

EXPLORE WORKSHOP EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Education Innovation Teams of students, parents, staff, administrators, parents/grandparents, business and community leaders representing each school in Missoula County Public Schools tackled a series of challenging exercises focused on exploring the world beyond Missoula for inspiration and mentors from highly effective schools around the globe.

Additional exercises focused on critiquing 15 school organization concepts for local relevance and developing learning patterns which represent the needs of students, teachers and staff.

The Expanded Education Innovation Teams identified the three most effective learning modalities for the students each group commonly worked with and developed a preliminary building program which defined the elements needed to create a learning environment that supports MCPS's educational vision.

In the final exercise of the EXPLORE phase, the Expanded Education Innovation Teams articulated a range of options for each facility, from Option B: Business as Usual to Option S: Start Over.

A mid-week Community Listening Session provided an opportunity for the Steering Committee, Education Innovation

Teams and Expanded Education Innovation Teams to share insights into the planning process and to collect the Hopes and Concerns of the community at large.

The World Beyond Missoula

The workshop began with a review of the world beyond Missoula for inspiration and mentors in highly effective schools from around the globe. The presentation included elements of schools including welcoming entries, places to gather, dine & celebrate learning, breakout areas for projects, technology, tutoring and presentations.

The presentation also incorporated images of planning centers for teachers and staff, transparency and the importance of introducing color, day-light, fresh air, into learning environments. Examples of flexible spaces and furnishings in support of teaching and learning and specifically project based learning were shared. Finally, connections to the community and environment concluded the more than 60 images of schools from around the world.



School Organization

Participants ranked the following schools as most effective in achieving the 21st Century Initiatives of MCPS.

- *Chugach Optional School, Anchorage, AK*
- *High Tech High International, San Diego, CA*
- *Lynnwood High School, Bothell, WA*
- *Columbus Signature Academy (New Tech Network), Columbus, IN*
- *Christo Rey High School, Minneapolis, MN*
- *Forrest Bird Charter School, Sandpoint, ID*
- *Trillium Creek Primary School West Linn, OR*
- *Minnesota New Country School, Henderson, MN*
- *Rosa Parks Elementary, Portland, OR*
- *Neighborhood Community Central Model, Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands*
- *North Central Shared Facility, Regina SK*
- *Harlem Children's Zone, New York, NY*
- *Anne Frank Inspire Academy, San Antonio, TX*

Learning Patterns

The group was asked to select one of 22 elements of a school and to develop a "learning pattern" including the key characteristics of the type of learning (active learning, learning alone, leaning in small groups, etc.), the type of space needed to support that type of learning, and key connections to other learning spaces. The group produced a brief statement advocating for the need of the learning pattern in our schools.

Guiding Principles

The Education Innovation Teams provided commentary on each of the draft guiding principles which had been extracted from the work of the Education Innovation Teams during the ASSESS phase. The guiding principles will continue to be revised and refined as the planning process continues.



Learning Modalities

Table teams identified three of the most effective Learning Modalities from a list of 20 Teacher-Directed, Teacher-Facilitated and Student-Directed learning modalities. Many of the groups identified Social-Emotional Learning and Learning with various forms of Technology as under-lying all learning in all school settings.

The top three most effective Learning Modalities included:

- Project-Based Learning*
- Interdisciplinary Learning*
- One-On-One Teacher/Student Learning*

The next four most effective Learning Modalities included:

- Team Collaboration*
- Student Presentation*
- Learning with Mobile Technology*
- Naturalist Learning*

The majority of the facilities within Missoula County Public Schools were designed and constructed well before the extensive educational research linked personalized learning to student engagement and comprehension.

Preliminary Building Program

- A preliminary building program was developed for each of the schools, illustrating the key components for a highly effective school serving the future enrollment projections for the grade configurations served.*
- CTA compared each of the building programs to state standards in Wyoming, Ohio and Massachusetts.*



Range of Options

The Expanded Education Innovation Teams developed a wide range of practical and creative options within a framework of Option B: Business as Usual to Option S: Start Over. The options that have the greatest impact on other schools includes:

Chief Charlo

- Expand to become a K-8

Cold Springs

- Combine with Russell

Russell

- Split K-5 with Cold Springs (one school K-2, other 3-5)

Rattlesnake

- Become K-8 & reopen Mount Jumbo as K-8

Lewis & Clark

- No change to K-5 structure

Paxson

- K-3 @ Paxson, 4-5 @ Lewis & Clark

Lowell

- PK-8

Franklin

- PK-5 in combination with Jefferson

Hawthorne

- No change to PK-5

Jefferson

- PK in all schools/Central Fine & Performing Arts Center on Brooks

Washington

- 6-8 on Sentinel campus

CS Porter

- 6-8 on DNRC campus with proximity to Big Sky & Hawthorne, Franklin or K-8 with Hawthorne

Meadow Hill

- 6-8 on Sentinel campus

Sentinel

- Skills Center @ Sentinel

Hellgate

- Consolidate to two high schools and Grade 9 center

Seeley-Swan

- Establish sister school relationship with Hellgate

Big Sky

- Consolidate to two high schools

Vo-Ag

- "Food to Fork" with Culinary Arts & MCPS food service

Willard

- Relocate to Missoula Mercantile

Dickinson

- Professional center in each school
- Re-locate to Brooks Corridor or collaborate with SELL/MOLI/COT relocate to River Campus.

Community Listening Session

A community listening session was held on Wednesday November 6, 2013 in order to provide an opportunity for more than 75 people to share their hopes and concerns about the work of the Education Innovation Teams as the planning process continues. The feedback allows the comments of the community to be integrated into the process, and to assure that the school teams do not get too far ahead of the community at large. The Community Listening Session included a brief overview of the territory covered during the planning workshops, followed by opportunities for Steering Committee members to record hopes and concerns in small groups stationed throughout the venue.

Individual Reflections

At the conclusion of each of the planning sessions participants were asked to write a brief reflection upon the planning process.

