Educational Innovation[1]

A culture of innovation in education requires bold and shared leadership working collaboratively to create a safe culture for members of the educational community to experiment, inquire, and learn.

In a culture of innovation, the leadership uses data and information to generate questions, inform resource allocations, question structures, inform decisions, and generate the shared agency to find better and better ways to serve learners and the broader educational community.

Descriptors:

- It is an environment in which educators, leaders, and learners are encouraged to take risks and know that failure is not penalized.

- It is a culture that encourages investigation, creativity, and iteration of ideas, products, and approaches.

- It is an environment where the type of learning and teaching being envisioned aligns with the approaches to assessing and measuring success.

- It makes various types and formats of professional learning available to empower educators and leaders to be creative and do their best work.

- It recognizes areas of innovation within the school and district and builds the capacity for others to adopt and adapt these innovations.

- It values all members of the educational community, and their collaboration is prioritized and rewarded.

- It has a mission to enhance equity and equality for all members of the educational community and engages in innovative practices to ensure access to high-quality learning and teaching opportunities and equality of learning outcomes and experiences.

- It is responsive to the needs of individual students, the broader community, and the workforce.

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[1] Resource used with the Rethinking Responsive Education Ventures (RREV) project in 2020

What do innovative learning environments look like?

- **Connection:** Educators know their students well and establish deep connections. Students connect with their teachers, peers, and the world around them.

- **Constant Learning:** The learning and teaching is fast-paced with many teachable moments.

- **Creativity:** Educators support out-of-the-box thinking and creative problem-solving.

- **Flexible Learning Environments:** Learning Spaces that accommodate different types of learning activities (e.g., independent learning, small group, and paired activities, one-on-one learning, collaboration) and learning time can be flexible.

- **Goal Setting:** Learners are a part of the goal-setting process for their learning.

- **Open-Ended Questions:** Teachers encourage a variety of answers, strategies, and points of view.

- **Opportunities for Revision:** Students and teachers engage in ongoing change, adaptation, revision, and improvement.

- **Principles and Routines:** Educators establish consistent environments and guidelines for how the learning space is conducted.

- **Problem-finding and Design Thinking:** Educators and students inquire and seek out problems to be solved, and educators encourage asking why and how. Educators identify challenges, gather ideas, generate possible solutions, refine ideas, and test solutions.

- **Reflection:** Educators and learners engage in ongoing self-reflection and inquiry.

- **Safe and Supportive Risk-Taking:** Educators support productive struggle and establish the safety to make mistakes and use them as learning opportunities.

- **Variation:** Educators use a variety of strategies and techniques to engage learners. Students are comfortable with their own styles of learning and personalities.

(Lynch, 2018; Shulman, 2018)