



Tool: Forming a Strong School (Re)Design Team

When launching a school redesign process, the **Design Team** plays a critical role in shaping the vision, testing bold ideas, and building trust.

These Design Teams Work Best When:

1. The team reflects the full school ecosystem.

A balanced Design Team of 7–10 members includes school leaders, teachers, students, classified staff, and parents or community members. The goal is to bring a variety of lived experiences, voices, and expertise into the room from the very beginning.

2. The team includes the informal culture leaders—not just those with titles.

Every school has trusted voices who influence morale, mindset, and momentum. Be intentional about identifying and inviting these “culture carriers”, people others naturally look to. They may be a beloved teacher, a family member, a campus supervisor, or a front office staff member.

3. Space is made for students and community members to lead, not just participate.

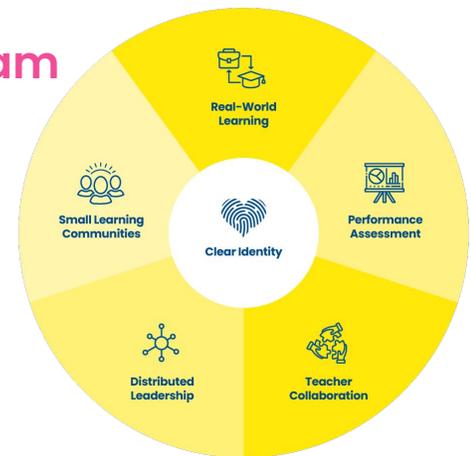
Elevating student and family voices is essential. Inviting them to join is the first step. Encouraging them to share their perspectives, drive decisions, and shape design choices will ensure meaningful inclusion and impact.

4. The purpose of the school redesign process is clear.

Frame this as an opportunity to reimagine systems and structures, not just make surface-level changes. Make it clear that the team is co-designing holistic learner-centered experiences and structures. Be clear about the budget or potential for more facilities based redesign that may or may not be part of the redesign process.

5. There is clarity on what participation looks like.

Design Team members will ideally be part of the entire process. They will conduct empathy interviews and focus groups, explore inspirational models, generate new ideas, and prototype them for feedback. It's hands-on, inquiry-driven work that shapes the future of the school. It's important to be clear about the time commitment expected and when the group will meet, accounting for if substitutes or stipends will be needed to make those extra meetings work. Also be clear that this is just the start of the process, that will take time and be iterative. Being a part of the Design Team means they will have a direct impact on the future of the school.



Design Team Planning Tool

1. Who will you include on your team? Plan for about 7-10 members.

Administrators	
Teacher Leaders	
Staff	
Students	
Family Members	
Additional Community Members	

Reflect: Among the list you brainstormed, is there an informal culture leader who will support building buy-in across the community?

2. What is your core messaging for teachers and staff on the purpose of the school redesign and the role that they will play as a part of the Design Team?

Reflect: Are you being clear about the time commitment and responsibilities of the Design Team members?



Design Team Planning Tool

3. What is your core messaging for students on the purpose of the school redesign and the role that they will play as a part of the Design Team?

Reflect: What are some initial ideas that you have about ensuring that student voice is not only included on the Design Team but centered that you can share in your messaging?

5. What is your core messaging for families and community members on the purpose of the school redesign and the role that they will play as a part of the Design Team?

Reflect: what are some initial ideas that you have about ensuring that family and community voices are integrated into the Design Team experience that you can share in your messaging?