

Workbook 4.

COME TOGETHER TO IMAGINE THE FUTURE

High school redesign is meant to be a time of exploration, innovation, and creativity. How do you take your community's natural resources, talents, and interests and leverage them into educational excellence for all students? This workbook is meant to help your schools and their communities come together to imagine what could be.

1. Community Values

When it comes to our community specifically, what are three values that have significant importance and unique value?

For example, if your community is located in an ecologically unique area, a value may be sustainability or environmentalism; if your community brings together a wide variety of people from different backgrounds and ethnicities, a value may be inclusion; if your community is in a revitalizing area, a value may be innovation or, perhaps, historical and cultural preservation. The options are limitless and there are no right answers.

The three values that differentiate our community and matter to us are:

A

B

C

2. Community Assets

Again, when it comes to our community specifically, what are three specific assets or resources we already have?

Some potential examples might be: a growing business district or industry; rich cultural traditions; tight-knit sense of community; access to unique points of interest; a diverse population; an active music scene.

The three “resources” or “assets” that differentiate our community are:

A _____

B _____

C _____

Now let’s brainstorm how education, specifically at the high school level, could enhance these natural assets or resources.

For example, why might local employers or civic organizations care about what’s happening at the local high school?

The three natural assets could be enhanced by local high school education because:

A _____

B _____

C _____

And reciprocally, what could our local high school stand to gain from our community's assets and resources?

For example, how might high school teachers and students stand to gain from collaborating with local employers or civic organizations?

Our local high school might gain from working more closely with our community's pre-existing assets and resources because:

A

B

C

3. Putting It All Together

Reflect on our community values and assets. In the section below, describe a school that lives up to those unique principles and makes the most of those unique resources. How do the two work together to make a more engaging, effective, and inspiring place of learning?

There's no right or wrong answer here. But it works best to almost "paint a picture." When you envision your ideal school in your home neighborhood, what do you see? What are students doing? What do you hear? Redesigning high school is about embracing creativity.

There—you've done it. You've taken your first pass at high school redesign. It's not just for experts; it's approachable to all. That's because, at its best, high school redesign doesn't have to be abstruse; it's meant to be accessible.

The beauty of high school redesign is that anyone can participate in the process—and the process improves with everyone's involvement.