



Welcome to

# PSI High

Sanford, Florida

A future-ready high school

## How They Came to Be

### PSI High's XQ Super School Journey

When district leaders in Seminole County Public Schools learned about the XQ Super School competition in 2015, their first response was to seek advice from students. Derek Jensen, who managed digital and blended learning for the district, invited high school students from around the district to join a design team. The team, in turn, gathered insights from their peers. What they discovered was galvanizing: students felt bored and alienated, shut out from learning that mattered to them, and frustrated by inequitable opportunities. They responded with the plan for Problem-Solving Incubator, or PSI High. "Designed by students for students," the proposal declared, "PSI High will serve as living proof that students can play a leading role in changing the world for the better."

**Initially designed by a team of high school students, PSI High is a program of emphasis at Seminole High School.**



## Discover PSI High

PSI High is a program focused on real-world learning at Seminole High School in Seminole County Public Schools. The high school offers additional programs, including an International Baccalaureate program, health and science program, and aviation program. PSI High designs teaching and learning around outcomes that represent an expanded definition of what it means to be college- and career-ready. Teams of students learn in an environment that looks more like a high-tech office than a classroom and work in teams to solve authentic community, business, and social problems. Academic credit is awarded by demonstrating skills.

**After a pilot program at three high schools in Seminole County Public School District, PSI High became a program of emphasis at Seminole High School in Fall 2018. PSI High will eventually serve up to 250 students in grades 9-12.**



## PSI High Design Features

### 1. Projects and partnerships

Real world learning is the priority at PSI High. Projects are organized around key themes and with key partners in the community. All projects have three things in common: a challenge or question, an authentic audience, and a high-quality deliverable. Students complete projects that serve a real need or add real value to the community, made possible through robust partnerships between PSI High and local government, businesses, and nonprofit service organizations. Students also choose from a number of design tracks, including art and digital design, computer science, and engineering.



## Theory Into Action

### Student Work: A smart project

Working closely with an industry partner for over six months, a team of PSI students recently created a Smart Mirror for Siemens’ internal communications group in their Digital Information Technology course. The mirror hangs in a high-traffic, collaborative space at Siemens to communicate headlines, time, weather, and important news. The project was fertile ground for the students to master state standards in an authentic and operational way. As real-world projects tend to do, the work created an intersection of required English, math, and science standards as well as professional skills like effective email communication and design thinking mindsets like creativity, flexibility, and collaboration. Students learned how to assess their progress, identify deficiencies, and figure out how to fill any gaps with more research, experimentation, or ideation. Together, the standards and competencies serve to create future-ready students, prepared to lead and innovate in college, career, and beyond.

#### Skills for Future-Ready Graduates Met:

- ✓ Information and digital Literacy
- ✓ Communication and collaboration
- ✓ Self-awareness and adaptability
- ✓ Collaboration
- ✓ Problem solving
- ✓ Adaptability
- ✓ Innovation and imagination

#### Some of Many Florida State Standards

- ✓ SC.5.P.11.1: Investigate and illustrate the fact that the flow of electricity requires a closed circuit
- ✓ MAFS.912.G-MG1.3: Apply geometric methods to solve design problems
- ✓ LAFS.910.L.1.1: Demonstrate command of the conventions of English grammar and usage when writing or speaking



## PSI High Design Features

### 2. Students in the driver's seat

At PSI High, learning is grounded in each student's unique interests and framed by structures of project-based learning, including a driving question that students pose as the entry point. Since each project cycle has a theme, students create questions that fit under the corresponding theme for the quarter. Students get the ongoing support they need as they create and manage their own projects from frequent advisory sessions with PSI High staff and access to experts.



**Angela Daniel**

Instructional Strategist and Coach

“Our students’ future is shaping up to be a place where learning how to learn will be the ultimate skill they’ll need to master. That’s why it’s time we shift the power dynamic and give students a proper seat at the table in their own education.”



## PSI High Design Features

### 3. Future-ready graduates

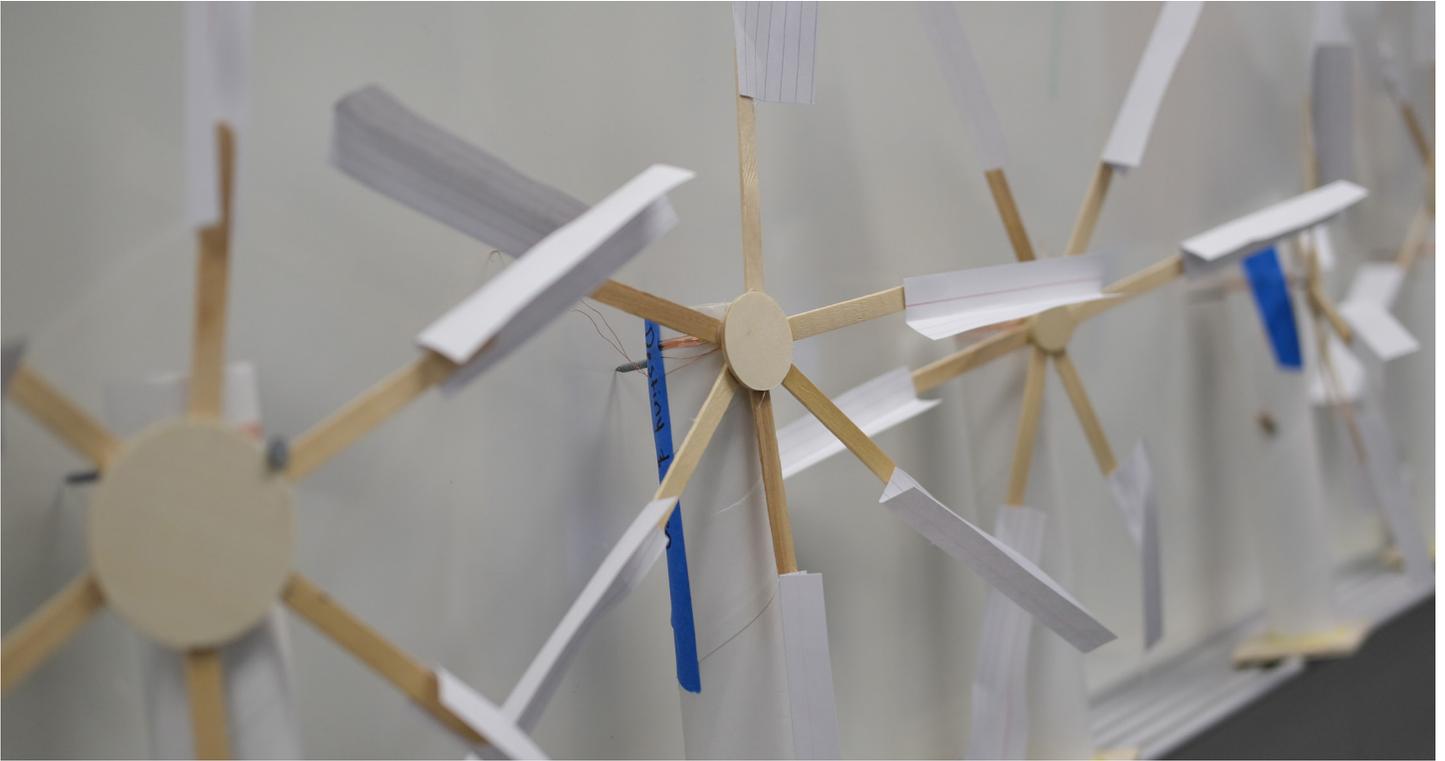
As a part of the Seminole County Public Schools graduate profile, PSI High has expanded the definition of what it means to be college- and career-ready. Students collaborate on teams to solve real-world problems and build skills in the SCPS [ePathways Skills for Future-Ready Graduates](#). Teachers, students, and community partners lead daily skills sessions on topics like academic help, personal skills, emotional well-being, or other topics. Skills sessions are 20 minutes for students to receive targeted and specific support by teacher or peers.



#### Derek Jensen

Coordinator

“Designed by students, for students, PSI High will serve as living proof that students can play a leading role in changing the world for the better.”



## PSI High Design Features

### 4. Mastery, not memorization

At PSI High, credit is awarded when students demonstrate they have mastered a skill. PSI accomplishes this by abandoning the traditional assignment-driven grade book and replacing it with standards-based grading using rubrics that define when a student has mastered a competency. Every PSI High student creates a personalized learning plan that details a list of competencies and a plan for how to get there. Every problem, lesson, and student artifact is documented and aligned to one of these competencies—like an email from a student to a business partner or the results of a collaborative project. Faculty members and partners evaluate these artifacts, matching them to graduation goals and assessing the student’s progress. Formal, student-led performance reviews that align to each student’s plan are conducted at regular intervals during the school year.



### Hi, I'm Lacie.

"My team designed, prototyped, and built animal enrichment games with the Central Florida Zoo in our Digital Information course. The 'Chow Chucker' is used with the black bears, warthogs, cheetahs, and rhinos. It's like a t-shirt cannon that can 'chuck' food throughout the enclosures to help animals dissociate people and food. Our 'Lemur Locker' is a puzzle box to engage lemurs and spider monkeys in using their hands more like they do in the wild. I learned about the science of animal behaviors when designing the devices, geometry and ratios in building the devices, and communication skills when pitching and presenting the team's ideas."



### Hi, I'm Kira.

"I'm planning a lot of art installations around campus. It's about beautifying our school but, more importantly, it's about making sure students feel represented here. When I'm not working on my art, I like writing stories for the role-playing web servers that I run and I'm creating a graphic novel! All these things are fun and I'm learning a lot. I need to be familiar with biology concepts to create my fantasy creatures and many ELA concepts to write a successful narrative. Math, physics, and physical science are things I need to investigate to be successful in my hobbies."

## Step into the PSI High student experience

Curious about how students get started in planning what learning will look like when it's so vastly different from what they've ever known? [Check out the PSI High website](#) where you'll find sample learning plans, schedules, and advice for managing your time.

### Student Data

PSI High serves 124 students in grades 9-12 this school year.

<b>49%</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>Free/Reduced Price Lunch</b>
<b>23%</b>	<b>Black</b>		
<b>20%</b>	<b>Latinix</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>Special Education</b>
<b>6%</b>	<b>Other</b>		
<b>2%</b>	<b>Asian</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>English Language Learners</b>

## Blogs and Media

- [A school that embraces the ‘messy, personalized’ journey to competency XQ Blog](#)
- [When school belongs to the students: Peer-to-peer learning boosts confidence and intellectual risk XQ Blog](#)
- [Researchers and teachers agree: Students deserve a seat at the table XQ Blog](#)
- [PSI High, Seminole’s answer to boring schools, engages students with hands-on lessons Orlando Sentinel](#)
- [How to Build Strong Relationships with Students Using Culturally Responsive Teaching](#)
- [Remote Learning Insights: The Role of the Student Is Shifting](#)

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