The Center for Creativity, Innovation & Discovery

MISSION
CULTURE
VISION

PREPARED BY: JULIE LAMARRA, PH.D.

CORE PURPOSE.

School Culture Committee Framework: Aligning Mission, Vision & Values

To cultivate a learning environment that reflects and reinforces CCID's mission and vision by embedding Creativity, Innovation, and Discovery into everyday experiences for students, staff, and the broader community.

EVIDENCE SPOTLIGHT: Research shows that strong learning environments grounded in belonging and emotional safety significantly enhance motivation and curiosity (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020).

MISSION ALIGNMENT

Mission | CCID is a student-centered, K–8 charter school that provides a challenging, place-based, integrative STEM curriculum using research-supported strategies, positive learning environments, and collaborative community

Culture in Action

- Build belonging where students feel safe to explore and take intellectual risks.
- Encourage curiosity-driven learning through visible inquiry and experimentation.
- Celebrate the process of learning through rituals, exhibitions, and reflection.

VISION ALIGNMENT

Vision | STEM education at CCID is active, student-centered, and focused on questioning, problem-solving, collaboration, and hands-on engagement with real-world issues.

Culture in Action

- Use shared norms around curiosity, perseverance, and teamwork.
- Facilitate authentic, inquiry-based learning experiences.
- Foster co-learning between teachers and students.

EVIDENCE | Integrative STEM education builds conceptual understanding and real-world problem-solving skills (Honey et al., 2014).

CORE VALUES IN ACTION

CORE VALUE	CULTURAL EXPRESSION	COMMUNITY EXAMPLE
CREATIVITY	Encourage idea generation and artistic expression across subjects.	Student art/STEM exhibits, *"Idea of the Week"* boards.
INNOVATION	Celebrate iteration and experimentation.	Innovation Days, student design challenges, *"Fail Forward Fridays."*
DISCOVERY	Promote exploration and curiosity.	Outdoor classrooms, journaling, field-based learning.
EVIDENCE SPOTLIGHT	Creativity and innovation are learned, cultivated through collaboration and iterative design (Robinson, 2011; Sawyer, 2012).	

IDENTITY FRAMEWORK

PLACE-BASED

CCID's model centers on place-based education that connects learning to local ecology, history, and community.

- Incorporate local stories and natural environments into projects.
- Host community-based seasonal events and outdoor learning experiences.
- Encourage student stewardship through sustainability initiatives.

EVIDENCE | Place-based learning boosts achievement and strengthens community ties (Sobel, 2004).

COMMUNITY & PARTNERSHIP CULTURE

- Connect students with local mentors, artisans, and scientists.
- Host *"Community STEM Days"* and exhibitions of student work.
- Engage families as co-learners and collaborators.

EVIDENCE | Community-engaged projects foster motivation and real-world skill development

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL & INTERPERSONAL CULTURE

Foster teamwork, problem-solving, and interpersonal growth by:

- Embedding SEL routines that model empathy and collaboration.
- Recognizing teamwork, perseverance, and social growth.
- Building reflection into classroom and community rituals.

EVIDENCE | Social-emotional learning improves academic outcomes and interpersonal skills (CASEL, 2020; Johnson & Johnson, 2009).

CONTINUOUS REFLECTION & GROWTH

The committee can lead an annual Culture Alignment Reflection to assess how well daily practices mirror CCID's values:

- How are Creativity, Innovation, and Discovery visible?
- Do students and teachers feel empowered and connected?
- What partnerships deepen learning?

EVIDENCE | Reflective collaboration among educators sustains culture and improves learning outcomes (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020).

MOTTO ALIGNMENT | Make It REAL | Make It RELEVANT | Make It RIGOROUS

| Principle	Cultural Practice
REAL	Hands-on projects connected to local communities.
RELEVANT	Inquiry tied to real-world problems students care about.
RIGOROUS	Growth mindset culture where persistence and challenge lead to excellence.
EVIDENCE | Project-based learning that is real, relevant, and rigorous increases critical thinking and collaboration (Thomas, 2000; Hmelo-Silver et al., 2007).	

NEXT STEPS FOR THE COMMITTEE

1. Identify 3–5 achievable culture initiatives for the school year.
2. Define visible, measurable indicators of success.
3. Communicate progress to families and staff.

GUIDING THOUGHT

The School Culture Committee ensures CCID's mission and vision come alive daily. These tenants are visible in classrooms, hallways, playgrounds, and community spaces.

Evidence-Based Framework
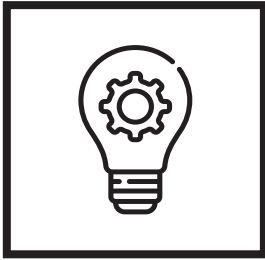
CORE PURPOSE

To ensure that the Center for Creativity, Innovation & Discovery (CCID) lives its mission of fostering Creativity, Innovation, and Discovery through a thriving, research-supported school culture.

Culture is not built by programs, but by patterns of interaction, shared values, and lived experiences.

Committee's Role

- Model the mission in all initiatives.
- Facilitate belonging and connection across the school.
- Use the benchmark rubric and mini-survey annually to measure culture health.
- Communicate findings and celebrate growth with the CCID community.

Strength & Growth Snapshot (Example)

DOMAIN	CURRENT STRENGTHS	GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES
Shared Vision & Norms	Clear mission and strong leadership communication.	Deepen family awareness and visual storytelling of values.
Trust & Relationships	Positive student-teacher rapport and low behavioral issues.	Increase cross-grade and peer mentorship opportunities.
Place-Based Learning	Outdoor and community projects align with STEM focus.	Broaden partnerships and measure community impact.

Call to Action

MAKE IT REAL. MAKE IT RELEVANT. MAKE IT RIGOROUS.
The Culture Committee helps CCID ensure these guiding principles are not just curriculum goals—but living, breathing parts of everyday experience.

Benchmarks

EIGHT BENCHMARKS OF A STRONG SCHOOL CULTURE

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INDICATOR	**WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE**	**RESEARCH SUPPORT**
1. **Shared Vision, Values & Norms**	Students, staff, and families articulate and live CCID's mission; values are visible in daily behavior and school rituals.	Darling-Hammond et al., 2020; New Leaders, 2024
2. **Trusting Relationships & Psychological Safety**	Everyone feels safe to ask questions, take creative risks, and learn through mistakes.	Edutopia, 2023; Johnson & Johnson, 2009
3. **Collaborative Professional Culture**	Teachers and staff co-plan, reflect, and innovate together; learning is collective and continuous.	Honey et al., 2014; Frontiers in Education, 2025
4. **Student Engagement & Inquiry**	Students lead learning through inquiry, design, and authentic problem-solving.	Hmelo-Silver et al., 2007; Thomas, 2000
5. **Community & Place-Based Connections**	Learning is rooted in local context, connecting classrooms with the environment and community experts.	Sobel, 2004; Darling-Hammond et al., 2020
6. **Holistic Wellbeing & SEL**	Social-emotional learning and empathy are visible across classrooms and relationships.	CASEL, 2020; Darling-Hammond et al., 2020
7. **Growth Mindset & Reflection**	Students and teachers treat mistakes as part of progress and reflect regularly.	Robinson, 2011; Sawyer, 2012
8. **Positive Outcomes & Evidence**	Culture translates into improved engagement, attendance, and satisfaction.	National Academies of Sciences, 2014

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CULTURE DEVELOPS NOT THROUGH FORMAL
PROGRAMS BUT THROUGH SHARED
EXPERIENCES, INTERACTIONS, AND THE
REINFORCEMENT OF COLLECTIVE VALUES.
— EDGARD SCHEIN, 2010 —