

What does it mean to belong?

To feel comfortable being yourself, sharing your ideas, around the people you're with and being in the space.

Feeling safe.

Feeling accepted

Not being judged and being able to express yourself

To be noticed

To be understood

What does belonging feel like, look like, sound like in a classroom or school?

Being quiet when listening to others

Being respectful

Others being open minded

Nobody left out

How does belonging help you learn?

Comfortable asking for help

Sharing ideas

You can be more involved

Easier to collaborate with others.

~~You're~~ You feel safe expressing yourself and sharing your thoughts and ideas to get feedback.

What does it mean to belong?

- To be noticed
- To feel calm around others who you know
- To be understood in weird situations
- ~~When~~ When people around you care about who you are
- Being the same even though you're different
- To be anonymous when I want to be
- To say what you want to say, and not having someone else say it for you

What does belonging feel like, look like, sound like in a classroom or school?

- People who care and want to be around you
- Belonging would look like a normal classroom
- Expressing yourself, and others accepting it
- Not be called out if you're different
- Feeling safe ~~and~~ to talk and ask the teachers for help
- Being with people who have been in the same situations as you

How does belonging help you learn?

- It helps me feel normal, not weird or crazy
- Being able to talk to the teachers and ask for help while feeling safe
- To feel comfortable with people who aren't like me:
- Working with others who aren't like me, ~~and~~ ~~not~~ ~~about~~ ~~get~~ ~~along~~ ~~with~~
Making them feel like they belong


the

now we wouldn't be

the
want

the
I want

- When you feel included and respected
- To feel comfortable in a space
- To encourage kindness
- When you feel safe
- When there is no judgment
- When you feel free to do stuff
- When you feel that you are respected, cared for, loved and well known
- To be with people who have similar traits and to have the freedom to express yourself

BY: 
CHRISTMAS

What does belonging feel like, look like, sound like in a classroom or school?


Feels like: Happy, safe, comfortable, warm, cozy, included, respected, accepted, appreciated, loved,

Looks like: People helping, listening supporting, encouraging, understanding, sharing ^{people feel free to share}

Sounds like: ^{calmly exited} loud, quiet, laughter, crying ^{feels like you have the right to dignity} ^{you feel comfortable around others} ^{because your laughing so hard}

How does belonging help you learn?

- If you're not always feeling stressed about if you belong, you can work more efficiently
- if you feel comfortable to express your opinions to others
- When you feel more comfortable you can feel more safe to learn
- You feel like you can ask questions without being judged
- You have the freedom to take risks because learning is like the unknown...
- Not belonging can help you learn so that you can isolate yourself and be focused

By: Kensie (Kenny) Ryler (Ayun) Sierra, Eric. 

Elementary Student Focus Groups – Spring 2022

Belongingness Responses

Name (optional): _____ School: ____Homma____

Describe a time at this school when you feel like you belonged. What was it about the situation/experience/space/people that helped you feel like you belonged?

- Playing volleyball: everyone was playing and we were all happy, we were having fun
- Always at this school: the people, they give you extra and resources, lots of buddies, tight community, you know almost everyone, comfortable with the people here
- Playing with the band: everyone has to work together to make a good sound and song, it's fun, you get to see everything that you are working towards
- When there are signs that say "this is a safe space for LGBTQ community"
- This focus group: because we can participate, do art, our feedback is listened to, we do activities we can express ourselves in any way we want
- Play sports during recess and lunch: everyone is working together to achieve same goal. You're important.
- When people accept your opinions, even when they don't agree
- Can talk to principal and teachers when there are students who are mean

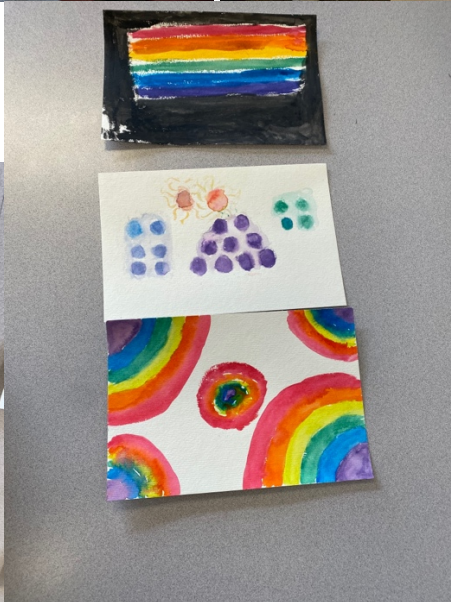
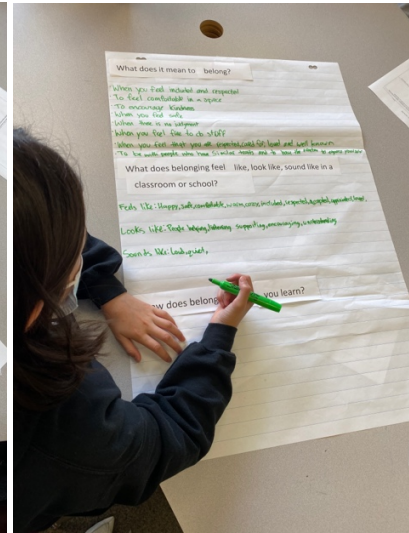
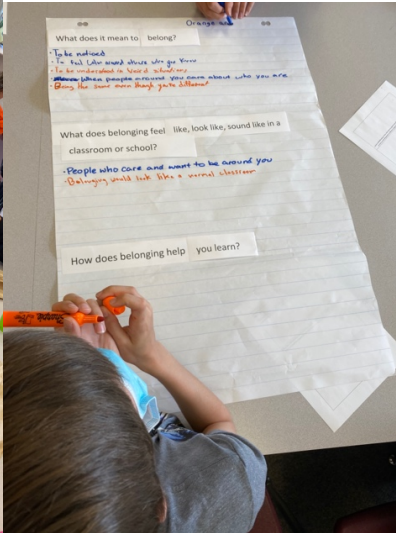
Describe a time at this school when you feel like you didn't belong. What was it about the situation/experience/space/people that made you feel that way?

- When there are different opinions and people don't accept them
- When there's a small group of mean students, it caused a lot of problems in school and didn't feel good. It went on for a long time but we could talk to the principal and teachers.
- When people don't accept your culture. When you bring foods to school that are a part of your culture and people make fun of it.
- A lot of people talking around you but you still feel alone. Doesn't feel good overall.
- People teasing me for liking someone.
- It hurts when you have to change to fit in.
- "Get in a group" instruction isn't as easy as it seems, because people have their cliques already
- Awkward when people are talking about a subject and you don't know what they're talking about.
- It's Pride Month, but there isn't a lot of recognition. Not like Asian Heritage Month.

What would you like to see at this school (either a change or something new or more of something that is already happening) that would increase your sense of belonging here?

- More clubs, people who share the same interest, bond with others, meet people who you're similar
- More lgbtq acceptance signs. "For me it would feel better."

- More different resources. Covid made a lot of things off limits. Like the wobble stools for people who are fidgety, or fidget tools. Tools to type or for learning rather than always writing by hand.
- More information for TTOCs about how we work: like a learning plan so they know what our needs are.
- It's Pride Month, but there isn't a lot of recognition. There should be more acknowledgment.
- Maybe the morning announcements could be changed to acknowledge all sorts of identities.
- We should have a Rainbow Day.
- We learn a lot about Indigenous people. The calls to action for example. Because we are only beginning to really recognize Indigenous people and their history.
- More counsellors to speak to or in a safe space with a trusted adult. A safe place where you can talk to a trusted adult about anything that's bugging you or that you don't agree with or that hurt your feelings. More opportunity for this.
- If you have a problem that only LGBTQ people understand, then it would be weird to express that in front of someone who is straight because they wouldn't understand as much. It would be nice to have more teachers who are LGBTQ so we could talk to them or ask them questions.
- In lit circles books, a main character was being sexually harassed, and she didn't want to go to the substitute counselor because the sub was a man, and she felt he wouldn't understand. It would be solved if she had someone who understood her experience to talk to.
- Clubs with similar people.



I wrote something in my bio bag that I have never written down before. It felt like a burden was lifted off me after I wrote it. During the animal activity it was a silly kind of fun. I love that kind when I'm not alone.

- thank you, k - -

This activity/learning that we did today made me feel very included. Especially the BIO bags. Sometimes I feel like people assume things about me before getting to know me. For example because I like the colour pink it has something to do with my personality, so this made me feel more included.

Response

Although I wasn't here for most of the activity I had standing out and being different re-enforced. It was nice to hear that other people thought similar. I felt safe and I had fun. -Thank you so much for comming!

I think that the bag activity allowed people to express themselves without the fear of being judged. I also think that the barn animal activity made lots of people feel welcome and like they belonged. I really liked the bag activity because you could write anything about yourself that's more personal. Although I do wish that there was more cards to put in the bag.

Thanks! :)

It felt nice to learn and discuss about these things that aren't often discussed because society seems to almost look away as a rule to follow and not discuss.

The activity's today makes me feel different. Like not everyone is the same but that's OK. You can still hang out with different people even though your different then them. I like how the activity's make me realize ~~more~~ more stuff in society. I learn a few more things about myself as well. It's important to learn about these things so we can adapt & change the bad stuff.