

DESIGN PRINCIPLES, BELIEFS and BEST PRACTICES

"Principles and beliefs transcend local contexts and cultures"

POWER OF THE SITE

Principles:

Locating school on a college campus is integral to student motivation and success, and to an enduring collaborative partnership. It is a visible symbol to the community of dual accountability for student outcomes and academic success. Students are treated as college students and see themselves as college completers.

TEACHING & LEARNING

Principles:

Developing students' literacy skills is critical to academic success. Schools regularly engage students in rigorous, in-depth academic work, use active intellectual inquiry, and sustained writing and revisions in all classes.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

Principles:

Schools design a system of assessment that provides multiple opportunities for students to publicly exhibit what they know and can do. Assessments grow out of classroom work and provide on-going feedback to the school community, the teacher, the student, and the parent on a student's progress toward achieving academic proficiency.

STUDENT SUPPORT

Principles:

'Smallness,' less than 100 students per grade level, helps to create a learning community for students and teachers, and provides opportunities for flexible and innovative structures to support students academically and emotionally.

All students are known well not only because the school is small, but also because the school values and gives priority to small class size and extended time with teacher both daily and over the course of the student's high school years.

DEMOCRATIC SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

Principles:

Purposefully designed structures provide for everyone's voice to be heard and respected in the decision-making process with regard to hiring personnel, managing budgets, determining curriculum and pedagogy, developing students' activities, and any other policies that affect the daily life of students and faculty.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Principles:

Staff participates in on-going, embedded professional development that focuses on student success. Time during the school day is provided for staff development and the creation of learning communities. New teachers are mentored in order to help them to understand and to implement the goals of the community.