

Teachers²¹ Secondary School Redesign Framework: Essential Elements

Our work in hundreds of schools and districts over the past decade and a half have helped us to recognize that many school reform efforts that use a “small learning community” framework are stymied by competing school- and district-wide improvement initiatives. Our comprehensive Secondary School Redesign Framework addresses the special small learning community needs of secondary schools within the context of school- and district-wide reform while maintaining an intensive focus on teaching, leadership, and learning, as well as a working knowledge of the unique characteristics that make up a high school community. Teachers²¹'s goal is to enhance the *whole* learning community.

1. Shared School Governance

- Vision, mission, values and goals created in a democratic process, embraced by the entire community, and support learning success for all
- Shared leadership committed to providing skills and competencies that ensure college and career readiness and educating the whole child to be engaged and productive citizens in our competitive global society
- Whole-school commitment to fostering a safe environment and a positive school culture

2. Culture of Professional Learning

- Active, engaged professional learning communities that utilize collective inquiry to refine and reflect on their practices
- Collaborative teams that engage in ongoing discourse about teaching and learning with a shared commitment to each others' learning and shared ownership of results
- Work-embedded professional learning to build internal capacity
- Outside learning opportunities to expand knowledge base and skill level
- Distributed instructional leadership with high expectations that provides growth-oriented feedback

7. Community Partnerships

- Meaningful family involvement to foster shared responsibility
- Collaboration with higher education, businesses and community agencies to aid students in making real world connections to the curriculum, to support project-based learning and to develop 21st century skills

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3. Personalization

- Sense of shared responsibility for all of our students built on a school culture of trust and mutual respect
- An emphasis on the social and emotional needs of adolescent learners
- Strong teacher/ student relationships and a safe environment to nurture each student's voice and competencies
- Frequent and meaningful opportunities for each student to plan and assess their learning in a small, personalized setting

6. Use of Time and Resources

- Flexible use of time to ensure that the diverse needs of learners are met
- Resources allocated so that teacher collaboration and reflection is on-going

5. Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

- Relevant, rigorous, and equitable standards that encompass the needs of 21st century students
- Research-based, technology-enhanced and differentiated instructional best practices
- Multi-faceted systematic assessment that is grounded in pre-assessment, guided by common formative assessment and revised grounded on data-based results
- Learning environment organized to support student engagement, collaboration, critical thinking, and 21st century skills

4. Equity

- Consistent, clear and high expectations for every student, and equitable access to supports for reaching them
- A safe and engaging learning environment for each student
- A community of educators committed to the attitudes, behaviors and skills that ensure inclusive, respectful and effective interactions
- Policies that ensure every individual learner has access to challenging programs