INDEPENDENCE (SUMMARY)
Empathize

1. *Who are we doing this for? Think of all the people this might affect.*
   - Students – increase their independence (confidence)
   - Staff – gives us more time
   - Families – transferable life skills
   - Community
   - Future generations

2. *What challenges do these people have that are related to "Independence"? Capture some detailed stories.*
   - Power dynamic – letting go of some control, teach students good habits and how to make good decisions instead of telling them what to do
   - Lots of anxiety – students afraid of failing (saying or doing the wrong thing)
   - How to build self-confidence and intrinsic motivation?
   - Students have been enabled for so long by so many people – some act helpless
   - Students may have need for instant gratification
   - Students and staff will need to put in the time to make it work
   - Need consistency with staff to help students build their own capacity (reinforced at home preferably)
   - Create opportunities for independence and decision-making / don't take away opportunities for students to be independent by doing it ourselves
   - Easier to do things for students rather than teach them the habits and skills to do it for themselves
   - Students are not advocating for themselves (come for help, ask questions, etc.) – how do we build this capacity? They instead rely on parents and staff to advocate on their behalf.
   - Difficult for staff to not always be the expert and direct every step

3. *How will improving Independence improve the culture of our school?*
   - Greater sense of ownership in learning – more engaged learners
   - Greater sense of self, pride in work, satisfaction in learning
   - Responsibility yields positive results
   - As capacity is developed, students can work more independently
   - Staff can eventually spend less time micro-managing and more time guiding, advising, and building frameworks for learning
   - More student accountability
   - No more chasing students around and micro-management

Define

1. *What are we trying to solve? Create some "How might we…" statements.*
   - How might we positively reinforce independence?
   - How might we help students see failure as the journey to learning?
   - How might we teach students to "fail forward"?
   - How might we help students take ownership of their learning?
   - How might we remind ourselves to always "ask" instead of "tell"?
   - How might we create more opportunities for students to be independent? (If we don't give students opportunities for independence, how would they ever learn to be independent?)
   - How might we scaffold students so that they have enough confidence to advocate for themselves?

- How might we make use of the critical mass of students who are already independent as role-models?
- How might we allow for more student voice and choice in learning?
- How might we help students develop and maintain good habits?
- How might we encourage and reinforce student proactivity and responsibility?
- How might we foster a desire within students to be more independent?

2. *What are the obstacles?*
- Students don't see value in being independent
- Students are so used to adults being accommodating, giving students everything, doing things for them
- Students might not know how to become more self-motivated or see no benefit to it
- Parents may not reinforce our desire for students to become more independent
- Staff need more strategies and develop habits that will help students become more independent
- Many students fear failure and may be too underconfident to try
- Path of least resistance: it is quicker for adults to just do things for students that they can easily do themselves and it is easier for students to get help or answers from an adult rather than build the capacity to work through a problem on their own and learn to be resourceful

Ideate

What are some solutions?
- Provide more opportunities for students to fail and learn from failure to demonstrate learning
- Provide opportunities for independence
- Consistency around independence from all staff
- Reward those who have shown independence and responsibility
- Involve parents and encourage them to reinforce student independence
- Help students focus on how they themselves are doing with their learning rather than comparing with everyone else
- Students design / organize their own learning
- Students organize their own field trip
- More spaces / rooms / resources for students to work independently
- Enclose court yards – recover to become student work areas
- Provide more choice with assignments
- Find a way to value and help students be satisfied with a job well done and love learning instead of trying because of a grade or to please the teacher
- More course choices
- Less teacher-driven structure and schedules in the classroom
- More immersive learning
- More freedom – less school scheduled time constraints
- More opportunities to learn off-site (field trips, independently organized tours)
- More opportunities for students to organize events, clubs, and school change
- Create a student council for 8-12 so there are more opportunities for all students to participate in leadership and responsibility
- Teach students how to study, organize, etc. – don't assume they know how and reinforce these skills until they become habitual