

BUILDING YOUR SCHOOL'S INNOVATION PORTFOLIO

MOUNT VERNON PRESBYTERIAN SCHOOL

SCHOOL
Mount Vernon Presbyterian School
Atlanta, GA

PRESENTERS
Dr. Brett Jacobsen
Head of School

Bo Adams
Executive Director at Mount Vernon Institute for Innovation

IMPERATIVE

At Mount Vernon, our imperative to innovate stems from **OUR MISSION**: "We are a school of **INQUIRY, INNOVATION, and IMPACT**. Grounded in Christian values, we prepare all students to be college ready, globally competitive, and engaged citizen leaders. Our imperative to innovate radiates from our desire to set the conditions for learners to design a better world—to be the agents of change who make positive impact."

"A desire to make the world around me a better place is what drives me to do everything that I do. At Mount Vernon, students are encouraged to make an impact and be their own unique person, so I am not afraid to be who I want to be, and I am empowered to be myself. There are no preconceived notions that teenagers aren't capable of producing major change in the world. It is my hope to leave a lasting impact on Mount Vernon in my last few months as a student at the school."
JAY MIDDLETON, CLASS OF 2017

"Beyond the day-to-day interaction with students and a really awesome team of teachers, I'm continually invigorated by the way the conversations around education are evolving. Students are getting more opportunities to work on problems that matter—not ones invented by teachers—and as a result they are gaining a sense that their world is malleable and we trust them to shape it in a positive way. I think we are on the cusp of a major (and much-needed) reimagining of the way we "do" school."
T.J. EDWARDS, DIRECTOR OF DESIGN AND ENGINEERING, MVPS FACULTY AND MVIFI NUCLEUS TEAM

IDEA

Our summit idea originates from **OUR MISSION**—that we are a school of inquiry, innovation, and impact. Beyond the baselines of foundational knowledge and skills, we also seek to nurture results in **SIX FUNDAMENTAL MINDSETS**: Creative Thinker, Solution Seeker, Ethical Decision-Maker, Collaborator, Innovator, and Communicator.

To establish and nourish a culture for our community to build and utilize these mindsets together, we thrive from our **NORMS**: Start with Questions, Fail Up, Share the Well, Assume the Best, and Have Fun.

And to guide our design of daily excursions in purposeful learning, we depend on our **PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES**: Relationships are Foundational for Learning, Curiosity and Passion Drive Learning, Learning Demands Interactive and Flexible Spaces, Empathy Influences Learning, and Learners Apply Knowledge to Make an Impact.

Collectively, these four dimensions of our purpose, results, culture, and design reinforce one another in what we call The Mount Vernon Continuum.

IMPLEMENTATION

At Mount Vernon we implement our summit idea by progressively and intentionally building an **INNOVATION PORTFOLIO**—leading and managing a collection of interrelated prototypes to advance the capabilities and capacities of our learners and our community.

We think of **TIER ONE, TIER TWO** and **TIER THREE INNOVATIONS**:

TIER 1

Those that incrementally move us forward

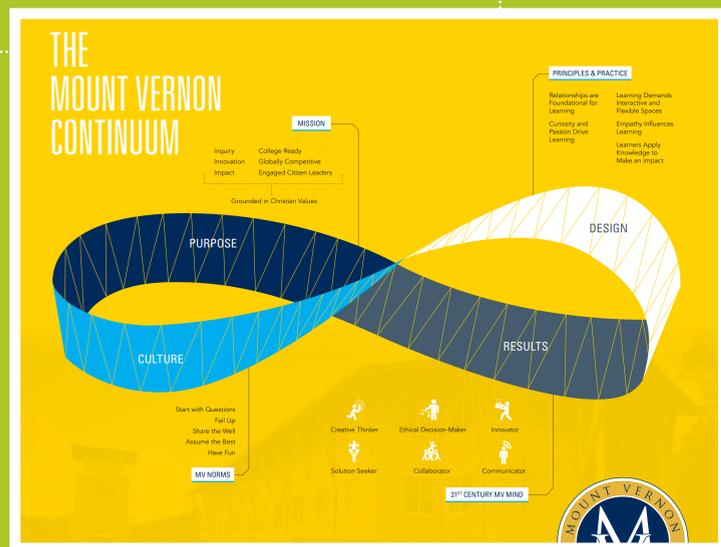
TIER 2

Those that create breakthrough opportunities

TIER 3

Those that transform the very way that people think about "school"

THESE FOUR DIMENSIONS OF OUR PURPOSE, RESULTS, CULTURE, AND DESIGN REINFORCE ONE ANOTHER IN WHAT WE CALL THE MOUNT VERNON CONTINUUM.



THREE DESIGN DRIVERS

1. How might we make school more reflective of real life?
2. How might we empower all learners to be seekers and explorers?
3. How might we inspire one another—and the larger world—through the work we undertake together?

We have developed these interconnected components and the continuum over a number of years, by connecting the dots looking backwards while ambitiously researching and designing how we might innovate school to meet the needs of the future. Most recently, our **THREE DESIGN DRIVERS** are expressed in these questions.

SHARED VISION and **SHARED LANGUAGE** make our collaborative efforts productive and our pace of innovation invigorating. And to reach our most ambitious summits, we know that we must vary our routes as explorers and pioneers of first-ascents.

Just like in an investment portfolio, we look for a particular mix and ratio of multiple tiers. Additionally, because we are practitioners of **DESIGN THINKING**, we "build, build, build, test, gather feedback, iterate, and plan further."

We lead and manage complex, ambiguous situations by working through phases of **DISCOVERY, EMPATHY, EXPERIMENT, and PRODUCE**. What's more, we have created a dual operating system with synergy among our operations of Mount Vernon Presbyterian School and our future-making R&D lab known as the Mount Vernon Institute for Innovation (MVIFI).

Consequently, all of our faculty and staff at Mount Vernon are **DUAL AGENTS**—both practitioners and researchers/designers.

RESOURCES

SCHOOL WEBSITE
mountvernonpschool.org

SCHOOL TWITTER
[@MVPSchool](https://twitter.com/MVPSchool)

MVPS FACEBOOK
facebook.com/Mount-Vernon-Presbyterian-School-149376885094264/

MVIFI WEBSITE
mvifi.org

MVIFI TWITTER
[@MVIFI](https://twitter.com/MVIFI)

MV INFLUENCERS
mvifi.org/influencers/