



DOM CONSULTING

— STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR DISTRICT LEADERS —

The Future-Ready District

A Strategic Framework for District Innovation & Transformation

THE DOM™ DISTRICT INNOVATION FRAMEWORK

Discover · Organize · Mobilize

A system-wide approach, not a single pilot.

PREPARED BY

Dominique Burgess

Founder | District Innovation Architect · DOM Consulting

DEVELOPING. OPULENT. METHODOLOGIES.



WHY DISTRICTS MUST INNOVATE NOW

Innovation Is No Longer a Program. It Is an Organizational Strategy.

Every superintendent in the country is managing the same conversation from eight different directions at once. Artificial intelligence is reshaping what work — and what learning — will look like in ten years, faster than any curriculum cycle can respond to. Families are no longer comparing your district to the district across town; they are comparing it to microschools, virtual academies, and homeschool collaboratives that promise flexibility and personalization your master schedule was never built to deliver.

Teacher shortages have made the old staffing model unsustainable in its current form, at the exact moment students need more individualized attention, not less. Enrollment is no longer guaranteed by geography. Community partners — employers, nonprofits, universities — are ready to invest in career pathways and real-world learning, but only where districts have built the structures to receive that investment well.

None of these pressures will be solved by a new initiative layered on top of an unchanged system. A pilot program, a strategic plan that lives in a binder, a single innovative school inside an otherwise unchanged district — these produce activity without transformation. They keep a district busy while the conditions around it keep changing.

The districts that will still be thriving in ten years are not the ones running the most programs. They are the ones that have made innovation an organizational capability — built into how they plan, staff, govern, fund, and design the experience of learning itself.

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A district doesn't need another innovative program. It needs an organizational strategy that makes innovation the default way the system operates.

DOMINQUE BURGESS, FOUNDER, DOM CONSULTING



MEET DOMINIQUE BURGESS

A Bridge Between Innovation, Operations, Policy, and Implementation

Dominique Burgess is the Founder of Burbrella Learning Academy, a nationally recognized microschool model built to serve neurodivergent, gifted, and underserved learners through a holistic, ecosystem-based approach to education. Under her leadership, Burbrella was named a Yass Prize semifinalist and has been featured in Forbes for its innovative model of blending academics, wellness, entrepreneurship, and real-world learning.

Beyond Burbrella, Dominique works nationally as an education consultant and policy advocate, partnering with school leaders, districts, and organizations — including a leadership role supporting school development, crisis management, and operational strategy across the Wildflower Schools network — to help innovative learning environments become sustainable, well-governed organizations rather than fragile experiments.

She is a frequent national speaker, including at SXSW EDU, on the future of learning, microschools, and district-level innovation strategy, and she actively works alongside state legislators and policy organizations to modernize the regulatory frameworks that determine which innovations are even possible inside a public system.

What distinguishes Dominique's work is that she does not stop at strategy. She has built a school from zero, stabilized schools in operational crisis, and turned policy barriers into legislative recommendations. That combination — founder, operator, and policy advocate — is what allows her to design district innovation frameworks that survive contact with budgets, boards, bargaining units, and buildings.



AT A GLANCE

- Founder, Burbrella Learning Academy
- National Education Consultant & Policy Advocate
- SXSW EDU Speaker
- Featured in Forbes
- Yass Prize Semifinalist
- Leadership role, Wildflower Schools network



THE PROBLEM

Why Innovation Efforts Fail

Most districts don't fail at innovation because they lack good ideas. They fail because good ideas are never connected to an operating system built to sustain them.

1**Innovation happens in silos**

One school, one department, or one grant-funded pilot carries the work alone, disconnected from the rest of the system.

2**No implementation systems**

Strategic ideas never get translated into staffing models, schedules, budgets, or governance structures that make them real.

3**No community buy-in**

Families, staff, and local partners learn about the change instead of helping shape it — and disengage as a result.

4**Disconnected strategic plans**

The strategic plan, the budget, the facilities plan, and the professional learning plan are built by different teams that never talk to each other.

5**Lack of leadership alignment**

The superintendent's vision, the board's priorities, and building-level leadership are not rowing in the same direction.

6**Innovation becomes another initiative**

It gets a logo, a launch event, and a line in the strategic plan — instead of becoming how the district actually operates.

Every reason on this page is a systems problem, not an ideas problem. That is why the framework on the next page starts with organizational design, not programming.



THE SIGNATURE FRAMEWORK

The DOM™ District Innovation Framework

Three interconnected stages, built to move a district from vision to a fully operating innovation system — not a single pilot, but a way of running the whole organization.

**DISCOVER**

Clarify the vision and the evidence base before designing anything.

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- District Vision
 - Community Voice
 - Portrait of a Graduate
 - Innovation Audit
 - Needs Assessment
 - Future Workforce Analysis

**ORGANIZE**

Build the systems and infrastructure that make innovation sustainable.

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- Leadership Systems
 - Operations
 - Scheduling
 - Technology
 - Policy
 - Funding
 - Facilities
 - Professional Learning
 - Governance
 - Community Partnerships

**MOBILIZE**

Launch, lead, and continuously improve what you've built.

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- Pilot Programs
 - Implementation
 - Leadership Coaching
 - Board Alignment
 - Change Management
 - Scaling
 - Continuous Improvement
 - Innovation Dashboard



WHAT WE HELP DISTRICTS BUILD

A Full Innovation Portfolio, Not a Single Program

1**District Innovation Strategy**

A system-wide strategy that connects vision to budget, staffing, and governance.

2**Future Ready Learning**

Learning models built for the workforce and world students will actually enter.

3**AI Integration**

Practical, responsible AI adoption across instruction and operations.

4**Career Pathways**

Structured, employer-connected pathways from classroom to career.

5**Learning Studios**

Flexible, district-owned innovation environments within existing schools.

6**Competency-Based Learning**

Progression built around mastery, not seat time.

7**Alternative Learning Models**

Microschool-informed models designed for public system scale.

8**Community Partnerships**

Structured collaboration with employers, nonprofits, and universities.

9**Innovation Academies**

Whole-school innovation models within the district portfolio.

10**Leadership Development**

Building the leadership bench capable of sustaining change.

11**Strategic Planning**

Plans built to be implemented, not filed.

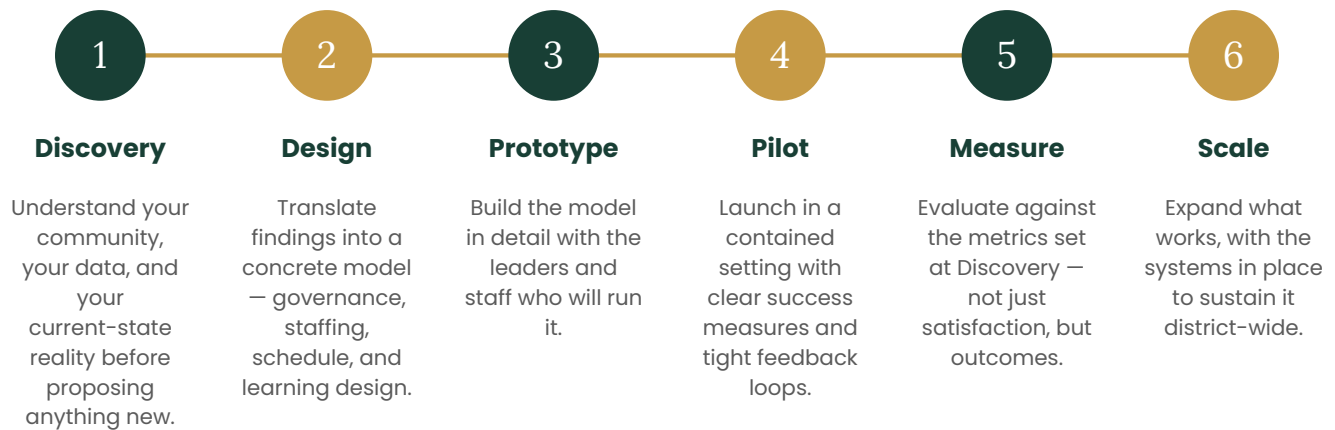
12**Operational Excellence**

The systems, scheduling, and governance that make innovation durable.



THE PROCESS

The District Innovation Journey



EVERY STAGE IS MEASURED, NOT ASSUMED

The journey moves at the pace of evidence, not enthusiasm. Districts move to the next stage when the data from the current one supports it — which is what makes the resulting scale durable instead of premature.



OUR CONSULTING SERVICES

Executive-Level Engagement, Built for Implementation

District Innovation Audit

A comprehensive assessment of your district's current innovation readiness — strategy, structure, and culture.

Innovation Blueprint

A custom, board-ready roadmap connecting your vision to a concrete implementation plan.

Leadership Design Workshops

Working sessions with your cabinet and leadership team to build alignment and capacity.

School Redesign

Hands-on redesign support for schools or programs ready to reimagine their model.

Strategic Planning

District-wide strategic planning built for real implementation, not a binder.

Community Engagement

Structured processes to bring families, staff, and partners into the design process.

Board Facilitation

Facilitated sessions to build board understanding, alignment, and support.

Innovation Implementation Coaching

Ongoing coaching to keep implementation on track long after the plan is written.



A SIGNATURE OFFERING

District Learning Studios™

District Learning Studios are flexible, district-owned innovation environments — not separate school systems, and not one-off pilots disconnected from the rest of the district. Each studio lives inside your existing schools and infrastructure, giving students access to specialized, real-world learning experiences without requiring families to leave the district to find them.

1**Career Studios****2****Entrepreneurship Studios****3****STEM Studios****4****Nature-Based Learning Studios****5****AI Learning Studios****6****Alternative Education Studios****7****Virtual Learning Studios****8****Early College Studios**

Studios give districts a way to pilot bold, specialized learning models with real containment and real measurement — and a clear path to scale what works across the system.



AREAS OF TRANSFORMATION

From Current State to Future State

AREA	CURRENT STATE	FUTURE STATE
Instruction	Standardized pacing across classrooms	Personalized, competency-based pathways
Assessment	Periodic, compliance-driven testing	Continuous, mastery-based evidence of learning
Technology	Tools adopted ad hoc, classroom by classroom	An integrated, AI-informed technology strategy
Scheduling	Fixed periods built around the building	Flexible structures built around the learner
Student Experience	One track, largely the same for every student	Multiple pathways matched to student goals
Family Engagement	Communication flows one direction, district to home	Families are co-designers of the learning model
Teacher Experience	Isolated classrooms, limited autonomy	Collaborative teams with real instructional agency
Leadership	Managing the system as it exists today	Architecting the system the district needs next
Operations	Systems built for compliance and reporting	Systems built to enable innovation at scale
Community Partnerships	Occasional, event-based collaboration	Structural, ongoing partnerships tied to strategy
Facilities	Fixed spaces designed for a single use	Flexible spaces designed for multiple learning models



WHY DOM CONSULTING

We Don't Leave When the Report Is Delivered

TRADITIONAL CONSULTANTS

Delivers Reports

Makes Recommendations

Runs Workshops

Leaves

DOM CONSULTING

Co-Designs With Your Team

Implements Alongside You

Coaches Your Leaders

Builds Internal Capacity

Creates Sustainable Systems

The difference shows up eighteen months in, when the traditional engagement has ended and the systems we build with your team are still running the district.



CASE STUDIES

Proof, Not Just Promises

FOUNDING AN INNOVATIVE SCHOOL MODEL**TURNING AROUND SCHOOLS IN CRISIS****TURNING BARRIERS INTO SYSTEMIC SOLUTIONS**

Launching Burbrella Learning Academy

CHALLENGE

No existing model was built specifically for neurodivergent, gifted, and underserved learners in a single, holistic ecosystem — and the opportunity to launch arrived in the middle of a global pandemic.

APPROACH

Applied the Discover-Organize-Mobilize sequence from day one: a clear founding Why and learner profile, a values-driven location decision, and operational systems built before enrollment opened.

IMPACT

Burbrella became a Yass Prize semifinalist, earned Forbes recognition, and now serves as a national reference model for microschool and innovative-school design.

LEADERSHIP LESSON

Innovative models survive their first hard year because the organization was built before the doors opened — not because the idea was good.

Operational Stabilization

CHALLENGE

Multiple schools facing simultaneous leadership turnover, enrollment decline, and operational breakdown — the kind of compounding crisis that puts accreditation and viability at risk.

APPROACH

Rapid operational diagnostics, interim leadership systems, governance stabilization, and a prioritized recovery plan focused on the highest-risk systems first.

IMPACT

Schools stabilized operations, retained accreditation and enrollment, and rebuilt the leadership systems needed to prevent the next crisis.

LEADERSHIP LESSON

Operational excellence isn't the unglamorous prerequisite to innovation — it's the thing that determines whether innovation survives.

Policy to Practice

CHALLENGE

Outdated local zoning and licensing regulations made it structurally impossible for innovative school models to open or operate legally.

APPROACH

Worked directly with local officials to change zoning ordinances, then translated that experience into statewide policy recommendations for legislators and policy organizations.

IMPACT

Zoning barriers removed at the local level, with policy recommendations now shaping statewide conversations about regulatory reform for innovative learning models.

LEADERSHIP LESSON

Sustainable innovation requires systemic advocacy, not just a strong program — the rules have to change too, or the next founder faces the same wall.



WHAT MAKES THIS DIFFERENT

Innovation Should Not Be Another Initiative. Innovation Should Become How the District Thinks.

Most district innovation efforts are designed to be visible: a new academy, a new logo, a ribbon-cutting. Visibility is not the same as durability. The programs that make the district newsletter this year are too often the programs that quietly disappear when the grant ends, the champion leaves, or the next strategic plan is written.

The DOM District Innovation Framework is built around a different premise: innovation should be judged not by how novel it looks in year one, but by how ordinary it has become by year five — woven into how the district hires, schedules, funds, governs, and measures success, so that it no longer depends on any single leader, grant, or building to survive.

That is the difference between running an innovative program and becoming a future-ready district. One produces a case study. The other produces a system.

*Innovation should not be another initiative.
Innovation should become how the district thinks.*



DELIVERABLES

What Your District Walks Away With

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Innovation Audit | ☐ Strategic Roadmap |
| ☐ Board Presentation | ☐ Leadership Workshops |
| ☐ Implementation Timeline | ☐ Innovation Dashboard |
| ☐ Quarterly Reviews | ☐ Coaching |
| ☐ Community Engagement Plan | ☐ Communication Toolkit |



WHO WE PARTNER WITH

Trusted Across the Education Ecosystem

School Districts

State Agencies

Innovation Offices

Education Nonprofits

Foundations

Universities

School Networks

Charter Organizations

Private Schools



SPEAKING & LEADERSHIP

Bringing This Thinking to Your Room

FORMATS

- ☐ Keynotes
- ☐ Leadership Retreats
- ☐ Board Workshops
- ☐ Strategic Planning Sessions
- ☐ Innovation Summits

SIGNATURE TOPICS

- ☐ AI in Education
- ☐ Future of Learning
- ☐ Microschools
- ☐ District Transformation

From keynote to cabinet retreat, every session is built around your district's actual context — not a generic deck.



ENGAGEMENT OPTIONS

Ways to Begin

- **Executive Discovery Session**

A focused conversation to understand your district's goals, constraints, and readiness.

- **District Innovation Audit**

A comprehensive assessment of current-state innovation capacity across the system.

- **Strategic Planning Retreat**

An intensive, facilitated session with your cabinet and board.

- **90-Day Innovation Partnership**

A focused sprint to design and launch a contained pilot or studio.

- **Year-Long District Transformation Partnership**

Full Discover-Organize-Mobilize partnership across the district.

- **Custom Consulting Engagement**

A scope built around your district's specific goals and timeline.

Custom proposals developed based on district goals.



DOM CONSULTING

Let's Design the Future of Learning – Together.

Schedule an Executive Discovery Conversation

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WEBSITE

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