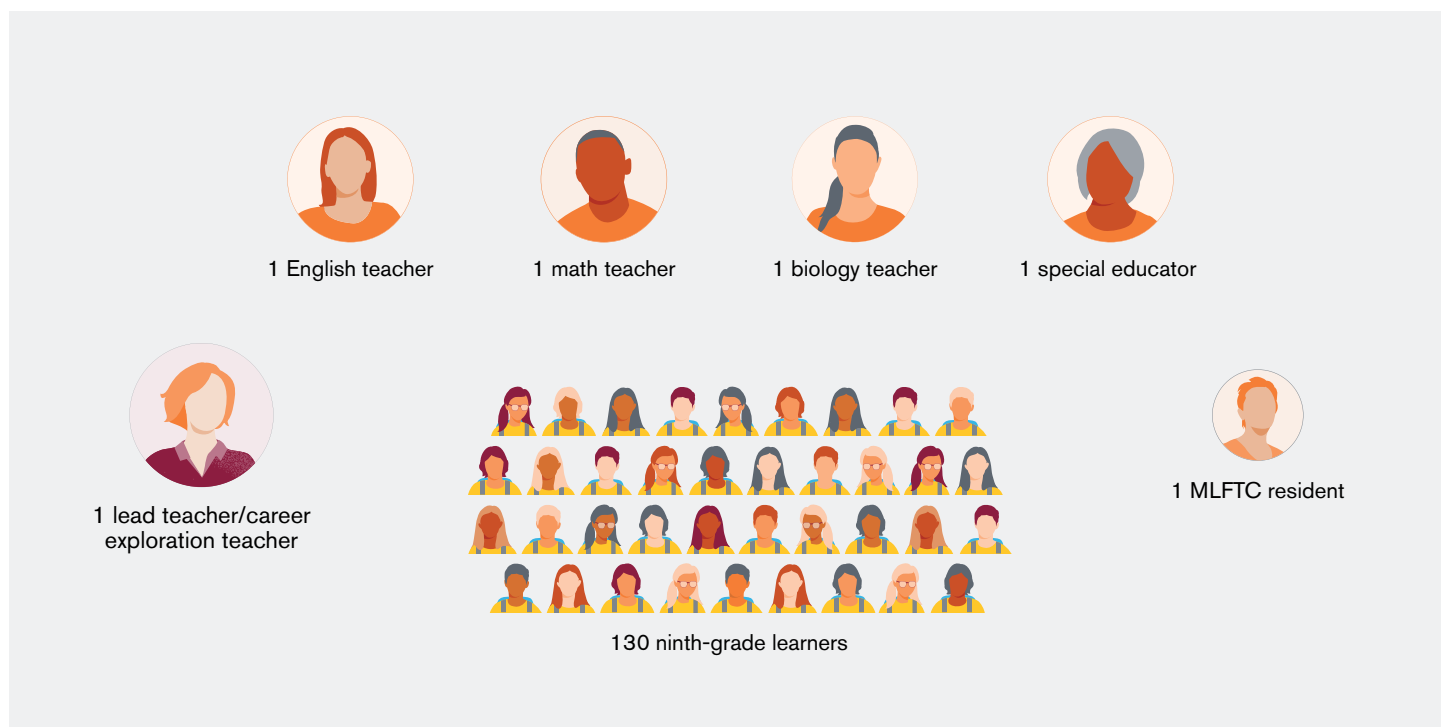


# Dynamic student groupings at Skyline High School

Explore some of the ways an educator team grouped and regrouped 130 students over the course of a weekly extended instructional block.

At **Skyline High School**, in the Mesa Public Schools district, 130 ninth-graders are supported by a core team of educators that includes an English teacher, a math teacher, a science teacher, a career exploration teacher, a special educator and an MLFTC resident — a senior-year student engaged in practice-embedded experience, teacher collaboration and family engagement. The career exploration teacher also serves as the lead teacher for the team.



Each Wednesday, Skyline ninth-graders engage in Learning Cafe, an extended intervention and enrichment block that replaces the first four periods of the school day. Learning Cafe is conducted almost entirely in the cafeteria, and activities typically include independent learning, targeted interventions, enrichment, labs and one-on-one conferences. Below you will find several snapshots from a single Learning Cafe. As you read, consider: **What are some of the ways the educator team leverages dynamic student groupings, differentiates roles and responsibilities and facilitates fluid movement across flexible learning spaces?**

Curious to learn more about dynamic student groupings, differentiated roles and responsibilities and flexible learning spaces? Check out the **[Elements of the Next Education Workforce](#)**.

## Snapshot 1: Presenting the menu

At the start of each Wednesday, the core educator team meets all 130 students in the Skyline cafeteria to facilitate Learning Cafe. Learning Cafe typically lasts three hours and directly replaces four class periods in the school's bell schedule. The educator team is able to facilitate Learning Cafe since they share a single, larger roster of students and have autonomy to manipulate the time during those periods to best fit the needs of their learners.

At the start of each Learning Cafe, the lead teacher reviews the menu of learning opportunities, shares when and where each activity will take place, and indicates which educator(s) will facilitate each activity.

Menu options typically include:

- Two interest- or skills-based enrichment and/or science lab opportunities per Learning Cafe
- Intervention groups
- Several opportunities for independent work (e.g., additional practice/application, completion of missing work, test corrections)
- Ongoing opportunities for one-on-one conferences

Some learning opportunities are optional, while others may be required of different subsets of students (e.g., participation in an intervention group may be required based on recent formative assessment data, while engagement with additional practice or extension may be optional). Educators touch base with individual students about required activities at the start of Learning Cafe.

Once all learning opportunities have been introduced and students understand which, if any, activities might be required of them, they map out how they will spend the rest of their time and move to the corresponding areas.

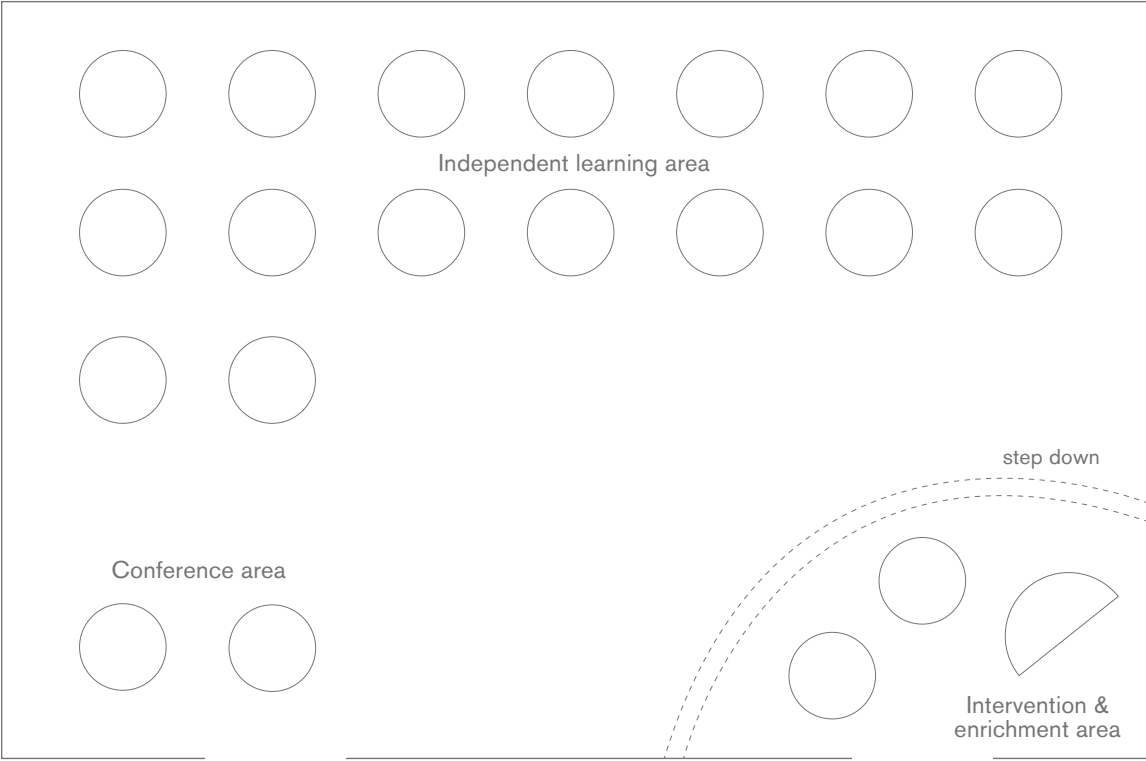
### Menu options

On this day's Learning Cafe, the Menu included a few required activities (e.g., an honors biology lab, a career exploration intervention group) and many optional learning opportunities.

Learning opportunity	Timing	Location	Facilitator	Participants
Career & technology intervention	9:00 - 9:30	Intervention & enrichment area, cafeteria	Career exploration teacher	Invitation only, required
Honors biology lab	9:30 - 10:30	Biology classroom	Science teacher	Honors biology students only, required
Career exploration enrichment activity	10:15-11:00	Intervention & enrichment area, cafeteria	Career exploration teacher	Open, optional
Independent learning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Make-up work</li> <li>▪ Test corrections</li> <li>▪ Ongoing practice</li> <li>▪ <i>Lord of the Flies</i> project</li> <li>▪ Comprehension questions for "The Cask of Amontillado"</li> <li>▪ Everfi game development</li> <li>▪ English project</li> </ul>	8:30 - 11:08	Independent learning area, cafeteria	Floating facilitators	Open, optional
One-on-one conferences: Mathematics	Open availability, 8:30 - 11:08	Conferencing area, cafeteria	Math teacher	Open, optional
One-on-one conferences: English	Open availability, 8:30 - 11:08	Conferencing area, cafeteria	English teacher	Open, optional
One-on-one conferences: Science	Open availability, 8:30 - 9:30, 10:30 - 11:08	Conferencing area, cafeteria	Science teacher	Open, optional
One-on-one conferences: Career exploration	Open availability, 8:30 - 9:00, 9:30 - 10:15	Conferencing area, cafeteria	Career exploration teacher	Open, optional
Small-group intervention	Rolling	Open classroom	Special educator	Invitation only, required

# Snapshot 1: Presenting the menu (continued)

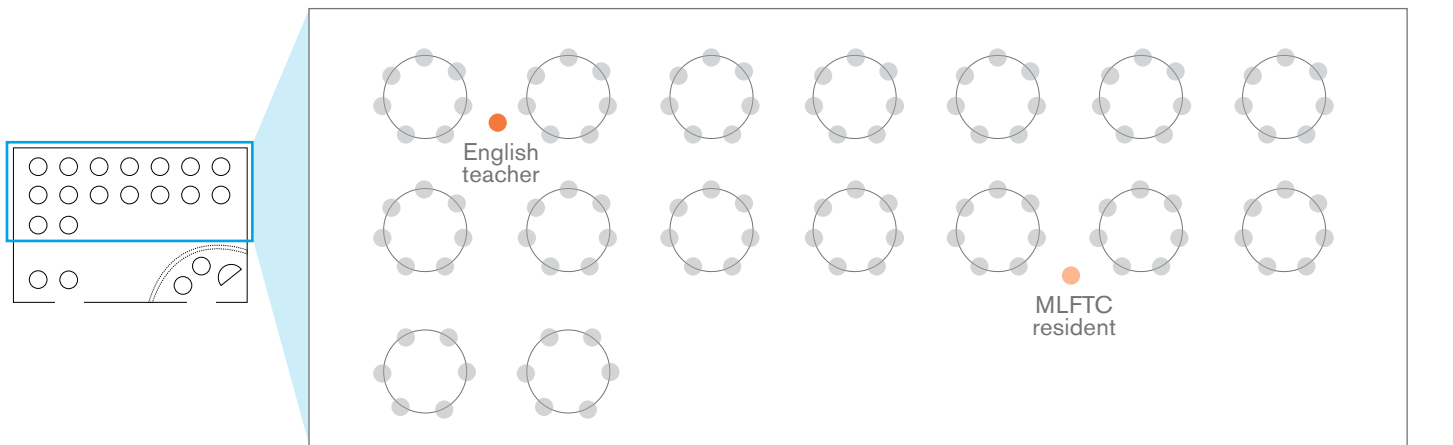
## Cafeteria Diagram



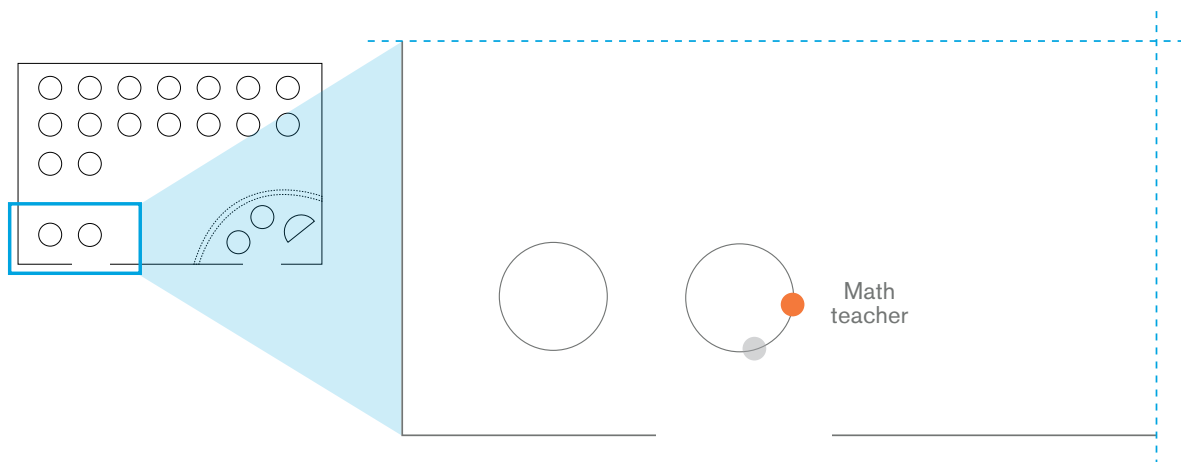
## Snapshot 2: Independent learning and on-on-one conferences

Students engaged in independent learning (e.g., additional practice/application, completion of missing work, test corrections) gather on one side of the cafeteria where the majority of tables and chairs are located. Students have the autonomy to come and go as needed (e.g., leaving to attend an intervention group, then returning to continue independent work) and are typically supported by all core team educators not engaged in facilitating intervention, enrichment, or labs along with the MLFTC resident.

Students are free to request one-on-one conferences at will from any educator present in the space. Conferences are conducted at a pair of tables set slightly apart from the independent learning area.



At this moment, students were engaged in independent work across all content areas, supported by the English teacher and the MLFTC resident. Options included make-up work, test corrections, ongoing practice, a *Lord of The Flies* project, comprehension questions for "The Cask of the Amontillado," Everfi game development and continued work on an English project. The MLFTC resident is bilingual; in addition to providing general support, they checked in with bilingual students during this time.

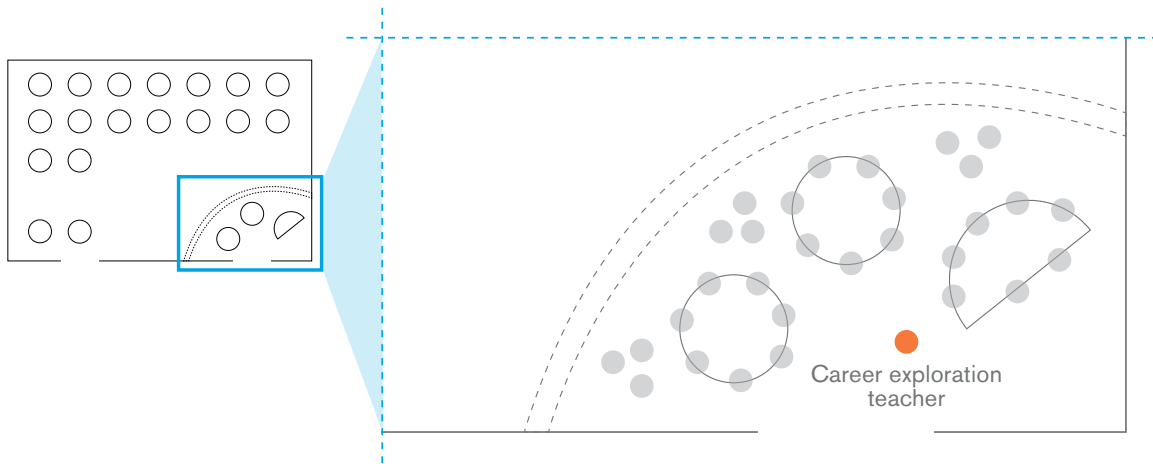


Meanwhile, one student conferenced one-on-one with the math teacher.

### **Snapshot 3: Interest-based enrichment**

The core educator team builds one interest-based enrichment learning opportunity into each Learning Cafe. Enrichment opportunities are open to all students.

Enrichment topics draw from the school's **AVID** curriculum, which focuses on college and career readiness and success. Educators leverage their distributed expertise to determine who will facilitate each lesson.



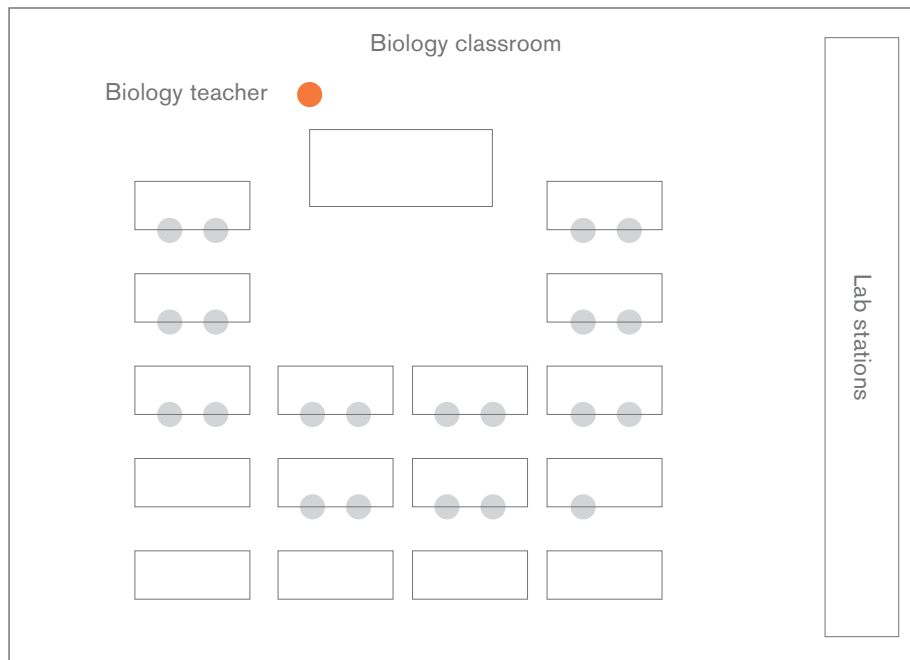
On this day, all students had the option of engaging in an interest-based AVID enrichment activity facilitated by the career exploration teacher in the intervention and enrichment area. Students gathered at the tables in the intervention and enrichment area and in small groups on the floor.

## Snapshot 4: Biology lab

The biology teacher facilitates one biology lab per Learning Cafe, allowing for all ninth-graders to engage in about one lab per month. Labs take place in the biology classroom.

Like many high schools, Skyline offers its ninth-graders both on-level and honors biology. In one-teacher, one-classroom models, these sections are typically facilitated separately; however, the ninth-grade team at Skyline opted to detrack their biology classes. Rosters for on-level and honors biology are blended during regular class time, thereby allowing all students access to rigorous, honors-level biology material.

The only time on-level and honors biology students receive separate instruction is during labs, a decision the team made in order to address differences in biology lab curricular requirements between on-level and honors biology. The flexibility provided by Learning Cafe enables this adjustment to rosters.



On this day, the biology teacher led a lab for all honors biology students.

