are overcrowded and the building is much too big to navigate some of the changes in 3 minutes of passing time. This created students rushing in the halls or stressed out as they arrived at their next class late. Students also seemed exhausted sitting through classes back to back without opportunities to move around.

I noticed technology became a barrier in some moments in the classrooms. In one instance, the chromebooks became a barrier between students and instruction, as all students had screens open and facing them without a specific task at hand. In another, an older projector temporarily disconnected and disrupted the classroom flow as the example slide disappeared. Students were immediately engulfed in their cell phones the technology became a barrier for social connection in a time where students could have talked/connected. Pacing in terms of too much instruction on the end of the teacher was observed, the work balance was obvious not benefitting the inactive student. Transitions between spaces are rushed and overwhelming at times, and outdated/at time dilapidated spaces are not conducive to a positive experience for all.

-Teachers are working with very limited resources. Anything beyond printer paper, basic technology, and books from the book room, I purchase myself.
-Hard to move desks around to collaborate
-Furniture is static and not flexible/big enough for high school students
-Teacher desk is stuck in one place
-Lots of oral directions given without a visual direction or image to back it up
-Lots of bathroom breaks/students taking long breaks in the hallway
-Unclear tasks and no extension plan for students who completed task early
-Students are bundled up in coats and hats due to cold temperatures, which it makes it harder to see each other
-Chromebooks are sometimes a distraction (videos and games)
-Students falling asleep in class
-Unpredictable WiFI
-Students seeking food in guidance during class time

Having 26 students in C105 was a bit cramped, but no one seemed to mind! Some of the signs I saw (one saying "medford teachers deserve medford's respect and other saying "good hair isn't cheap and cheap hair isn't good) may have made some students feel awkward or even badly about the environment or themselves. Additionally, in the English class we say - the environment didn't feel as warm or engaging. One example was students were asked to pair up, but no one checked on pairings and some kids were working alone.

Loud heating unit made it difficult to hear in one room.
Projected screen was difficult in another.
Lack of completed homework made a partner activity challenging.

I do think a barrier was the projectors. The teacher would block the screen if they just moved their location. In addition teachers juggled moving back and forth between various tabs to show students. It would be helpful having various locations to project at the same time.

I also think there was a barrier with English class that we observed. Students were "working" in peers but not every student was assigned a partner. Some students worked independently although the assignment was to be with a peer.

Friction came through in terse in-class exercises and in seemingly sporadic class pacing, where students weren't sure of what to expect throughout the course of the period. Not knowing what to expect, not feeling like support was around the corner if needed, made it difficult for students to engage. It goes without saying that the physical space did not help, way too loud HVAC, Glare from windows, intense overhead lights, insufficient AV with tiny screens

Internet and chromebook issues caused stress and annoyance/frustration for everyone. Loud noises from the neighboring classrooms or students out in the hall distracted and annoyed teachers and students. Teachers would close doors due to outside noises.

During independent work times, or times without direct instruction, student social arguments or squabbles were observed. Teacher was working independently with other students and could not manage or did not see these individual situations.

Point of Friction - bathroom times and trying to escape when they can’t leave (student was having difficulties with math and wanted to get out of the classroom). Girl smacked a boy across the head for no reason, he didn’t react though. Kids are definitely too close to each other. Also, moments of friction during class passing time in the halls. Some kids looked angry or upset.

Students were visibly bored in Periods 1 and 3. In Period 1, they were on YouTube, or chatting. Students who did not grasp concepts told teachers that they did, when it was evident that they did not, and the teacher let it go. This was in a window-less and dark room as well. In Period 2, students who left for the bathroom were gone for a long time. Loud unit ventilators made it difficult to hear students from across the room. One student said to a friend "I can't hear her at all". In Period 3, the projected video size was too small for the room and the number of students in the classroom.

Medford High and Vocational Technical High School, Medford, MA

LEARNING & SUPPORT
What does learning look and feel like across the classes you visited?
Individual vs. collaborative? Hands-on vs. passive? How easily do students access help, feedback, or support?

CTE: Collaborative, upper class students would help Grade 9 students.

most support was individual or whole group. In one class we saw an attempt at a jigsaw. Generally the teacher circulated and responded to specific student questions

Learning looked collaborative in the honors and AP classes we observed. Students seemed comfortable taking risks and working together in these spaces.

Not much in term of collaborative learning in the classrooms I was present in. A lot of individual learning or majority teacher instruction. 2/3 periods I observed rather passive learning without much opportunity for collaborative experiences or feedback. I do recognize, though, that this was one singular instance of observation.

-Static, lots of sitting
-Sometimes collaborative, sometimes passive, sometimes independent
-Students regularly asked teachers questions by raising their hands and teachers moving to the students
-Art/music classes were very hands-on
-Our Access and Transition special education students seemed very isolated (with no peer models) in the corner of A building during our tour

Lots of collaborative work! We saw examples of hands on learning and passive engagement. Students were actively checked on in all the classes we saw, but in a different way. For example, walking around to all students or checking on students who seemed like they needed support (ie: off topic).

Some teacher-led, but mostly collaboration in pairs or small groups. In all three classes the teacher was easily accessible for help with the longest delay in Math since lots of students needed assistance. Mostly active learning in all three classes.

For two out of the three classes there were hands on activities. Students were engaged in the classes. The one class that was not super engaging was taught more traditionally with students in row, teacher directed at first and then independent reading. A couple of students, who were talking about the book were redirected to complete the task.

We had a mixed set of experiences. While collaborative learning is oftentimes a great strategy, in our Math class, it was detrimental to learning , where students were not engaged with teaching, but with each other and missing out on instruction that the teacher called out as being important. It created an overloaded atmosphere that appeared confusing at times for students. Collaborative learning can take place outside of classroom and in dedicated periods, with clear outcomes, or during classes but given their ALLOTTED time. Where collaborative learning went hand in hand and worked well with instruction was in an instance where collaboration was class-wide, with everyone working together to solve a set of problems. Again this was in the English class where play, though not stated, was the underlying rubric.

EL ELA class - Collaborative and independent learning, good and clear transitions between activities. Posted agendas constantly. Accessible and supportive, whole-group, small group, and independent work opportunities.

Math - Learning is more challenging - a lot of distractions and conversations. Many students do not do preparation homework assignments in order to access instruction. Very little forward movement happening because the teacher had to do a lot of teaching for something that should have been review. No movement forward. Whole-group, small group, and independent work opportunities.

History - Learning was very challenging - Absolutely packed class, tight space, very few student voices, most did not speak, too hot in the classroom. Pacing was incredibly slow, students and myself were bored. Whole-group and small group opportunities.

Period 1: Individual make-up work of worksheets. Communication was mostly from teacher to student. Teacher-led. Some students on YouTube instead. Students were not engaged.

Period 2: Co-taught class. Collaborative small group work and large group discussion, with individually filling out the pre-reading activity. Share out of pre-reading activity responses and read the first few paragraphs of the shared reading. Students were mostly engaged.

Period 3: Individual and partner work. Watched 2 minutes of a video. Short period of sharing out of partner work but was mostly the teacher talking, prompting, and feeding students information. Students were not engaged.

Medford High and Vocational Technical High School, Medford, MA

BELONGING & RELATIONSHIPS
When do students seem connected, comfortable, or seen? When do they seem unsure or isolated?
Which adult or peer interactions seemed to matter most? Where did the physical environment support or undermine belonging?

At the beginning of my class (which lasts for 3 periods), we start with a snack break in which students mingle and converse with each other. Many students tell me this is the best part of their day.

teacher to student relationships were calm, mutually respectful, and supportive.
teachers were working hard to connect with the students' interest and lives

Teachers who waited in the hallways to greet their students created a welcoming environment and started the class on a comfortable note. Students also benefited from quick check-ins from teachers about their mood as they began class.

Students presented as connected and comfortable when the teacher took a few moments to discuss their lives with them: while this was not directly linked to the content or time on learning, it appeared to be very affirming to students and solidified their presence within the classroom community. Space/seating arrangement was somewhat restrictive at times as it was not very conducive to collaboration. Students were rather sedentary throughout the day, which may contribute to lack of engagement in different classes. Not much structured peer interactions observed.

-Connected: In classrooms where collaboration was built into lessons and participation is supported and expected
-Isolated: When they are working independently
-Isolated: In the hallway when they are on their phones
-Current furniture/desks undermine interaction and belonging, lack of a structured lesson
-Projectors and document cameras tethering a teacher to be near the projector undermines connection and engagement

The mismatched/small desks were challenging for group work. Connection between teachers and students were very strong for the most part. The work in the English class started off as work as individuals sharing out as a whole group - it would have been richer discussion if it was done in small groups.

Seemed to be good relationships in all three classes with teachers. In math, some kids were not engaging/sleeping and came in very late without excuses. The lights were off and it definitely felt like nap time while trying to learn a challenging topic. It was also the only class that was mostly teacher led.

I think students appeared to be connected in the two classes with hands on activities and movement. In the Spanish class, they were very connected with the teacher will created a safe space for their learning.

The students were isolated in the English class where they were answering three questions and then independently reading. It was a missed opportunity to have a class discussion about these questions.

In the cotaught English class, support always seemed to be right around the corner and was not relegated to the most vocal students. Students definitely felt seen and this was an instance where the classroom layout was kept as rows, so attention was across to other students and frontal to teacher. In one of he exercises about characters of a book, students drew from daily experiences and personalized responses found maximum engagement across the classroom. Learning has to be tied back to the lived experience of students, to daily issues that they undoubtedly come across within the US and internationally. It makes the teaching 'applied', not just in name only. This can come from teachers being in-the-know about daily concerns of teenagers, social media etc., Instead of discarding such concerns as being contrary to the 'seriousness of learning' e.g our history class was discussing International Workers Unions and there was a missed opportunity there to tie it to workers unions today (it's worth noting that the set of students that were in the class are on the CTE track so this was a highly relevant topic to them).

EL ELA class - Supportive, positive, affirming environment. Teacher knows them well, students know each other well. Language similarities, many different languages spoken. Space is small but makes the most of it

In other periods - some joking, some student voices, but missing a lot of positive collaboration. Most students did not speak in the other two class periods. Some surprisingly negative teacher feedback to students.

They felt connected/seen when chatting with friends, when teacher's asked students how they were and complimenting their work, and when sharing their perspectives and work. Seemed comfortable when able to eat and drink in class.

The heavy sled-desks made it difficult to properly gather in groups but teachers did what they could to make group work possible.

Medford High and Vocational Technical High School, Medford, MA

MOVEMENT, TRANSITIONS, & SPACE
How do students move through their day physically and emotionally?
Are transitions smooth or stressful Does the environment support focus, collaboration, independence, or regulation? What did the building itself help or hinder?

I have o

(I think this is the Movement Transition and Space response)
there was no stress for us movign between classes
moving within a class was VERY stressful and moving between grouping structures felt forced and chaotic.

One teacher who taught in a different room as well arrived to class late (which students said was typical) as they hustled from one space to another. The classroom was not set up for an immediate start. This signals how much learning and adjustment will have to take place

Transition are very stressful for students, and I was specifically thinking about students with sensory challenges or who struggle with peer interactions and how chaotic passing time was. Also classes are each so different that it would be very challenging to enter a new space with different expectations each period.

The transition from class to class was stressful, cramped, loud, and rushed. I cannot fathom having enough time to use the restroom, refill a water bottle, stop by the nurse, say hi to a friend, ask a teacher a quick question, or anything else other than rush to the next location. This does not support focus as there is virtually no reset time between class periods. Within the classroom, transitions from topic/activity to the next did not seem too smooth either. This can result in a disjointed feeling approaching new tasks due to this rapid change in instruction tactic. More space/time for regulation would be beneficial.

-Students have to rush between classes with only 3 minute passing period --> this is stressful
-Students have difficulty finding bathrooms or bathrooms are overcrowded with students at certain times
-Building hinders students getting to class on time, accessing bathrooms efficiently, and promoting connection between classrooms and content areas
-No windows in classrooms makes it a dreary environment

The hallways felt tight, and we were late for every class (by about 1 minute).

We only moved a total of 100 feet for our three classes so it was very easy (and boring).

When talking with Johnny, they were looking for the stairwell that was less crowded. They avoided certain stair cases due to traffic. I loved walking with the group of students within the hallway. They were confident and comfortable moving around the building. They admitted to liking High School more than Middle School. They liked the freedom and ability to move on their own. Johnny's schedule moved from one side of the building to the other. We did not make it to any class on time. This was without any stops or conversations with peers other than the ones moving with Johnny to the next class.

Johnny definitely was happy and willing to participate in the first two classes, Spanish and Exploratory. Within the third class, the setting was more restricted and fostered less movement and chaos. Learning can be loud and fun.

Students tended to retreat to their social affinity groups. It is imperative that teachers be aware of this and encourage cross cultural collaboration. It is admittedly a tough thing to do but it is important to dedicate the time to doing it as it will have it's repercussions on society down the road.

Emotions were constant and in some cases, included drastic swings from positive to negative.

Due to spacing of the classroom, some kids have their back to the board and literally can't or won't turn to see the board. Complicated space restrictions also allow small conversations that are unproductive or distracting. Desks and classroom size is limiting. The projector only allows for a smaller screen, tough to make it much bigger.

EL ELA class - transitions are seamless due to communication and routine, and posted expectations for each task.

In all classrooms - no physical movement, but there is a change in tasks and mental demands for different tasks. Absolutely makes sense that kids are constantly leaving the classroom.

Period 1's room was dark and windowless. The mood and vibe of classroom matched where students (and I) felt sleepy.
Period 2s room was comfortable and bright with windows. Vibe was energetic, although I could not hear softer speakers when sitting near the unit ventilator.
Period 2 and 3's furniture was not conducive to partner and small group work.
Science stools were uncomfortable, and some seemed to have difficulty sitting comfortably in the attached desk/chairs.

Medford High and Vocational Technical High School, Medford, MA

TAKEAWAYS & FUTURE VISIONING
What 2-3 insights from the shadowing experience should most influence our upcoming visioning?

Students like high energy classrooms, but they also seek peace and quiet, even looking for spaces to be by themselves and relax. At schools like Newton North, I observed that students were given spaces outside of classrooms to work quietly by themselves or in small groups. I see students at MHS that want the same thing.

We need a space that is flexible
Sharing a room is a culture shift
Joy happens in the interactions between students
A break space is NOT a solution for poor instruction.

I would love to explore the experiences of students in different levels (AP, special educaiton, EL classes etc.). I also think we need to think more about the mixed messaging teachers are receiving between making sure they are teaching grade level and engaging lessons and supporting the social emotional needs of students in their spaces.

1. The layout/timing of schedule is not supporting our students to its full potential 2. Key spaces related to student life (locker rooms, auditorium, older classrooms) are in states of disrepair resulting in disfunction 3. Standards for engaging instruction/meaningful routines should be standardized across the board. I would like to explore potential solutions to these road blocks/how other districts solved similar issues.

1) Each classroom is set up differently, which can be confusing to special education students. Routines and predictability reduce confusion and cognitive load so that they can focus on academics and connection.

2) Teacher plans and talk moves can promote collaboration, engagement, and affirming moments in the classroom

3) Desk arrangements and furniture capabilities matter when promoting collaboration and engagement --> I would love to have standing desks and furniture that is actually "flexible" for my students with significant ADHD or sensory needs who need near constant movement during lengthy academic tasks (e.g., paragraph writing)

Students are willing and wanting to learn with great staff relationships! The space often felt cramp, but also felt inviting and warm in many spots. Teachers work hard, but are sometimes missing the mark on engaging instruction.

All three classes were challenging. I don't know the standards, so I can't be certain if they are grade level, but none of the students seemed to find the work easy.
As we look at physical structures to support learning, what desk/chair options best support learning? What other aspects can teachers take advantage of to improve instruction and student experience?

For me one of the takeaways was that in a small room, filled with 26 students and a lack of adequate materials, a teacher created an environment that was full of joy, learning and engagement. Students weren't always perfect within the class but everyone was engaged and learning in the classroom. There was movement, talking, laughter and a safe place to make mistakes. I wished the classroom had chairs/tables more conducive to group work.

To me it seemed that the student's connection to the teacher was the most impactful aspect of the classroom. It didn't matter the lack of space or lack of technology. My question is how does a new building help teachers, who are not connected to the student? How can teachers better connect to the students? What does that look like in a building?

1) Teachers need to make the effort to connect with students, teen culture (tough to do but important!). 2)How do you encourage students to be comfortable outside affinity groups? (a very important issue to grapple with). 3) Teachers should incorporate PLAY and gamify aspects of Instruction and where appropriate empower students to take the reins of portions of class to share and even teach (this breeds the idea of democratization of knowledge and spurs engagement). 4) Learning of today and the future cannot mirror what has been done in the past 100 years. We're living in more culturally diverse and technologically advanced societies and so our places of learning more than anywhere else must reflect this.

So much time is lost in instruction - teachers having to move spaces and start up the period late, kids arrive late to class, repetition of instructions, slow speed of technology, students constantly out of the classroom, kids are bored and aren't keeping up with speed - lose focus

Spaces are not conducive for optimum learning - some kids are very far away from the teaching materials, or don't have equal access to them (not enough copies for all kids, or too far away from the projector), some kids are faced away from the board, the projects are not big enough for students to even see easily, either too hot or too cold in spaces. The warm spaces made me feel VERY uncomfortable.

Many students are not happy throughout the day - there are pockets and spaces where students feel comfortable and safe, but many more observed students did not appear that way. Friction between students and between adults is consistent. Culture needs to be addressed (it is currently being addressed as a school, but it seems needed in some classroom spaces more than others).

Students were most engaged when having discussions that were made personal or relatable.
Students were visibly bored in classes where they mostly only listened.
Furniture is not conducive for partner or group work.
Students were most engaged (and time went by faster) in the class where students and teachers talked equally.
I thought everything about the way the tours were organized were great, but I do wish I could have been in a CTE class as well.

Program Workshop 1 Meeting Minutes

MINUTES

Date: 01.14.2026

Meeting Date: 01.09.2026

Attendees:

Marta Cabral	MHS Principal
Chelsea McNiff	Director of English Learners
Suzanne B Galusi	Interim Superintendent
Kim Talbot	Assistant Superintendent
Jonathan Wilson	Science Teacher
Norman Rousseau	CTE Biotech Teacher
Becca Matloff	MHS School Adjustment Counselor
Stacey Schulman	Director of School Counseling
Joan Bowen	Director of Student Services
Chad Fallon	Executive Director of Career and Technical Education
Dana McMahon	Social Studies Teacher
Colleen Mahany	Special Education
Megan LeClair	EL Math Teacher
Madeline McDonough	English Teacher
Suzanne Fee	Director of Arts
Adele Sands	Leftfield, Ed Liaison
Matt Rice	SMMA Architect
Rosemary Park	SMMA Architect, Educational Planner
Helen Fantini	SMMA Architect
Matthew Gulino	Leftfield, OPM
Mike Pirollo	MLP Educational Planner
Paul White	MLP Educational Consultant

1. Welcome and Framing the Day

The meeting opened with a welcome and an overview of the goals for the day. Participants were asked to review the project goal sheet and reflect on how well the goals captured Medford High School's values, history, and aspirations.

2. Goals and Priorities

Participants were asked to review the project goal sheet and reflect on how well the goals captured Medford High School's values and aspirations.

Several participants noted the importance of ensuring that Medford's history is explicitly reflected, particularly within Goals 1 and 2. Goal 5 received strong positive feedback, with many participants underlining language they felt was especially meaningful. There was discussion about the need to consider Goal 2 beyond the traditional school day, including what extended use could look like and how it might be supported beyond community access to spaces such as the gym.

Participants suggested that Goal 1 could include clear wayfinding strategies, such as ceiling-mounted signage, to help students and visitors easily locate CTE programs and other specialized areas.

In discussing Goal 4, participants reflected on school tours and noted that some alternative or flexible spaces were underutilized. There was concern that small spaces should have a clearly defined purpose rather than simply serving as overflow seating with tables and chairs. Participants appreciated examples of small group spaces located between classrooms but emphasized that these spaces need a compelling reason to be used. Suggestions included incorporating features such as graph-tiled floors, wall-mounted screens for gallery walks, or activity-based elements (e.g., basketball hoops or soccer nets). A cautionary example was shared from Billerica, where flexible spaces are underused or have not been implemented at all.

Participants noted that some flexible spaces do not currently offer anything meaningfully different from a traditional classroom, which limits their effectiveness. Scheduling was identified as a challenge, as sharing flexible spaces is difficult when teachers at the same course level are not teaching at the same time. Concerns were also raised about noise from open or flexible spaces spilling into adjacent classrooms. Many educators expressed greater comfort with enclosed spaces, particularly in English and history classrooms, where reducing distractions is important.

While there has been thinking about bringing entire classes into flexible spaces, participants shared that students often request smaller areas for group work instead. Chapman Middle School's layout was cited positively, especially the way classrooms faced inward toward a central area, though participants also expressed concern that some layouts can unintentionally silo teachers. The developmental needs of seniors were raised, including the role of a senior lounge. Overall, participants emphasized that space planning must be accompanied by systemic changes to support student learning effectively.

One participant noted that academic rigor is implied in the goals but not explicitly stated, suggesting that it could be added to Goal 3 to highlight increased knowledge and rigor. Goal 5 was again praised, with participants reflecting on whether it represents a whole-building vision or more specifically the role of a building leadership team. Student voice was identified as one of the most impactful aspects of the visioning process; participants described students as honest, vulnerable, and inspirational and stressed the importance of ensuring their voices continue to be heard. Several

participants noted that students want choice and expressed concern that adult-driven decisions can unintentionally limit those choices.

It was shared that Mike would convert the goals into a Google Doc so the district could review, mark up, and add notes or revisions as needed.

3. Establishing a Perspective-Taking Lens

Mike introduced the Perspective-Taking Lens Protocol and explained that participants would be asked to share feedback from three viewpoints: department or program expertise, student experience, and the broader educational vision and goals.

4. Program Deep Dive 1: Academic Organization

Mike led a discussion on different ways to organize the building academically, presenting four potential models along with hybrid approaches. Visuals were shared, followed by Mentimeter results from a previous visioning session, which showed that 22 participants favored collaboratively organized learning communities.

Participants highlighted the strong work currently being done by freshman teachers to establish community, collaborate, and support students. The idea of a dedicated freshman wing was discussed as a potential way to support students' transition into high school. From a student experience perspective, concerns were raised that separating freshmen could limit interaction with upper grades. Questions were also raised about how to support English Learners and students receiving counseling services across grades 9–12 if a separate freshman structure were implemented. It was suggested that the rest of the student population could be more intentionally mixed.

The house model was described as culturally sound, though participants emphasized the need to refine its implementation. Others noted that a freshman experience could be preserved through a freshman academy model (e.g., elective structures or scheduling strategies) without physically isolating students in a separate wing.

A side discussion highlighted the desire for department planning spaces where teachers teaching the same subject or grade level could be housed together to support collaboration. Participants expressed interest in learning more about vertical versus horizontal alignment and how teachers feel about each approach.

Community learning spaces were discussed in terms of safety and accessibility. Participants noted that destination spaces may not be used by some special education students who require more frequent instructional touchpoints. Small collaboration spaces should maintain clear sightlines for teacher supervision.

It was noted that while subject or core classrooms could be distributed throughout the building, centrally located department planning rooms could help support collaboration. Participants

reflected that the current house model exists but feels too large, and student feedback suggests a desire for spaces where they feel a sense of connection. There was interest in identifying existing strengths that could be built upon.

5. Program-Specific Considerations

For science, participants supported the idea of clustering science rooms near one another while still maintaining connections to other academic areas. Housing science at the end of wings was seen as offering both connection and separation, and keeping chemistry and biology together was emphasized as important for sharing chemical resources and from a safety perspective.

In discussing CTE and applied programs, participants explored how academic practices currently used in core subjects could be integrated into CTE curricula. There was strong interest in strengthening connections between CTE and core academics.

CTE programs identified during the discussion included Construction Trades; STEM-related pathways such as Criminal Justice, Dental Assistance, and Health (Nursing); and community-facing programs such as the restaurant, auto shop, Mustang Mall, and cosmetology.

Arts and music were described as currently being physically and academically separate from the rest of the building. Students perceive this separation as reinforcing the idea that arts are isolated from core academics. Participants emphasized the need for a mindset shift to better embed the arts within the academic program. Music was acknowledged as appropriately located near the auditorium due to sound considerations, while participants questioned whether other arts could be more academically integrated. It was noted that currently only students enrolled in art classes visit the art wing, limiting exposure for other students.

6. Library and Media Center

Participants expressed strong interest in the Waltham High School library model, particularly its role as a central hub that students walk through regularly. Features that were highlighted included low book stacks that improve sightlines, flexible working areas, and glass-enclosed rooms for meetings.

In considering a new library at Medford High School, participants described it as another potential space for quiet student work. It was noted that this role may evolve in a new building if small group spaces and extended learning communities are more prevalent. Mike shared several library model examples. Currently, the library is used for capstone projects, and the librarian supports instruction by collecting books on carts for teacher use. Students also use the space for independent work. It was noted that at the Medford Public Library, students frequently use small group rooms to complete homework.

7. Adjacency Mapping 1

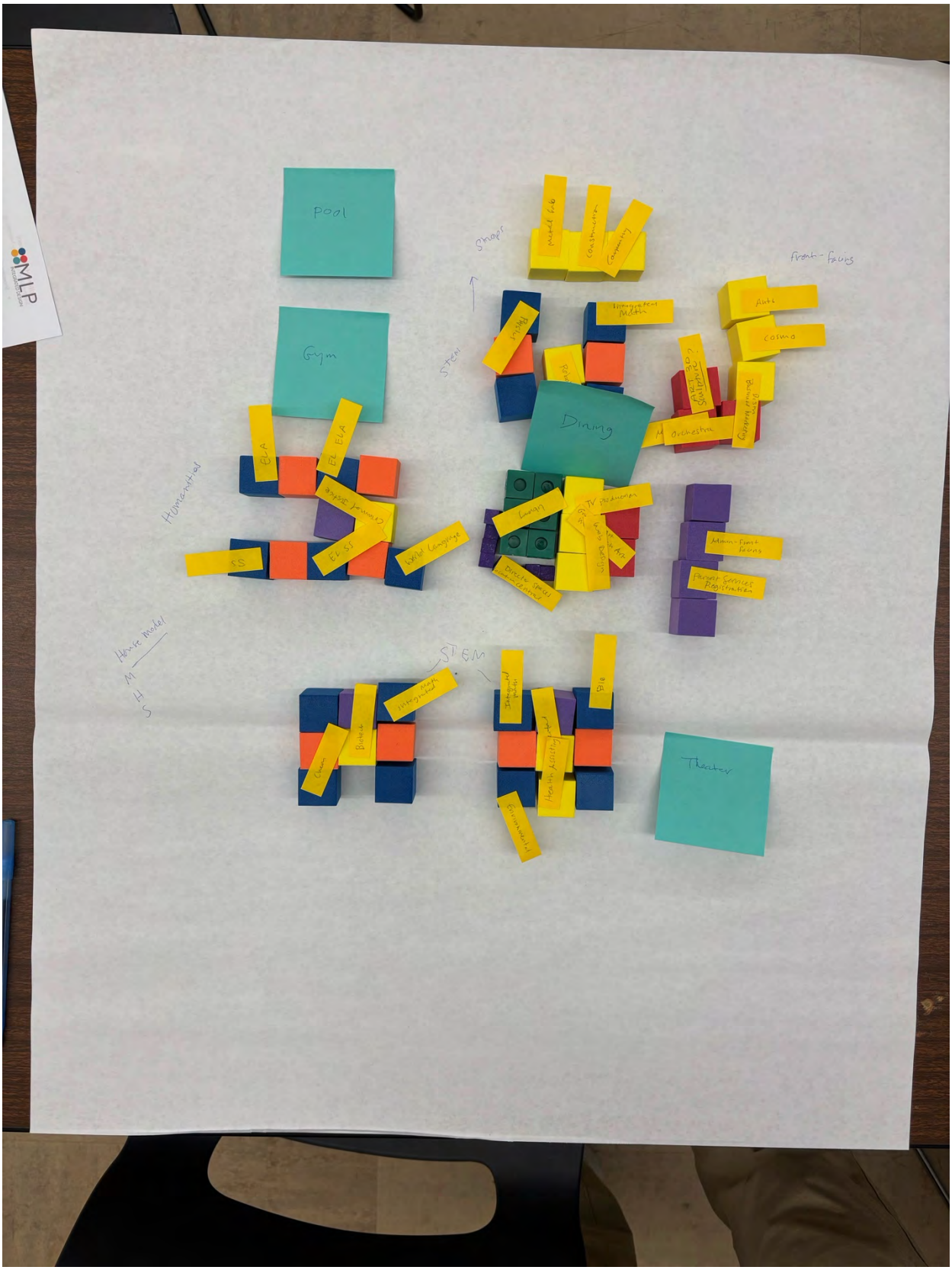
For the first adjacency mapping activity, participants counted off by threes and moved to assigned tables. Small groups discussed program adjacencies and placed cubes representing spaces onto

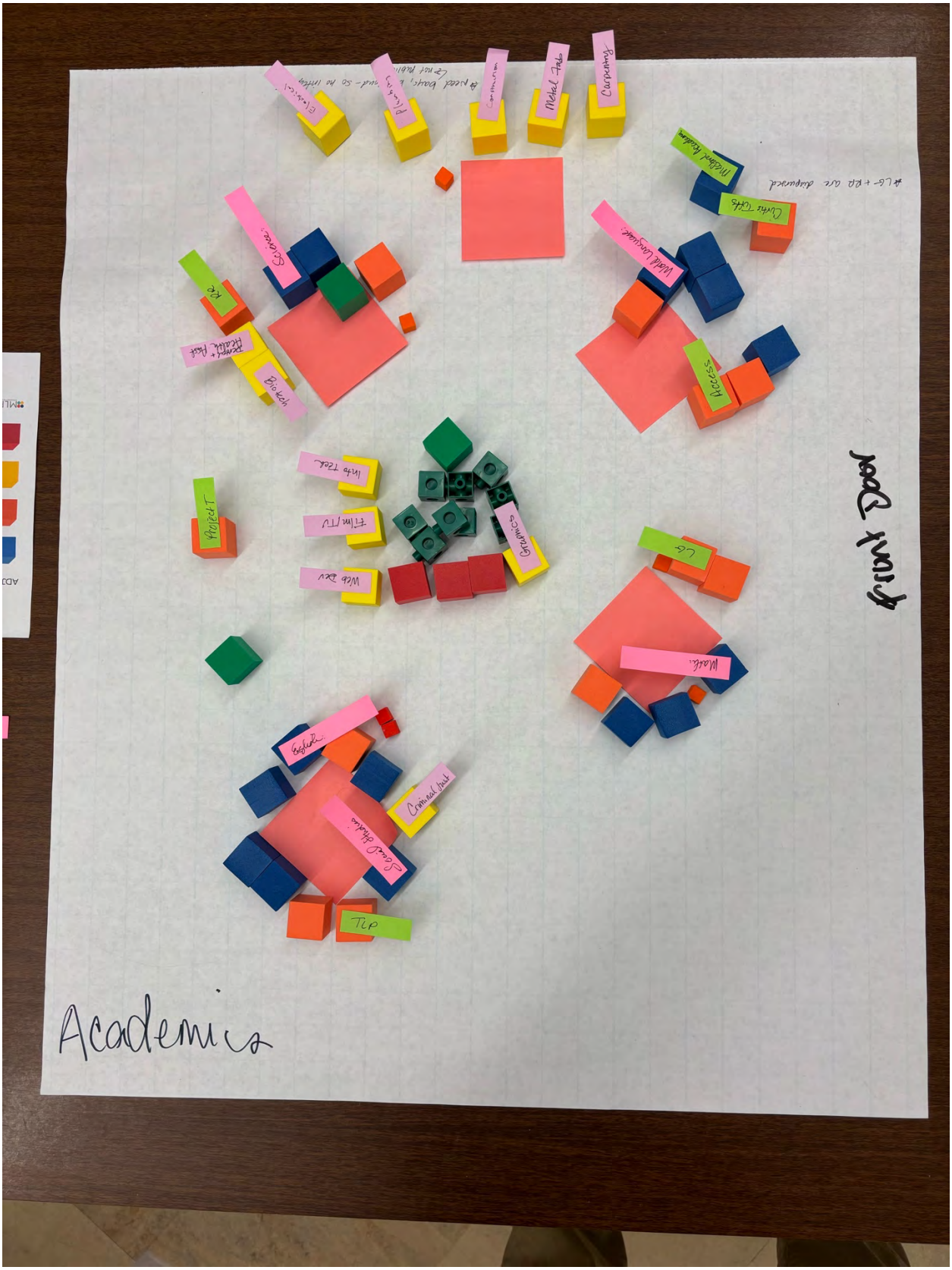
chart paper. After approximately 45 minutes, a representative from each group shared their map with the full group. Mike then facilitated a whole-group discussion to identify emerging guiding principles, focusing on areas of alignment and common themes across the maps.

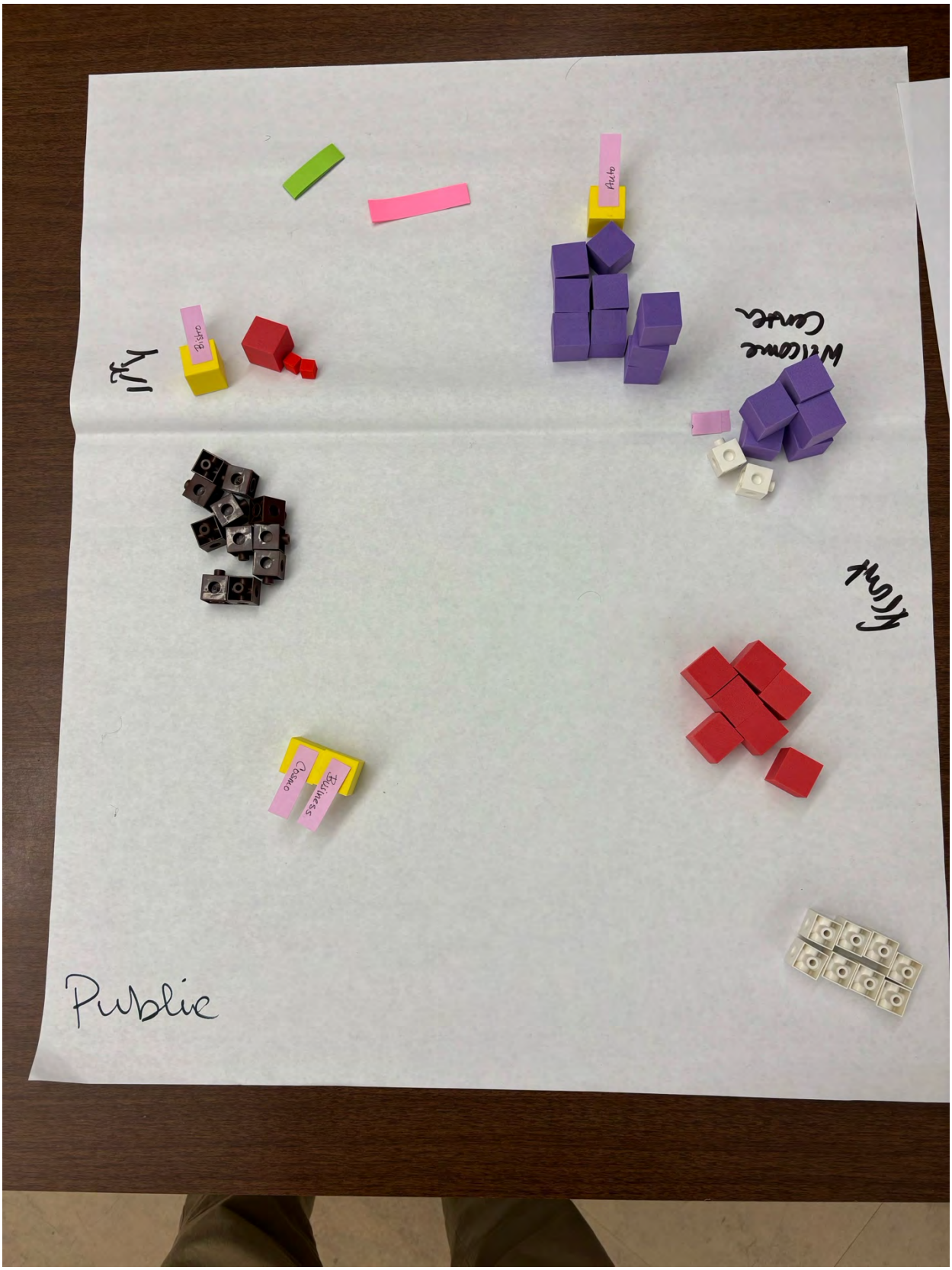
8. Adjacency Mapping 2

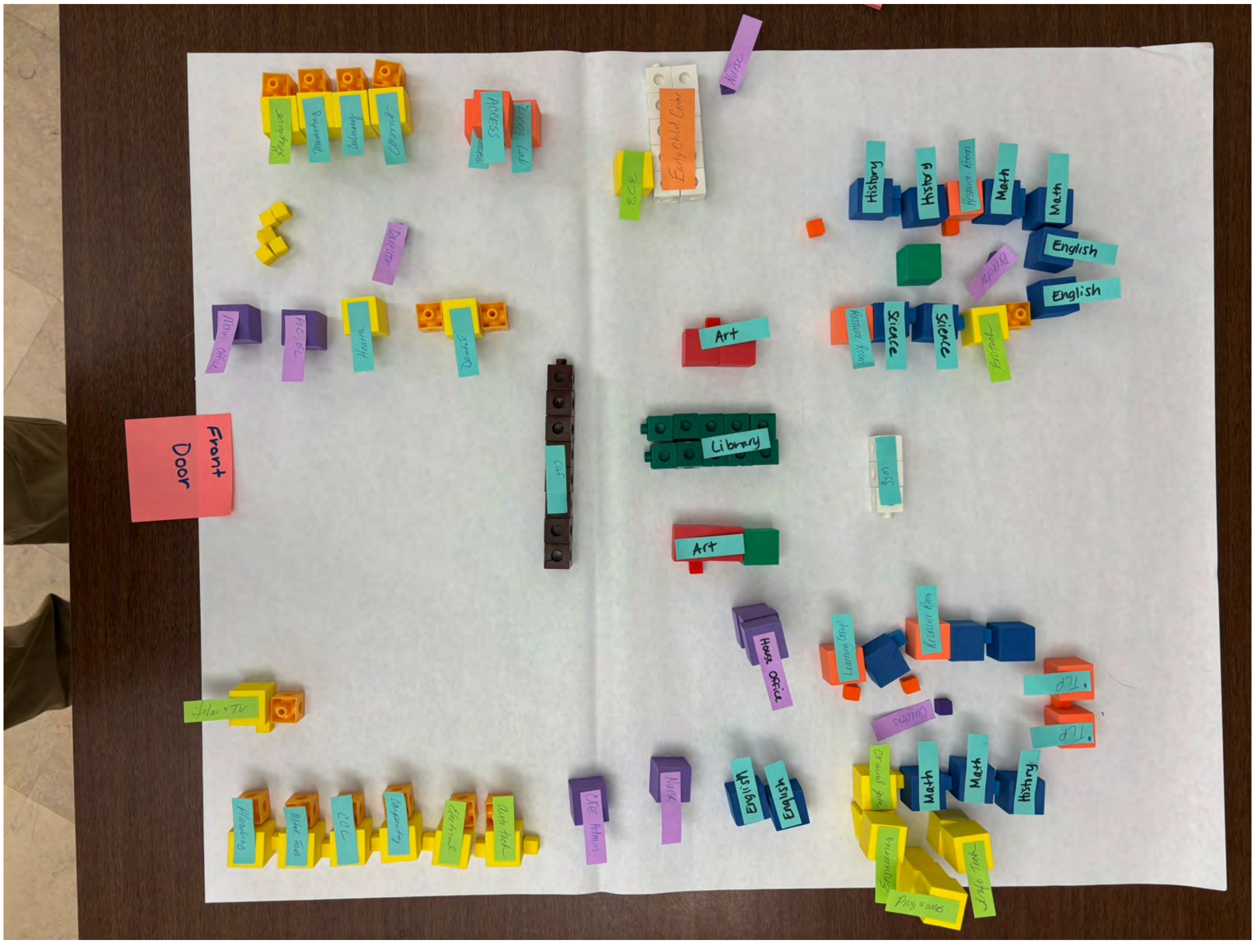
In the second adjacency mapping activity, participants returned to their original maps and were asked to consider additional programs and spaces, including administration and guidance, social-emotional supports and belonging, and community and shared spaces. Mike again facilitated a whole-group discussion, inviting participants to reflect on their revisions and add additional insights to the emerging list of guiding principles based on areas of alignment, priorities, and shared themes.

Adjacency outcomes from each group are documented in the pages that follow.


Pool
Gym
Dining
Theater
STEM
Humanities
Hexie model
Front - facing
Shaper
M
H
S


Academics
front door
Metal Fab
Carpentry
Project
Wood Lab
Wood Lab
Film TV
Little Tech
Graphics
Lit
Music
Computer Science
Computer Aided Design
TLP
Wood Lab
Lit
Art
Science + Health
Project
Wood Lab
Science
Wood Lab
Library
Cafe
Media Center
Assess


Public



To conclude the adjacency mapping, the group gathered for a whole group conversation where they identified agreed-upon guiding design principles and adjacencies for the future building, which are documented below:

Guiding Design Principles and Ideal Adjacencies

- Academics organized into learning community pods with centralized shared breakout space to collaborate directly outside of classrooms
- Special Education and EL spaces embedded throughout learning communities
- Small group rooms within proximity of pods; need different sized small group rooms for group sizes of 4-6 and up to 10
- One central library that has connections to academics and art classrooms
- CTE integration with core academics when appropriate
- Special consideration to CTE programs with bay shops; place CTE programs where students can see them
- Art displays should have a public facing component

- Themed spaces and variety of tech labs (i.e. put a culinary themed tech space near the culinary program and cafeteria)
- Welcome Center by the front door; should be accessible to the community with a separate entrance
- Some nursing by entrance for pickup
- Community facing spaces include auditorium, gym, CTE (Bistro, Shop, Cosmo, Auto)
- House offices should be stacked
- Outdoor dining options should be supported

Questions remaining and topics TBD:

- Should gym and cafeteria be adjacent to each other?
- Location of auditorium?
- Design of core classrooms – should they be universal or a hybrid?
- Components of library – art, maker space, media, writing lab, College and Career Center, co-op, math lab
- How do we want to integrate quite spaces throughout?