

VISION: To unleash human potential

MISSION: Iowa BIG nurtures and inspires students to own their own learning and develop their agency, efficacy, and passions while gaining valuable real-world and academic skills so they can succeed in a world of rapid and constant change. Iowa BIG activates its vision and mission through:

1. MEANINGFUL & SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIPS with peers, staff, and the larger community
2. ENGAGEMENT in authentic and organic learning experiences beyond the walls of school
3. DEVELOPMENT of THE AGILE MINDSET
4. CONTINUOUS REFLECTION on actions, habits, purpose, performance and mindset
5. INCREASING LEVELS of challenge, freedom and responsibility

VALUES: BIG's values provide an outline and direction for our daily work. We frame our values through the principles of the Agile Mindset.

MAKE PEOPLE AWESOME. Every project, every meeting, every day the goal is to make yourself and the people around you awesome. Get a bit better and learn something worth knowing each day.

MAKE SAFETY A PREREQUISITE. Make sure everyone in the space and on the team feel safe. Safe to be themselves, to speak openly, and to be treated humanely and respectfully in their interactions. Student voice in the learning process is critical. We are here to help you learn and succeed by experiencing failure and mistakes differently than you do in traditional school settings.

EXPERIMENT AND LEARN RAPIDLY. By focusing on constantly experimenting and trying new things, we can learn quickly. Mistakes are never too big to stop us. Here we help you learn to be a rapid and powerful learner.

DELIVER VALUE CONTINUOUSLY. Rather than wait to deliver a product until the end of a project or assignment, we want to be delivering value constantly - to our project partners, our teammates, and ourselves. By not waiting until the end, we get valuable feedback before it is too late.

PURPOSE

- I reflect to help me stay on course and make decisions regarding my habits, behaviors and actions
- I am able to see how my purpose connects with others' purposes and larger purposes beyond myself
- I make better decisions by prioritizing my work, making appropriate choices, and showing initiative and self-direction by taking action and following through
- I accept responsibility for and ownership of my own learning and actions
- I demonstrate investment in my work and my team's work and in striving to make us all awesome
- I persevere and stay focused during times of challenge, confusion, and uncertainty

RESPONSIBILITY

- I am prepared to engage and learn at BIG and in the other areas of my life
- I am fully present, listen attentively, and give my full attention to the work at hand
- I follow through with my commitments and obligations - I do what I say I'm going to do
- I communicate in appropriate ways using appropriate mediums
- I understand and accept the role I am playing at any given time
- I demonstrate empathy, equity, and recognize differences in both my culture and those I'm engaged with
- I show responsibility by taking initiative, prioritizing my work, being prepared, and accepting my actions
- I act with integrity and have a sense of the impact I have on others

AUTHENTICITY

- I admit my mistakes and learn from them - I'm not afraid to ask questions and for help

- I try to see myself in an honest light
- I am true to myself and encourage others to be their true selves
- I recognize when I'm making an excuse rather than stating a reason
- I speak clearly and accurately
- I can have difficult conversations
- I respond openly and empathetically while considering the thoughts and opinions of others
- I own my actions and honor my word and commitments

APPRECIATION

- I show appreciation and give respect to those I meet and interact with.
- I recognize the freedoms I've been given and honor them
- I honor myself and others through my words and actions
- I offer problems or criticisms with the intent on building toward solutions
- I value my and others' time and effort by being on time and communicating clearly
- I practice cultural competence and respect the cultural differences of those I interact with
- I avoid criticizing, putting down, making fun of, and/or talking behind others' back

LEADERSHIP

- I recognize myself as a leader and can identify my leadership qualities
- I share and receive information and knowledge openly
- I believe that the best ideas are in the room with me and the people I'm with
- I listen intently, speak my truth, and am willing to be right, wrong and heard
- I am sensitive to and ensure that all voices are heard and recognized
- I am aware of my own verbal and non-verbal responses and recognize that they have an impact
- I see the validity in others' views
- I am unafraid of questioning the status quo
- I help to set, clarify and get everyone focused on common goals
- I lead and support as appropriate

LEARNING

- I focus on learning as a continual improvement process
- I ask questions and seek answers
- I interpret the context I am in so I can learn and apply relevant skills and content to succeed
- I see opportunities for growth in my successes and failures
- I ask and seek out where I can go next
- I am able to expose and question my own assumptions and stay open to new possibilities
- I motivate myself to learn and grow, even in times when I'm still unsure why I'm learning it

CREATIVITY

- I make and share connections between unrelated ideas
- I seek meaningful problems to solve and/or opportunities to pursue
- I see challenges as opportunities, not as roadblocks, burdens, or annoyances
- I clarify or challenge assumptions or the status quo to help gain clarity and/or to open myself and my team to wider options or thinking
- I persist in working through problems and roadblocks and find ways to overcome these challenges
- Use and learn processes to be more creative that may include steps such as background research, brainstorming, idea honing, evaluation, reflection...etc.

COMMUNITIES

- I recognize the value in the places I go and people I meet
- I serve my communities with my work and presence
- I respect the work others who have created and maintained the communities I enjoy
- I try to make my communities better places