

Reimagining Our Future: Innovageous School Design Principles & Indicators

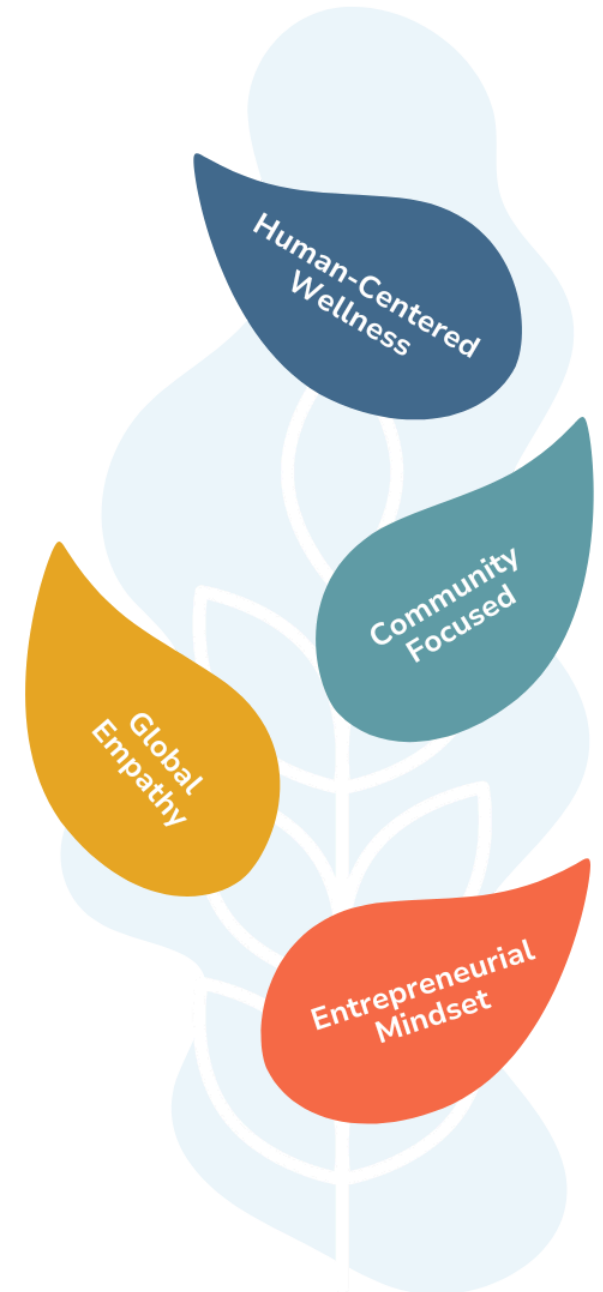
The Innovageous School Design (ISD) framework is a roadmap for transforming schools into vibrant, inclusive, and forward-thinking learning communities. Rooted in four research-based core principles— Human-Centered Wellness, Global Empathy, Entrepreneurial Mindset, and Community Focused Practices—our framework is designed to enhance the [foundational practices](#) and outcomes of existing schools, by integrating these specific principles into their current structures. Through this, we aim to add meaningful value to already established schools, supporting them in their journey toward educational excellence.

To support this work, we have developed a comprehensive set of indicators for each principle. These indicators provide actionable steps, benchmarks, and measurable goals to help schools bring the ISD vision to life. They guide leaders and educators in aligning their practices with the core principles of the framework, creating transformative and sustainable change.

By using these indicators, schools can work towards:

- Prioritizing the holistic well-being of students and staff.
- Cultivating empathy and understanding across diverse perspectives and cultures.
- Encouraging innovative thinking and resilience to tackle complex challenges.
- Building stronger partnerships with families and communities to drive collective impact.

These indicators are intentionally flexible without any principle or indicator taking priority over another, and designed to meet the unique needs of every school and its community. Whether a school is just beginning its transformational journey or seeking to refine established practices, the ISD provides a clear, inspiring toolbox of actions and resources to help them achieve their goals.



Human-Centered Wellness

At the core of a thriving school community is the well-being of its people—students, educators, staff, and families. The Human-Centered Wellness principle emphasizes creating environments where everyone feels safe, supported, and empowered to succeed holistically. **This principle goes beyond addressing basic needs by fostering emotional, social, and physical well-being of all.** Schools adopting this principle prioritize practices across many systems - operations, instruction, leadership, professional development, school climate, family and community engagement, and student support - that nurture resilience, promote mental health, and create inclusive cultures where diversity is celebrated and individuals are valued. By focusing on the wellness of the entire school community, this principle lays a foundation for sustainable growth and meaningful engagement.

Human-Centered Wellness Indicators	
<p>1. Implement Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Programs Integrate SEL curricula to help students and staff develop emotional intelligence, resilience, and interpersonal skills.</p>	<p>7. Engage Families & the Community Build strong partnerships with families and the community to support student learning and well-being.</p>
<p>2. Foster a Positive School Climate Cultivate a supportive, inclusive, and respectful school culture. This includes anti-bullying initiatives, diversity and inclusion training, and promoting positive relationships.</p>	<p>8. Provide Professional Development on Wellness Offer ongoing training for staff on topics such as trauma-informed practices, stress reduction techniques, and fostering a supportive classroom environment.</p>
<p>3. Prioritize Mental Health Services Provide all students access to mental health resources such as school counselors, psychologists, and social workers.</p>	<p>9. Implement Restorative Practices Use restorative approaches to address conflicts and behavioral issues, with a focus on repairing harm and restoring relationships.</p>
<p>4. Encourage Staff Well-being Programs Implement wellness programs for staff, including stress management workshops, physical fitness opportunities, and mental health days.</p>	<p>10. Regularly Assess & Address Wellness Needs Conduct regular surveys and needs assessments to identify areas where students and staff may need additional support. Use this data to inform policies and programs that address specific wellness needs within the school community.</p>
<p>5. Create Collaborative Professional Learning Communities Establish professional learning communities (PLCs) where educators can collaborate, share strategies, and support each other.</p>	<p>11. Organized, Purposeful, & Positive Leadership Establish and maintain consistent, organized communication from leaders that impacts wellness of staff through aligned, transparent, and proactive strategies.</p>
<p>6. Promote Physical Health Ensure that students and staff have opportunities for physical activity, access to nutritious food, and education on healthy lifestyles.</p>	

Community-Focused

Strong communities are the cornerstone of impactful education. The Community-Focused principle recognizes schools as integral hubs that bring together families, educators, businesses, and local organizations to foster collaboration and shared purpose. **Creating community-focused schools involves fostering strong relationships between the school and its surrounding community to enhance educational outcomes and community well-being.** By building meaningful partnerships, schools can align their resources and efforts to address the unique needs of their communities. This principle encourages schools to develop practices that engage stakeholders in co-creating solutions, recognize the cultural capital of the surrounding community, celebrate local culture, and foster a sense of shared responsibility. Through this lens, schools become catalysts for community empowerment, driving both educational and social progress.

Community-Focused Indicators	
<p>1. Develop Community Partnerships Establish reciprocal partnerships with local businesses, organizations, and institutions to create enriching educational opportunities for students and staff, such as internships, mentorship programs, and resource sharing.</p>	<p>6. Organize Community Events & Celebrations Host events that bring the community together and celebrate the community's diversity and achievements, such as cultural festivals, health fairs, and academic showcases.</p>
<p>2. Engage Families in School Activities Actively involve families in school events, decision-making processes, and volunteer opportunities.</p>	<p>7. Support Local Initiatives & Causes Encourage students and staff to participate in local initiatives, such as environmental clean-ups, local charity drives, and community improvement projects.</p>
<p>3. Implement Service Learning & Community Projects Incorporate service learning into the curriculum where students participate in community service projects, connecting academic learning with real-world experiences, and fostering a sense of civic responsibility and community connection.</p>	<p>8. Utilize Community-Based Learning Integrate the local community into the curriculum by using community sites and resources as extensions of the classroom. This could include field trips to local businesses, historical sites, and natural areas, providing practical learning experiences.</p>
<p>4. Create a Community Resource Center Establish a center within the school that provides resources and support for families and community members, such as job training, health services, and educational workshops.</p>	<p>9. Promote Shared Decision-Making Involve community members in the school's decision-making processes through advisory councils and committees.</p>
<p>5. Foster Open Communication Channels Maintain transparent and open communication with all community stakeholders through multiple modalities, including regular newsletters, social media updates, and community meetings.</p>	<p>10. Implement Policies that Reflect Community Values Develop school policies and practices that align with the values and priorities of the local community.</p>

Global Empathy

In a world that is increasingly interconnected, fostering global empathy equips students with the skills and mindset necessary to navigate and contribute to a diverse and complex society. **This principle is about cultivating understanding, respect, and respect of different perspectives, encouraging cultural competence, and promoting a commitment to equity and justice.** Schools adopting Global Empathy integrate practices that inspire curiosity about the world, build bridges across differences, and prepare students to engage in collaborative problem-solving on local and global scales. The ultimate goal is to empower students to be compassionate, informed citizens who are ready to make a positive impact in their communities and beyond.

Global Empathy Indicators	
1. Integrate Multicultural Education Incorporate multicultural content into the curriculum to expose students to diverse cultures, histories, and perspectives.	6. Support Diversity & Inclusion Initiatives Create and support programs that celebrate diversity and promote inclusion within the school community.
2. Encourage Cross-Cultural Exchange Programs Facilitate opportunities for students and staff to engage with people from other cultures through exchange programs, virtual collaborations, and partnerships with schools abroad.	7. Teach Global Competency Skills Develop curricula and activities that focus on global competency skills, such as critical thinking, intercultural communication, and ethical decision-making.
3. Promote Language Learning Encourage the learning of multiple languages, which can help students better understand and connect with people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds.	8. Model Empathetic Leadership School leaders and educators model empathy in their interactions with students and colleagues.
4. Implement Service-Learning Projects Design service-learning projects that address global issues, such as poverty, climate change, or human rights.	9. Facilitate Dialogue on Global Issues Create spaces for students and staff to discuss and reflect on global issues, such as through discussion groups, debates, and seminars.
5. Use Global Literature & Media Incorporate global literature, films, and media into the classroom to provide students with diverse narratives and viewpoints.	10. Incorporate Technology for Global Connection Use technology to connect with classrooms and communities around the world, providing students and staff with real-world contexts for understanding and empathy.

Entrepreneurial Mindset

Preparing students and educators for the uncertainties of the future requires fostering an entrepreneurial mindset—one that embraces creativity, adaptability, and resilience. **This principle focuses on developing critical thinking, problem-solving, and innovation skills, empowering both students and staff to turn challenges into opportunities.** It encourages a culture of curiosity and experimentation, where students are supported in taking calculated risks and learning from failure. **This principle also involves designing efficient, resourceful operations, and empowering educators to use innovative technology for creative planning, efficient administrative task completion, and differentiated instruction.** Schools adopting this principle create opportunities for students to engage in hands-on, real-world projects, equipping them with the tools they need to thrive in a rapidly changing world and contribute as innovators and change-makers.

Entrepreneurial Mindset Indicators			
<p>1. Intentional Design of Career Development Continuum Activities Design and implement activities for students that lead them through a career development continuum of exposure, exploration, preparedness, and training to ensure an identified career path and post-secondary goals.</p>	<p>4. Empower all Educators to Lead with a Future Focused Mindset Offer professional development programs inclusive of all educators on how to teach and support entrepreneurial skills.</p>	<p>7. Organize Entrepreneurship Competitions & Event Host competitions, hackathons, and pitch events where students and staff can present their ideas and solutions.</p>	<p>10. Foster a Culture of Risk-Taking & Resilience Encourage a school culture that values risk-taking, learning from failure, and resilience by a safe environment where students and staff are encouraged to take ownership, work together, experiment, fail, iterate, and persist through challenges without fear of judgment.</p>
<p>2. Integrate Entrepreneurship into the Curriculum Incorporate entrepreneurship education across various subjects, focusing on business fundamentals, financial literacy, and project-based learning.</p>	<p>5. Facilitate Mentorship & Coaching Connect students and staff with entrepreneurs and business leaders who can provide networking opportunities, mentorship, and coaching.</p>	<p>8. Collaborate with Local Businesses & Entrepreneurs Partner with local businesses and entrepreneurs to offer internships, workshops, and real-world projects.</p>	<p>11. Integrate Technology & Digital Tools Utilize technology and digital tools, such as AI, online platforms, simulation software, and collaboration tools, to support entrepreneurial education, personalize learning, automate administrative tasks, enhance engagement, analyze data, and make learning more accessible, all while maintaining high standards.</p>
<p>3. Establish Incubation Programs & Innovation Labs Create spaces like innovation labs or incubators where students and staff can develop and test their ideas.</p>	<p>6. Promote Student-Based Enterprises Encourage the creation of student-based businesses within the school, allowing students to learn business planning, management, marketing, and financial operations through practical experiences.</p>	<p>9. Incorporate Design Thinking & Problem-Based Learning Use design thinking and problem-based learning methodologies to encourage innovative ideas and problem-solving.</p>	<p>12. Resourceful & Efficient Operations Design efficient, resourceful operations to support a sustainable and flexible learning environment by streamlining processes, leveraging data for decision-making, optimizing human and financial resources, and finding innovative solutions for critical school operations.</p>