

Creating Future Ready Learners: Frisco ISD

Frisco, Texas

Total Students: 66,451 • Elementary School: 29,072 • Middle School: 16,084 • High School: 21,295

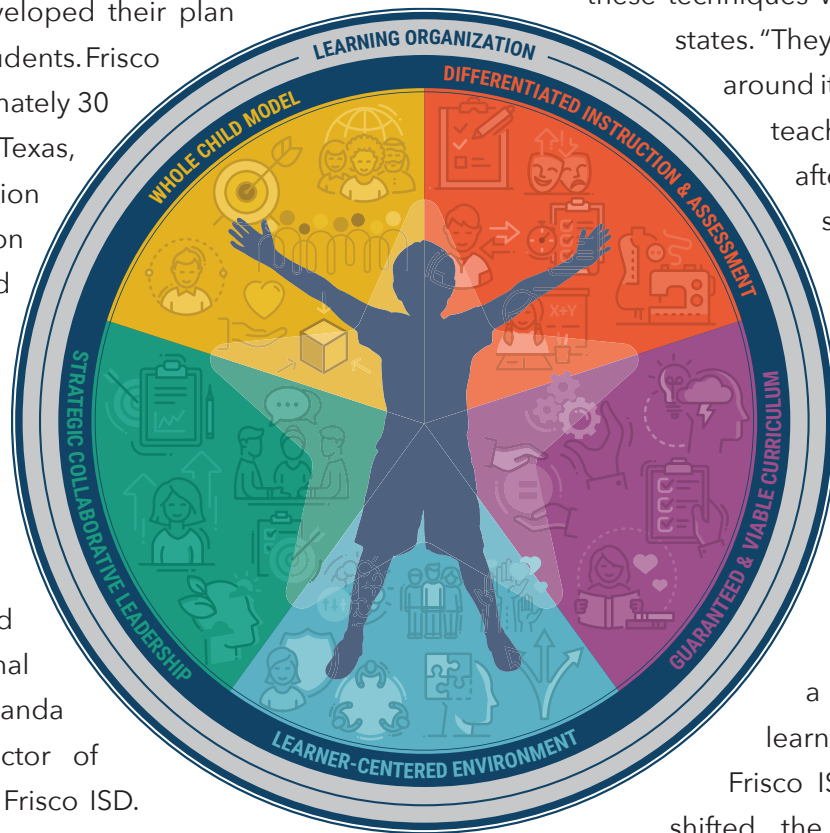
A district is ready for change. The transformation plan has been approved, the core values have been drafted, and the vision is secure. But how can the district ensure widespread adoption?

That's the question Frisco ISD district leaders sought to answer when they developed their plan around Future Ready students. Frisco ISD, which sits approximately 30 miles north of Dallas, Texas, designed a transformation plan which centers on student outcomes and goal setting at every level; a plan founded around a profile of a Future Ready Learner.

"We realized pretty quickly we couldn't do it by ourselves, and we needed additional support," said Amanda Ziaer, Managing Director of Strategic Initiatives for Frisco ISD.

"New Tech Network is a huge part of how we're planning on sustaining and building out our Future Ready plan."

NTN partnered with Frisco ISD to provide structures and support on different levels of the journey. Leadership started by focusing on the outcomes identified in the Learner Profile and working to incorporate each outcome into instruction. Through NTN Deeper



Learning Practices workshops, leadership teams set clear goals on connecting instructional practices to the outcomes. Now, the district uses these practices to implement the same processes when working with teachers and instructional coaches. "We've modeled

these techniques with our teachers," Ziaer states. "They're wrapping their minds around it and saying, 'wow, I can't teach like I've always taught' after learning this, so we're spending a lot of time on mindset and shifting skills and how you think about classroom instruction. We've started changing our conversations from curriculum to instruction."

Through this approach, a culture of deeper learning has spread across Frisco ISD, and district leaders shifted the focus to a student-centered authentic learning approach.

"Frisco ISD leadership took the first step in this complex work by clearly defining what they want the future of learning to look like for their students," said Steffany Batik, New Tech Network Director, District and School Development (Texas). "Our role as a school design partner has been to share our process of ensuring

they achieve the desired outcomes for their students outlined in their district plan." Dr. Wes Cunningham, Chief Academic Officer at Frisco ISD, shares how setting conditions for deeper learning establishes an outcomes-based student culture, something leaders in Frisco ISD are working hard to build. "We had to be very clear about the outcomes," said Cunningham. "We need to see students learning things, yes, but we need to see them learning things through these outcomes-based lenses. Students have to be comfortable with taking risks and trying new things, and they learn that by seeing their teachers and other educators modeling that behavior."

NTN research tactics are another element the district cites as helping to establish more student-centered learning practices at the Frisco ISD schools. "The information we received back from our NTN surveys about our kids' experiences was so powerful," said Ziaer. "It's so helpful to be reminded about these types of tactics when you're trying to develop an authentic student-centered learning experience. It's just simple things you might skip because we live in such a traditional

adult-centered world." This model is already increasing student engagement in the classroom.

"The proof of concept is watching those students show passion, excitement and genuine curiosity about what they're learning," explained Cunningham. "It's different for them than they've ever experienced."

Frisco ISD leadership is adamant about the sustainability of this work, and the belief that a model like New Tech Network's works for all students. "There's this belief that you can't pull this off at a comprehensive high school campus," shared Cunningham. "It might not be all PBL all the time, but it's about setting conditions and the mindset about how powerful instruction is, and that's something we've learned from the support and coaching from NTN."



Contributors to this profile include Wes Cunningham, ED.D. Chief Academic Officer, Frisco ISD,

Amanda Ziaer, Managing Director of Strategic Initiative, Frisco ISD, and Steffany Batik, New Tech Network Director, District and School Development



Frisco ISD Elementary Schools



Frisco ISD Middle Schools



Frisco ISD High Schools



Frisco ISD Special Program Centers