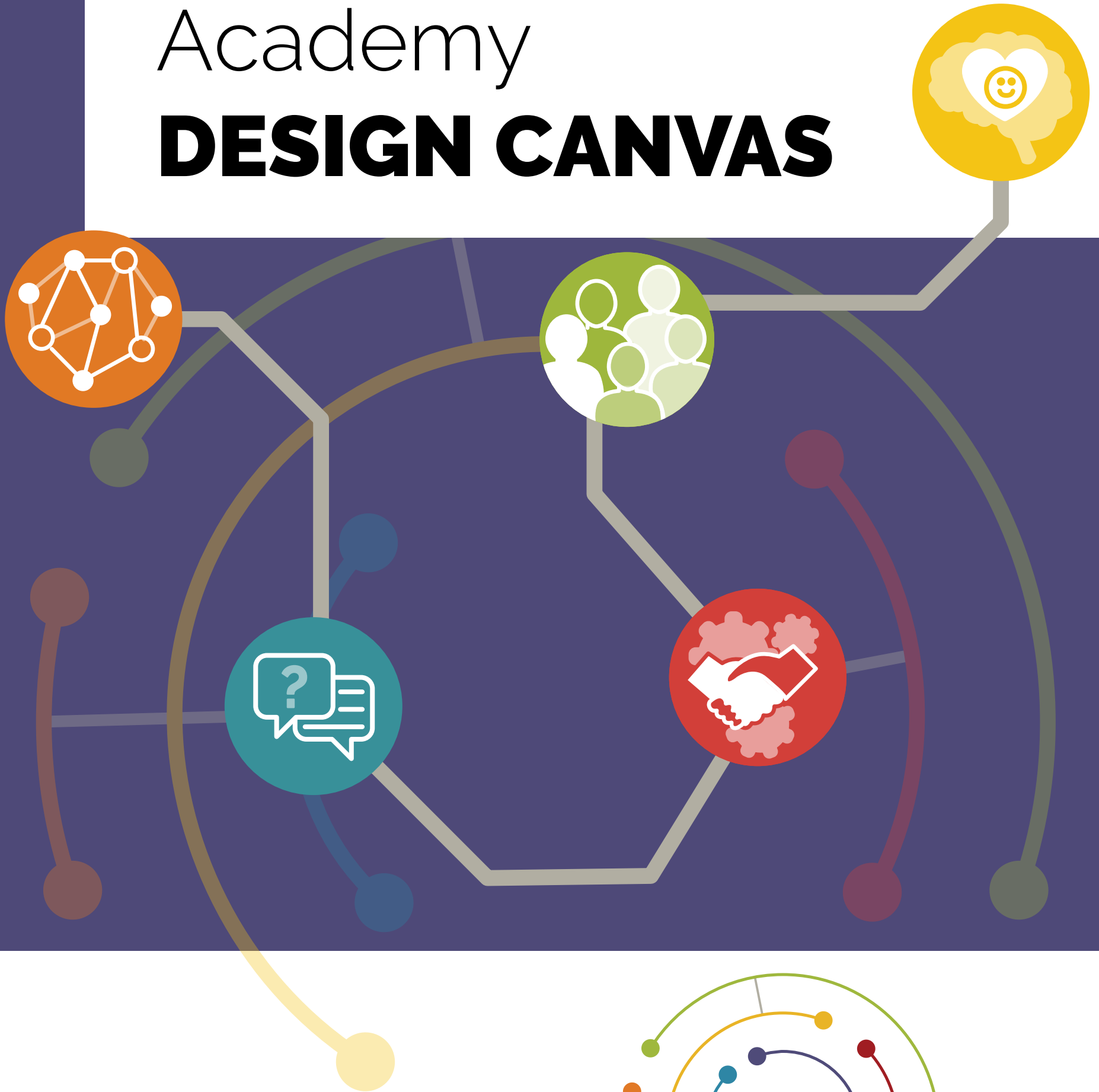


# Howard Connect Academy **DESIGN CANVAS**



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*Howard Connect Academy is an Open Enrollment school  
committed to maintaining a diverse community of learners.*





# OUR **VISION** & PURPOSE

Howard Connect was created to unlock in all students a creative confidence of knowing what they want to be because they know the possibilities of what they can be. Our mission is simple -- to cultivate independent thinkers of tomorrow today.

Howard Connect Academy is breaking the mold of what a middle school education can be. We create a space where our diverse community learns to collaborate, communicate, and solve real world problems in a fun, safe, and accepting learning environment. Academic content, knowledge, and skills are approached in interdisciplinary ways, making learning real and meaningful. With a strong set of academic tools in place, we then help students cultivate their own unique genius, by tapping into their curiosity and allowing them to discover and develop their individual interests. Our students develop the necessary tools to move beyond the ability to compete to the ability to thrive.



creati**N**g the future

a**N**d

d**E**cididing what

**C**

**T**hat is like

# A CASE FOR **CHANGE**



Created at the turn of the 19th century, the current education system is nearly identical to 120 years ago, an industrial model designed to produce interchangeable workers in mass quantities. Our students and our future depend on creating a new paradigm — one that accounts for new styles of learning, new realities of the digital age, and new jobs of the future economy.



“Only those who will **risk going too far** can possibly find out **how far one can go.**”

— T. S. Eliot



## **Time**

A research-based restructuring of time to better reflect the pace of learning rather than strict bell schedules.



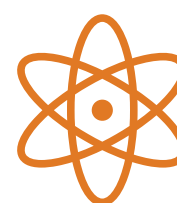
## **Talent**

Rethinking how we utilize not only expertise in teaching but expertise in the experience of everyone around us.



## **Space**

Reimagining the places and spaces in which we learn — learning happens everywhere.



## **Technology**

Redesigning technology education to include the myriad of ways in which we not only access information but also understand new content.

# DESIGN PRINCIPLES



**Authentic Learning:**

Our school provides students with an exceptional learning experience relevant to their lives, connected to the world outside of school, and that prepares them for the future. Students have flexibility in how, when, and where they learn.



**Fostering Curiosity:**

Our school encourages students to think critically, ask questions, and have creative confidence as they discover their own genius.



**Collaborative:**

All voices matter here! Working together, students, staff, parents, and community members are building the best possible learning experience.



**Equitable:**

The diversity of our student body is a cornerstone of our school. We meet the needs of every student, helping them become their best academic, social, and emotional selves.



**Love and Joy:**

Our school is a place where care is shown and everyone acquires a love for learning.

# OUR STORY



Welcome to the Howard Connect Academy, where the future is a place that we create. Made up of a diverse community of learners, students are the center of the learning paradigm. Empowering empathetic leaders who are well balanced in all that they do, we guide students to be both mentally and emotionally intelligent.

## AUTHENTIC

Authentic learning experiences anchored in relevance and purpose is the mainstay for our students. Academic content, knowledge, and skills are approached in interdisciplinary ways, much like they are in the adulthood our students are growing into. Tapping into the curiosity of our students is commonplace, and we use that curiosity to explore interests and discover possibilities. Our students do not experience learning as a set of prescribed procedures locked into a given timetable. Rather, our students learn in flexible ways, having a negotiated say in the time, place, space, and with whom they learn.



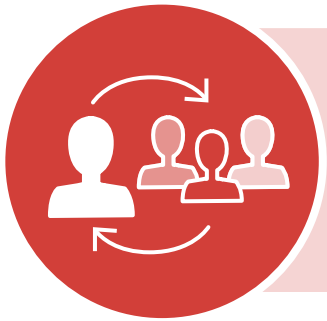
## JOYFUL

Our school is a joyful place. This can only be achieved when learning is fun, learning is relevant, and where learners are challenged to learn new skills and push themselves to try and try again in ongoing cycles of inquiry. With anything worth understanding, there are often multiple ways of looking into it. Our students are encouraged to see things differently, to bring their strengths, and to acquire new abilities and ways of seeing themselves and their potential.

## INNOVATORS

Our teachers are innovators who use their own creativity, collaboration, and critical thinking to design learning opportunities that personalize the learning to match the needs of our individual learners. Our students are taught to think, question, learn, and adapt, creating a future worth standing up for, a future that elevates humanity. Students leave the school life-ready with a confidence in what they could be because they know the possibilities of what they can be.

# A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A STUDENT



## ADVISORY

Developing deep relationships between students and adults (3 year cohorts).



## PERSONALIZED MATH

Instruction across all grades and focused on delivering student-specific content and instructional strategies.



## TOOL TIME

Team-taught exploration of integrated and rigorous academic content (STEAM-like).



## DISCOVERY PERIOD

Time to explore community-based challenges and provide exposure to work (including internships).



## GENIUS PERIOD

Time to explore individual passion in project based way.

- ✓ Using Culturally Responsive Teaching
- ✓ Explicitly teaching SEL skills and knowledge
- ✓ Teaching academic content AND 21<sup>st</sup> century ready skills.

# GRADUATE PROFILE



## MASTERS OF KEY LITERACIES



Read Write Compute **Think**

## LIFELONG LEARNERS



Agile Dynamic Crafty Innovative

## OWNERS OF ESSENTIALS SKILLS



Motivated Doers

Creative Problem Solvers

Computational Thinkers

Generous Collaborators

Skilled Communicators

Self-Aware Citizens

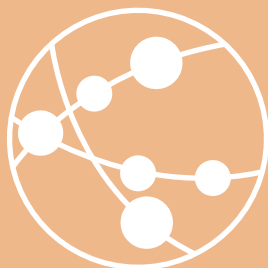
## DISCOVERERS



Curious



Exploring possibilities



Connected to the community



Engaged in ongoing inquiry

## READY FOR THE FUTURE



Industry-certified



Courageous



Self-confident



# OUR PARADIGM



COMPONENT	CURRENT PARADIGM	LEARNER-CENTERED PARADIGM
<b>Organization of Learners</b>	Organized in age cohorts (grade levels)	Learners learn individually and in diverse, shifting communities consistent with their developmental, social, and competency needs
<b>Curriculum</b>	Standardized linear curriculum divided into subjects (in static time periods and spaces)	Standards are organized into interdisciplinary, relevant, and authentic learning experiences
<b>Role of Learners</b>	Passive learner waiting to be filled by others	Active co-creators of their learning and development
<b>Role of Adults</b>	Individual teachers expected to serve as content deliverers, curriculum developers, and data assessors	Network of qualified adults facilitating learning and development
<b>Technology</b>	One-to-many communication tools (e.g. books, white boards, projectors)	One-to-one, one-to-many, many-to-many communication, networking, diagnostic, and content delivery tools
<b>Assessment</b>	Primarily "of" learning	Intentional assessment "for, as, and of" learning
<b>Location</b>	Localized in a school building	Learning occurs at many times, in many places and through many formats; a physical space is established for learners and guides to gather, socialize, and learn
<b>Meeting Learner's Needs</b>	Differentiation of the standard model to meet learners' needs	Personalization for each and every learner