

Design Sprint Facilitation in Schools

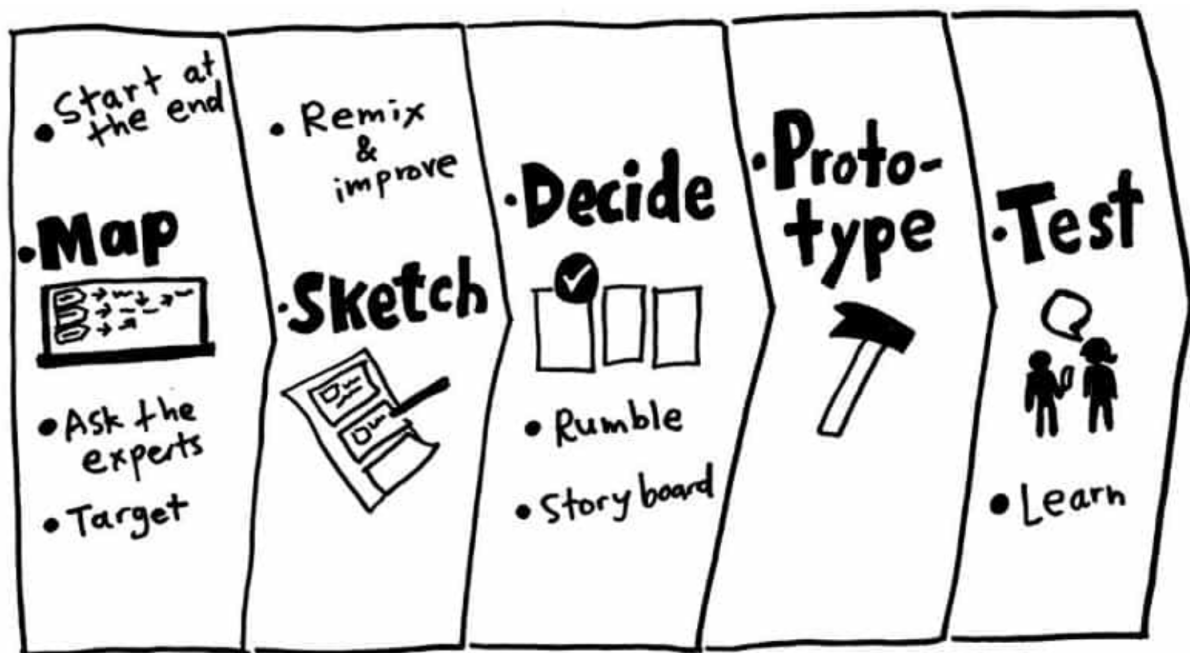
School leaders are faced with the challenge of continuously improving the learning experience and students outcomes. As a flexible and adaptable tool that can be tailored to fit the needs of any school, the Design “Sprint” process can be applied to a wide range of challenges including improving student achievement, enhancing school operations, and optimizing the school experience.

By investing in a Design Sprint, leaders can engage and empower the school community in the process. They’ve helped support cultures of innovation and continuous improvement while creating tangible results that benefit your students, teachers, and other stakeholders.

The Design Sprint process typically involves five phases:

1. **Discovery:** During this phase, the team gathers information about the problem they are trying to solve and the needs they are trying to address. This can involve conducting research, analyzing data, and identifying the key shifts in student experience
2. **Interpretation:** In this phase, the team generates as many ideas as possible for potential solutions to the problem. This is done through activities such as quick writing and sketching.
3. **Ideation:** During this phase, the team selects the most promising ideas and begins to develop them into more concrete prototypes.
4. **Experimentation:** In this phase, the team decides a small number of high-fidelity micro solutions and tests them within the school context. This allows the team to gather feedback and validate their assumptions about the solution.
5. **Evolution:** Based on the feedback and insights gathered during the testing phase, the team tracks learnings and develops a plan for moving forward.

In other words:



When applying this framework in schools, it's important to be mindful of the constraints and limitations that schools face and to design solutions that are feasible and realistic given these constraints. This may involve adapting the Design Sprint process or using more iterative approaches to design and testing.

There are many potential solutions that could be produced by a Design Sprint in a school context. Here are a few examples:

1. *Support system for struggling students*: by creating new forms of content, such as a tutoring program or an online platform that connects students with academic mentors, design a new system for providing support to struggling students
2. *Improved communication platform*: by developing a new interface for sending and receiving messages or new tools for organizing and tracking communication, test a new approach for communication between school staff, students, and parents
3. *Improved student wellness program*: by creating new activities, such as yoga classes or meditation sessions, expand the student wellness program that helps to more effectively promote health and well-being among students
4. *Enhanced professional development program*: by initiating new forms of training, such as online courses or new approaches to mentorship and coaching, plan a new professional development program that helps to build specific skills and expertise of school staff
5. *Improved school safety program*: by developing new protocols for responding to emergencies or improving school security, implement a new school safety program that helps to keep students and staff safe and secure

These are just a few examples of the types of solutions that could be produced by a Design Sprint in a school context. The specific solutions will depend on the specific challenges and needs of the school, as well as the ideas and insights generated through the Design Sprint process.

Here's what our Sprint could look like:

Activity	ACTIVITIES
Expectation setting - School Leader <i>Approx 1-2 hours</i>	Calibrate expectations and goals of "Sprint" with leader
Design Sprint - Leadership team ~ 6 hours (including working meal and breaks)	● Defining which challenges to create solutions for. ● Producing a mass of possible solutions. ● Voting on and combining most relevant solutions. ● Clarifying the (actionable) micro-solution ● Creating a plan to implement and test effectiveness of the chosen solution.
Follow up solution support and discussion (up to 3 hours)	Discuss summary of sprint, review progress of micro-solution and measure effectiveness

Feedback from School-based Design Sprints

Sometimes my work makes me zoom in and stay on a tactical level. It was great to step back, be heard, and think big-picture.

I could use this process with my department team to improve how we work together.

The process is simple and tangible which is a great strategy for a diverse group of people.

The process felt very natural and organic and I didn't feel like there was pressure to solve problems or that we had to solve all of the problems/challenges we're facing.

So many times we meet but don't ever leave with concrete ideas of what to do next. Today I leave with knowing/believing one small change can create a positive chain reaction.

ResultsAhead exists to help schools and organizations generate and implement bold ideas in support of dramatic improvement. Through strategic community-centered design, support of organizational leaders, and leveraging resource alignment as a key driver for change, we collaboratively achieve measurable results.