



Wilder School District #133

Nestled in the heart of a high poverty community, Wilder School District # 133 is located in Wilder, Idaho.

To address the opportunities and challenges presented by the scale and needs of its population, Wilder SD # 133 continues a significant partnership with Apple and the ConnectedED initiative, providing a robust instructional technology infrastructure, devices, and training for all students, ensuring equity of access to even education for all learners.

Wilder School District strives to create an active, collaborative, and authentic learning environment that is challenging and engaging for all students, regardless of grade level or preferred learning style. As co-authors of their own learning, Wilder students work collaboratively with teachers and peers to identify topics of interest, set goals, monitor progress, share knowledge and perspectives, and learn from one another. As a result of continual involvement in peer learning and inquiry-based learning, students develop their critical thinking, creativity, communication skills, cultural awareness, and 21st-century competencies.

From kindergarten, Wilder students are taught the learning habits needed to succeed in both the classroom and future career pathways. As learners begin their educational journey, for example, they engage in applying the “16 Habits of Mind” framework, strengthening their ability to strive for excellence, persist, manage impulsivity, and think critically. As students progress, their teachers and parents encourage learners to take control of their own learning process, with “sideboards” gradually introduced at the appropriate pace for students to be independently successful on a continuing basis.

Wilder School District's learner-centered and personalized environment at all grade levels has resulted in the removal of equity-related barriers evident in more traditional approaches and structures for learning. Wilder # 133, for example, has removed a grade-level focused instructional and bell system at elementary and high school levels. Students are taught based on their mastery assessment placement (in line with Zone of Proximal Development theory)—not their grade level. According to leaders, this approach allows school leadership teams to create a robust program model that would teach all students the skills and habits needed to be successful in a system where they are the owners of their own learning. Students need voice and choice conversations with teachers to truly become co-authors of their learning.

and inquiry-based learning. At the primary level, for example, learners are given play lists for daily learning, which they must manage. Increasingly, they formulate SMART Goals in daily learning episodes, monitoring their own progress in partnership with their teacher and reflecting on processing their growing proficiency. This process of “thinking about their thinking” reinforces self-regulation and efficacy while encouraging them to strive for more complex and rigorous learning opportunities.

As learners progress through middle and high school, they are required to begin each day or week with SMART Goals to be accomplished that day. They review these goals with their teacher/mentor—and then follow their personalized learning plan (which articulates learning modality, place, and movement for the day). This plan ensures content mastery and movement across classrooms when learning has been completed—rather than a standardized bell system. Using a Habits of Mind rubric, students self-monitor to ensure they are successful co-authors of their own learning process, including striving for accuracy and mastery as well as being required to “teach” the content they have learned to receive a top rubric score (i.e., A/4).

The guiding principles for this learner-centered school district include the following expectations for practices, programs, and expectations:

- We expect professionalism, respect, responsibility, and honesty.
- We embrace innovation in technology tools, resources, and instructional practices.
- We hold accountable the ownership of teaching and learning.
- We incorporate the necessary skills (16 Habits of Mind) and a growth mindset to effectively