



Designing Creative Solutions: A School Built for Change

What is it?

A wholehearted commitment to building educational solutions on the basis of a learning community's fundamental values (Practice M1) can lead to unique and creative designs (Practice P1). In this video, learn about how one school community, Canyon View High School in Arizona, built a school whose architecture and pedagogy are built—literally—around a commitment to the school's values of innovation, character, community, diversity, and pride. The result of this commitment to inclusive values is an environment that encourages an ongoing quest to design creative solutions (PI Practice P1).

How does it support Principled Innovation?

In Principled Innovation, the character asset of creativity is in part the result of being deliberate about inclusivity—about seeking out divergent ideas and being curious and courageous enough to experiment and see where divergent thinking might take us. When our character assets come together this way, they build out a practical wisdom that expresses itself in a willingness to test new creative solutions and navigate uncertainty by taking creative risks (PI Practices P1 and P2).

The learning community at Canyon View High School has centered its pedagogy around the idea of inclusivity—a core PI character asset. In its mission, the school seeks to understand their students' perspectives—another PI character asset and PI practice—and build on the character assets that each student brings to the learning community. Leveraging the school's open-spaces architecture that creates flexible learning spaces to meet different pedagogies, the teachers and students are able to create the learning environments that best meet the students' learning needs. The school's commitment to its inclusive values is therefore expressed in its architecture, which prompts a continued enactment of those values. This virtuous cycle nurtures an ongoing cycle of designing creative solutions—of prototyping and ongoing innovation.

Use this video to help teacher and leader prep students think about the ways in which making decisions that are rooted in the values of a learning community (Practices M1 and M2) and an inclusive, perspective-taking approach to learners' needs (Practice C2) can provide the raw material for Practice P1 and P2: a creative and courageous approach to innovative solutions.

What do I need?

- Time: 20 minutes
- Classroom or virtual setting

How do I use it?

Step 1: Prepare

Watch the video and read the “What is it” and “How does it support Principled Innovation” sections above. Read through the discussion questions provided below and consider how you yourself would respond.

Prepare for distributing the [PI Character Assets document](#) to all participants.

Step 2: Situate

Begin by providing for the students this description PI Practice P1 (“Design Creative Solutions”):

We design creative solutions by working collaboratively to address challenges through a human-centered process, in order to reimagine systems and invite new possibilities for improving the lives and learning of others.

Explain that we can’t design creative solutions without understanding our values and without understanding the people who will use those solutions. It is for this reason that Principled Innovation includes Practices M1 (“Identify and Acknowledge Fundamental Values”) and C2 (“Engage Multiple and Diverse Perspectives”). Distribute the [PI Character Assets document](#) to all participants, explaining that these two PI practices in turn build on bringing together our character assets of empathy, perspective-taking and inclusivity. This blending of character assets creates practical wisdom—it helps us get a complete picture of our learning community and gives us the raw material we need to find innovative solutions.

Ask the participants to watch the video, making note of the way the community built their creative solutions (Practice P1) on the basis of their own values (Practice M1) and according to the needs of the learners (Practice C2). Ask them to think about how the architecture of the learning community reflects the character assets of perspective-taking, empathy, inclusivity, and creativity.

Step 3: Present

Present the video for the participants or have them watch it on their own.

Step 4: Discuss

Discuss the video in a group discussion (in-person or online).

Here are some questions to consider using:

1. In this learning community, how is the character asset of creativity building on the character assets of perspective-taking, empathy, and inclusivity? How do these character assets work together to give these educators the practical wisdom they need to create innovative solutions?
2. This learning community states that they value “innovation, character, community, diversity, and pride.” In what ways do you think this learning environment could nurture the character of their students?
3. Collaboration is an important Performance character asset in Principled Innovation. In what ways do faculty and students collaborate in this school, and what are some ways that your team can practice this character asset in your own learning environment?
4. How does collaboration in this environment connect inclusivity to creativity?
5. How might the physical space impact the values of the students and educators at Canyon View?