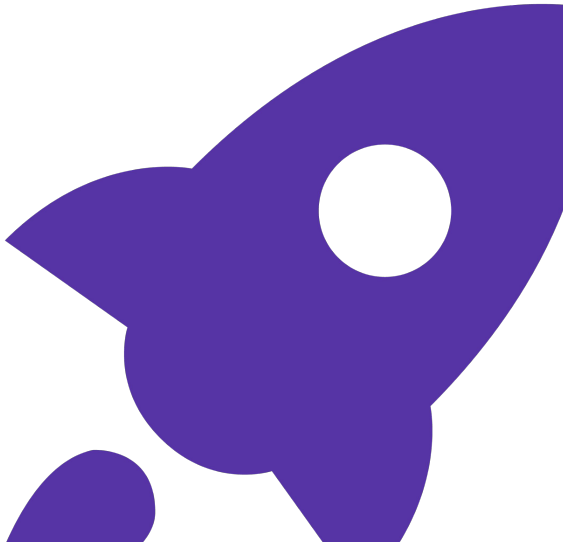
Piloting Your Theory of Change

VJ Brown (he/him)
Moonshot edVentures

Branta Lockett (she/her)
5280 Freedom School



Objectives

- Continue to learn about Moonshot and our approach to community design
- Understand how piloting can be a critical tool for your school launch
- Explore examples of a piloting journey for a school

Our Time Together

- ❏ Moonshot + VJ intro (5 min)
- ❏ Piloting 101 (15 min)
- ❏ The Piloting Journey (15) min
- ❏ Q&A and Closing (10 min)

The Moonshot Team

Kat Ling
she/they
CEO

Sasha Green
she/her
Program and Operations Manager

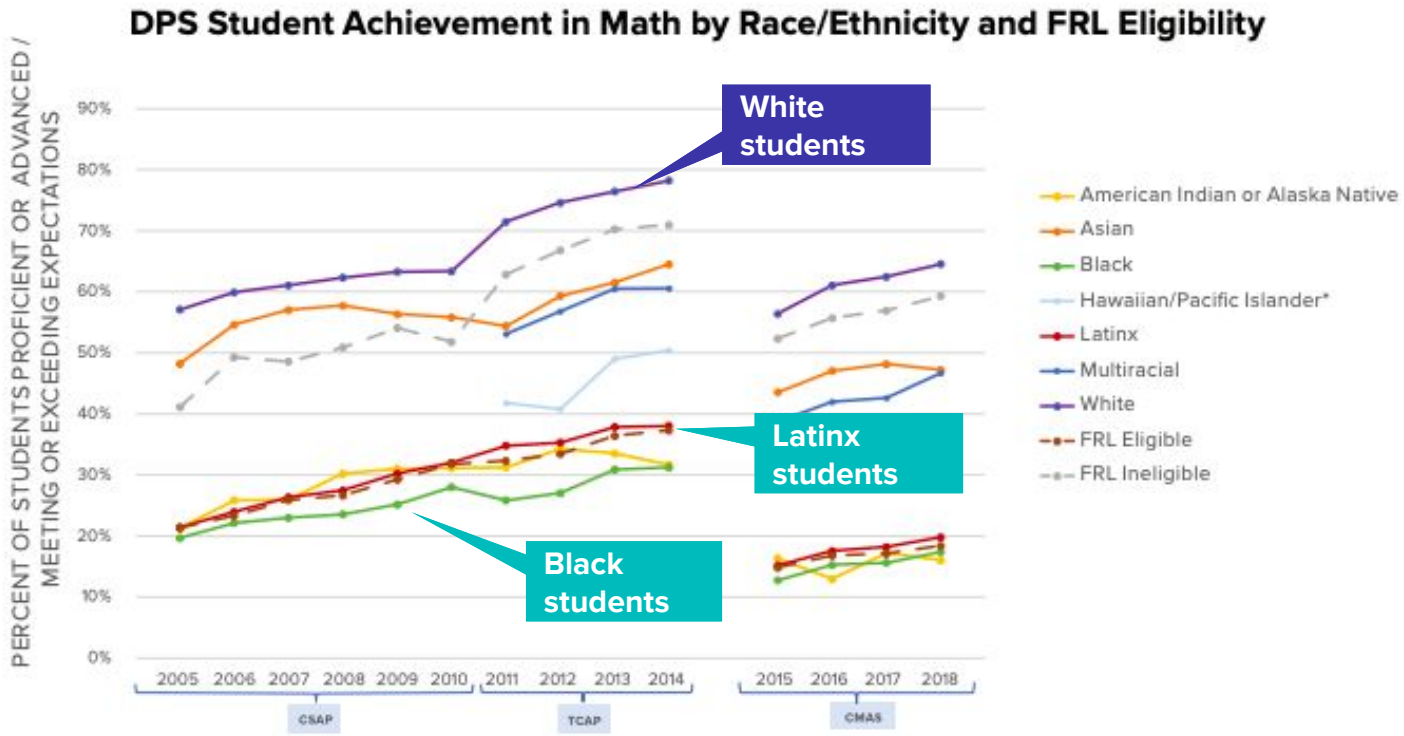
Alex Chavez
she/her
Finance & Operations Senior Manager

VJ Brown
he/his
Alumni & Partnerships Manager

Daranee Teng
she/her
Managing Director, Program

Problem #1

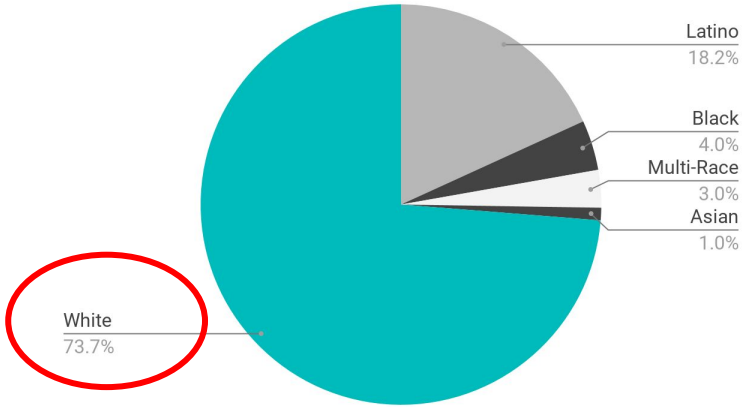
Over time, if our city does more of the same, students of color in Denver will fall further behind



The Problem: #2

Though 75% of students in Denver are students of color, 75% of the teaching force is white

4,910 Teachers*



Source: Denver Public Schools

Note: 0% Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

Note: 0% Native American

*** 75% of Denver's 92,000 students are children of color**

Two Needs

1. We need to **change learning environments** for students of color.
2. We need to **diversify the talent** that will transform these learning environments.

Our Foundation

VISION

Moonshot envisions a learner-centered system, led by individuals who share and empathize with the experience of the students and communities they aim to serve, where all children become lifelong learners who persist through life and meaningfully contribute to their communities.

MISSION

Moonshot edVentures surfaces and supports a diverse set of leaders to design and launch the schools and learning environments of tomorrow.

OUR CORE VALUES

- **Respect**
- **Trust**
- **Love**
- **Collaboration**
- **Equity**
- **Reciprocity**

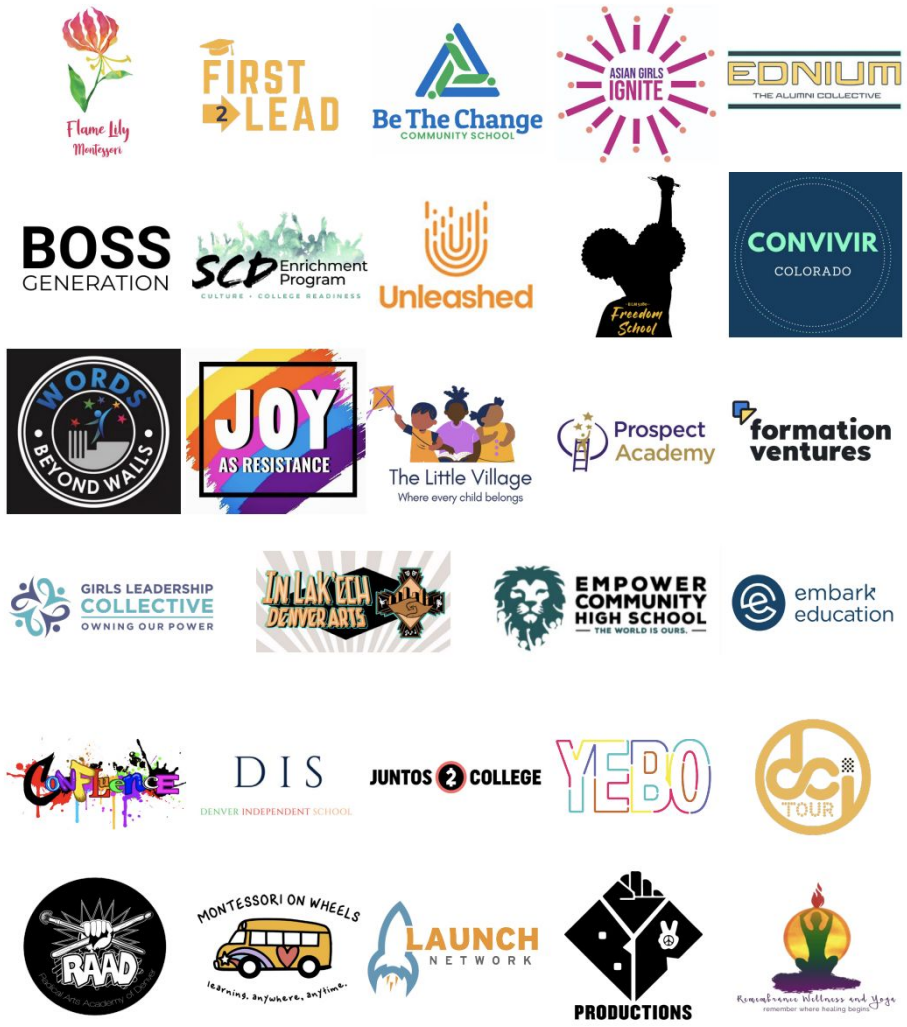
In five years...

84 Fellows

81% BIPOC

27 ventures

4,500 students served in 2021

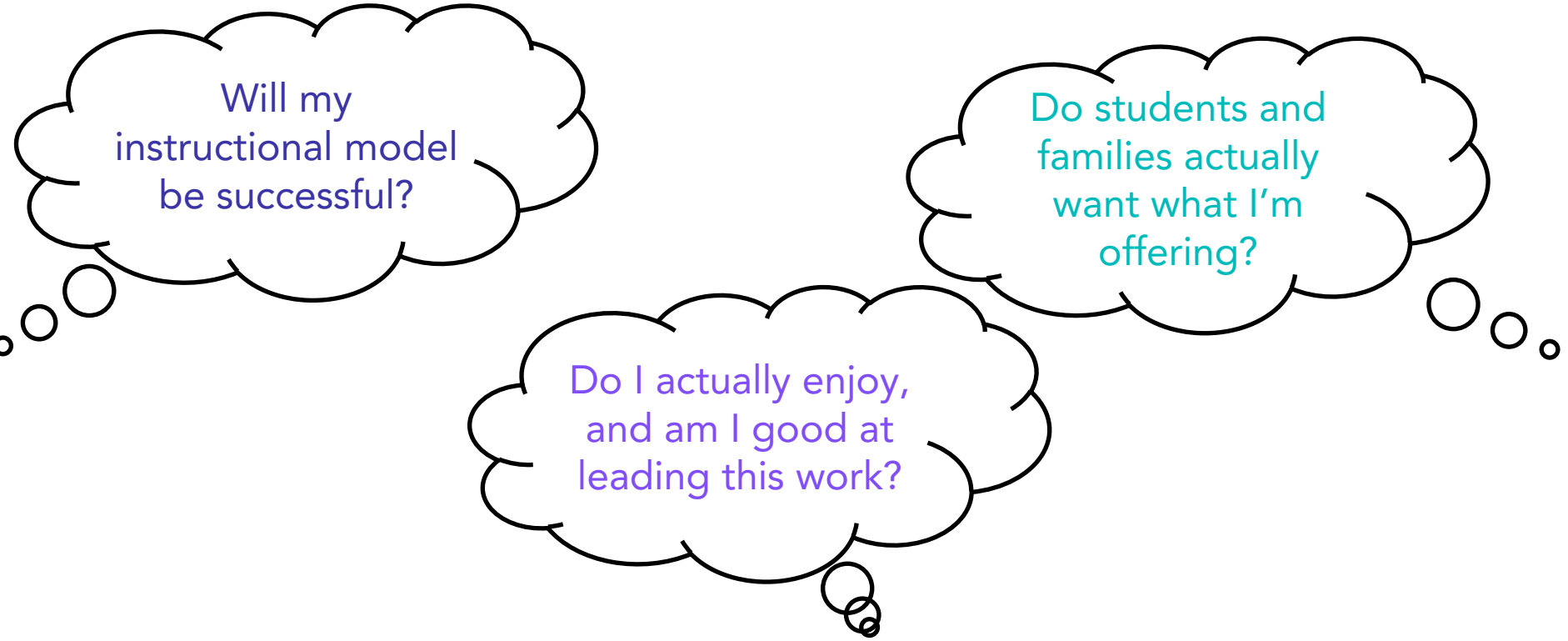


What is a pilot and why should I run one?

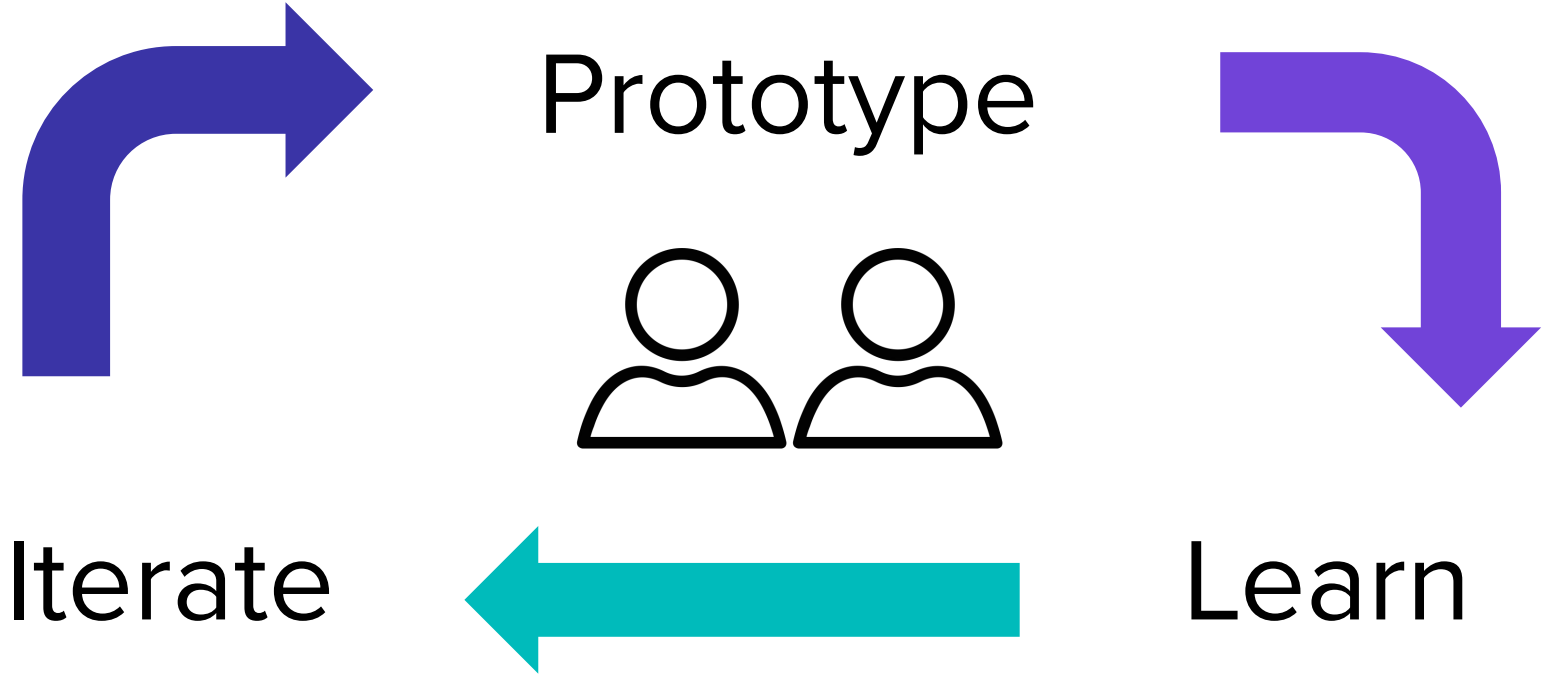
What is a pilot?

Small-scale, short-term experiences that founders run with the families they ultimately want to serve to test their idea while the stakes are low

What do pilots help us learn?



Why do we pilot?



Why we do pilot?

Your idea

Assumption | Assumption | Assumption | Assumption | Assumption

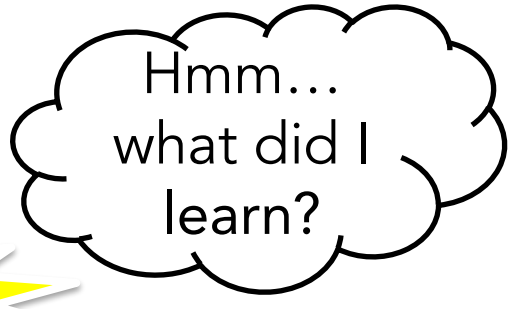
You'll want to test your assumptions while you don't have far to fall - through a ***prototype!***

Why Assumptions?

Assumptions are things about your venture you believe to be true, but haven't fully tested yet.

Your idea

Assumption **Assumption** **Assumption** **Assumption** **Assumption**



Testing assumptions can save you time, $$, energy, confused potential users

Types of Assumptions

Assumptions are the things that are believed to be true about a model. You do not know an assumption is true until you test it.

Demand

- **Do the people I am designing for want this?**

Capacity

- **Am I the right person to launch this idea?**

Efficacy

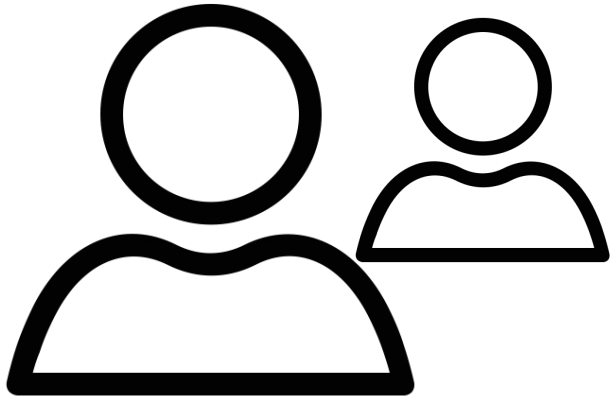
- **Does this idea actually create the outcomes it promises?**

Why do we pilot?

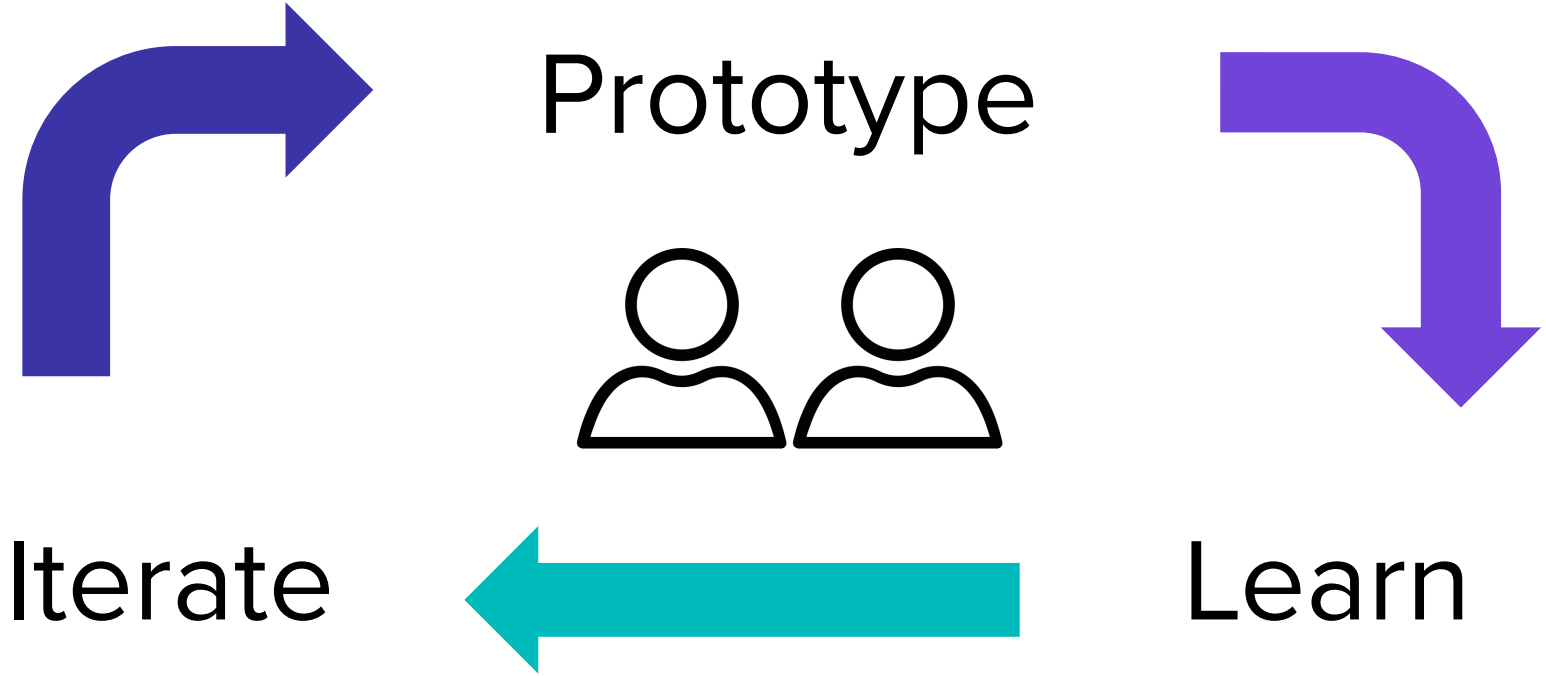
Learnings from your pilot should help you make informed decisions about how to ***iterate*.**

Why do we pilot?

Piloting puts users at the center and gives them a voice



Why do we pilot?



What are major benefits of piloting?

- Building a sphere of influence with community members
  - Build relationships with students and families
  - Receive relevant feedback for your model design
- Develop proof points for your model
  - Data Collection
  - Testimonials
- New insight to help refine design
  - Create new assumptions

It’s a process

Piloting can be complex.

Embrace this opportunity to flex a new muscle!

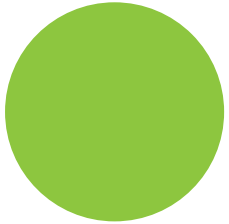
Piloting at Moonshot

Explore

- Test **demand** (or relevant) assumption
- 1-2 hour pilots
- Moonshot guided for the first time!
- We encourage subsequent pilots

Cultivate

- Test **efficacy** (and some demand and capacity)
- Saturday pilots
- Moonshot advised



Prepare for Launch

- Test **capacity**, efficacy, and demand
- Summer (week-long+)
- Moonshot funded (with less oversight)

The Piloting Journey: Perspective from a Moonshot Fellow!

Branta Lockett,
Co-Founder & Executive Director
5280 Freedom School
Moonshot Cohort 1

5280 Freedom School

5280 Freedom School

Mission: 5280 Freedom School teaches Kindergarten - 5th-grade students to become racially literate and civically-minded by centering Black knowledge, people, and principles so that students can dismantle oppressive systems, liberate themselves, and transform the world.

Vision: 5280 Freedom School is a place where people are loved, valued, safe, and free to be themselves and students are leaders for social change.

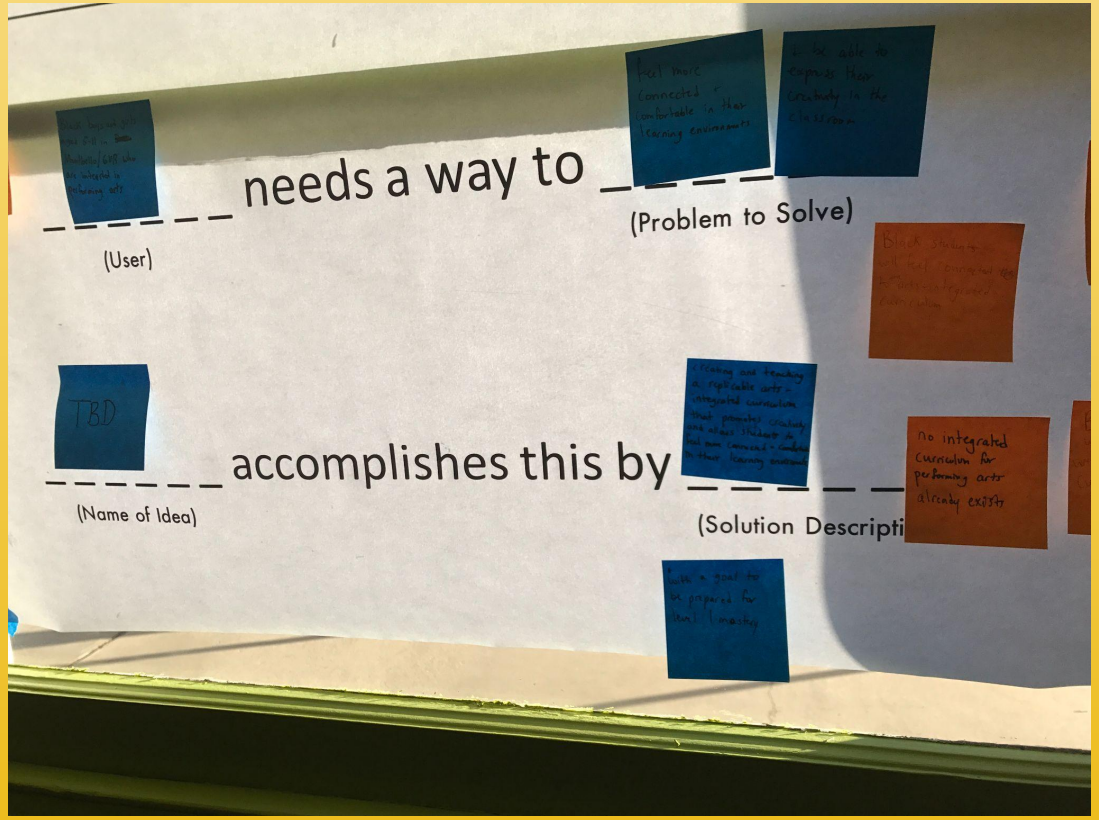
School Model

Kindergarten - 5th Grade Prospective Public Charter School

- Black-Centered
- Culturally Responsive - “Ready for Rigor”
- Inquiry-Based Learning
- Universal Gifted and Talented Instruction

Assumptions to Test using Pilots

Created in 2017

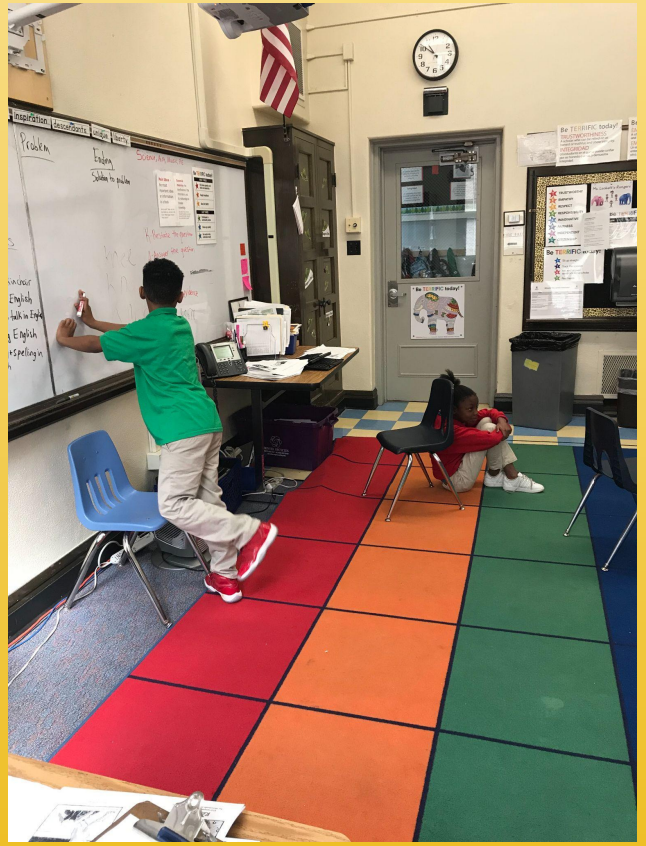


1st Pilot

Arts Integration

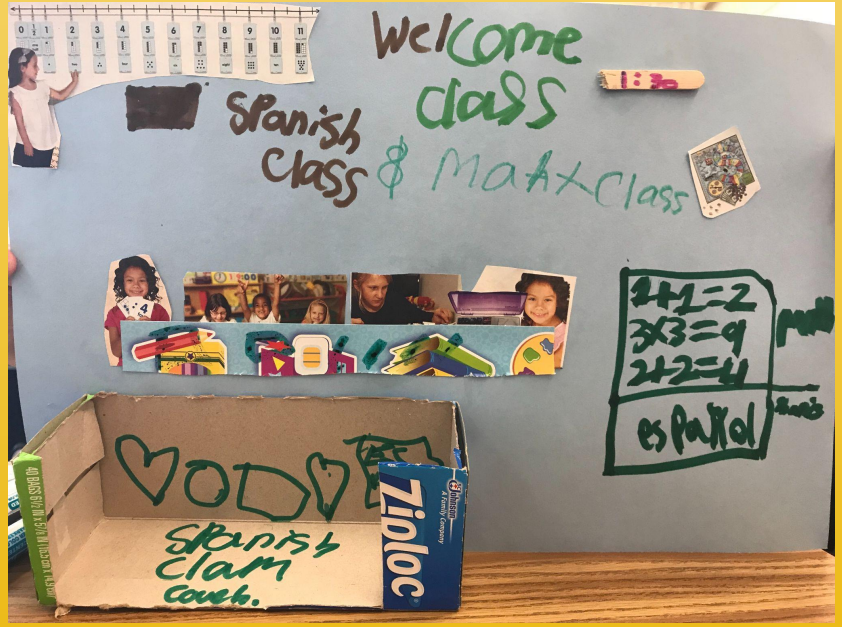
Spring 2018

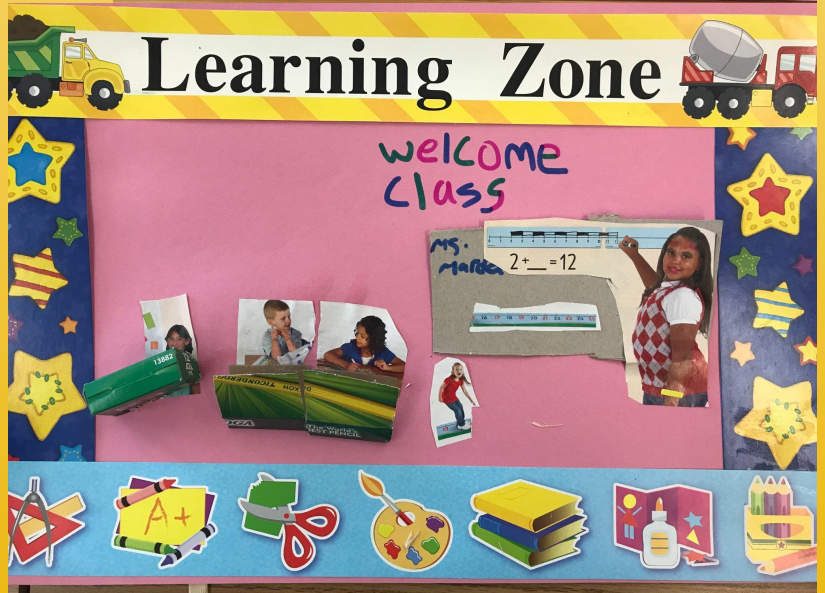
- Classroom- based
- Literature and Theater



2nd Pilot

Design Ideal Learning Environment
Spring 2018
Classroom- based





3rd Pilot

Summer Freedom School

Summer 2018

Survey Results from Freedom School 2018

100% of students expressed that they wanted to attend the Freedom School in 2019
100% of parents had positive reviews for the Freedom School
100% of students and families felt a sense of community within the Freedom School

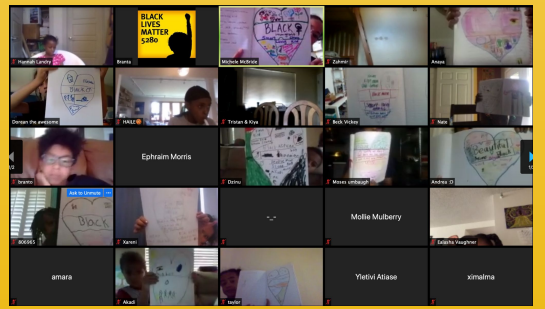
Continued Summer Piloting

- 2019
- 2020*
  - Virtual
  - Saturday Sessions
- 2021
- 2022 (enrollment is at capacity)

BLM 5280

Summary of Growth

- July 2018- First summer Freedom School
- Doubled enrollment each year since & added more grade levels
- Went virtual during pandemic
- Began monthly virtual Saturday Freedom Schools in 2020
- Need for a school that centers and affirms students who identify as BIPoC.



FC Schalke
K2B

Benefits of Piloting for 5280 Freedom School

- Helped build supporter base (financial, prospective families, prospective teachers, social media following, and more)
- Demonstrated demand and results overtime (useful for charter application)
- Provided insight into proposed models
- Allowed opportunities for continued feedback
  - Student feedback
  - Parent input through surveys and focus groups

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