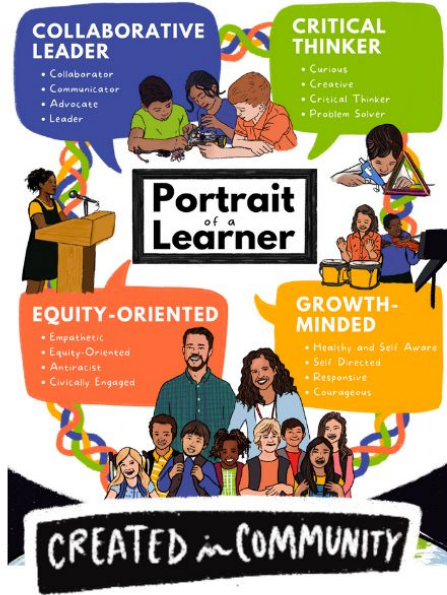


# PORTRAIT OF A LEARNER FRAMEWORK CORE PRACTICES

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## THE LPS PORTRAIT OF A LEARNER

The LPS Portrait of a Learner is our vision for what each member of our community will become through their work together in the Lincoln Public Schools. The portrait makes visible our priorities and goals for teaching and learning so that all staff, students, and families can unite in collective effort. Because we are all lifelong learners – kids and adults – we are all working to grow ourselves into the Portrait of a Learner.

The creation of this portrait was a collaborative effort of families, community members, staff, and students – from Boston, Hanscom, and Lincoln – who worked together to explore the purpose of school, what young people need now and in the future, and our vision for successful learning and growing. Every element of our portrait comes from our community members and the values and hopes they shared with us.

## WHAT GUIDES THIS WORK? 3 COMMITMENTS

Thriving learning environments that enable us to be collaborative leaders and critical thinkers who are equity-oriented and growth-minded are anchored by three core commitments that must thread through all that we do together:



Our commitment to Antiracism, Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity requires that we create learning spaces that interrupt systemic patterns of oppression that result in opportunity gaps for traditionally marginalized students.



Our commitment to Social Emotional Learning and trauma-informed practices requires that we weave self-awareness, social-awareness, and responsible decision making development throughout all aspects of our work and play.



Our commitment to Deeper Learning requires that all students engage in rich, complex learning experiences that are relevant and interactive, inviting them to connect and apply what they learn in authentic, meaningful contexts.

## THE PORTRAIT OF A LEARNER REQUIRES WE ARE ANCHORED IN ALL 3 COMMITMENTS

If we succeed at our commitment to AIDE and SEL without committing to DL, we have warm environments where all identities are valued, but a lack of the intellectual rigor that would empower students to craft their futures.

If we succeed at SEL and DL without committing to AIDE, we have a community that provides rich learning experiences for some, while widening the opportunity gap and failing our most marginalized students.

If we commit to AIDE and DL without SEL, we have high standards for all with a lack of attention to self and social awareness, running the risk of high pressure environments that don't value individuals or the community.





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If the Lincoln Public Schools are to nurture collaborative leaders and critical thinkers who are equity-oriented and growth-minded, we must shift from traditional school models of the past – and this is deeply challenging work. Our academic data and Panorama surveys tell us that not all students are flourishing in our schools. We need a clear set of values to guide us in transforming our learning spaces.

The Portrait of a Learner Framework grew from a combination of classroom observations, research from the field, and many conversations with faculty and staff. It describes a set of Core Practices that mark the essential qualities of thriving learning environments, in any school context, for both students and adults. Naming these Core Practices provides us with common language about teaching and learning, uniting and directing our efforts as a community. By strengthening each of the Core Practices of the Framework, we can honor our commitments to AIDE, SEL, and DL, and move closer to our vision of the Portrait of a Learner.

## ORIENTATION TO THE FRAMEWORK

THRIVING LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS ARE CENTERED AROUND THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE. AS SUCH, THE PORTRAIT OF A LEARNER FRAMEWORK IS ORGANIZED BY THREE GUIDING QUESTIONS, ASKED FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE LEARNER:

### WHAT AM I LEARNING?

Learning begins with purpose. Students must feel that the work they are doing is important and worthy of their time and energy. It is our responsibility to make sure learning is rooted in standards and stretches all students to their full potential.

### DO I BELONG?

This question is the center of the Portrait of a Learner Framework because a sense of belonging is the essential element of any thriving community of learners. It is the foundation upon which all growth and learning can flourish.



### HOW AM I LEARNING?

The conditions for learning are just as important as the content. When learning is structured to foster independence and collaboration, highlighting thinking and student voice, we set the stage for powerful learning experiences.

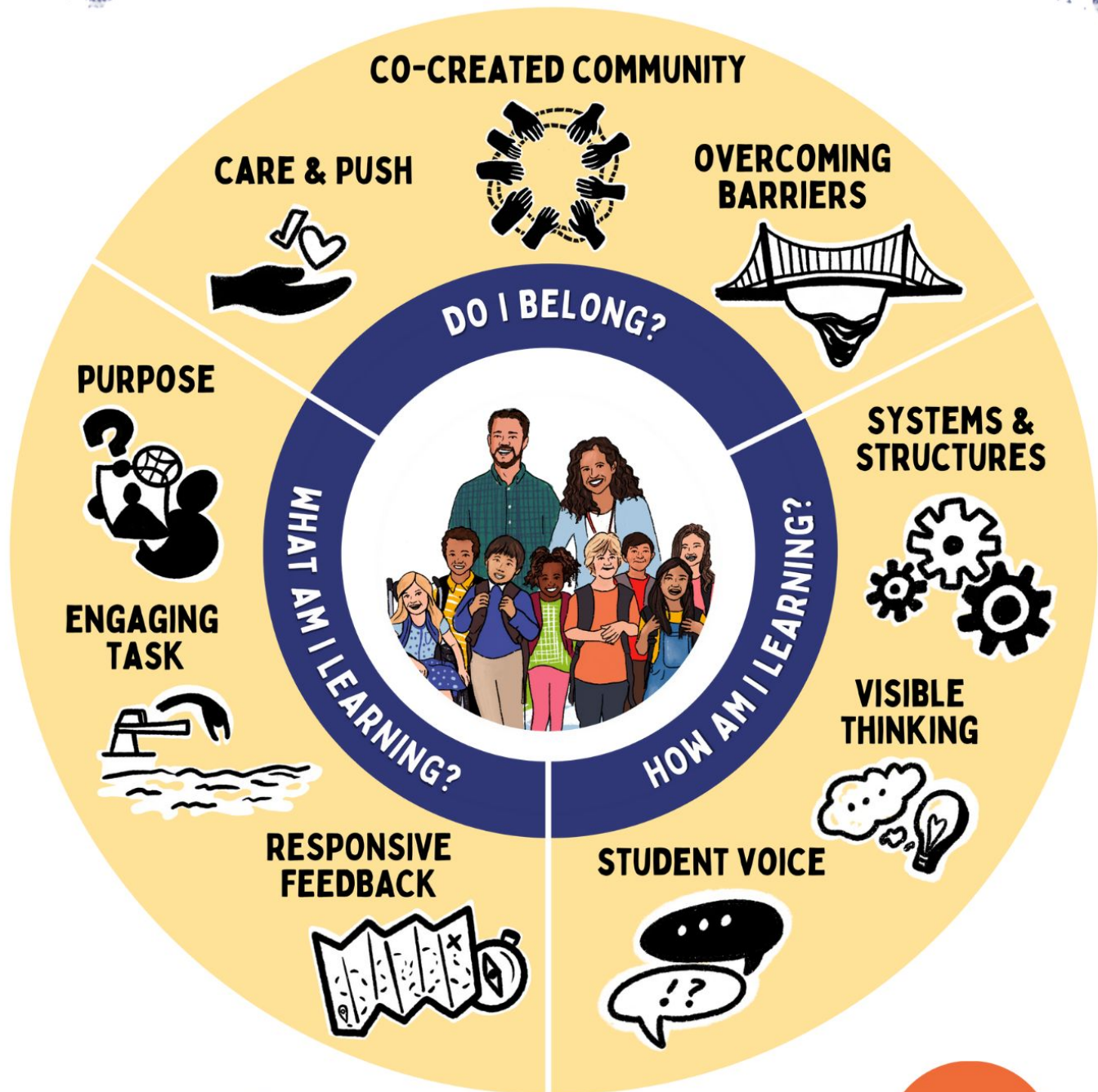


Our commitment to equity is not a box to be checked, but rather a continual practice that we strengthen through daily commitment. Equity is essential to each of the nine Core Practices and strengthening any one Core Practice makes our learning spaces more equitable.



# PORTRAIT OF A LEARNER FRAMEWORK

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## EQUITY PAUSE:

- II WHO IS ON THE MARGINS IN THIS LEARNING COMMUNITY?
- II WHICH CORE PRACTICE COULD IMPACT THIS INEQUITY?



COLLABORATIVE LEADER

CRITICAL THINKER

EQUITY-ORIENTED

GROWTH-MINDED

# DO I BELONG?

WHEN EQUITY IS THRIVING, ALL CAN BELONG.  
BELONGING IN A COMMUNITY IS HOW WE LEARN SOCIAL EMOTIONAL SKILLS.  
LEARNING CAN'T BE DEEP IF WE DON'T FEEL SAFE, INCLUDED, AND VALUED.



## CORE PRACTICES

### CO-CREATED COMMUNITY



Our classroom is a space where I feel safe, valued, and connected. We reflect on our learning and ways of being together.

### INCLUSIVE - CONNECTED - REFLECTIVE

Students learn how to be equity-oriented collaborators when they co-create the community's ways of being together. Through regular reflection, they learn how to make sure everyone is included and connected to one another.

**SHIFT: CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT → BUILDING COMMUNITIES**

### CARE & PUSH



My teacher and classmates strive to understand me. They believe in me and push me to grow as a learner and a community member.

### TRUST - POTENTIAL - PRODUCTIVE STRUGGLE

In order for every learner to reach their full potential, they must have a strong sense of trust that the adults they work with know them and believe in their potential. Knowing a learner deeply allows the adult to craft learning experiences that have the right level of challenge to ensure productive struggle.

**SHIFT: DEFICIT MINDSET → GROWTH MINDSET**

### OVERCOMING BARRIERS



When things are hard, we are mindful of our biases and work together to grow as learners and as people. We advocate for each other and view challenges as opportunities to grow.

### CURIOSITY - GROWTH-MINDED - RESTORATIVE

When mistakes and setbacks are viewed as opportunities for growth, we enact our commitment to being equity-oriented. This requires we approach all barriers from a stance of curiosity first, being mindful of our biases. We then take a growth-minded stance as we work to find restorative ways to approach problems.

**SHIFT: AVOIDANCE → EMPOWERMENT**



- II How are traditionally marginalized students included and connected to adults and their peers in this community?
- II Are they engaged in learning partnerships that accelerate learning, disrupt patterns of inequity, and address issues of equity together?



# WHAT AM I LEARNING?

WHEN OUR LEARNING IS CLEAR AND RELEVANT, ALL CAN ACCESS IT.  
WE ARE MOTIVATED WHEN WE ARE ENGAGED IN PURPOSEFUL LEARNING.  
WE ENGAGE DEEPLY WHEN WORK FEELS IMPORTANT AND MEANINGFUL.



## CORE PRACTICES

### PURPOSE



I know what we are learning and why it is important to me, my learning, and the world. It's clear how this learning fits with our ongoing work.

### CLARITY - RELEVANCE - COHERENCE

Students are motivated when they clearly understand why their learning is important and how it is relevant to their identities, learning goals, or the world. Students can make meaningful connections when their learning is presented in a coherent sequence.

**SHIFT: CONTENT → CONTEXT**

### ENGAGING TASK



The work I'm being asked to do interests me and challenges me and my classmates. We are motivated to engage and lead our learning.

### STRETCH - ENGAGE - EMPOWER

Learning experiences that stretch students with opportunities to engage with the content and each other in meaningful ways empower students to take ownership and lead their learning.

**SHIFT: WORK COMPLETION → COMPLEX THINKING**

### RESPONSIVE FEEDBACK



I know what success looks like as a learner and as a community member. I get clear, frequent, and actionable feedback. My teachers and peers celebrate my growth.

### SUCCESS CRITERIA - PROGRESS - ACTION

Students can lead their learning when they know what success looks like in a task, what progress they've made so far towards that goal, and what actions to take to move further.

**SHIFT: GRADING → GROWTH**



Do traditionally marginalized students feel their learning is relevant, important, and complex?



Do they receive feedback in a way that conveys high standards, faith in their potential, and specific actions to take to improve?

# HOW AM I LEARNING?

EQUITABLE STRUCTURES ENABLE ALL TO BE VALUED THINKERS IN THE COMMUNITY.  
OUR WAYS OF BEING AND LEARNING TOGETHER ARE HOW WE PRACTICE OUR SEL SKILLS.  
WHEN CLASSROOMS FOSTER INDEPENDENCE, WE ARE ABLE TO LEAD OUR OWN LEARNING.



## CORE PRACTICES

### SYSTEMS & STRUCTURES



We have clear routines for working and being together that make space for me, nurture my independence, and foster collaboration.

### AGENCY - RESPONSIVE - COLLABORATION

When the structures we use to orchestrate our work together are responsive to our students' needs, they nurture agency and facilitate collaboration.

**SHIFT: CONTROL → FACILITATE**

### VISIBLE THINKING



I see and hear teachers and students display and talk about their thinking. We document our thinking moves so we can reflect on how our understanding grows.

### ROUTINE - QUESTION & LISTEN - DOCUMENTATION

We use thinking routines to help us prioritize the purposeful thinking in our tasks. We ask powerful questions and listen for student thinking to highlight so we can document how our understanding grows over time.

**SHIFT: CULTURE OF SCHOOL → CULTURE OF THINKING**

### STUDENT VOICE



I get opportunities to express my ideas and practice listening to my classmates. We extend and revise our thinking by listening to each other.

### STRUCTURE - ACADEMIC LANGUAGE - CO-CONSTRUCTED

Teachers structure classroom discussions to raise the quantity and quality of student academic language, enabling students to co-construct ideas by listening to and building off of each other.

**SHIFT: TEACHER TALK → STUDENT TALK**



- II Who does this community's systems and structures center?
- II Are traditionally marginalized students engaging in the thinking and discourse of the academic community? How are their contributions valued and amplified?



# HOW THE PORTRAIT OF A LEARNER FRAMEWORK CAN GUIDE OUR WORK TOGETHER

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Holding true to the vision articulated in the Portrait of a Learner and honoring our commitments to AIDE, SEL, and Deeper Learning requires that we transform the way we teach and learn. The Portrait of a Learner Framework can ground and guide our work together as we shift our practices to enable learning spaces that create collaborative leaders and critical thinkers who are equity-oriented and growth-minded.



## INDIVIDUALS

PLANNING - PROBLEM SOLVING - GOAL SETTING - COACHING

We can all use the Portrait of a Learner Framework as tool to help us strengthen our practice in our unique settings. All learning spaces are dynamic and complex; the Core Practices can help us discern where to prioritize our efforts and how to know if we are moving towards more thriving, equitable learning environments.

## TEAMS

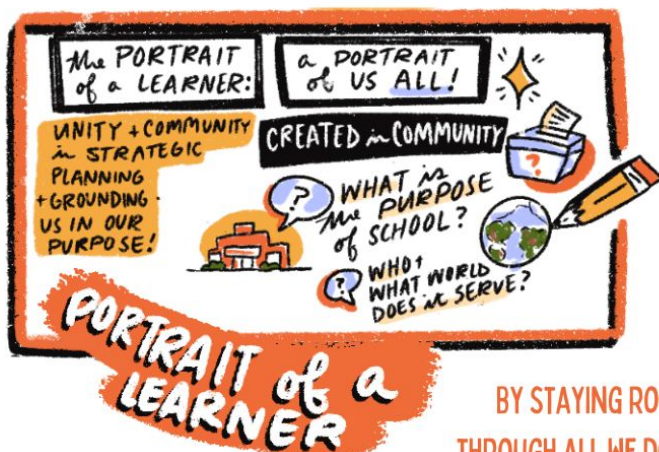
UNIT PLANNING - PEER OBSERVATION - LEARNING WALKS - PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Framework can guide groups in their work together, ensuring our collective efforts are grounded in the Portrait of a Learner's vision. The Core Practices can provide a common language for communicating about our work and help us see how each of our learning spaces contribute to the district's vision.

## OUR COMMUNITY

COMMON LANGUAGE OF PRACTICE - STRATEGIC PLANNING - MEASURING GROWTH - CELEBRATING SUCCESS

Our community can use the Portrait of a Learner Framework as our north star, keeping us grounded in the student perspective and providing purpose and direction for our work together. It can help us plan for the future and celebrate our growth.



## FROM PORTRAIT TO PRACTICE

The Portrait of a learner establishes a clear vision for our work in the Lincoln Public Schools. Aligning our teaching and learning to this vision has the potential to transform both our practice and our impact.

BY STAYING ROOTED IN THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE AND THREADING OUR COMMITMENTS THROUGH ALL WE DO, WE CAN GROW THE PORTRAIT OF A LEARNER INTO A PORTRAIT OF US ALL.



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