

New Elementary School Day Think Tank Meeting #3

The New Elementary School Day Think Tank met for the final time on Tuesday, December 3. Parents, teachers, and administrators came together to finalize the guiding principles that will be used to guide the teachers and members of the Department of Instruction in creating learning experiences. In addition, a possible framework for creating experiences was shared and feedback was received. The Think Tank also engaged in learning experiences and provided feedback.

The Think Tank finalized a set of principles that align with the district's strategic commitment of providing innovative learning experiences so that every child can graduate prepared for college and career. These principles were created based on the feedback form completed by parents and staff members, articles read and discussed, feedback and ideas shared by various stakeholders, engaging in experiences together, and opportunities for conversations. The principles will inform what happens in the classroom, the implementation and evaluation of programs, and remind us of our own expectations for student learning.

Experiences should:

- Be available to all students
- Provide opportunities for authentic learning
- Focus on processes and skill application, not on additional core content (English Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies)
- Embed opportunities for movement
- Be student led, with the teacher serving as a facilitator of learning
- Offer students choice, with the understanding that choice can look different based on the experience
- Incorporate purposeful play and discovery
- Intentionally integrate the application of social emotional skills
- Utilize technology in a way that enhances and supports the learning

With the new elementary day, students will engage in additional art, music, and physical education. The charge of the Think Tank was to provide guidance on determining additional opportunities for specials throughout the week. Members of the Department of Instruction, along with teachers, will use the information collected by the Think Tank to determine the structure and experiences. In January, an update of the work of the Think Tank will be provided to the School Board Learning and Teaching Committee. In addition, a presentation will be made to the School Board Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC), that includes an update of the work of the Think Tank and next steps, providing an additional opportunity for community feedback. Lastly, members of the Department of Instruction will meet with student focus groups in early spring to determine if the potential experiences have been designed to meet their interests.

We would like to thank members of the community and D303 staff for their service on the Think Tank committee and for providing their guidance and input in the development of additional learning experiences for our elementary students.