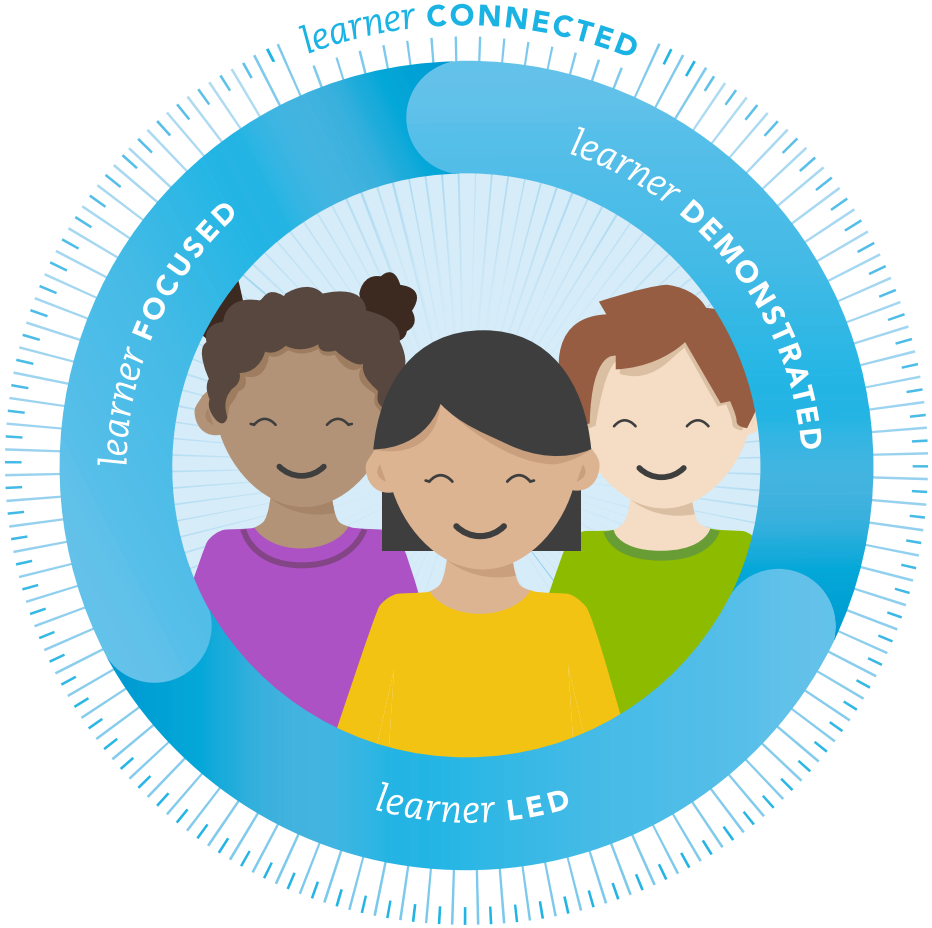


LEAP learning framework™

for personalized learning

2021 EDITION | OVERVIEW

LEAP

LEAPInnovations.org

INTRODUCTION

At LEAP Innovations, we believe our rapidly shifting economy necessitates that we reshape our entire system of learning around the student. For every child to succeed in tomorrow's unknown world, we need to focus on cultivating skills and knowledge for a future we can't fully predict or imagine. We define learner success by strong academic outcomes, growth mindset, 21st-century skills (including relationship, problem-solving, self-management, and leadership skills), and wider, denser webs of support, as well as social capital. These cannot be mastered through teaching by telling and learning by listening, but instead require active, problem-based, performance-rich learning experiences.

The LEAP Learning Framework guides all of our work at LEAP Innovations. Much like our broader organization, it emerged out of a need to make learning science and research actionable in real-world classrooms. We have built and added to it since 2015 with the invaluable contributions of a diverse range of experts across the education field. The principles within it are not new—they are the amalgamation of research, learning science, ground-level evidence, and more than 100 years of best practices in teaching and learning. What makes the Learning Framework innovative is that it aggregates and combines these principles, functioning to help educators bring them to life in classrooms. It exists, like all of our work, at a rare cross-section between theory and practice; between research and the real world.

The 2020 Edition has been strengthened in its research foundation with extensive additional vetting from more than 50 experts around the field, and the new supplemental strategies throughout reflect what we've learned across more than 140 schools and five school years.

GROUNDING PRINCIPLES

The LEAP Learning Framework is grounded in three evidence-based, fundamental principles:

EVERY LEARNER CAN SUCCEED WITH SUPPORT THAT'S CUSTOMIZED TO THE CHILD'S INTERESTS AND NEEDS

When they are engaged in a more personalized manner, students will often master content well above curriculum standards or developmental guidelines. We can and should reframe how educators set and raise expectations for our students.

EVERY LEARNER BRINGS STRENGTHS AND TALENTS TO THE CLASSROOM

The diverse knowledge bases, life experiences, languages and cultures of children are powerful assets for their learning—as well as the learning of those around them—and need to be leveraged as such.

LEARNER AGENCY IS ESSENTIAL

Our world of work increasingly requires more leadership, agility and self-direction. At an early age, we must inspire our students to assume responsibility of their own learning, and help co-design it.

WHAT IS PERSONALIZED LEARNING?

At LEAP, our definition of personalized learning lies within the construct of the LEAP Learning Framework's four core components: Personalized learning is **FOCUSED** on, **LED** with and **DEMONSTRATED** by the learner, and is **CONNECTED** to career-relevant, real-world skills and opportunities.

At large, personalized learning is an approach to learning and teaching built upon the idea that, in today's day and age, every student's learning experience can and should be holistic and tailored to fit and empower that student as an individual. Centering learners' educational experiences around their specific needs, strengths, and interests, personalized learning fundamentally inverts the traditional "one-size-fits-all" classroom model.

THE LEAP LEARNING FRAMEWORK

COMPONENTS

LEARNER FOCUSED
Learners are empowered to holistically understand their needs, strengths, and interests

LEARNER LED
Learners are entrusted to take ownership of their learning

LEARNER DEMONSTRATED
Learners can progress at their own pace based on demonstrated mastery

LEARNER CONNECTED
Learning transcends location in relevant and valued ways, connected to learners' families, educators, communities, and networks

GUIDELINES

LEARNERS:
LF.1 Deepen their understanding of themselves holistically, including:
- **LF.1.1** academic needs, strengths, and interests
- **LF.1.2** physical and mental health
- **LF.1.3** social and emotional learning
- **LF.1.4** cognitive skills (i.e. focus, working memory)
- **LF.1.5** identity and culture
- **LF.1.6** social and community context

LF.2 Experience learning that is relevant, challenging, contextualized, and designed for their individual needs, strengths, and interests

LEARNERS:
LL.1 Articulate their needs, strengths, and interests
LL.2 Partner in setting their learning goals
LL.3 Partner in shaping their learning pathways and experiences
LL.4 Assess, monitor, and reflect on their progress
LL.5 Advocate for needed support from teachers, peers, technology, and other sources

LEARNERS:
LD.1 Begin at a challenging level appropriate to their prior knowledge and learning needs
LD.2 Receive feedback on effort, process, and mastery throughout every learning experience
LD.3 Advance or go deeper upon demonstration of mastery
LD.4 Demonstrate learning in multiple ways
LD.5 Receive recognition based on demonstrated mastery, not time

LEARNERS:
LC.1 Collaborate with peers, family, educators, and others
LC.2 Cultivate meaningful relationships
LC.3 Advance opportunities through connections
LC.4 Engage in real-world experiences to develop:
- **LC.4.1** Academic skills & knowledge
- **LC.4.2** Community and civic engagement
- **LC.4.3** Workplace experience

LC.5 Earn valued recognition for all learning, regardless of where and when it happens

HISTORY

In developing and vetting the Learning Framework, our priority was diversity—of perspective, profession and expertise. We believed, as we still do, that creating the most holistic, rigorously evaluated guide for personalized learning possible required we solicit and listen to a wide and diverse range of research and expert voices. We consulted not just learning scientists, but also leading experts in psychology, cognitive psychology, child development, career preparedness, pedagogy and technology as we developed the Framework's base of research. And as we considered the applicability of our concepts and strategies in real-world contexts, we gathered the perspectives of educators on the ground. More than 20 educators gave feedback and suggestions on the Framework before it rolled out in 2016. Like our researchers, they varied in geographical location, gender, race/ethnicity and age—a fact which we're confident gave the Learning Framework more power as a tool for adapting learning into specific contexts.

Today, our commitment to listening and pressure-testing our work with a large range of experts remains stronger than ever. As the field of student-centered learning continues to advance and evolve, the LEAP Learning Framework will grow and adapt alongside it.

THE LEAP DESIGN METHODOLOGY

The fields of learning science and psychology are not static—new findings constantly change what we know and raise new questions. The Learning Framework, as such, is a dynamic document, adapting to reflect the latest insights.

We developed the Framework with the same four-phase "Praxis" Design Methodology that we use each time to re-evaluate or add to it. "Praxis" refers to the practical application of a theory, which for LEAP means we apply learning science and research to the contexts of educators. The structured approach to refining our work ensures that all of our ideas continue to be firmly rooted in real-world evidence, and powered by the diversity of perspective we've seen deliver success.

With each phase, we adapt to the feedback we receive.

PHASE 1:
RESEARCH REVIEW
What does the existing body of research—especially recent, K-12 empirical studies—say on this and related topics?

PHASE 2:
REAL-WORLD AUDIT
What examples are there of this in practice in the real world?

PHASE 3:
DIVERSE CRITIQUES AND INTEGRATED DISCOURSES
What diverse group of experiences and experts can push our design and help us directly address potential biases?

PHASE 4:
OPEN PEER REVIEW
What thoughts do peers and the general public have about the work in its preliminary form?

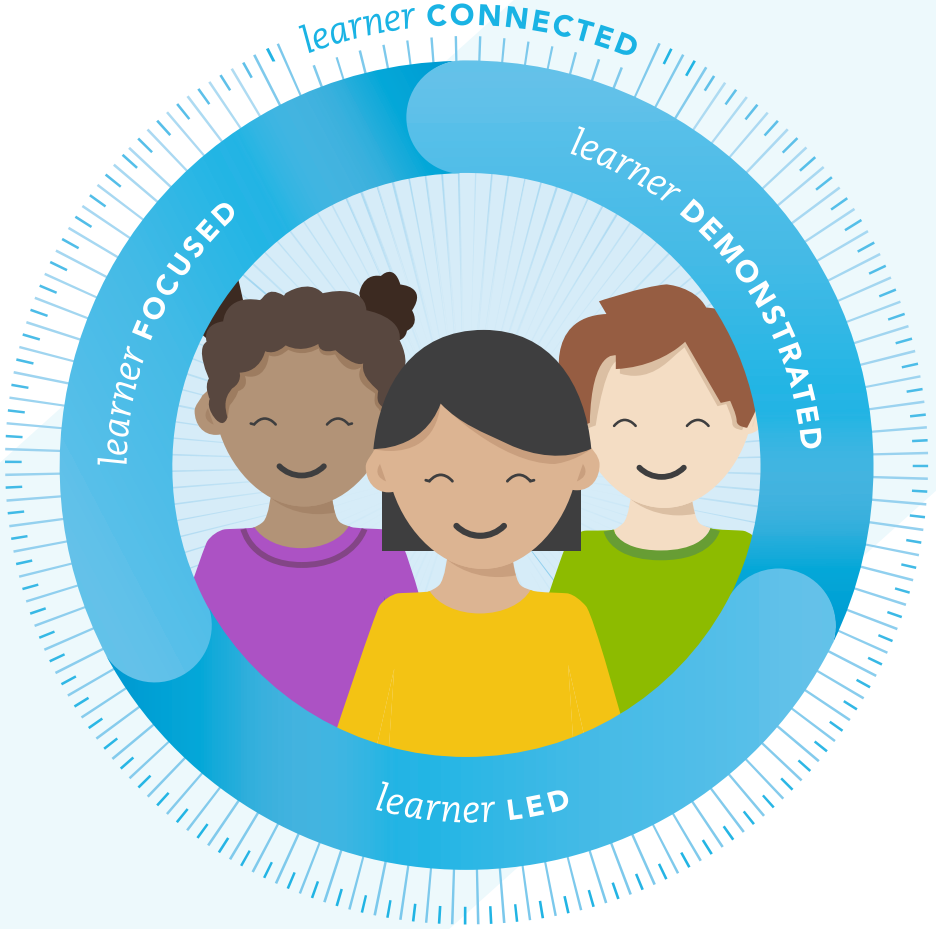
LEAP learning framework™

for personalized learning

THE LEAP LEARNING FRAMEWORK™ IS THE FOUNDATION FOR ALL OF OUR WORK.

THE LEAP LEARNING FRAMEWORK is the guiding vision for LEAP Innovations. Our definition of personalized learning lies within the construct of its four core components.

Personalized learning is focused on, led with and demonstrated by the learner, and is connected to career-relevant, real-world skills and opportunities.



LEARNER FOCUSED

Learners are empowered to holistically understand their needs, strengths, and interests.

HOW DO LEARNER FOCUSED EXPERIENCES HELP STUDENTS?

Learning doesn't happen in a vacuum. What occurs inside children and outside their classrooms has an enormous impact on their academic success. Students thrive when their learning is relevant to their lives and shaped by their individual needs, strengths and interests, as well as their approaches to learning. Understanding all the factors at play—even the ones that teachers can't control—makes those factors into sources of strength, rather than barriers to learning.

1.4

points higher GPA among ninth-grade students provided with a culturally relevant curriculum (4.0 scale)

*Dee, T. S., & Penner, E. K. (2017). The Causal Effects of Cultural Relevance: Evidence From an Ethnic Studies Curriculum. American Educational Research Journal, 54(1), 127–166."

WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH SAY?

When learners choose their own reading material based on their interests, their reading skills improve, in both the elementary and middle grades.[1]

Integrating social-emotional development into academic lessons improves student behavior, which leads to greater content knowledge and motivation to learn.[2]

Culturally responsive teaching includes: high academic expectations and using student strengths; cultural competence, where teachers reshape lessons based on the culture of the students; and critical consciousness, where teachers share power, engage in social justice, and encourage students to challenge the status quo.[3]

"ONE WAY TO BUILD ON PRIOR KNOWLEDGE IS TO CONNECT WITH A LEARNER'S INTERESTS."

Reis, S. M., McCoach, D. B., Little, C. A., Muller, L. M., & Kaniskan, R. B. (2011)

The Effects of Differentiated Instruction and Enrichment Pedagogy on Reading Achievement in Five Elementary Schools. American Educational Research Journal, 48(2), 462–501.

LF1. Learners deepen their understanding of themselves holistically, including:

- academic needs, strengths, and interests
- physical and mental health
- social and emotional learning
- cognitive skills (i.e. focus, working memory)
- identity and culture
- social and community context

STRATEGY: Co-design a milestone map with learners on their past experiences and future goals and dreams.

EXAMPLE: A teacher talks one-on-one with each incoming learner about his/her previous experiences in school and influential moments. They then co-author a shared plan for future goals.

STRATEGY: Engage in cultural competence training and actively seek to learn more about the cultures of your learners.

EXAMPLE: A teacher serving a primarily Puerto Rican population actively researches major holidays and traditions, engaging with learners and their families to better understand the nuances and values of the culture.

STRATEGY: Review available information regarding learners' prior academic performance (e.g. testing, work samples, and portfolios).

EXAMPLE: A teacher reviews a historical portfolio of a learner's prior performance that includes sample work and areas of success or struggle, going over it with the learner to confirm the findings.

STRATEGY: Conduct observations and assessments to confirm learners' current academic levels, as well as their responses to varying levels of academic challenge.

EXAMPLE: A learner takes a pre-assessment before starting a new topic in school, so both the learner and the teacher can see what the learner already knows and what he/she still needs to learn.

STRATEGY: Meet regularly with key supporters (e.g. parents, teachers, extracurricular staff, therapists) to inform the strategy for the learner's development.

EXAMPLE: Learner-led conferences are held prior to the start of the new school year with parents and others to discuss the learner's needs and co-develop a support plan that is revisited throughout the year.

LF 2. Learners experience learning that is relevant, challenging, contextualized, and designed for their individual needs, strengths, and interests.

STRATEGY: Redesign curricula and learning experiences to reflect the learner's culture and expand self-awareness.

EXAMPLE: A teacher integrates works of literature that feature protagonists of the same culture or background as different learners in the class.

STRATEGY: Create flexible learning environments to adapt to key needs (e.g. time, space, content).

EXAMPLE: A team of teachers removes the doors between their classrooms and changes the furniture layout to create different learning "nooks" and dynamic groupings based on learner needs.

STRATEGY: Partner with learners to explore ways to modify or vary content to align with their needs, strengths, and interests.

EXAMPLE: A teacher works with her English language learners to incorporate more drawing and sketching of ideas in their science class.

STRATEGY: Offer flexible modalities, groupings, times, and places for learning to help meet individual learner needs, strengths, and interests while balancing these individual needs with the needs of the class community.

EXAMPLE: A teacher has several "centers" set up in his classroom for learners to learn about reducing fractions. They can watch a video, practice with an online program, use manipulatives, work with a partner on a worksheet, or do a mini-lesson with a teacher.

STRATEGY: Design lessons and information using the principles of Universal Design for Learning, including multiple means of representation to support learners with limited working memory skills.

EXAMPLE: A teacher redesigns content in an English lesson to reduce the number of concepts a learner reads at a single time and shows the target concepts in multiple ways.

LEARNER LED

Learners are entrusted to take ownership of their learning.

HOW DO LEARNER FOCUSED EXPERIENCES HELP STUDENTS?

When students lead and feel in control, they work harder to learn. This is the case whether or not they meet their goals.

Still, teachers know they must strike a balance between giving students autonomy and supporting them to develop crucial skills and knowledge—because students need to feel confident and competent before taking greater control of their learning.

41%

increase in skills among children who were taught self-monitoring over children who were not.

Schunk, D. H. (1982). Progress Self-Monitoring. The Journal of Experimental Education, 51(2), 89–93.

WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH SAY?

A disconnect between what is taught in school and what interests students drives a decrease in motivation and achievement, notably among boys. Thus, giving students more say in what they learn can play an important role in increasing motivation, attention, and learning—even when the material is challenging.1

Student grades, attendance, and conduct improve when they practice a learning technique where they imagine a desired future, think through potential challenges and then plot a course to surmount those challenges. However, this practice is not widespread, so there have been no systematic reviews of personal development or learning plans.2

Studies are mixed on whether students learn more from student-led projects or ones led by teachers. This is largely because few models are purely one or the other; the best classrooms embrace a hybrid where teachers and students collaborate on desired projects, and students get more choice in everyday activities.3

"FEELING IN CONTROL IS INSUFFICIENT IF LEARNERS DO NOT ALSO VALUE THE OUTCOME OF THEIR LEARNING."

Wigfield, A., & Cambria, J. (2010) Students' achievement values, goal orientations, and interest: Definitions, development, and relations to achievement outcomes. Developmental Review, 30(1), 1–35.

LL1. Learners articulate their needs, strengths, and interests.

STRATEGY: Encourage and model articulation of needs, strengths, and interests to inform future learning.

EXAMPLE: A teacher provides his learners with a "Reflection Binder." At the end of each day, they reflect on their work, identifying what worked well for them, what they struggled with, and what support they need.

STRATEGY: Offer tools to help learners identify their own needs, strengths, interests, and preferences (e.g. interest inventories, checklists, reflection exercises).

EXAMPLE: Over the course of six weeks (beginning at the start of the school year or when a new learner arrives), teachers and learners complete several inventories to identify learning drivers and gaps.

STRATEGY: Establish a culture that encourages learners to actively share their feelings and experiences while learning.

EXAMPLE: A teacher creates a system of small book clubs and public share-outs during independent reading time that helps the community of learners share their excitement for books.

STRATEGY: Provide learners with a systematic method (e.g. learner profiles) for documenting learning needs and preferences.

EXAMPLE: A teacher uses a platform for learners to regularly update their needs, strengths, and interests in focus areas to inform conferences, interventions, and/or upcoming lesson plan design.

STRATEGY: Guide learners to generate questions that lead to further curiosity and self-directed learning.

EXAMPLE: A teacher does a KWI (Know, Wonder, Interest) chart to have learners share what they know, wonder, and are interested in regarding a theme.

LL2. Learners partner in setting their learning goals

STRATEGY: Collaborate with learners to set specific, challenging short-term goals and develop learning plans.

EXAMPLE: An advisory teacher has learners craft a daily goal at the start of each day that is reviewed among their peers at the end of the day.

STRATEGY: Support learners to imagine a desired future and then think through what challenges they will need to overcome to attain it.

EXAMPLE: A teaching team has learners complete a WOOP (Wish, Outcome, Obstacle, Plan) template at the start of each month.

STRATEGY: Partner with learners to establish a timeline and a plan for monitoring progress in meeting goals.

EXAMPLE: A teacher meets with a learner to set dates on which the learner will finish key steps toward a long-term project. They also include days that she will get feedback from a peer or teacher.

STRATEGY: Utilize mentor conferences to review progress and determine next steps.

EXAMPLE: A classroom has a system of "learning buddies," or peers that regularly check in with each other on goals and learning plans for reading.

LL3. Learners partner in shaping their learning pathways and experiences.

STRATEGY: Collaborate with learners to develop standards-aligned activities that meet their learning goals.

EXAMPLE: At the start of the week, learners complete a shared online document that outlines their proposed activities for the week. The teacher reviews the plans and provides guidance as necessary.

STRATEGY: Allow learners to choose their best learning place and medium to work on their goal.

EXAMPLE: During an ELA block, two teachers open up their doors and create one quiet and one "active conversation" room that students can choose between for their work.

STRATEGY: Enable learners to choose with whom to work based on goals and needed expertise.

EXAMPLE: A class creates a peer working group and identifies adult mentors for their upcoming projects.

STRATEGY: Offer learners an organized approach to outline and document their learning plan (e.g. template, rubric).

EXAMPLE: A teacher provides learners with a template to plan and track their learning activities for the week.

STRATEGY: Empower learners to choose their own approach to learning a new concept.

EXAMPLE: A teacher empowers her learners to choose between 10-blocks, tallies, and other mediums for learners to practice their math.

LL4. Learners assess, monitor, and reflect on their progress.

STRATEGY: Guide learners in ongoing reflection on learning outcomes, products, and processes.

EXAMPLE: A teacher provides time at the end of every rotation for learners to complete a template for reflection on what they learned and what they find challenging.

STRATEGY: Provide learners with ongoing access to their data to help identify academic and non-academic needs.

EXAMPLE: A teacher has learners track their growth in skills (via assessment scores) in a binder, so they can see which of their skills are strong and which skills they need to work on.

STRATEGY: Partner with learners to reflect upon and document their own learning needs and progress.

EXAMPLE: A teacher helps learners create a system to track and reflect on their progress in an edtech product.

STRATEGY: Model examining data, discussing progress and identifying challenges, as well as needed supports.

EXAMPLE: A teacher meets with a learner and models how to look at the learner's data to identify areas of progress and areas where the learner needs support.

STRATEGY: Help learners reflect upon their learning strategies and efforts, as well as the result of those strategies and efforts in regard to meeting desired learning goals.

EXAMPLE: A teacher helps a learner reflect on her use of a reading strategy, and then the learner chooses to try a new strategy from a given list.

LL5. Learners advocate for needed support from teachers, peers, technology, and other sources.

STRATEGY: Coach and model for learners how to identify and advocate for their needs according to degrees of urgency.

EXAMPLE: A teacher works with his class to create anchor charts that give suggestions for how learners can know if they need support and provides prompts for how to ask for help.

STRATEGY: Actively encourage learners to independently problem-solve by seeking help from peers, technology, and other sources.

EXAMPLE: A teacher establishes a classroom culture of "Three Before Me," in which learners must seek help from three other sources before consulting the teacher.

STRATEGY: Establish routines for regular learner-led conferences.

EXAMPLE: A teacher sets up a rotation of short, five-minute check-ins with learners throughout the week for them to vocalize their progress and needed supports. Experienced learners teach others how to be more effective in learner-led conferences.

STRATEGY: Actively nurture a class culture of self- and team advocacy.

EXAMPLE: A teacher guides learners to reflect on their rights and identify barriers to their learning. Learners then work individually or as a collective group to advocate to the proper authorities for changes or expanded privileges.

STRATEGY: Provide a system for learners to provide their status and request support.

EXAMPLE: A teacher gives each learner a popsicle stick and flag to decorate. When the learner needs assistance, he/she places it in the "up" position to notify the teacher and peers that help is needed.

LEARNER DEMONSTRATED

Learners can progress at their own pace based on demonstrated mastery.

HOW DO LEARNER FOCUSED EXPERIENCES HELP STUDENTS?

Students make academic progress, tackle challenges, and improve perseverance when they are in classrooms that feature flexible but rigorous pacing and assessments. Teachers can make it safe to struggle and fail so that students recognize the importance of mastering a skill over just showing up for class and turning in required assignments.

35%

more students earned As or Bs when a course was delivered with a competency-based instructional approach rather than a traditional approach.

*Fleming, R., Stoiber, L. c., Pfeiffer, H. m., Kienzler, S. e., Fleming, R. r., Pedrick, L. e., ... Reddy, D. m. (2016). Using U-Pace instruction to improve the academic performance of economically disadvantaged undergraduates. Journal of Computer Assisted Learning, 32(4), 304–313.

WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH SAY?

Interventions that help teachers provide students with lessons at appropriately challenging levels consistently produced learning gains. This typically involved using pre-tests to gauge what students know and the supports they need to progress.1

When students learn at their own pace, get regular feedback, and move forward when they are ready, it improves student motivation and the belief that they can be successful learners, especially on mathematics tasks.2

"SIMPLY GROUPING STUDENTS ACCORDING TO TESTED ABILITY HAS A NEGATIVE OVERALL EFFECT."

Deunk, M., Doolaard, S., Smale-Jacobse, A., & Bosker, R. J. (2015)
Differentiation within and across classrooms: A systematic review of studies into the cognitive effects of differentiation practices.

LD1. Learners begin at a challenging level appropriate to their prior knowledge and learning needs.

STRATEGY: Use all available data to determine where a learner falls on the appropriate learning progression for major and sub skills.

EXAMPLE: A teacher and her learners regularly review data to set goals and adjust learning and instruction.

STRATEGY: Partner with learners to identify the most suitable learning format for their current academic level (e.g. class, groupings, activities, software).

EXAMPLE: A teacher has regular check-ins with individual learners after learning activities to discuss how successfully they learned something, and what that says for the types of learning activities they should focus on moving forward.

STRATEGY: Design learning experiences that explicitly connect new content to prior knowledge and skills.

EXAMPLE: Using a learner profile, a teacher intentionally designs mini-lessons to build upon her learners' past experiences and strengths.

STRATEGY: Articulate short- and long-term learning expectations that are appropriate for learners' current academic levels.

EXAMPLE: A teacher sets goals with learners on which steps of a project learners will complete in a week.

STRATEGY: Assess learners during the first parts of any lesson or unit to determine the starting points of their learning paths. Then, continue with dynamic, fluid changes to groups as needed to prevent "tracking."

EXAMPLE: A teacher starts each class with an entrance ticket to check for understanding, then creates dynamic groups for mini-lessons or independent work that learners can opt into based on their needs.

LD2. Learners receive feedback on effort, process, and mastery throughout every learning experience.

STRATEGY: Provide feedback that is objective and non-judgmental to reinforce a learner's sense of control for improving his or her mastery.

EXAMPLE: A teacher eliminates all language from his feedback that denotes fixed conditions such as "you're smart" or "you're talented."

STRATEGY: Encourage learners to experiment and try multiple strategies to solve problems.

EXAMPLE: A teacher gives an assignment where learners are assessed not only by how successfully they solve a problem, but by how many ways they can think of to solve the problem.

STRATEGY: Encourage learners to reflect and report on effort and strategies as often as they do on results.

EXAMPLE: A teacher ends every class by having learners publicly share examples of peers putting forth great effort or using successful strategies.

LD3. Learners advance or go deeper upon demonstration of mastery.

STRATEGY: Create learning menus and vertical alignment of activities.

EXAMPLE: A teacher creates a document listing out multiple activities and sources of information for learning about and practicing a specific learning target. Students then choose which resources to use to reach the given target."

STRATEGY: Use formative assessment and learner feedback to enable advancement if a learner has mastered the objective needed to move onto the next objective.

EXAMPLE: Students are allowed to skip a unit test and move on to the next topic if they have shown mastery of the content through earlier quizzes and assignments.

STRATEGY: Allow learners to move through content at varied rates regardless of their starting level.

EXAMPLE: A teacher has designated "assessment blocks" during the week in which students may take mastery assessments on a topic when they feel ready.

STRATEGY: Provide a daily workflow of formative assessment, intervention, and feedback to learners.

EXAMPLE: A teacher establishes a transparent system using an online learning management system (LMS) for learners to take micro-assessments, receive or seek support based on results, and get direct feedback from a teacher or peer.

LD4. Learners demonstrate learning in multiple ways.

STRATEGY: Provide learners with access to multiple assessment options.

EXAMPLE: A teacher provides learners a menu of options for how to show their understanding of a concept.

STRATEGY: Support learners to co-create a rubric based on the learning objective(s).

EXAMPLE: A teacher and a subgroup of learners co-create a rubric that will be used for assessing their project.

STRATEGY: Co-design with learners multiple ways for demonstrating competency with standards.

EXAMPLE: A teacher works with her class to develop a menu of options for how to show understanding at the end of a unit (e.g. make a movie, draw a diagram, give a presentation).

STRATEGY: Leverage digital platforms and multimedia to capture multiple forms of learning and build an ePortfolio.

EXAMPLE: A teaching team shifts to an ePortfolio platform to capture all work on a daily basis and provide multiple means of documenting and showing learning progress.

STRATEGY: Partner with learners to select the content, product, or process they will use to demonstrate proficiency, as well as devise the methods that will be used to show evidence of their learning.

EXAMPLE: A teacher and learner work together to develop learning plans, including goals, strategies for learning, tools needed, and how learning will be demonstrated.

LD5. Learners receive recognition based on demonstrated mastery, not time.

STRATEGY: Identify which competencies need to be met to obtain credit, advance, and/or receive other recognitions for learning.

EXAMPLE: A team of teachers establishes a competency map across levels that enables assessments to be taken regardless of perceived "grade level."

STRATEGY: Ensure that learners are clear about expectations and requirements for recognition.

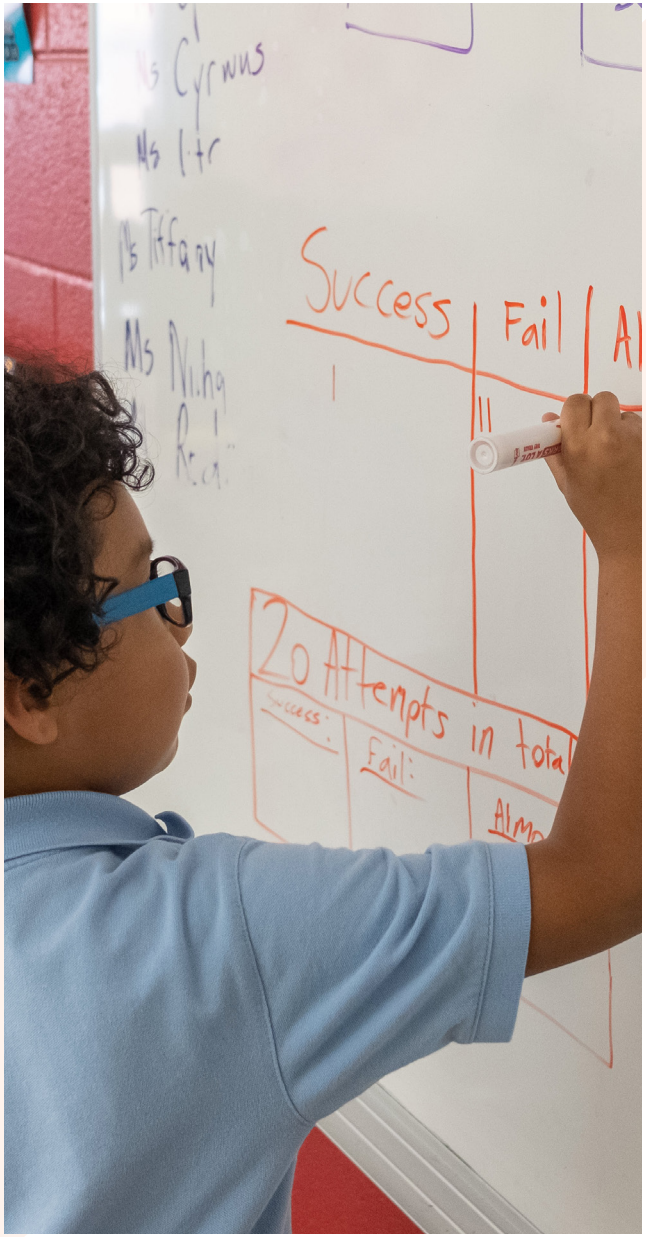
EXAMPLE: A team of teachers adjusts their report card to be proficiency-based and holds regular mini-conferences with learners to check their understanding of their progress.

STRATEGY: Create an organized and accessible system for tracking evidence of learning (e.g. performance, assessment, credits, and competency progression).

EXAMPLE: A school team adopts a digital portfolio platform that is accessible to parents, learners, and teachers and provides transparent issuing of recognition for work.

STRATEGY: Change classroom policies for learning recognition and progression to take into account varying speeds of learner competency.

EXAMPLE: A teacher removes the weekly summative assessment on the same standard for all learners, and she implements a new system with flexibility—but with set expectations—around when learners demonstrate competency.



LEARNER CONNECTED

Learning transcends location in relevant and valued ways, connected to families, educators, communities, and networks.

HOW DO LEARNER FOCUSED EXPERIENCES HELP STUDENTS?

Real-world connections lead to new opportunities and bridges that enable students to grow social capital and develop lifelong skills in personal, social, and civic engagement. In an unprecedentedly connected world that is driven by relationships and constant, immediate learning, schools can help students learn to thrive and advance.

40%

40% increase in high school graduation rate among high school students enrolled in a community-based support program.

*Oreopoulos et al. (2014) Pathways to Education: An Integrated Approach to Helping At-Risk high School Students". National Bureau of Economic Research working paper 20430.

WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH SAY?

When group learning is supported, it can be a powerful way to promote social-emotional skills and improve achievement in academic subjects, with the strongest gains seen in math and science. Cooperative learning relies on effective teamwork and a solid base of knowledge.1

A sense of belonging at school and strong relationships with teachers strongly predicts improved learning outcomes—learners can do more when they have more people whose support, ideas, or networks they can rely on.2

There are promising models that help students build social capital by developing mentor relationships and professional connections outside school.3

"FROM AN EQUITY PERSPECTIVE . . . ACCESS MATTERS."

Amelia Peterson, Innovation Unit

LC1. Learners collaborate with peers, family, educators, and others.

STRATEGY: Create projects and activities that require family and caregiver participation.

EXAMPLE: A teacher creates an at-home, place-based project in which the learner must collaborate with caregivers to identify an issue and design a solution.

STRATEGY: Leverage internet-based tools that enable synchronous school-home sharing of learning, data, and progress.

EXAMPLE: A teacher uses a digital ePortfolio platform with parent access to have learners capture their experiences, progress, and performance on a daily basis, sparking new conversations between home and school.

STRATEGY: Work with parents and caregivers to ensure that the learner has the supports and opportunities needed for learning.

EXAMPLE: A teacher meets with parents a few weeks prior to school to discuss the learner's needs across all aspects of Learner Focused and collaborates with school staff and third-party organizations to connect the family to a custom suite of support for the learner.

STRATEGY: Regularly re-sort teams based on diversity, choice, and interests.

EXAMPLE: A teacher changes the grouping strategy for every project throughout the year to avoid unintentional tracking and increase how well learners know each other.

STRATEGY: Set up expectations and support for the development of "team" skills (e.g. negotiation, conflict resolution, giving and receiving feedback, assertion).

EXAMPLE: A teacher shares a formal rubric of team skills that teammates on a project then use to score each other for formative feedback.

LC2. Learners cultivate meaningful relationships.

STRATEGY: Establish a daily journal or reflective practice that is shared with parents and teachers.

EXAMPLE: A teacher has all learners complete a daily reflection that is shared through an online platform with their families and the teacher.

STRATEGY: Develop planning templates for learner, family, and community-initiated experiences that specify how to interact with other networks.

EXAMPLE: A teacher creates a guided template to scaffold the process of reaching out to family members and contacts for support on a project.

STRATEGY: Hold community meetings across the school to celebrate and share.

EXAMPLE: The art department runs monthly gallery walks for the entire school to see each other's work and provide feedback to each other.

STRATEGY: Create zones of safety that provide scaffolding for pursuing new relationships and opportunities.

EXAMPLE: A teacher mentors a learner through the process of contacting a company for an internship and pursuing the opportunity, offering constructive feedback along the way.

STRATEGY: Create safe communities of practice for peers dealing with the same issues to provide support to one another.

EXAMPLE: A teacher creates a community of practice consisting of learners who have younger siblings for them to discuss and share experiences as older brothers and sisters.

LC3. Learners advance opportunities through connections.

STRATEGY: Provide an online database of sites and partners to learners to enable self-discovery and proactive habits.

EXAMPLE: Teachers in the department actively curate a list of local and national partners aligned with their curriculum which is shared with learners.

STRATEGY: Develop rubrics to guide habits and reflection of social intelligence.

EXAMPLE: A team of teachers co-develop a rubric for expected social and empathy skills that learners are assessed and coached on regularly.

STRATEGY: Connect learners to social networks of peers and others with shared interest (affinity groups).

EXAMPLE: A teacher connects an interested learner to a trusted neighborhood group focused on urban planning.

STRATEGY: Model skills to locate and manage social connections and proper responses in the professional world.

EXAMPLE: A teacher incorporates lessons on professional networking to learners prior to the start of a cross-school collaboration project.

STRATEGY: Integrate interviews and other workplace habits and protocols into regular class habits.

EXAMPLE: A teacher designs a team-based project and has learners interview to be part of different teams instead of being automatically assigned.

LC4. Learners engage in real-world experiences to develop:

- Academic skills and knowledge
- Community and civic engagement
- Workplace experience

STRATEGY: Establish public blogs for sharing of learner work to an expanded audience.

EXAMPLE: A teacher creates and co-manages a single classroom blog that showcases outstanding learner work with parents and the public.

STRATEGY: Help learners plan experiences that reflect and expand their personal identities, values, and family backgrounds.

EXAMPLE: A teacher helps a student who is a recent immigrant get involved with different cultural activities around the community.

STRATEGY: Create forums for public performances and authentic final products.

EXAMPLE: Teachers guide learners through “problem-based” projects that produce solutions for needs in their neighborhood.

STRATEGY: Include working professionals as advisors or establish an advisory committee on the overall curriculum.

EXAMPLE: Teachers partner with parents who are healthcare professionals to inform their STEM curriculum.

STRATEGY: Co-design opportunities with learners for advocacy and independent study in the workplace, community, and online.

EXAMPLE: Teachers partner with advocacy groups and connect learners with those that match their interests.

LC5. Learners earn valued recognition for all learning, regardless of where and when it happens.

STRATEGY: Hold public, community-wide gallery walks or themed expos for authentic presentation of work beyond the classroom.

EXAMPLE: At the end of each semester, a summit is held at the local town hall for learners to present developed, new business ideas to local leaders and the public.

STRATEGY: Leverage an online portfolio system for formalized documentation of learners' artifacts and experiences.

EXAMPLE: Teachers across the grade use an online ePortfolio system to have learners capture all work and share it across teachers and with their parents.

STRATEGY: Expand dual-enrollment and credit programs with partner institutions and third-party organizations.

EXAMPLE: Teachers formalize dual-credit options with the local community college and professional organizations to help students build their college transcripts.

STRATEGY: Work directly with outside mentors and experts to identify measurable criteria and how they can be demonstrated.

EXAMPLE: Teachers converse with engineers from a local firm/ factory to identify key skills and co-develop how they can be appropriately assessed at the fifth-grade level.

STRATEGY: Identify target skills and how gains will be validated.

EXAMPLE: A team of grade-level teachers co-develops a scope of target skills and protocols for assessment and validation during the year.