

# Foundation:

This section provides an overview of the fundamental concepts and values underlying all Person-Guided Planning approaches. A few people at your school need to understand how to facilitate meetings, but the success of the plan often depends on the greater school community understanding and embracing the values and principles surrounding Person-Guided Planning. Without common values, any time spent planning may be misdirected or not accepted, so please do not skip this important step of building a foundation.

## A Person-Guided Approach



This begins with the belief that people of all abilities are whole and complete with strengths and gifts that are valued and are needed in the community in which they live and learn. It recognizes each person belongs, and it creates a space where individuals are celebrated for their ability to contribute to the educational community and opportunities to do so are intentionally cultivated. Person-Guided means there is an understanding that learners deserve to be uniquely known and have an active voice in planning for their future. It is with this understanding that specific supports are wrapped around the learner.

Embedded in this approach are All Belong's core beliefs. Directed by the Gospel of Jesus Christ and relying on the Holy Spirit, we believe:



We need diversity of ability to form a complete community



We experience God's love through belonging in community



We bring glory to God when we live, learn, serve, and worship together in interdependent community

## Person-Guided Planning

This planning approach is a positive and affirming process that guides the learner and their team to creatively dream and plan for the future. It recognizes the learner has an active role in creating and sharing their vision for the future while expressing what is important now and in the future. Person-Guided Planning builds on the strengths, interests, skills and contributions of the individual to identify action steps that inform day-to-day supports. Research has shown that young people are more likely to be successful as adults if they have experience making their own decisions and choices. It develops an appropriate sense of agency for the learner.

Approaching transition planning, required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), with a person-guided approach ensures that the details of planning focus on what is most important to the learner while recognizing the team of peers, parents, teachers, family or church members, and other invested participants as vital contributors.

Inviting team members into an ever-widening circle of support complements what is beautifully modeled day after day in schools, moving beyond inclusion to creating communities of belonging. These schools are a place where everyone belongs, everyone is cherished and needed, and everyone is recognized as having gifts to share in the body of Christ. With a focus on interdependence, schools realize it is inadequate to develop transition plans that focus solely on the attempt to empower individuals to reach independence. Interdependence means that everyone needs everyone to be the best he or she can be. A Person-Guided transition plan addresses both the growth of individual self-direction and the community in which they live and learn.

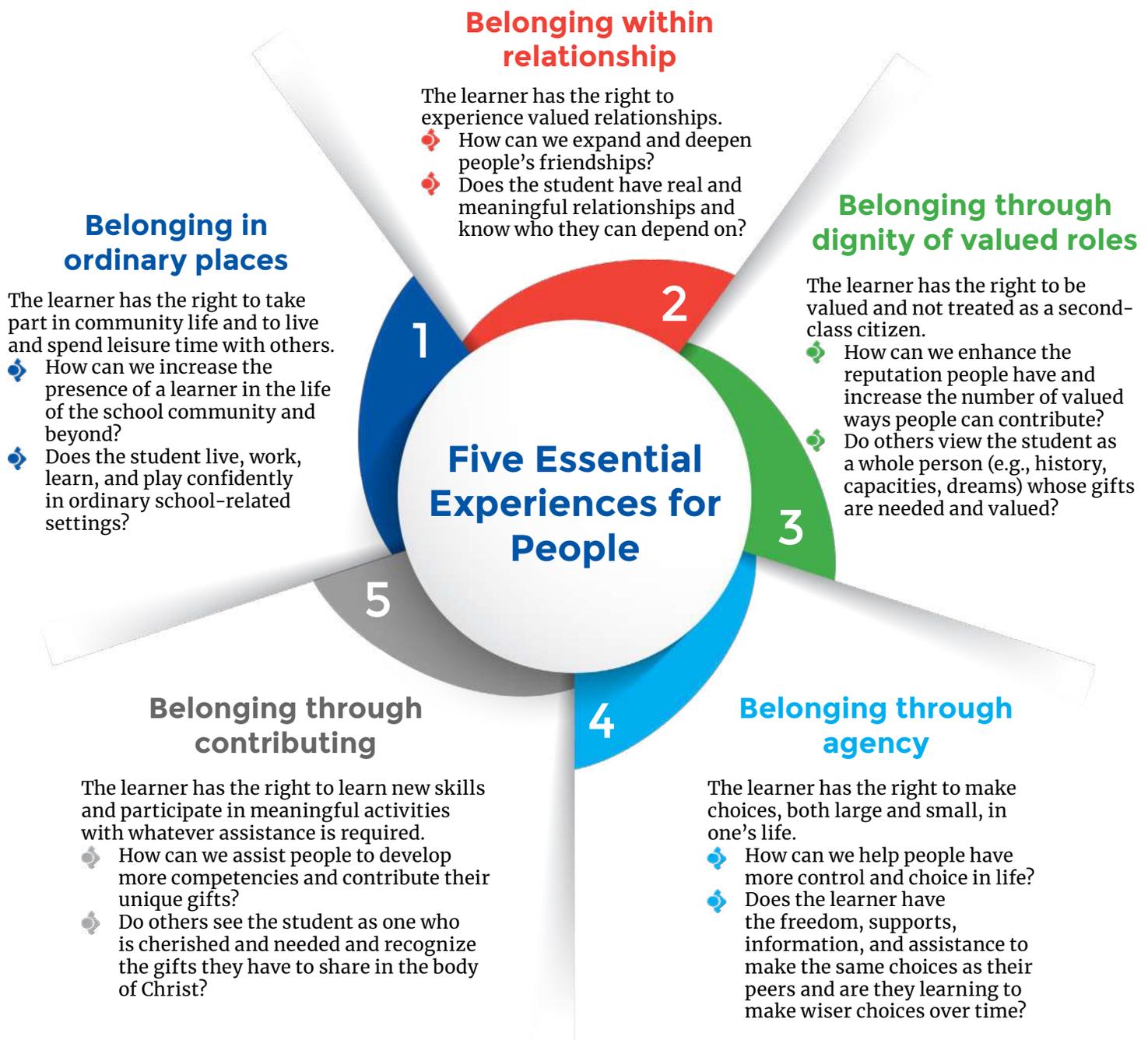
The very nature of this approach pushes thinking beyond traditional systems related to standard classes and measurement of academic success. It creates a space where students are celebrated for their ability to contribute to the educational community and opportunities to do so are intentionally cultivated.

System-Centered Approach		Person-Guided Approach
Focuses on the labels/ diagnosis/ deficits		Focused on strengths, skills, abilities
Focuses on independence		Focus on interdependence
Communicates <b>about</b> the learner		Communicating <b>with</b> the learner
Plans <b>for</b> the learner		Planning <b>with</b> the learner
Focuses on what the learner can't do		Focus on what the learner can do
Fits the learner into a program or system		Cultivate new opportunities
Focuses on medical or clinical diagnosis		Personal profile of strengths, likes, dislikes
Places an overemphasis on clinical strategies or fitting into program goals		Emphasis on dreams, desires, and meaningful experiences
Decides things are done "that way" because it works		Things are done "that way" because it works for the learner
Views family members and community are peripheral		Family and community members are true partners

# Person-Guided Plan for Belonging

Grounded in the concept of I Corinthians that all individuals are needed for a community to be complete, All Belong understands inclusion as creating communities of belonging. Rather than having a presence in a community, persons with a disability label should be a vibrant part of community and developing the reciprocal nature of giving and receiving in relationship with others.

# Person-Guided Plan for Belonging



# Circle of Support

It is essential to include individuals who are familiar with the abilities, interests, and needs of the learner in the Person-Guided Planning Process. These “natural supports” can be family members, friends, former teachers, neighbors, or other individuals who know the learner well and want to come alongside the learner in a way that makes a difference in both of their lives. Building the circle of support with both professionals and natural supports will provide access to a broad range of opportunities at school and in the community.

Think about the circle as a life support system. We all have them. These are the people we depend on to help us make decisions, navigate tough times, and enjoy spending time with. All people are created for relationships. Circles are for everyone. With this in mind, we intentionally build this support system around the learner. This is the core to everything else.

Identifying Circle of Support team:

- ❖ Ask the learner! Who is important to you? Who can you count on?
- ❖ Create accountability! There needs to be a commitment from a core team who meets regularly.
- ❖ Include others! Other people may join over time based on circumstances (e.g., share a class with the learner, involved in after-school activities, new friendship)

