TRANSFORMATIONAL LEARNING FOR EACH STUDENT—67,000 TIMES A DAY

Building defined and flexible, scalable structures to unlock insights and capacity across large, complex systems

Virginia Beach City Public Schools

Virginia Beach, Virginia

ABOUT THE INNOVATIVE SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES PROJECT

Dear Educator,

Beginning in 2017, the Successful Practices Network (SPN) and AASA The School Superintendents Association have been conducting a study of innovation best practices in public K–12 systems from throughout the United States, with support from global learning company Houghton Mifflin Harcourt (HMH).

Dr. Bill Daggett has led a team of nationally recognized superintendents, researchers and data analysts to identify systems that are using innovative approaches to put students first by expanding and supporting student learning and achievement. Schools and districts were selected for further study based on a national search conducted by thought leaders and experts at HMH, SPN and AASA. HMH supported this effort by providing research and reviewers as part of its work to partner with school districts on improving student outcomes.

From that study, 25 national Innovative Successful Practices systems were identified based on their ability to demonstrate rapid improvement in student learning and preparedness through innovative organizational and instructional practices.

Each of those 25 systems collaborated with SPN and AASA to host an on-site visit, detailed data analysis and development of a case study. These case studies are intended to provide an accessible and nontechnical overview of each innovative approach that is backed up with data-driven results.

The participating systems include a wide range of geographies, demographics, student population and resource levels. In spite of those differences, each of these systems shares a common mindset that innovation can drive public education with a strong focus on serving the needs of all of their students.

We have been inspired by the lessons learned from these courageous leaders that took risks to think beyond their traditional systems and approaches. It is our hope that this work continues to inspire, inform and support public education leaders in their efforts to prepare students for success both in school and beyond school.

"The world that our children will live, work and interact in will be fundamentally different than the world we all grew up in," said Bill Daggett, Founder and Chairman, International Center for Leadership in Education. "To prepare them for success in this changing world our schools need to make fundamental changes as well. These innovative districts are paving the way and showing us how to make the necessary changes needed in our schools."

"At a time when the new school year is beginning across the nation, there is no better time than now to speak out about the value of public education and bring to the forefront the outstanding work being done by our school districts," said Daniel A. Domenech, Executive Director, AASA.
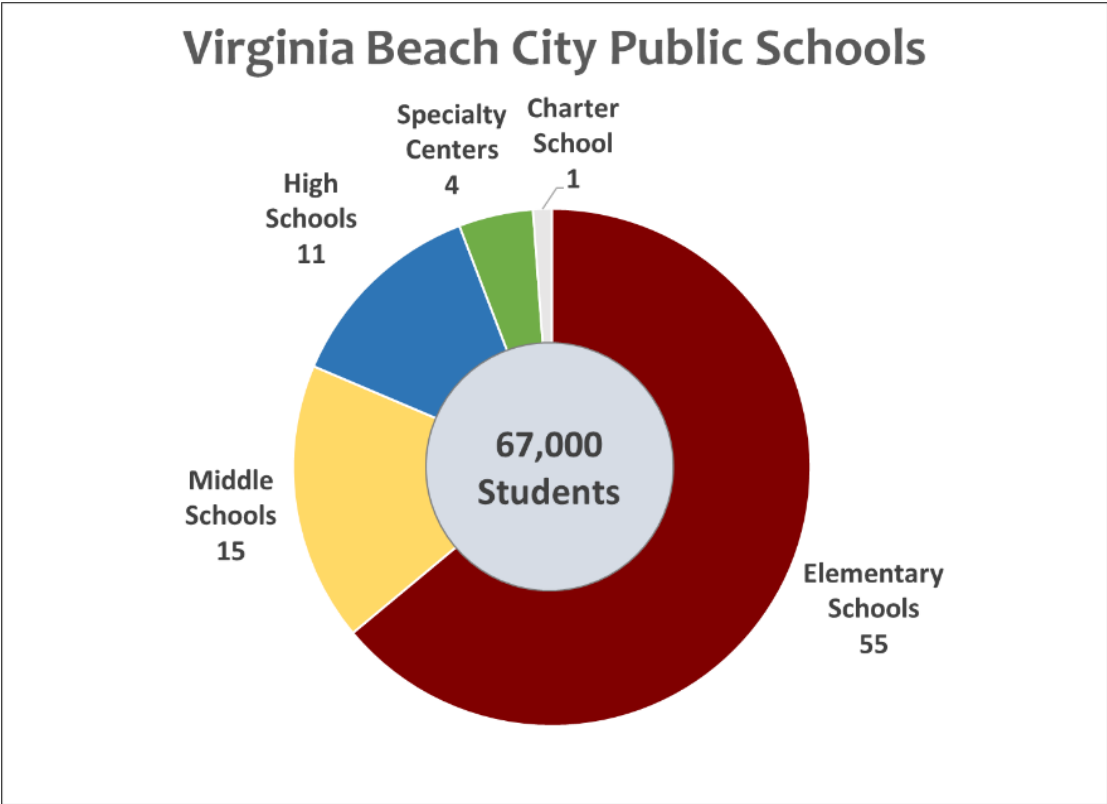
"It's important to be imagining how our classrooms and schools can look and feel different in the next decade," said Rose Else-Mitchell, Chief Learning Officer, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. "We congratulate these change-makers for creating a culture of innovation and the conditions for future-focused learning designs in their school districts to accelerate student engagement, growth, and achievement."
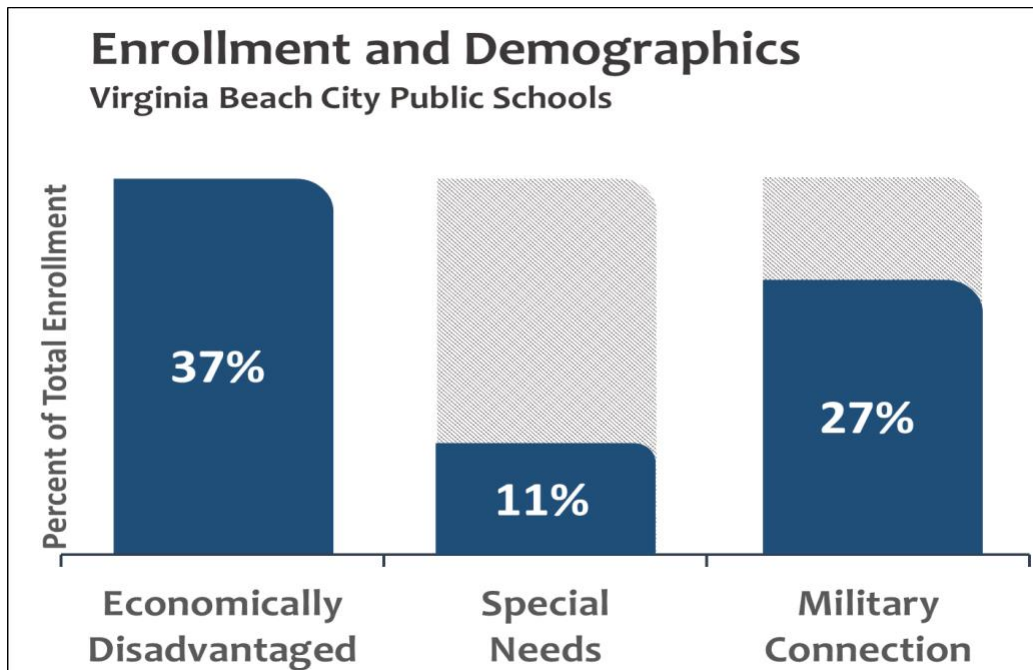
INTRODUCTION

With 16 of its 82 schools not fully accredited, the Virginia Beach City Public Schools system—long known for its outstanding schools—knew dramatic improvement was urgent. As a district proximal to a military base, the school always had some student transiency. Yet as surrounding population demographics also began to shift, the district found its ability to reach all students slipping. This coincided with the district's vision to prepare all students for the demands of a technology-driven and global world with equity. How, then, does a district with 67,000 students transform learning for each one of them? How do they build structures defined enough to create common understanding and cohesion towards goals *and* be flexible enough to meet the individual needs of all schools so that they in turn can meet the individual needs of all students? Very thoughtfully and deliberately.

THE CHALLENGE

Virginia Beach City Public Schools (VBCPS) is a massive and diverse district encompassing 85 schools—55 at the elementary level, 15 at the middle level, 11 high schools, 4 specialty centers, and one charter school. Approximately 67,000 students are enrolled in their district every year. Thirty-seven percent of these students are considered economically disadvantaged, 11% are identified as special needs, and 27% are connected to the local military bases.

Enrollment and Demographics
Virginia Beach City Public Schools

Percent of Total Enrollment

- Economically Disadvantaged: 37%
- Special Needs: 11%
- Military Connection: 27%

Between 2010 and 2013, 16 of VBCPS's schools lost accreditation due to performance issues associated with state tests. At the same time, leadership had been having a conversation with the community and school board about how to integrate 21st-century skills into curriculum and meet the needs of an ever more diverse student body. These goals were crystallized in the district's strategic plan, called *Compass to 2015*, which was intended to provide all students the skills that would prepare them for long, successful careers in a technological and globalized world. The plan also included developing an assessment system that went beyond multiple-choice measures of core content areas and establishing systematic procedures for responding proactively to student needs.

That the district lost accreditation on 16 campuses amid implementation of *Compass to 2015* underscored the need for district wide improvement and put more urgency behind change. It also overlapped with a community conversation about the district's next strategic plan, which would yield *Compass to 2020*. While *Compass to 2015* created a solid foundation for substantive and meaningful changes, the district needed to consider the new challenges it was facing and ensure it had a plan in place to address them. With *Compass to 2020*, the district is striving to put students at the center of learning and reimagine their role in it. The plan focuses purposefully, for example, on the social-emotional development of students, and it aims to provide all students interest-based, adaptive, student-directed learning opportunities supported with integrated technologies.

In 2014, the district hired a new superintendent. A top priority was to restore accreditation at all schools. But the superintendent was also committed to an equally urgent goal: to deliver the most effective, meaningful, and relevant learning experience for *all* 67,000 of the students under the district's care. This required supporting *Compass to 2020* with formalized but still flexible structures that could scale while remaining customizable to individual campuses. If a district the size of VBCPS wanted to transform learning for all 67,000 of its students, leadership knew it had to take a hands-on approach in devising such support structures and their processes. Leadership also knew they would have to be able to know when to transition to a more hands-off role of monitoring and offering tailored support as needed.

With sights squarely on transformed learning experiences for 67,000 students, the superintendent's strategy was to conceive and build structures that could unlock personalization capacity on every campus and in every classroom despite individual campus circumstances. If not handled with thoughtfulness and care, personalized learning and large systems can be diametrically opposed; the bigger the system, the more challenging it is to build structures that can serve every single person in it. Yet VBCPS had no choice; their size was a reality. So too was their commitment to equity as they set out to achieve transformational, individualized learning experiences, 67,000 times a day.

THE INNOVATION

Spend time in schools across VBCPS and it is easy to see scores of small and medium innovations across their campuses utilized to transform learning. Its educators have in many ways achieved the goal of using technologies to personalize learning, to hand ownership of learning to its students, to foster collaboration, to use data to discover insights that drive change, and to teach students to be ethical and responsible digital citizens. However, one could argue that these mission critical innovations could not have been possible without the district's largest scale innovation—building structures that unlocked capacity for the smaller and medium sized innovations that directly impact learners.

VBCPS achieved this by systemizing and coordinating broad school improvement structures that were still customizable to each school. By the end of 2017, just three plus years after this renewed focus on the school improvement process was implemented, all schools in Virginia Beach were once again fully accredited. Of equal significance, all educators in the district are united in meeting the needs of all 67,000 of its students every day. They continue to find ways to amplify systemic efficacy and capacity based on new insights and an openness to continuous improvement.

These changes didn't happen in a vacuum or without purpose. Five fundamental beliefs drove the structural changes that enabled customizable support for each school and transformational learning for each student across VBCPS.

Humility and Trust Underpin Successful Relationships in Complex Systems

Building complex, operational, strategic, and still customizable structures at scale entails finding balance between a series of polarities. Fortunately for VBCPS, its leadership was well aware of the fragility of this work. Such structures must be both structured and unstructured, specific and general, defined and flexible. They must be directive and adaptable. They must be pinned to an ultimate shared goal and leave room for individualized goals within it.

Leaders of such structures must offer clear guidance and support with a delicate touch. They must monitor without micromanaging. Those within the systems must grasp the contours of the structures and recognize when to construct their own supports within them. All the while, everyone must be working to achieve equity and equality at the same time. To skew too far in one direction of any of these polarities is to build to a structure too rigid to scale while remaining capable of meeting individual needs or too lax to identify progress towards shared goals.

Building cohesive, customizable structures to scale requires creating balance. For balance to be achieved and maintained, VBCPS knew that all stakeholders have to play always-evolving roles, which can only be possible when all processes are made transparent through frequent communication. In the early stages of structural implementation and change, VBCPS leadership clearly defined and communicated changes to the improvement process. Schools were placed into one of four levels of support based on a variety of factors, with clear systems of support and expectations outlined for each level. While the different levels were designed to ultimately require more or less communication with central support teams, district leaders took a more hands-on approach with all schools initially; their role was to work closely with schools as they undertook certain initiatives and ensure they were fully supported and set up for success.

Meanwhile, campus teams were to communicate their needs clearly and often to leadership. As teams moved further along in implementation processes, district leadership began to ease their involvement in some schools to empower teams to adapt structures to their circumstances for optimized success. What VBCPS shrewdly knew at this stage was not to loosen control to the same degree across the board and at the same time. Rather, the rate at which they transitioned to more hands-off leadership varied per campus based on needs articulated in structured, rich data conversations between school and district staff. Eventually, more and more campuses began operating effectively independently, aware that district leadership remained available to guide, support, and provide resources.

The underpinnings of this always-evolving dynamic between district leadership and campus teams are humility and trust. District leadership must demonstrate humility, aware that with time, they will relinquish more and more control to campus teams. They must trust their own ability to define and communicate structures clearly so that they can trust campus teams to forge their own paths as they adopt structures and adapt them to their needs. Campus teams must be able to trust that district leadership will monitor progress, offer support where they see a need, and be available for support when asked.

In other words, there has to be an openness to constructive dialogue and feedback among all parties in the process. Moreover, to scale this across a district, there has to be trust that schools and the district are engaged in the improvement process for the same purposes and that additional supports and resources made available at one school and not at others are being allocated in alignment with a district-held belief that all children deserve equity of access and opportunity. As VBCPS set out to design structures for change, they knew everyone in the district had to be on the same page.

Start on the Same Page (And Be Open to Moving Together to a Different One)

Compass to 2020 created a shared vision for change. However, before attempting the complex task of engaging and coordinating over 5,000 teachers and over 15,000 full- and part-time employees in a change process, guiding principles were seen as critical to point everyone in the same direction. More importantly, the district needed to be speaking the same language across schools when it came to the kinds of learning experiences students were expected to have in every classroom.

To that end, VBCPS developed the Teaching and Learning Framework (T&L Framework) in collaboration with teachers, principals and district office staff. Its purpose is to give shape to the daily expectations around instruction and student learning. Built on three repeating stages of response to student needs—plan, teach, assess—it defines a process for always knowing each individual's needs to, in turn, ensure

equity in every classroom, every day. The T&L Framework also emphasizes personalized learning and technology as a tool to enhance engagement, critical thinking, communication, creativity, and globally competitive skills.
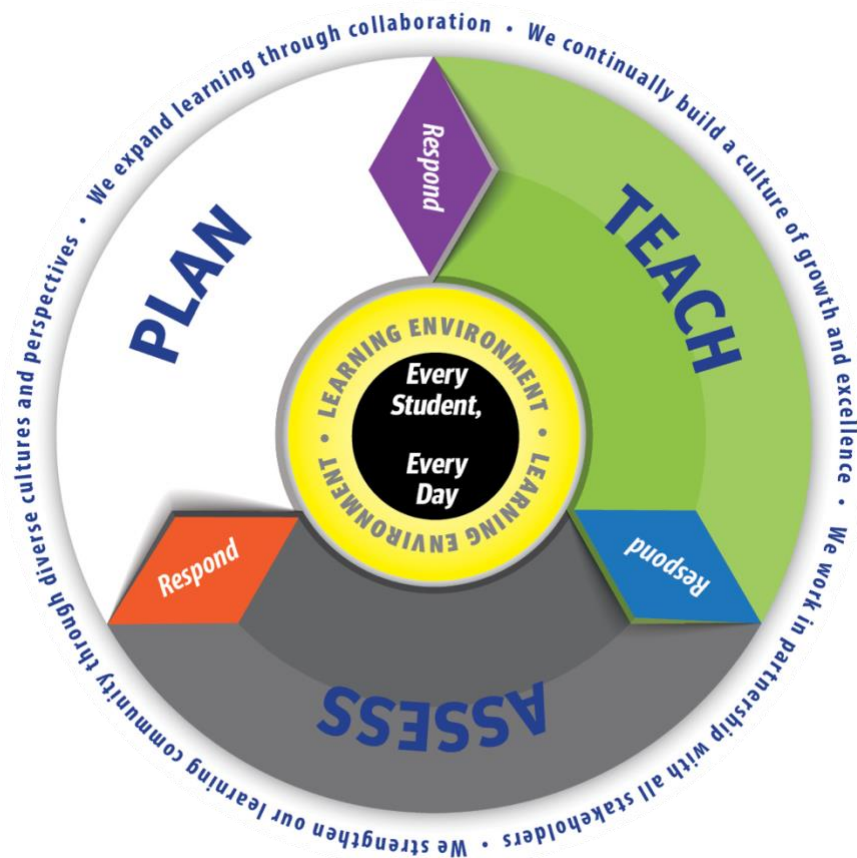
Next, stakeholders across the district defined personalized learning. Most of us have an idea of what personalized learning is, but most of us hold definitions that might not totally align with that of our colleagues. District leadership knew that to overlook this small step could mean its 5,000 teachers are all working towards 5,000 slightly different ideas of personalized learning. VBCPS defined personalized learning as, "an approach to instructional design guided by a learner's personal goals, strengths, interests and needs that is informed by ongoing assessment and self-reflection."

With everyone in the districted unified by the shared vision of *Compass to 2020*, the guiding principles of the T&L Framework and a common definition of personalized learning, they were ready to take action—in measured, strategic steps.

Know What You Don't Know & Learn As You Go

There's a belief that true intelligence is marked by an awareness of how much one does not know. Fortunately for everyone in VBCPS, leadership espouses this kind of humble intelligence. The superintendent and his team were aware they needed to let the process teach them what they did not yet

know about implementing successful personalized learning. Their job, then, was to be as smart as possible in creating structures to make room for this kind of insight-yielding process—while being both defined and nimble and also capable of scaling across a large, complex, diverse district.

How do you solve a very large problem, like scaling personalized learning? You break it apart into smaller, more manageable problems. This is especially true when the solutions are not yet apparent to you. Breaking this large challenge into smaller parts gave permission to everyone in the district to be steady and thoughtful—so long as they were always strategic, meaning collectively working towards a common goal. It allowed them to take deliberate steps to reveal information that could then inform the next step. Leadership knew that an iterative approach would be more responsive to real-time opportunities and needs. Smaller steps also leave more room for error should an idea prove unfruitful, as it would then impact on a smaller scale. And they allow for more rapidly scalable replications of ideas once they have been tested, refined, and proved promising.

The district took two first steps, both of which directed distinct paths for two different cohorts. A benefit of such a large district is that they could pursue two information discovery initiatives simultaneously without compromising the thoroughness of either.

Digital Learning Anchor Schools

In advance of the 2015-16 school year, schools were invited to apply to become Digital Learning Anchor Schools. The eleven selected schools would serve as model digital learning schools, where various digital devices and instructional practices would be studied for their capacity to enhance deeper learning. Each anchor school formed leadership teams that guided implementation and met monthly to discuss results and recalibrate plans as needed. In time, these schools came to understand which practices redefined instruction, where technology enabled more rigorous and relevant learning. They also worked to develop strong infrastructure to provide technical support as educators integrated new digital devices and best practices into their classrooms. In looking both at the instructional and support needs around technology in learning, VBCPS anticipated discovery of the most effective ways to use technology to support learning at all levels—insights that could then be more rapidly shared and implemented across the district.

Design Fellows

Teachers and specialists were invited to apply to be Design Fellows. Those chosen would play a key role in operationalizing personalized learning across all classrooms. From 100 candidates, 57 were chosen to serve in the 2015-16 school year. The ultimate goal of the Design Fellows was to identify effective artifacts and models to shape instructional design that supports personalized learning.

Using IDEO's Design Thinking for Educators, Design Fellows went on several site visits and held quarterly meetings to share ideas and synthesize findings from observation and research. In time, the Fellows saw three essential components to successful personalized learning:

1. Learning environments with flexible learning spaces, student-created displays, and routines/procedures to support independent yet collaborative work;
2. Personal pathways that provide student-created options, or choices, for how to learn while keeping them accountable for their learning;

3. Student ownership and agency as evidenced by students engaging in goal setting, progress monitoring and reflection.

These key findings were applied to redefine VBCPS's initial definition of personalized learning—no longer as the end goal, but the most critical path to a new goal.

Let Yourself Change Course When a Superior Course is Discovered

At the end of the 2015-16 school year, the district was equipped with valuable, new insights about personalized learning. Findings from both the Anchor Schools and the Design Fellows converged to redirect course on the *Compass to 2020* path. In other words, the structures the district had put in place and begun to roll out were working: they were structured enough to yield key insights and unstructured enough to adapt to those key insights.
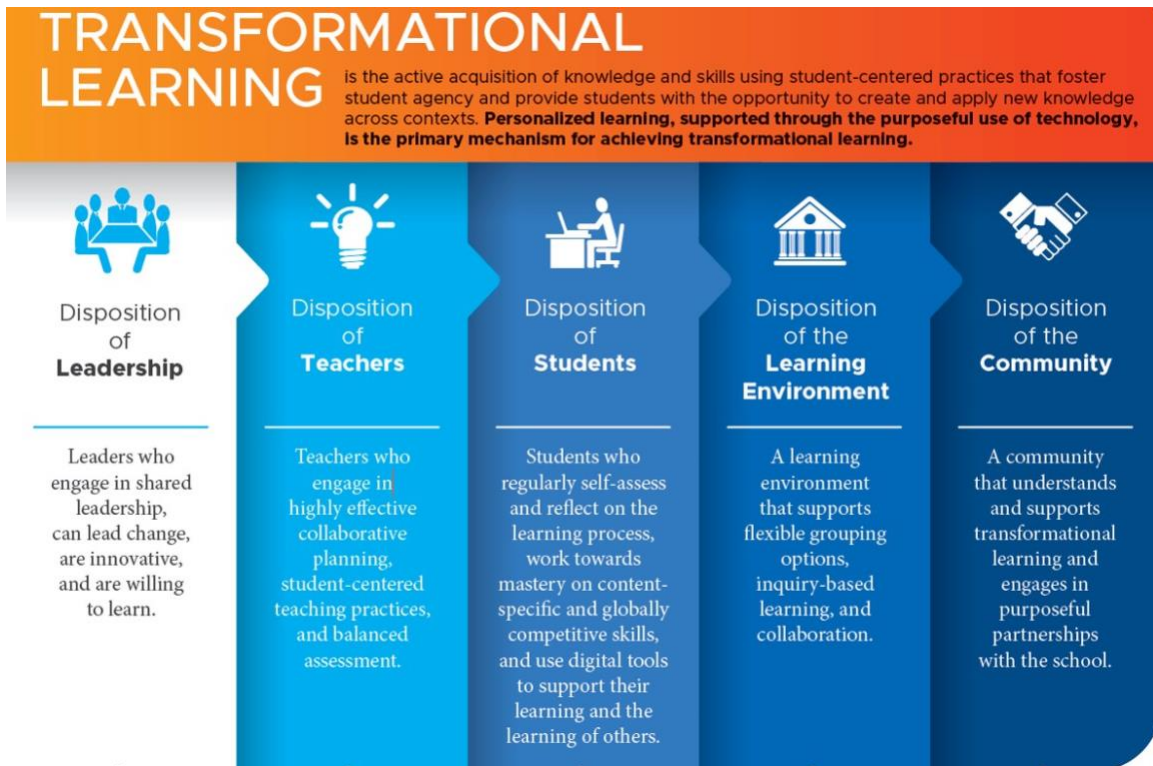
The Anchor Schools and Design Fellows made an ultimate assessment—that personalized learning itself is *not* the end goal, but a powerful mechanism to give students agency and ownership of their learning. Personalized learning unleashes student capacity to make decisions about their learning, learn how to identify and articulate their needs, and make meaningful choices and take purposeful actions based on those needs. Inherent in this dynamic are changing roles of both teacher and student, where teachers support students in their self-directed learning.

Learning is not merely to be personalized, the teams realized; it is to be *transformed*. And personalized learning is the ultimate conduit to truly transformational learning.

Emboldened by these powerful insights, the district augmented their end goal: *transformational learning for all 67,000 students every day*. All next steps in their structural evolution and development were pinned to this bold, new goal.

Tailor Support to Achieve Equity Within Equality

Thanks to new comprehension of the end goal, the district recognized the interdependency between learning environment, leadership, and community and the roles each play in transformational learning. As a next step, the Anchor Schools synthesized the core elements of this interdependency into what they called dispositions of leaders, teachers, students, the learning environment, and community that make transformation possible. In the following figure, the ideal dispositions that support transformational change are defined.

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEARNING is the active acquisition of knowledge and skills using student-centered practices that foster student agency and provide students with the opportunity to create and apply new knowledge across contexts. **Personalized learning, supported through the purposeful use of technology, is the primary mechanism for achieving transformational learning.**

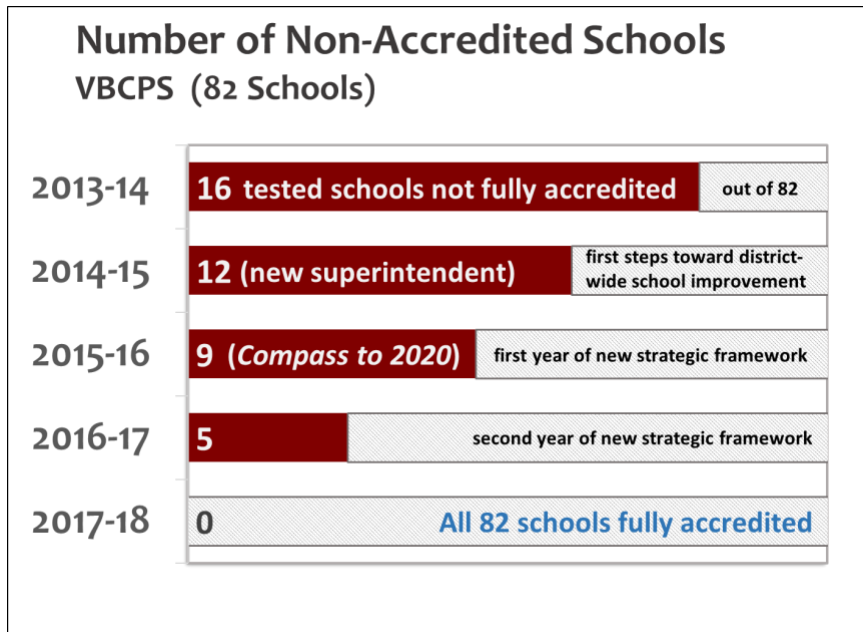| Disposition of **Leadership**	Disposition of **Teachers**	Disposition of **Students**	Disposition of the **Learning Environment**	Disposition of the **Community**
Leaders who engage in shared leadership, can lead change, are innovative, and are willing to learn.	Teachers who engage in highly effective collaborative planning, student-centered teaching practices, and balanced assessment.	Students who regularly self-assess and reflect on the learning process, work towards mastery on content-specific and globally competitive skills, and use digital tools to support their learning and the learning of others.	A learning environment that supports flexible grouping options, inquiry-based learning, and collaboration.	A community that understands and supports transformational learning and engages in purposeful partnerships with the school.

The discovery and definition of the dispositions and the five rubrics that were then created for each disposition unlocked new capacity within the district—the ability to ascertain the readiness for transformational change of every school in the system. (See Appendix 1 for all five dispositions rubrics.) Using the rubrics, schools can determine if they are exemplary, proficient, emerging, or novice in each of the five dispositions. Based on any individual school's disposition assessment, the district can gain a clearer understanding of the support and resources they need to provide so that the school can reach the exemplary level across of all dispositions.

The dispositions and their rubrics are not used to green light or red light any school for change. All schools in VBCPS are expected to be working towards transformational learning. As a natural continuation of the restructured school improvement process, the rubrics simply permit the district to offer tailored support to all schools—and leadership within the schools to do the same. In some cases, this means offering less support and fewer resources because they aren't needed. In other cases, it means offering more support and more resources until they are no longer needed to that degree. In tailoring support and regularly revisiting the rubrics to monitor progress towards exemplary status, the district can achieve equity as it simultaneously pursues equality in terms of the experiences and access to resources every student should have related to transformational learning.

THE IMPACT

From its commitment to transformational learning, VBCPS feels confident they are well on their way to achieving all goals outlined in *Compass to 2020*. Its vision and initial steps towards transformational learning have produced rapid results. Notably, this is seen in how quickly the district was able to restore accreditation to all of the 16 schools and maintain it for all schools:

Number of Non-Accredited Schools
VBCPS (82 Schools)

Year		
2013-14	16 tested schools not fully accredited	out of 82
2014-15	12 (new superintendent)	first steps toward district-wide school improvement
2015-16	9 (Compass to 2020)	first year of new strategic framework
2016-17	5	second year of new strategic framework
2017-18	0	All 82 schools fully accredited

Additionally, each year since the 2013-14 school year, the district on-time graduate rate has increased: In 2014, it was 88.5%. By 2017, it was 91.9%. And, thanks to the pursuit of equity within equality through transformational learning, enrollment in AP courses has increased and performance has remained steady. SAT and ACT scores have increased. Discipline referrals and suspensions have decreased measurably.

These are just some of the important measures that capture the impact on student learning. In the long run, however, the superintendent and district leaders believe the real impact is on the kinds of opportunities students have to influence and connect their learning in meaningful ways to their life after graduation.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are we doing to personalize learning? Are we also changing the roles of teachers and students—to support roles and self-directed learners, respectively—not only to achieve personalized learning, but also to use it to unlock student agency and empowerment?

2. Are any of our structures too rigid to allow for meaningful change? Are any too lax to be able to keep everyone moving towards shared goals in the way best suited to needs? How can we achieve the delicate balance between defined *and* flexible structures?

3. Where are there opportunities for leadership to take a more hands-off approach to school support? Where are there opportunities to take a more hands-on approach?

4. Have we sufficiently discussed and understood the relationship between equity and equality? Are we pursuing both simultaneously? Or rather, are we supporting and using resources in a one-size-fits all manner?

APPENDIX 1: TRANSFORMATIONAL LEARNING DISPOSITIONS RUBRICS

Dispositions of Leadership

Shared Leadership—engages the school community in a strategic manner to share in learning, thinking and decision making; enables and empowers others to act; creates a culture of shared ownership between students, teachers and the school community.

Exemplary	Proficient	Emerging	Novice
The administrative leadership team **embodies and actively promotes** a shared vision for improving teaching and learning that **clearly articulates** innovation and personalized learning experiences as the primary focus. **clearly articulates** the goal of digital learning as a best instructional practice **All staff** value and take advantage of opportunities to participate in shared leadership opportunities. Problem solving for continuous improvement is seen as a collaborative process. Shared leadership is clearly a **practice of the school community;** therefore, the leadership potential of **all staff** members is developed.	The administrative leadership team **embodies and actively promotes** a shared vision for improving teaching and learning *that includes* innovation, personalized learning, and digital learning. **Most staff** value and take advantage of opportunities to participate in shared leadership opportunities. **An instructional leadership team is in place** to collaboratively problem solve for continuous improvement.	The administrative leadership team **has begun to promote** a shared vision for improving teaching and learning with some emphasis in one or more of the following: - innovation - personalized learning - digital learning Staff are provided with opportunities to participate in shared leadership opportunities; although, **only some take advantage of these opportunities.** Collaboration is i**n the beginning phase of fostering** continuous improvement.	The administrative leadership team **has established** a vision for Shared Leadership; although **there are not yet structures and practices in place to support this vision.**

Change Leadership—successfully leads change within the school, has begun work toward focusing teacher practices on creating a personalized learning environment for students; encourages and motivates individuals, not just the process; encourages an environment in which failing-forward is embraced.

Exemplary	Proficient	Emerging	Novice
The administrative leadership team **embodies and actively promotes** the pursuit of higher-level goals that lead to a change in both instructional practice and the learning environment. **All members** of the school are bonded together with the commitment to foster continuous improvement and risk taking. **It is clear** that **customized** opportunities for professional development are provided to the **entire** instructional staff and that the administrative leadership team understands the professional development needs of **each staff member** and **supports their growth in these areas.** School structures and processes are **proactively developed and implemented** to support the continuous improvement **of each** administrator, teacher, and student.	The administrative leadership team **actively promotes** the pursuit of higher-level goals that lead to a change in both instructional practice and the learning environment. **Most members** of the school are bonded together with the commitment to foster continuous improvement and risk taking. **Some** opportunities for professional development are provided to the **entire** instructional staff. The administrative leadership team understands the **collective** professional development needs of its staff and **works to support growth in these areas.** School structures and processes are **proactively developed and implemented** to **collectively** support the continuous improvement of administrators, teachers, and students.	The administrative leadership team **has begun to promote** the pursuit of higher-level goals that lead to a change in both instructional practice and the learning environment. A commitment to foster continuous improvement **is beginning to be established** amongst instructional staff. **Few** opportunities for professional development are provided to the **entire** instructional staff. and are usually **reactionary in nature**.	The administrative leadership team **has begun to promote** changes in instructional practice and the learning environment; although, **this has not yet been moved forward** via supports and opportunities for continuous improvement for administrators, teachers, and students.

Innovative Leadership—challenges process; inspires a shared vision, embraces change to drive improvement; provides staff frequent recognition and support for good ideas; understands and promotes the idea that iteration is the key to innovation.

Exemplary	Proficient	Emerging	Novice
The administrative leadership team *embodies and actively promotes* innovation. There is a clear focus on teamwork and collegiality to foster the change process in order to increase student achievement and transform the learning environment. Instructional staff *receive support and recognition* for innovative risk-taking and *understand that through critical reflection and feedback, new ideas become standard practice, which improve with each new iteration.*	The administrative leadership team *actively promotes* innovation. There is a clear focus on teamwork and collegiality to foster the change process in order to increase student achievement and transform the learning environment. Instructional staff *receive support and recognition* for innovative risk-taking.	The administrative leadership team *has begun to promote* innovation. A focus on teamwork and collegiality to foster the change process has been established. Instructional staff are *encouraged to engage* in innovative risk-taking.	The administrative leadership team *invites innovative practices; though,* the promotion of risk-taking and innovation, as well as staff recognition for such, *may not be embedded practice at this point.*

Learning Leadership—frequently models the use of technology and/or learns alongside faculty, exhibits willingness to be a learning partner with staff; sets an example and a commitment through daily acts that create progress and momentum.

Exemplary	Proficient	Emerging	Novice
The administrative leadership team *embodies and actively promotes* professional learning as a life-long process by studying, engaging in personal research, reflecting upon, and modeling the role of technology in terms of its contribution to continuous improvement for the school.

Instructional staff are open to change and the administrative leadership team *has an open willingness* to learn alongside staff.

Collaboration between the administrative leadership team and instructional staff is *regularly* focused on:
- reflection upon the use of technology.
- growth in the use of technology. | The administrative leadership team *actively promotes* professional learning as a lifelong process by studying, engaging in personal research, reflecting upon, and modeling the use of technology in terms of its contribution to continuous improvement for the school.

Some instructional staff are open to change, and the administrative leadership team *often* learns alongside staff.

Collaboration between the administrative leadership team and instructional staff is *frequently* focused on:
- reflection upon the use of technology.
- growth in the use of technology. | The administrative leadership team *promotes* professional learning as a lifelong process by studying, engaging in personal research, reflecting upon, and modeling the use of technology in terms of its contribution to continuous improvement for the school.

The administrative leadership team rarely seeks out opportunities to learn alongside instructional staff.

Collaboration between the administrative leadership team and instructional staff is *infrequently* focused on:
- reflection upon the use of technology.
- growth in the use of technology. | The administrative leadership team promotes professional learning *only as a response to observational instructional deficits.*

The administrative leadership team *does not* seek out opportunities to learn alongside instructional staff.

Reflection upon how instructional use of technology may contribute to the overall continuous improvement of the school *is not evident.* |

DISPOSITIONS OF TEACHERS

PLAN: Collaborative Planning

Exemplary	Proficient	Emerging	Novice
Highly effective and collaborative PLCs are evident **among all teams. The entire instructional staff functions as a professional learning community**, committed to a shared vision. This learning community extends beyond school walls and operates in a global capacity by soliciting frequent collaboration across schools and from the broader academic community, leveraging digital collaborative tools where appropriate. There is clear and compelling evidence of student achievement as a result of daily collaboration between teachers and specialists who: ● frequently collaborate to reflect on data and create and modify plans that respond to student needs. ● design clear, standards-based learning targets and plan for active student engagement with the targets.	**All instructional staff are members of a PLC, reflective of grade level or content area**, and the PLCs regularly function as a collaborative planning team committed to: ● analyzing student work ● reflecting on data and create or modify plans that respond to student needs. ● designing clear, standards-based learning targets that are communicated to students.	**Instructional staff collaboratively plan as need arises** in order to achieve a common instructional goal. PLCs operate on a reactionary basis rather than as a consistent part of the school's culture of collaboration.	There are **no structured and deliberate PLCs** (collaborative teams) in place at the school.

PLAN: Transformational Instruction

Exemplary	Proficient	Emerging	Novice
All instructional staff in the school plans innovative, personalized learning opportunities that create a joyful learning experience and foster engagement, critical thinking, communication and collaboration in authentic ways.	*More than half the instructional staff throughout the school* plan innovative learning opportunities that create a joyful learning experience and foster engagement, critical thinking, communication and collaboration in authentic ways.	*Pockets of instructional staff throughout the school* plan innovative learning opportunities that foster engagement, critical thinking, communication and collaboration in authentic ways	Planning for innovative learning opportunities *is not a school priority at this time.*
Planning for digital learning experiences which provide students with opportunities to build and demonstrate knowledge in a way that would be challenging or otherwise impossible without the use of technology *has become ubiquitous throughout the school.*	*More than half the instructional staff* in the school plans for digital learning experiences which provide students with opportunities to build and demonstrate knowledge in a way that would be challenging or otherwise impossible without the use of available technology resources.	*There are several early adopters* of technology amongst the instructional staff who plan for digital learning experiences which provide students with opportunities to build and demonstrate knowledge in a way that would be challenging or otherwise impossible without the use of technology.	Digital learning *is not a school priority at this time.*

TEACH: Highly Effective, Student-Centered Teaching, Strong Pedagogy

Exemplary	Proficient	Emerging	Novice
There is strong evidence of a personalized, student-centered learning approach ***across grade levels and content areas***, including ● student reflection, ● goal-setting, ● development of action steps toward established goals, and ● evidence of student agency.	***Most instructional staff throughout the school*** are using a personalized approach, including ● student reflection, ● Goal-setting, and ● student agency as ways to approach student-centered learning.	Student reflection and goal setting are ***used in some classrooms within the school***, but overall instructional staff are not yet at the point where they are using a personalized, student-centered approach to learning.	Personalized, student-centered learning ***is not evident throughout the school***.
When appropriate, digital tools are ***purposefully leveraged*** to f***acilitate personalized learning and enhance student agency***.	Digital tools are used to ***facilitate student agency***.	Digital tools are used to enhance a lesson, but the f***ocus is often on the tool itself, rather than on the learning.***	Digital tools are ***rarely*** taken into consideration when planning for student learning.
Instructional staff are consistently incorporating collaboration and opportunities for students to connect with others, personal experiences, and content ***both inside and outside of the classroom by incorporating technology.***	Instructional staff are incorporating collaboration and opportunities for students to make connections to each other, personal experiences, and content ***in the classroom and sometimes corporate technology to do so.***	Instructional staff are having students make ***connections between content and themselves.***	Learning ***happens in isolation*** with little opportunity for students to make connections.
Gradual Release and differentiation are common best practices used ***throughout the school, in all subject areas***. Lesson structure allows for varied levels of technology integration to meet student needs.	Gradual Release and differentiation are purposefully planned for and executed ***by most teachers with occasional use of technology to meet student needs.***	Gradual Release and differentiation occur ***at times*** during instruction.	Gradual Release and differentiation are ***not commonly practiced*** at this school.

ASSESS: Highly Effective Assessment Practices.

Exemplary	Proficient	Emerging	Novice
I*nstructional staff throughout the school consistently* adjusts instruction based on a variety of assessment data.	*Most instructional staff i*n the school use data to inform instruction.	*Some instructional staff* in the school use data to inform instruction.	Instructional planning and delivery are *not primarily based upon student assessment data*.
Formative checks for understanding, gathered both digitally and through other means, are *used daily in the classrooms;* there is *clear evidence* that information gathered from this formative assessment is used to *immediately* respond to student needs.	Formative checks are *regularly used in the classrooms,* and there is *some evidence* that information gathered is used to respond to student needs.	Formative checks are part of classroom practice *in some classrooms within the school,* but there is *little evidence* to support how that information is used by instructional staff to respond to student needs.	Formative checks for understanding are *not used to help drive instructional decision making.*
The use of descriptive feedback to students is *common practice throughout the school.* A digital feedback loop is used by both students and teachers, allowing both teachers and students to respond in sync.	*Most teachers* in the school provide students with descriptive feedback and l*everage digital tools* to do so.	The use of descriptive feedback is practiced but *may be inconsistent* throughout the school.	The use of descriptive feedback is *not a primary way of gathering student growth data* in this school.
Instructional staff throughout the school have created a strong balanced assessment system. They are able to *clearly articulate* the reason for assessment choices, *including the rationale* for a variety of assessment types and formats (digital and written) used to demonstrate students' growth, as well as their acquisition, application, and transfer of skills and content.	*Instructional staff use a variety of assessment types and formats* to demonstrate students' growth, as well as their acquisition, application, and transfer of skills and content, thereby creating an effective balanced assessment system.	A balanced assessment system is *not consistently applied* throughout the school.	A balanced assessment system is *not eviden*t in this school.

DISPOSITION OF STUDENTS

Exemplary	Proficient	Emerging	Novice
Students throughout the school *regularly self-assess* their learning and reflect on this to help develop and guide their personal learning pathway (voice and choice/student agency). ● Student works with teacher to decide how to acquire information ● Student decides best way to demonstrate knowledge and understanding	Students throughout the school *are able to self-assess and set goals* based on their assessment of learning and mastery.	Students throughout the school set goals, but these goals *may not be directly related to self-assessment of their mastery or learning.*	Student goal-setting and self-assessment *is not a common practice throughout the school.*
Students throughout the school consistently use inquiry and collaboration, *as well as leverage digital tools,* to approach concepts from *personal, community, and global perspectives.* *Students demonstrate mastery in multiple or all of the following areas:* ● Critical thinking ● Communication ● Creativity ● Collaboration ● Citizenship	Students throughout the school approach concepts from *multiple lenses, which often includes a global and/or community perspective.* *Students demonstrate mastery and are actively working toward mastery in one or more of the following areas:* ● Critical thinking ● Communication ● Creativity ● Collaboration ● Citizenship	Students throughout the school are exposed to a *variety of perspectives through their academic content* and **may show progress toward mastery** in critical thinking, communication, creativity, and/or collaboration.	Student interaction with academic content is *primarily isolated to the student; students do not demonstrate mastery* of critical thinking, communication, creativity, and collaboration.
Students throughout the school *regularly collaborate using digital tools* to support their learning and the learning of others.	Students throughout the school *frequently collaborate using digital tools* to support their learning and the learning of others.	Students throughout the school may collaborate with one another, but *digital tools may not be the primary vehicle for doing so*.	Student collaboration is *not common in classes*. Learning is primarily an individual task.
Students throughout the school demonstrate, with ease, academic mastery and growth through the creation and publication of digital work *both inside and outside the classroom.*	Students throughout the school have access to digital tools to demonstrate mastery and growth through the creation and publication of digital work, and *most students create and publish digital work.*	Students have *inconsistent access* from class to class to digital tools to demonstrate mastery and growth through the creation, *limiting their opportunity* to create and publish digital work.	Students primarily use *more traditional, non-digital methods* of creating and publishing work.

DISPOSITION OF LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Exemplary	Proficient	Emerging	Novice
This school has made a **complete shift** in rethinking instructional spaces: • **Nearly all classrooms, including those beyond the core content areas,** employ flexible grouping options (i.e.,small group instruction, rotation model, whole group instruction). • Media center or other spaces are fluid and allow for student collaboration. • Designated physical spaces **throughout the schoo**l are designed to encourage the exploration, creation, and development of student ideas. • Spaces are conducive to the inquiry-based learning process. (makerspaces, science labs) • Spaces are created in which students may display and showcase their work products to convey their learning	**Much effort** has been made to redesign learning spaces at the school. • **Most classrooms** employ flexible grouping options (i.e.,small group instruction, rotation model, whole group instruction). • There are other spaces throughout the school designated for students to collaborate, explore, create and develop ideas (makerspaces, science labs)	**An attempt** has been made to create spaces which allow for flexibility. **Some of classrooms and/or media center** employ multiple spaces for students to gather and collaborate	Spaces allow for a **minimum level of flexibility**. Some accommodations are evident, **but most classrooms and the medial center are not truly student-centered learning environments.**
The **consistent and deliberate** use of established routines and procedures **throughout the school** has contributed to a culture of positive rapport and mutual respect between teachers and students.	**Most teachers** in the school have established clear and consistent routines and procedures, resulting in a positive rapport and mutual respect between those teachers and their students.	**Some teachers** in the school have established clear and consistent routines and procedures; however, because this is not a practice common to every classroom, it h**as not been established as part of the school's culture.**	**Most teachers do not** enforce clear and consistent routines and procedures in their classrooms.

DISPOSITION OF COMMUNITY

Exemplary	Proficient	Emerging	Novice
There exists a *high degree of purposeful, reciprocal partnership* between the school and broader school community, including local businesses/organizations and parents.	There exists *a degree of purposeful partnership* between the school and broader school community, including local businesses/organizations and parents exists; however, *it may not be reciprocal in nature.*	*Work has begun* on developing purposeful partnerships between the school and broader school community, including local businesses/organizations and parents.	*Little to no work* has been started in terms of developing purposeful partnerships between the school and broader school community.
There is *clear and compelling evidence* that the broader community supports an instructional shift to a student-centered learning environment that includes digital learning.	*There is some evidence* that the broader community supports an instructional shift to a student-centered learning environment that includes digital learning.	*There is limited evidence* that the broader community supports an instructional shift to a student-centered learning environment that includes digital learning.	There is *little evidence* that the broader community supports an instructional shift to a student-centered learning environment that includes digital learning.
The majority of homes in the school community have the infrastructure to support student use of digital resources at home, after school hours. *There is a method of providing access for students who don't have it.*	*The majority of home*s in the school community have the infrastructure to support student use of digital resources at home, after school hours.	*Some home*s in the school community have the infrastructure to support student use of digital resources at home, after school hours.	*Few home*s in the school community have the infrastructure to support student use of digital resources at home, after school hours.
The school uses digital tools to communicate with parents and other community stakeholders on a regular basis. School staff models the use of technology during school-community events.	The school uses digital tools to communicate with parents and other community stakeholders on a regular basis.		