This semester I was placed in the student leadership class at Poudre High School. This class is open for any student 9th through 12th grade to join. The structure and role of this class is essentially similarly to a student council. All of the students who join this class, join with the intent and desire to have a say in contributing to their school community, making decisions on behalf of the student body, and organizing service projects for the school. This is a student lead class, so the students really get to decide the structure and projects they work on. Some of the big things they work on are putting together spirit weeks and events for the school. They also are in charge of a very impactful service project that the school does every year called feed out families. The students in this class organize canning shifts at grocery stores, sorting donations, distributing the donations to families in the community, and raising money. With all of that in mind, the setting and context for this class is a group of students with a desire to improve the community, get others involved and take a leadership role within the school.

There are two teachers for this class, however they take a step back compared to a traditional class. They act more as mentors, and just guide the class and connect them with certain people or areas so the students can follow through with their ideas. The students in this class are a diverse group from all grades. This helps the group to be able to reflect the school community, and offer a variety of perspectives when making decisions and consider all grade levels. The demographics of the students are also diverse to reflect the school population. There are varying races, income levels and genders to offer more perspectives and represent the community. The students in the class all collaborate together to work on big projects as a whole. Since the students in the class are all so diverse, they all bring different interests and perspectives to the table. This helps them consider how to best benefit a larger community of students, and since each project has multiple components there are parts for all of the students to benefit and thrive.

There are two students within this class who have IEP’s and fairly intense learning disabilities. Both of these students work with a personal para who helps communicate expectations and assignments with them, and works with the teachers to create a plan that will work for them. Because this class works together on large projects, rather than each student being assigned the same assignment, each student takes on a different role in the project. This helps with students with IEPs, different intelligences, and learning styles because each student can pick an area or task that is of interest to them. Some roles are more design oriented, while others include outreach, research, ideation, writing up information. Thus, many learning styles and preferences can be accommodated. Students also lead this class, and are there to represent their needs as a community, so this also allows students to specifically share what they need to succeed. In addition, the students in this class respect one another and work well in groups to make sure everyone is contributing in a way that works for them.