



# I am CPS

A Culture Transformation for Our Tomorrow

## I Collaborate



### *My Tomorrow Team*

“Everyone at the table has a voice and a thought around the issues, and they realize how important their voice is to our success.” – Deputy Superintendent Laura Mitchell

Early on Tuesday mornings, the My Tomorrow Team gathers in a Mayerson Academy classroom. First on the agenda: examining task by task everything listed in the 14-page Project Plan — determining what’s been completed, what’s coming up on a deadline, what timelines need adjusting, and where and how someone can lend a hand.

It’s more than a mere status update; it exemplifies how the group melds as a team — and is a showcase of the *I am CPS* competency, I Collaborate.

Thirty people strong, and representing a wide range of resources, this team is the driver of Cincinnati Public Schools’ far-reaching

My Tomorrow initiative. Together, they created My Tomorrow, and now, together, they are nurturing it to maturity.

“In many ways, it’s an honor to be part of this group,” says Cynthia Sanders, CPS’ English Language Arts Curriculum Manager. “We’re very strategic in everything we do, and it’s all centered around staying true to the long-term vision.”

My Tomorrow, launched in 2014, is a bold reimagining of education that combines high expectations, technology and mentoring to prepare all students for success in college, careers and life. *I am CPS* is a districtwide culture transformation launched to support My Tomorrow.

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# I Collaborate (continued)

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“This is an initiative that’s not for *some* kids but for *all* kids,” says Laura Mitchell, Deputy Superintendent, the My Tomorrow Team leader.

What started out as a small group with big ideas soon began to grow as the need to share talents and expertise increased.

“We kept pulling more people in when it became crystal clear that all departments touch our students on some level,” Mitchell says. “Everyone at the table has a voice and a thought around the issues, and they realize how important their voice is to our success.”

The team jokes that My Tomorrow has created an unusual marriage, so to speak, of curriculum and technology, with the two departments collaborating to form a Digital Learning Team.

“Working together makes us more effective,” says Megan Safko-Preslin, the Technology Training Administrator with CPS’ Information Technology Management Department.

Curriculum, she points out, is the focal point of everything she does.

“We don’t buy technology and then tell the classrooms to use it,” says Safko-Preslin. “Instead, we make curriculum the core of what we do and then provide the technology that supports their needs and our total vision — to get students to the next level.”

While collaborating combines individual strengths for a stronger whole, one does wonder if “too many cooks in the kitchen” make it difficult to move forward.

That’s clearly not the case with this My Tomorrow Team. Everyone checks egos and titles at the door, demonstrating respect for peers and incorporating a range of opinions.

“Collaborating with my peers,” says Kevin Jamison, Assistant Director of CPS’ Student Services Department, “gives me opportunities to build relationships that fuel trust and the openness to innovate.”

As a model of I Collaborate, the My Tomorrow Team performs as reliable colleagues committed to working together, valuing the input of others, and communicating clearly within and outside the team.

It’s an empowering experience that team members are proud to own.