SCHOOL DESIGN STRATEGIES

Excellent Teaching for All Students

Organize teachers and teams to maximize student learning and continuously grow talent.

1. Hiring and Strategic Retention: Attract and retain the best teachers for students.

Typical: Hiring is done to fill vacancies, and excellent teachers exit at highest rates.

Strategic: Hiring is based on rigorous assessment of gaps in staff expertise. High performers are deliberately retained through additional responsibilities, recognition, and pay, while consistent underperformers are efficiently exited.

2. Data: Systematically use common, standards-based assessments and other data to track student progress and adjust instruction and support.

Typical: Teachers do not use interim assessments or they create tests that are not directly aligned with or at the rigor of state standards. They review student work and make instructional changes on their own at various times during the year.

Strategic: Teachers use common interim assessments administered four to six times a year, and other common assessments more frequently that are aligned with state standards at the correct levels of rigor. The assessments themselves inform detailed scope and sequences, other tests, and unit and lesson plans (backwards planning); and the data produced directs student groupings, whole- and small-group instruction, and interventions.

3. Differentiated Teacher Roles: Give teachers roles that match their skills to student needs.

Typical: Teachers are mostly kept in traditional roles that don't leverage their unique talents and interests to help students and peers and align with school goals.

Strategic: Teachers are strategically assigned to roles that apply their time and individual assets to meet diverse student needs, extend the reach of strong performers, and advance school goals.

4. Teaching Teams: Cultivate teams of teachers who share responsibility for student success and build collective expertise by working together to plan and adjust instruction based on data.

Typical: Teachers largely work in isolation from one another. Student work and other data are not rigorously and collaboratively examined to inform instruction.

Strategic: Teaching teams, led by instructional experts, excellent teacher leaders, or meet regularly to plan and adjust instruction based on student data; team members view themselves as collectively responsible for the success of the students they share.

5. Individual Professional Growth: Facilitate teacher learning through job-embedded supports tailored to their needs.

Typical: Professional growth opportunities are one-size-fits-all professional development workshops with no or limited follow-up. Teachers are observed primarily for evaluation.

Strategic: Differentiated individual professional growth, particularly in the formof regular observation and coaching, is linked to teacher performance standards, student data, and school needs.

Personalized Learning and Support

Match grouping, learning time, technology, and program to students' individual needs.

6. Targeted and Dynamic Learning Resources: Create targeted student groupings and schedules that match resources (talent, learning time, program, and technology) to student needs and adjust groupings and schedules during the school year as needs change.

> **Typical:** Class sizes, teacher loads, and schedules are standardized and rigid.
>
> **Strategic:** Groupings and schedules are initially set and frequently adapted to differentiate which students need to be with which teachers or technology, learning what content, in what group size, and for how long, based on their individual needs.

7. Personal Relationships and School Culture: Ensure students are deeply known within a community of shared expectations.

> **Typical:** Teachers are responsible for 100+ students, and strong personal relationships are rare; expectations of students, the definition of success, and beliefs about what it will take to get there vary significantly across teachers and students.
>
> **Strategic:** Learning happens in the context of deep relationships between students and teachers, students and students, and teachers and teachers. Strong shared culture and a common definition of success are evidenced through individual interactions and the execution of common routines.
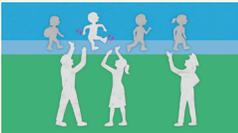
8. Targeted Social-Emotional Support: Integrate more intensive social-emotional support where necessary.

> **Typical:** The spectrum of support does not align with the spectrum of student need.
>
> **Strategic:** Systems exist to link students to the right supports, both inside and outside the school, and to ensure strong, ongoing communication between teachers, support providers, and families.
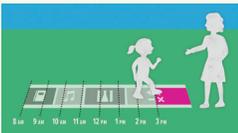
9. Sufficient Time: Ensure students have enough time to meet rigorous standards and engage in motivating enrichment opportunities.

> **Typical:** The day and year are too short for students to get to mastery on core subjects and also have sufficient time to explore their interests and passions.
>
> **Strategic:** The school day and/or year is lengthened to match the needs of students, enabling their participation in activities that fuel optimism and motivation more broadly.

Cost Effectiveness through Creative Solutions

Organize a combined set of jobs, partnerships, and technology to maximize resources that support teaching and learning.

10. Targeted Teacher Time: Enable teachers to focus on the most important aspects of instruction by integrating instructional support staff and technology.

> **Typical:** The full instructional cycle, and most other parts of the student day, are facilitated by teachers.
>
> **Strategic:** Various types of support staff and technology are used in targeted ways across the student day to ensure teacher time is prioritized to the most critical activities.

11. Community Partnerships: Create community partnerships that expand opportunities for students and help schools meet key goals.

> **Typical:** School-based services are provided by school-based staff in traditional, full-time roles.
>
> **Strategic:** Community partners are used to provide high-quality services at a lower cost where possible; shared goals and ongoing communication ensure tight alignment between partner and school.

12. Creative Staffing Arrangements: Use creative staffing arrangements to meet the school's unique staffing needs in the most efficient way.

> **Typical:** Most school staff are in traditional, full-time roles.
>
> **Strategic:** Part-time, shared, and other nontraditional roles ensure that the investment made in any given role matches the needs of students and the school.