Why Deeper Learning?

In the current global economy, jobs increasingly require high skills. The U.S. education system needs to be aligned with these high-skilled jobs to ensure that today’s students will be able to compete in tomorrow’s job market. This requires that young people learn, process, and produce more than their parents and grandparents. To meet these demands, students will need “deeper learning,” a mix of knowledge, skills, and dispositions that includes critical thinking and problem solving, effective communication, collaboration, an academic mindset, and the ability to learn how to learn—all applied to the mastery of rigorous academic content. In 2012, the National Research Council produced the report *Education for Life and Work* that showed how deeper learning enables students to transfer what they learn in school to solve problems they face in the future.

What is the Deeper Learning Network?

A national “Deeper Learning Network” of more than 500 schools in forty-one states is serving as a source of innovation and tools for delivering the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of deeper learning. Composed of ten school networks—a mix of charter and traditional public schools—the Deeper Learning Network collectively serves more than 227,000 students, most of which are low-income minority students. Each network has a unique approach to delivering deeper learning, but all are united in fostering the educational outcomes that prepare young people for economic and civic success. The Network includes Asia Society, Big Picture Learning, ConnectEd, EdVisions Schools, Envision Education, Expeditionary Learning, High Tech High, Internationals Network for Public Schools, New Tech Network, and New Visions for Public Schools.
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For additional information on Deeper Learning, please visit www.deeperlearning4all.org

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deeper Learning Network</th>
<th>RICHER ASSESSMENTS: A First-Rate Yardstick for a First-Rate Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Envision Education</strong></td>
<td>Students assessed on a full range of competencies—including leadership, confidence, and critical thinking—develop the harder-to-measure skills they need for college- and career-readiness. At Envision schools, students are required to play a role in their own education, mapping out self-directed projects, including four-year internships and service-learning projects, and following them up with public presentations of their portfolios to peers, teachers, family, and neighbors. Much like a graduate student defending a thesis, an Envision graduating senior must defend his or her work to demonstrate mastery of the subject matter, bolstering communication skills and confidence. <a href="http://www.envisionschools.org">www.envisionschools.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New Visions for Public Schools</strong></td>
<td>At New Visions schools, data drive the educational experience. New Visions for Public School encourages and supports teams of teachers in developing instruction, evaluating the impact of their efforts, and modifying teaching practice based on their assessment of student improvement. This empirical approach facilitates communication between teachers, administrators, parents, and pupils, giving all parties a clear view of each student’s educational goals and how to reach them. <a href="http://www.newvisions.org">www.newvisions.org</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TAKING THE NEXT STEP:**
Education policy should encourage flexible, creative approaches that improve both language skills and academic performance for English Language Learners and should prioritize “global” competence for all students—i.e., broad understanding of the world’s cultures, politics, languages, and economy through the opportunity to examine world affairs through a multi-cultural prism, cultural exchanges, and international travel.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internationals Network for Public Schools</th>
<th>NEW PERSPECTIVES: Preparing for an increasingly diverse and interconnected world</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Internationals Network for Public Schools</strong></td>
<td>Recent immigrants to the United States succeed when curricula combine mastery of English, rigorous academic content, and respect for cultural and linguistic creativity and individuality. At Internationals Network schools, enrollment is composed almost entirely of immigrant students—representing more than 100 countries and 90 languages—including some who have never attended school before. In their classrooms students of all language and skill levels learn together, developing their English language skills while simultaneously learning their academic content. Students conduct projects outside the classroom to help prepare them for life in the real-world. <a href="http://www.internationalsnps.org">www.internationalsnps.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Asia Society</strong></td>
<td>Students prepared to be global citizens are better able to tackle complex problems in an increasingly interconnected world. The Asia Society’s International Studies Schools Network enrolls mostly low-income students and addresses a vexing dilemma in twenty-first-century U.S. education: how to bridge the gap between native-born and immigrant youths who enroll in school, while also helping students—and communities—maintain their cultural character. To this end, the Asia Society incorporates a global perspective into every part of the learning experience, both in and out of school, to allow students to compete, connect, and cooperate on an international scale. <a href="http://www.asiasociety.org">www.asiasociety.org</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TAKING THE NEXT STEP:**
Education policy should encourage the use of student portfolios at both middle and high schools to evaluate performance and weigh the best options for remediation. Further, policymakers should support professional development and training that focus on the use and analysis of data.
### CAREER READINESS: How to Hit the Ground Running

#### Big Picture Learning
Extensive internship opportunities help students succeed academically, prepare for careers, and prosper in their communities.

Students excel when they are personally invested in schoolwork that is meaningful to them. Through a series of two-day-per-week internships that run for the duration of students’ high school years, the Big Picture Learning network extends the classroom beyond the schoolhouse doors into the domain of local businesses, nonprofits, and government agencies. Youths are evaluated not only the quality of their projects, but also on how their entire learning experience transforms them, influences their character, and informs their role in their community.

www.bigpicture.org

**TAKING THE NEXT STEP:**
Education policy should encourage students to participate in practical, career-based learning that grants credit toward both high school graduation and college admission.

#### ConnectEd
Work-based learning with rigorous instruction in math, science, and language arts introduces students to a world of professional and vocational possibilities.

A positive high school experience is closely linked to success in college and entry into a valuable career. Following this logic, ConnectEd offers rigorous academics integrated with career-based learning and real world workplace experiences. Its students combine academic study with learning “pathways” that reflect the knowledge and skills demanded by key industries such as engineering, health care, and law. This allows students to explore topics that suit their individual interests and goals, making school personally relevant.

www.connectedcalifornia.org

### PERSONALIZED & PROJECT-BASED LEARNING: One Size Does Not Fit All Students

#### High Tech High
Collaborative, innovative, and empowered teachers better prepare their students to be successful in the classroom and the real world.

Teachers at High Tech High schools consider collaboration the key to their own success, as well as their pupils’; they meet each day before class to put finishing touches on that day’s lesson plans, discuss long-term projects, share tips and best practices, and offer each other guidance and support. Their students, through practical work experience, learn to “connect the dots” between education and employment and to defend their work in presentations to their peers, teachers, and the community at large. These presentations promote a culture of rigor and transparency that is the hallmark of High Tech High.

www.elschools.org

**TAKING THE NEXT STEP:**
Education policy should promote personalized learning in which students deepen understanding through their own experience of core academic content and skills; new benchmarks for measuring critical—but often less easily assessed—skills such as problem solving and effective communication; and more freedom for schools and teachers to make scheduling and curricula decisions that ensure collaboration, innovation, and personalization.

#### EdVisions Schools
Engaged students are better learners.

At EdVisions Schools, teachers don’t stand in front of a classroom and lecture. They build relationships with their students, empowering them to create collaborative projects aimed at solving dilemmas in their communities. This practical approach builds a bridge between the school and the community; motivates students to learn; and encourages communication, real-world problem solving, and civic involvement.

www.edvisions.com

#### Expeditionary Learning
Learning experiences outside the classroom connect students to their communities and teach them the value of service.

Expeditionary Learning is a network of more than 150 schools in which students learn math, science, history, English language arts, and other subjects by “doing.” In contrast to traditional instruction, students are largely responsible for developing their own structured, self-directed projects that are inspired by “expeditions” wherein they work in their communities. These expeditions compel students to address topics as diverse as ecology, zoning, and voting rights issues.

www.hightechhigh.org

### INCORPORATING TECHNOLOGY SCHOOLWIDE: The American Classroom 2.0

#### New Tech Network
Curricula that integrate technology into hands-on projects engage students, teachers, and parents in the learning process.

At New Tech Network schools, technology is integrated into every aspect of the educational experience. Students learn through hands-on projects that require them to collaborate in solving complex problems. These projects rely on creativity, ingenuity, and subject material relevant to the students’ communities, preparing them to engage in a world increasingly driven by technology.

www.newtechnetwork.org

**TAKING THE NEXT STEP:**
Education policy should promote technology and innovative diagnostic benchmarks to continuously upgrade teaching and learning and assess both core content and competencies, including harder-to-measure skills.
Deeper Learning schools are all across the country

41 out of 50 states have Deeper Learning Network schools

The Deeper Learning Network has more than ...  
- 500 schools
- 13,800 teachers
- 227,000 students

Deeper Learning schools receive the same level of public funding as their neighboring public schools.

Their students look like this ...

- 73% are minorities
- 63% qualify for free or reduced lunch

And they accomplish this ...

- 82% graduate from high school
- 87% are accepted to a 2- or 4-year college

Plus ...

LATINO 37%
WHITE 27%
BLACK 21%
ASIAN 9%
OTHER 4%
AMERICAN INDIAN 2%
### WHY DEEPER LEARNING?

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**THE NETWORK:** Asia Society, Big Picture Learning, ConnectEd/Linked Learning, EdVisions Schools, Envision Education, Expeditionary Learning, High Tech High, Internationals Network for Public Schools, New Tech Network, and New Visions for Public Schools.

[www.deeperlearning4all.org](http://www.deeperlearning4all.org)

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### ASIA SOCIETY GRADUATES ARE COLLEGE-BOUND

**Graduation rate**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0</th>
<th>20%</th>
<th>40%</th>
<th>60%</th>
<th>80%</th>
<th>100%</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>88%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**College acceptance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0</th>
<th>20%</th>
<th>40%</th>
<th>60%</th>
<th>80%</th>
<th>100%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>90%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

### AN EMPHASIS ON GLOBAL COMPETENCY

Students learn to communicate and collaborate across cultures through an academically rigorous, globally-focused curriculum where students learn through experience, rather than through textbooks, by solving real-world problems – this is also called problem-based learning. Students’ learning is measured using authentic assessments, i.e. their ability to demonstrate what they can do with their knowledge and skills. Students also complete four years of required language courses, with a daily focus on global citizenship through real-life learning experiences such as Model United Nations. Additionally, students complete projects that relate to global issues, and they compile the best examples of their papers, reports and other materials into what is called a learning portfolio. Students learn to work collaboratively with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. This prepares them to navigate the challenges of cross-cultural communication and daily living in a diverse environment. Students round out their study program through internships and by volunteering in their communities, where they provide service but also learn while doing their work; study abroad language immersion; and several options for advanced level courses (e.g. dual credit and Advanced Placement).

### LEARNING THROUGH PROJECTS

**Project-Based Learning** sparks students’ interest and engagement. As they design unique portfolio projects during daily student advisory periods, or work on senior capstone projects, students learn how to

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### DEEPER LEARNING IN ACTION

Students at two ISSN public schools are extending their learning beyond the walls of their classroom through a partnership with a learning center for the poor in a slum of Bangalor, India to raise awareness about global living conditions. Students first learned statistics about the global rise of “mega-slums” and were also exposed to contemporary artists who were engaged with these issues. They then collaborated with the learning center to share images, art and stories about everyday lives, and encouraged students to participate in a global conversation on how the majority of the world’s population lives and what can be done to improve daily life. Moving from learning about an issue to applying that knowledge in the real world is exactly what deeper learning is about.
solve problems, think critically, and reflect on the work they have done throughout the year. They analyze and evaluate global issues from multiple perspectives, based on relevant information gathered and synthesized from sources around the world. Students might examine the question, “Do we have a stereotypical view of Africa? Why? Why not?” Students engage in reflection using the ISSN Graduate Profile to assess their global competency, for example in foreign language literacy, understanding of global interconnectedness, media literacy, and cross-cultural collaboration.

**A COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE AND EQUITY**

The ISSN is committed to serving the needs of low income and minority students in urban, suburban, and rural communities. Network-wide, ISSN schools serve students in grades K-12, 78 percent of whom are minority students and 65 percent are students from low-income families. A combination of rigorous curricula, assessment and instruction, inclusive school culture, family and community involvement, and experiential learning results in students who are doing better academically and graduating at greater numbers than their peers. In an average Asia Society International Studies School the graduation rate is 88 percent. Nearly 90 percent of ISSN graduates are accepted to two or four year colleges – a testament to students seeing the importance of pursuing postsecondary education.

**Teacher Professional Development**

Fostering an environment of deeper learning demands committed professionals. Teachers at ISSN schools engage in ongoing professional development. They mentor one another, observe each other’s lessons, give constructive feedback to improve instruction, study together to stay abreast of the latest research and instructional strategies, and collaborate with teachers locally and nationally through the Network. Teachers are willing to engage in international learning experiences and model for students how to be receptive to the perspectives of others. In this way they exemplify the very aspects of deeper learning they are seeking to develop in their students.

**Common Core And More**

ISSN schools employ the Graduation Performance System (GPS), a performance assessment system through which teachers engage students in Project-Based Learning and standards-based evaluation of their work. While aligned to the Common Core State Standards, the GPS goes beyond with the addition of the element of agency, where students not only analyze and interpret information, but engage in advocacy or action based on their own interests. Students develop personalized service projects such as raising awareness about water crises globally, or child abuse locally. In these projects they master the content, use critical thinking and communication skills, and navigate the ups and downs of working collaboratively with a wide range of people. All these activities prepare them well for success in college and careers.

Learn more about Asia Society’s students: [http://asiasociety.org/education/international-studies-schools-network/international-studies-schools-network](http://asiasociety.org/education/international-studies-schools-network/international-studies-schools-network)
Big Picture Learning supports a network of fifty-six public schools located across the United States and a growing number internationally. Founded in 1995, Big Picture has refined and expanded its innovative public school design, which connects high school and college, to include support of urban and rural student populations. The core of the design is creating a learning program for each student, based on his or her academic and career interests and needs and on addressing essential learning standards. Big Picture Learning schools promote learning goals to develop critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, communication, and collaboration.

### Personalized Learning

The curriculum, learning environment, and use of time during the school day at Big Picture schools are determined based on the student’s individual interests, talents, and needs. Students have the option of taking academic workshops at school or of taking college classes if they are ready for the work and the subject is one they wish to study. Big Picture Learning believes that personalizing education is about doing what’s best for kids—pushing and pulling at the right time, helping them solve problems, and providing the right measures of challenge and support for each student in order to promote growth. Students take responsibility for and ownership of their learning by pursuing their interests and passions in the real world; they develop skills in school-based settings as well as through learning experiences outside of the school building, school day, or the academic year.

### Learning in the Real World

The main component of every student’s education at a Big Picture school is Learning Through Internship/Interest. In this internship with an expert mentor, the student completes an authentic project that uses real-world problems and projects that allow students to explore and discuss these problems in ways that are relevant to them and that benefit the student and the mentor. These internships are the main path to deepening student learning and academic growth.

### Deeper Learning in Action

DJ’s quandary was two-sided: he toyed with dropping out of school, yet he yearned to go to college. A classmate told him about the Metropolitan Regional Career and Technical Center, informally referred to as “the Met” and the first Big Picture Learning school, where “you can study what you want to study.” DJ’s first Met internship was creating street murals and doing silk screening. That’s when he discovered his flair for business. He jumped into the Met’s entrepreneurial program run by a local business person. DJ was tapped to be a CEO of a new product launch—Big Picture Soda. He drew up business plans, hired fellow students, and raised $10,000 in six months, landing Whole Foods and other stores to distribute the new drink. These tasks required DJ to be a creative problem solver, use communication skills to convince others to support the business and product, and collaborate with his employers and funders. The profits from the venture helped support a Dollars-for-Scholars scholarship project. The internship position helped DJ develop content knowledge in English, mathematics, and business, and he enrolled in Howard University where he successfully majored in business.
growth. At one school a student shared his passion for flying and described his internship working at a small airport, learning about all aspects of the aircraft industry. With the aid of his school advisors and workplace mentor, the mathematics and science he learned in the classroom were reinforced and integrated into his work with aircraft on a daily basis. This helped him see the relevance of academics in a career, strengthened his content knowledge, and helped him determine the next steps along his proposed career path.

AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT
Authentic assessment measures students’ ability to solve real-life problems. For example, while a traditional assessment for a chemistry class might consist only of multiple choice questions that require little more than memorization, an authentic assessment engages students in scientific inquiry and might ask test-takers to propose their solution to helping their community clean up a chemical spill in a local lake. Big Picture Learning uses authentic assessments that ask students to demonstrate meaningful application of essential knowledge and skills. Their assessment criteria is individualized and fit to each student based on the standards of the student’s project (as gauged by the student’s advisor with input from mentors, parents, and peers). Assessments include public exhibitions (one per quarter or trimester which tracks student growth, quality of work, and academic depth in the learning goals), weekly check-in meetings with advisors, yearly presentation portfolios, and transcripts (which translate the Big Picture Learning design so that colleges can understand the students’ knowledge and skills). Students also reflect upon their learning by keeping journals.

COLLEGE PREPARATION AND SUPPORT
By developing challenging individual learning plans, organizing student visits to colleges, educating families about the college application and financial aid processes, and building relationships with local colleges, Big Picture Learning schools cultivate students’ readiness for the challenges of post-high school study. Big Picture Learning school students are required to take college entrance exams and apply to at least one college or postsecondary school program. Many Big Picture Learning students take courses on college campuses as well.

RESULTS THAT SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES
Personalizing each student’s learning experience, engaging in authentic assessments, and maintaining a focus on rigorous content results in impressive outcomes. Big Picture Learning reports higher passing rates at its schools than at other schools in the same district. Big Picture Learning also has a higher on-time graduation rate than other schools in same districts. For example the Met Sacramento High School, a Big Picture Learning school, has a rate of 89 percent versus 76 percent for the district overall and the Metropolitan Regional Career and Technical Center in Providence, RI has a rate of 81 percent versus 65 percent in the city. A 2012 study of Big Picture Learning alumni conducted by MPR Associates, Inc., found that 74 percent of Big Picture Learning graduates enrolled in college within the first year after graduation, and on average the freshman-to-sophomore persistence rate was 87 percent.
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www.deeperlearning4all.org

Linked Learning is an approach that uses “pathways” to help students of all abilities connect learning to their interests and career goals. A pathway spans grades nine to twelve, connects high school and postsecondary institutions to ensure a smooth transition after graduation, and integrates rigorous academic instruction with demanding technical curriculum and field-based learning. Pathways are developed around industry sectors, such as business and finance, building and environmental design, biomedical and health sciences, or arts, media, and entertainment.

A STRUCTURED APPROACH THAT SUPPORTS STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

By integrating “rigor, relevance, and relationships” into the pathways, Linked Learning melds strong academics, technical education relevant to the student’s chosen career path, and real-world experiences which allow students to develop relationships with teachers and community mentors focused on career goals. Most pathways limit the number of students to 250–500 so that teaching is individualized, and struggling students are identified and helped. Many pathways adopt a flexible schedule that allows more time for in-depth labs and Project-Based Learning, longer classes, extra tutoring for students that are behind, work-based learning experiences, and common preparation time for teams of teachers to develop integrated curricula and work with employers and students. Schools that use Linked Learning pathways train and motivate teachers and school leaders so they can develop partnerships with local industry and business to inform curriculum and support work-based learning. Linked Learning supports the development and operation of pathways at both the district and school levels, but it advocates for district-wide implementation as a way to change instruction and learning for all students.

DEEPER LEARNING IN ACTION

Porterville (California) Unified School District hosted an exhibition of student work titled Night at the Pathway Museum, where students showcased their Project-Based Learning and described how they deepened their content knowledge over the term of the project. Projects included robotics design, healthy diet and nutrition, and the design of buildings. Working in teams, students from nine Porterville high schools chose unresolved issues in the community they wanted to address. Then, with data culled mostly from local libraries, they formed conclusions and made recommendations for how to resolve the problems. Students collaborated in presenting their findings to an audience of outside reviewers who evaluated the student presentations using criteria which ensured that the projects addressed learning outcomes set by teachers. Students had an opportunity to showcase their content knowledge in various disciplines (English, math, science, and technical fields), and they were asked to explain what they learned and how they applied their knowledge to their project. Students explained the critical-thinking and problem-solving skills used to develop their conclusions during their presentations. A by-product of the exhibition is that more employers want to partner with the high schools and support the Linked Learning approach.
Connecting Academics to Real-World Applications

The Linked Learning approach relies on teachers to connect theoretical knowledge and real-world applications in newly developed curricula. Teachers in Linked Learning pathways are given adequate time and support to plan and create standards-aligned, integrated, and multidisciplinary project-based instruction and assessments that help students make connections between book learning and real-life learning and to practice problem solving and critical thinking. For example, an engineering teacher who challenges students to design the shape and area for the most energy efficient blade for a wind turbine is reinforcing both the engineering and the geometry standards that students must master. Similarly, a geometry teacher who asks students to propose and defend their placement of blade angles for a wind turbine is helping students understand the geometry of angles and is making mathematics more relevant and understandable by using a real-world engineering context.

Work-Based Experiences

Linked Learning students have opportunities to connect what they learn in the classroom with work and careers. For example, a biology student enrolled in a health-care pathway might visit a local hospital or medical institute to learn about the science of stem cells or heart disease from scientists and doctors. Students experience the workplace in various ways, beginning in the early high school years with shadowing business partners to learn about their jobs and careers to engaging in real work with intensive internships in the upper grades. These work-based learning experiences allow students to build supportive relationships with adults and to develop problem-solving, communication, and collaboration skills, all necessary to succeed in the workplace and in college.

Linked Learning is Working

Schools that have adopted the Linked Learning approach have reported increased attendance rates, improved test scores, and decreased dropout rates than their non-pathway peers. Data collected by the Institute for Evidence-Based Change working directly with school districts shows that in two districts with four-year Linked Learning pathways, ninth grade pathway students fail fewer courses than their peers; 9 percent more Linked Learning students attend four-year postsecondary education institutions than their peers; tenth grade students enrolled in certified pathways are as much as 14 percent more likely than their peers to be on track to complete the California college entrance requirements; and according to data from the Stanford Research Institute, ninth and tenth grade Linked Learning students accumulate significantly more credits than their non-pathway peers.

Learn more about Linked Learning:
www.connectedcalifornia.org/linked_learning

Network operator type:
Professional Development and Technical Assistance Provider

Founded: 2006

Headquarters:
2150 Shattuck, Suite 1200
Berkeley, CA

Website: www.ConnectEdCalifornia.org
Phone: (510) 849-4945
Email: info@ConnectEdCalifornia.org
Twitter: @ConnectEdOrg

* numbers reflect California only
EdVisions Schools, a network of forty small schools, promotes relevant and personalized learning environments that emphasize self-directed, Project-Based Learning to empower students, parents, and teachers. Working primarily with underserved students in both urban and rural areas, EdVisions credits its success to its focus on teacher-led schools, positive caring relationships, mentoring, and active student engagement in school decision making. Students are measured on rigorous academics as well as the deeper learning skills needed for postsecondary education, careers, and civic engagement.

**EDVISIONS STUDENTS OUTPERFORM THEIR PEERS ON COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACT Scores</th>
<th>SAT Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>EdVisions Average</strong></td>
<td>22.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>National Average</strong></td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SMALL AND PERSONALIZED**

The founders of EdVisions found that students often leave traditional schools due to impersonal curricula and time-driven instruction that pays little attention to relationships and relevant learning opportunities. Through small learning communities, every student at an EdVisions school is treated as an individual. Strategies to support students include the use of personalized learning plans that are designed by students, parents, and teachers; personalized workspaces that are equipped with technology that tracks student progress against their learning plans; full-time student advisors; and a curriculum that emphasizes student projects and presentations. To foster a culture of student ownership, students manage the library, music class, school congress, and multiple student clubs, giving them additional authentic opportunities to develop communication, collaboration, and critical-thinking and problem-solving skills. EdVisions also focuses on students' non-academic needs, which helps students think about their own learning by measuring their ability to set reasonable goals, make plans to meet those goals, and persist to achieve those goals.

**SELF-DIRECTED, PROJECT-BASED LEARNING**

A core component of the EdVisions approach is the use of self-directed, Project-Based Learning opportunities in which students explore real-world problems and challenges, allowing them to obtain a deeper knowledge of a subject. A central goal of these individual or group projects is to build student mastery through rigorous interdisciplinary content that is relevant to...
the students’ lives. One student who was interested in music learned physics through an exploration of sound. Another built on her interest in gardening through a study of the genetics of heirloom tomatoes. Teacher advisors guide students as they develop their individual or group projects. Academic learning standards are embedded into each of these projects and used to demonstrate high levels of understanding. Students demonstrate their learning through online portfolios or publicly through presentations to their peers, parents, and the community.

AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT

Authentic assessment measures students’ ability to solve real-life problems. For example, while a traditional assessment for a chemistry class might consist only of multiple choice questions that require little more than memorization, an authentic assessment engages students in scientific inquiry and might ask test-takers to propose their solution to helping their community clean up a chemical spill in a local lake. EdVisions students are held to high standards in their project-based learning, not only by their teachers and advisors, but by parents and content specialists outside of the classroom as well. Teachers help guide students’ work and ensure that they are meeting content standards and preparing for graduation. Students first develop a project proposal, which is vetted and edited with parents and multiple advisors and content area teachers. Upon approval, a contract is signed to set expectations. Advisors then pay close attention to the student’s progress throughout a project, using the contract, content standards, and rubrics as a guide. An advisor might help a student incorporate the algebra skills needed to pass a standardized test into an upcoming project. Or the advisor might emphasize critical thinking or collaboration skills in which a student needs practice and help the student create a plan to meet those goals. Teachers believe in the philosophy that “a student’s best work looks different for every kid,” and they demonstrate that belief through multiple forms of authentic assessment.

TEACHER OWNERSHIP AND DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

EdVisions embraces the principle of teacher ownership of every aspect of the learning environment. They engage “teachers as owners” of a democratic learning community by granting teachers control over numerous core aspects of school management, such as budgeting and staffing choices. Teachers are evaluated by peers, students, and parents. New staff are incorporated within the school culture and offered continuous improvement support by a teacher-led coaching and mentoring plan. This approach is grounded in the belief that in order to successfully engage students and promote deeper learning, the school must espouse a culture of strong leadership and ownership at all levels.

GETTING RESULTS

EdVisions reports that students in their schools earn higher scores on the SAT, that approximately 80 percent of their students graduate, and 82 percent of students have gone to a two- or four-year college. In their flagship school, 69 percent of students have graduated from postsecondary institutions, while 22 percent are still enrolled, for a total of 91 percent. Additionally, EdVisions students consistently outperform their peers at similar schools on growth in their social and emotional skills.
WHY DEEPER LEARNING?
The U.S. education system must prepare students to be engaged citizens and to succeed in the high-skilled jobs that are increasingly required in the global economy. To meet these demands, students will need “deeper learning,” a mix of knowledge, skills, and dispositions that include critical thinking and problem solving, effective communication, collaboration, an academic mindset, and the ability to learn how to learn—all applied to the mastery of academic content.

WHAT IS THE DEEPER LEARNING NETWORK?
A national “Deeper Learning Network” of more than 500 schools is delivering deeper learning to students in forty-one states. Composed of ten school networks it collectively serves more than 227,000 students, most of whom are low-income minority students. Each school network has a unique approach, but all foster the deeper learning skills that prepare young people for economic and civic success.


www.deeperlearning4all.org

ENVISION GRADUATES ARE COLLEGE-BOUND
Envision students—especially African Americans, Latinos, and those who represent the first in their family to pursue higher education—enroll in college at higher rates than their non-Envision peers.

DRIVING SUCCESS THROUGH RIGOROUS STUDENT ASSESSMENT
As part of the “Know, Do, Reflect” approach to learning, Envision Education schools use multiple assessments that emphasize students’ deep understanding of academic topics. Students assemble a portfolio of their best work, which they must “defend,” dissertation-style, in front of an audience of educators, peers, and community members. As students prepare their portfolios and receive feedback from teachers, they hone not only their critical thinking skills, but also their communication skills, as they describe their learning across grades and classes. Students present a defense of their work at the end of the tenth grade, where they provide examples of what they have studied and explain their learning step by step. Students continue to make presentations of their work throughout their school career, which allows them to develop their communication skills and apply their knowledge. Seniors must pass the “college success portfolio” defense, which is required for graduation from an Envision school. One student reflected that in the tenth grade it was difficult to present, as she had to keep revising and improving.

DEEPER LEARNING IN ACTION
When Sha’nice started at City Arts & Technology High School (CAT) in San Francisco, her mother had just died at age forty-two. She was estranged from her father, and she was being raised by her eighty-year-old grandmother. CAT Principal Karen Bioski recalls the arrival of an “angry, frustrated girl.” Four years later, Sha’nice was a student transformed. She had received acceptances from three four-year universities and was awaiting word from several more. What caused the transformation? Sha’nice said the teachers at CAT offered engaging projects that interested her, provided opportunities to be responsible for her own learning, encouraged her to take on new challenges, and helped her learn from her mistakes. Through presentations of her work she got to “show what I know,” honing her critical-thinking and communication skills. Her junior year internship at the San Francisco city attorney’s office—the first time the office employed a high school intern—developed her problem-solving skills and instilled the desire to work harder to get to college.
her presentation; by the twelfth grade, she and other students were able to present confidently and comfortably and had mastered the content knowledge. She was able to accomplish this because she had many opportunities to present, learn from the experience, apply those lessons to the next opportunity, and to constantly refine each presentation.

**DEVELOPING REAL-WORLD PROJECTS**

Envision teachers embed rigorous academic content in projects that speak to students’ life experiences and that have relevance and application in the larger world and in their communities. This instructional approach is called Project-Based Learning. These learning experiences are augmented by community-based projects and internships at partner organizations and businesses. During part of their eleventh grade year, all Envision students work at an internship site, such as the Oakland Zoo, St. Luke’s Hospital, Youth Radio, or California Academy of Sciences, where they work side by side with employer mentors who help them solve real-world problems and apply their knowledge.

**PROMOTING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Envision schools invest heavily in teacher professional growth, including new teacher training in August, three hours of weekly on-site professional development time, and ten days of professional development over the summer and during the school year. Envision teachers work and learn collaboratively, sharing their projects and tools, trading ideas and successes, and learning best practices from each other—within and between Envision Schools and, through Envision Learning Partners, between schools and systems across the country.

**COLLEGE PREPARATION AND SUCCESS FOR EACH STUDENT**

Hand in hand with this academic preparation, teachers help students develop the skills, attitudes, and expectations that support college success. They do this by emphasizing lifelong learning, cultivating persistence and confidence, and helping students navigate the college admissions process. Envision students also visit college campuses and receive critical tutoring to prepare for the SAT. This intentional focus on college preparation and the strong academic foundation students receive at Envision Schools has led to positive outcomes. According to data collected by Envision, fully 100 percent of Envision students meet all the requirements for admission to California’s public university system, and more than 90 percent of graduates go on to attend either a two- or four-year college, compared to 40 percent of all California high school graduates. Additionally, 87 percent of African American students and 91 percent of Hispanic students at Envision Schools go to college, compared to the national averages for those groups of 32 percent and 25 percent respectively.
Expeditionary Learning is a network of schools in which students learn by doing. Students at these schools learn math, science, history, English language arts, and many other subjects through projects, or “expeditions”, that connect them to their communities and teach them the value of service. Students also learn how to think critically, solve problems, and collaborate—the kind of deeper learning skills that will help them to succeed in college, the workforce, and society.

Expeditionary Learning Schools Significantly Outperform District Averages

**Reading/English Language Arts (2010-11)**

- **Elementary**: +7%
- **Middle**: +11%
- **High**: +12%

**Math (2010-11)**

- **Elementary**: +6%
- **Middle**: +9%
- **High**: +8%

Learning by Doing

Real-world experience through service is what sets Expeditionary Learning apart. In contrast to traditional instruction, students learn by designing their own projects, going on extended expeditions outside the classroom to work in their communities for weeks at a time—covering topics as diverse as ecology, zoning issues, and voting rights.

Students work alone and in groups, conducting original research, analyzing data, and presenting their findings to their teachers and their fellow students. The work goes in stages, as students solicit feedback from their peers and instructors, making revisions along the way. Each step in the process reinforces a culture of continuous improvement and refinement. Among the most popular events of the school year are exhibition nights, in which students display their work to fellow students, educators, parents, and the community.

Deeper Learning in Action

Students at The Springfield Renaissance School in Springfield, MA are learning about environmental science and saving their school district money. In 2010, Joseph Forest, a city facilities engineer, worked with a tenth grade environmental science class on a project to figure out how to save energy. The students collected data and developed recommendations for conservation in the city’s school buildings, and presented their findings to city officials. Springfield Mayor Domenic Sarno not only commended students on their effort, but backed their ideas with a $156,000 investment based on their proposal, known as “Greenprint.” Within two years the city recouped all of its investment and has engaged the students in future projects, dedicating another $250,000 towards that work.
DIVERSE STUDENTS WHO CONSISTENTLY OUTPERFORM THEIR PEERS

Expeditionary Learning encompasses a diverse community of students and educators in schools across the country. Their 46,000 students come from diverse socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds, and over half of their students are minorities. According to a 2013 study by Mathematica, students in Expeditionary Learning schools consistently outperform their peers on standardized tests. This includes substantially higher scores for both black and Latino students. Expeditionary Learning students have a consistently higher college acceptance rate than similar students from other schools.

TEACHERS WHO RECEIVE ONGOING TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Expeditionary Learning schools pay particular attention to their teachers. Teachers and school leaders work together to improve curriculum design, instruction, school culture, leadership, and assessment. Faculty members take part in coaching sessions, demonstration lessons, classroom observations, and the EL Commons, an online forum where educators can share information and learn from their peers. Each year over 800 educators come together for master classes, discussion groups, and regional meetings. In addition to rigorous assessment and a focus on making sure that teachers use data to inform their teaching, there is plenty of room for creativity and judgment. Teachers have the flexibility to adjust instruction to meet their students’ needs while measuring progress.

And “learning by doing” isn’t reserved only for students; by accompanying their students on expeditions, teachers understand the importance of going beyond the classroom.

A RIGOROUS NETWORK

It isn’t easy to become an Expeditionary Learning school. Each prospective school must undergo a rigorous assessment before it can join the network. Expeditionary Learning collects a variety of data about the school and gauges the district’s support for comprehensive change. It looks for thoughtful and influential leadership within the school and examines the faculty’s willingness to embrace a new model.

LINKED TO THE COMMON CORE

To fully implement the Common Core Standards decision-makers must demand high-quality, aligned curricula to deliver both the academic content and skills of deeper learning. New York selected Expeditionary Learning to create the statewide English Language Arts and Literacy curriculum for grades 3-8. These materials will be reviewed to demonstrate their quality and alignment to the Common Core. Finally, they’ll be openly available for other states to adopt and to help ensure that all students are prepared for college, work, and life.
High Tech High is a network of eleven schools in San Diego County, California, spanning grades K-12 that prepares students for college and careers by providing a personalized, hands-on approach to learning, strong connections between students and adults, and a common intellectual mission, with strong teacher leadership. High Tech High is authorized by California to fully credential its own teachers and also opened a graduate school of education in 2007 that offers master’s degree programs for experienced educators.

HIGH TECH HIGH STUDENTS SCORE BETTER ON BOTH MATH AND READING TESTS

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COMMON INTELLECTUAL MISSION

High Tech High schools are diverse and integrated. Students are enrolled by a ZIP code-based lottery, and there is no tracking of students by perceived academic ability. All students pursue a rigorous curriculum that provides the foundation for entry into the University of California system and employment. Schools articulate common expectations for learning that value deeper learning competencies, the integration of hands and minds, and the merging of academic disciplines. Performance-based assessments are used to gather evidence of the scope of a student’s knowledge on a subject, rather than simply testing the accuracy of their responses on a selection of questions. Students develop projects, solve problems, present findings to community panels, and complete an academic internship, a substantial senior project, and a personal digital portfolio. Teachers employ a variety of approaches to accommodate diverse learners and recognize the value of having students from different backgrounds working in collaboration.

A TRANSPARENT LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Walk into any High Tech High school, and you are immediately struck by the open learning environment marked by high-quality student work on display everywhere—in galleries, outdoor learning spaces, and specialty laboratories. The caliber of work is consistently high, and students are proud to showcase their learning, which is the product of hours of toil, revision, and working through challenges collaboratively.

DEEPER LEARNING IN ACTION

High Tech High seniors collaborated with the San Diego Blood Bank, along with an art teacher and a biology/multimedia teacher on the Blood Bank Project. Students were divided into pairs to research blood-related topics that incorporated various disciplines, such as biology, health, media, and history. Topics focused on leukemia, sickle cell anemia, the AIDS epidemic, the use of blood in film, and the role of blood in religion. Once the research and findings were complete, students created a painting of their theme on a large piece of custom-cut wood. An opening housed a laptop displaying an audio-visual presentation they had designed to teach the community about their topic. The final product highlighted students’ research about the importance of blood to our health, blood diseases, and the symbolism and use of blood in art and religion. Students collaborated in conducting their research and used critical thinking to analyze how blood is viewed by the entertainment industry and by religions. Students demonstrated their communication and presentation skills as they shared their findings with a broader audience. Students’ final projects were exhibited at the JETT Art Gallery in San Diego, next to the Blood Bank to promote blood donations.
and openly. Students often take risks as they try new approaches. Reflection is a standard part of their practice, which helps students develop resiliency and persistence and helps them learn how to learn. Students are encouraged to explore and investigate and use their mistakes as learning opportunities. After one student mistook an alternator for a motor and plugged the alternator into the wall, causing power to go out in his classroom, he reflected on how much he learned about electricity from his error.

**ADULT WORLD CONNECTION**

High Tech High students connect their studies to the world beyond school through field studies, community service, internships, and consultation with outside experts. Using their good communication skills, students routinely create and present work for audiences of employers and community leaders and exhibit their work in professional venues. All high school students complete internships with employers or in a community service setting, where they develop projects that contribute to the workplace or help solve a problem. One student’s project analyzed bacteria levels at popular beaches which required sophisticated measurement of the water and interviews with doctors and other health experts. The student determined the safety of the water and the illnesses that could be caused by the different types of bacteria and presented the material to peers, teachers, and local experts, making use of critical-thinking and problem-solving skills.

**TEACHER AS DESIGNER**

High Tech High teachers are program and curriculum designers. They work in interdisciplinary teams to design the courses they teach and participate in critical decisions regarding curriculum, assessment, professional development, hiring, and other significant areas of the school. The school schedule supports team teaching, and teachers have ample planning time to devise integrated projects, common rubrics for assessment, and common rituals by which all students demonstrate their learning and progress toward graduation. High Tech High has a deep commitment to professional development and teacher preparation and offers certification to teachers that teach at High Tech High or an affiliated school. The High Tech High Graduate School of Education offers master’s degrees in teacher leadership and school leadership which are open to experienced teachers and educators.

**RIGOROUS LEARNING, OUTSTANDING RESULTS**

Students at High Tech High are exposed to a rigorous curriculum that meets admission requirements to the University of California, and they demonstrate their learning through performance assessments and portfolios, as well as standardized assessments. The High Tech High Network reports that for U.S. schools, 98 percent of graduates go to college, a strong rate given that 35 percent of High Tech High graduates are first-generation college students. Thirty percent of students go into the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) fields (the national average is 17 percent), and 75 percent of graduates enroll in four-year institutions.
Since 2004, Internationals Network for Public Schools has supported a network of schools that provide quality education for immigrant youth who have arrived in the United States with limited English language skills, varying degrees of schooling, and different literacy levels in their native language. The schools focus on developing language skills and preparing students with the knowledge and skills they will need for college. Internationals Schools are close-knit, nurturing communities that support students who may feel displaced as newcomers to the United States and students accustomed to the U.S. but who are still not proficient in English.

INTERNATIONALS STUDENTS GRADUATE AT HIGH RATES

2-, 4-, & 6-year Graduation rates

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College acceptance

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<tr>
<td>Internationals</td>
<td>79%</td>
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<td>Peers</td>
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LANGUAGE AND CONTENT INTEGRATION

In Internationals Schools, every teacher teaches content and language. Teachers know that strong language skills develop most effectively in context and emerge most naturally in a purposeful, language-rich, interdisciplinary, and experiential program. Teachers are constantly seeking language learning opportunities regardless of the content area and incorporate the home language skills of students to foster learning of English and other content. A biology class, for example, also offers an opportunity to understand the language features embedded in content vocabulary.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Internationals Schools believes that learning outside the classroom is essential to providing the real-world experiences necessary to learn English and become prepared for life after high school. An internship program is a key element for students to explore career interests while applying and extending their skills in meaningful settings. Students participate in activities such as community service, research projects about community issues, field trips to local museums, and lab experiences. Authentic assessments that ask students to perform real-world tasks that demonstrate meaningful

DEEPER LEARNING IN ACTION

Ygnacio, a native of the Dominican Republic, moved to New York City with his family as a teen with little formal education. The transition was difficult, but Ygnacio was fortunate to enroll at the International High School at LaGuardia Community College, which provided him with the tools he needed to overcome his dyslexia and make up for missed time in school. At one point, overwhelmed by the educational challenge he faced, Ygnacio considered dropping out. However, his peers, teachers, and other support staff pushed him to focus on his interests in community organizing. He was able to take an internship at a community-based organization advocating for educational equity, allowing him to develop valuable problem-solving and communication skills as he worked alongside community partners to support the organization’s strategic goals. He also incorporated what he learned into individual and group class projects and steadily developed his academic skills. The collaborative environment and work with other students of different ability levels helped him learn and provided an additional support structure. As he gained a better sense of his interests and became confident in his abilities, his English skills and overall grades improved until he was able to graduate. He is the first member of his family to graduate from college.
application of essential knowledge and skills, such as portfolios, are used to monitor progress on academic and other deeper learning skills, such as problem solving and communication.

HETEROGENEITY AND COLLABORATION
Students are organized into diverse groups, each with a mix of English proficiency, academic backgrounds, native language, and literacy levels. These student groups foster a sense of community and allow students to teach and learn from one another. Through this collaborative approach, students are encouraged to take ownership of their learning and understand content on a deeper level, learning communication, collaboration, and critical thinking skills in the process. Additional supports such as guidance counselors, social workers, structured peer support, homework help, and writing centers are also provided.

ONE LEARNING MODEL FOR ALL
International Schools believes strongly that all members of the community learn best by engaging in authentic, rigorous, relevant, and collaborative projects that incorporate the voices of all members and use real-world problems to explore in meaningful ways. Not only students, but faculty and principals, work in heterogeneous groups on collaborative projects.

INTERNATIONALS NETWORK FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS
5,500+ STUDENTS in 17 HIGH SCHOOLS across 3 STATES and THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

A NETWORK OF SUPPORT
The first Internationals School began in 1985 as a partnership between the New York City Department of Education and the City University of New York. Over the next sixteen years, three additional schools were opened in New York City, and in 2004, the Internations Network for Public Schools was formalized to create new schools and support existing schools and districts. At present, the network supports 18 high schools in New York, Virginia, and California.

GETTING RESULTS
International Schools continue to outperform schools that are serving similar challenging populations. According to the Network, in 2011, 64 percent of Internationals students graduated from high school in four years, 73 percent in five years, and 82 percent students graduated in six years, outperforming the English language learner graduation rate for New York City public schools. Students are not only graduating; 79 percent of graduates were accepted into college. According to New York City’s published progress reports, three of the top twenty schools in New York City were Internationals High Schools, including Brooklyn International High School, which was ranked the city’s top performing public school in 2008–2009 and is currently in the top three percent of high schools in the city.
New Tech Network is a nonprofit school development organization dedicated to ensuring that all students develop the skills and acquire the knowledge necessary to thrive in post-secondary education, careers, and civic life. Working with districts to build and sustain innovative K-12 public schools, New Tech Network creates a rigorous and engaging school experience that features the intensive use of Project-Based Learning and technology and establishes a positive and engaging school culture. In the seventeen years since its founding, the Network has grown to 133 K-12 schools in twenty-three states and Australia.

**NEW TECH NETWORK STUDENTS EXCEL AT HIGHER-ORDER THINKING**

68% of New Tech Network seniors outperform college freshman with similar backgrounds and abilities

New Tech Network students grow by 77% more than their non-Network peers using the College and Work Readiness Assessment

**PROJECT-BASED LEARNING**

Project-Based Learning is at the heart of New Tech Network's instructional approach. Project-Based Learning is contextual, creative, and shared. Students collaborate on projects that are based on rigorous academic content and require critical thinking, communication, and collaboration to complete. Through extensive professional development and on-site as well as virtual coaching from New Tech Network, teachers learn how to become facilitators of rich, relevant learning. Students work together on projects, ranging in length from two to eight weeks, with teachers serving as coaches, not lecturers. For example, students in a class on environmental analysis at one New Tech school were assigned a project to design and build a solar oven to be used in developing countries. The groups of students used mathematics to calculate the dimensions of the ovens and chemistry and physics to determine the best conductors of heat. During New Tech Network projects, students often engage with experts in the field: business owners, professionals, or college professors who provide advice and feedback on the problem. Students present their completed designs for review by teachers and advisors. Project-Based Learning gives students the opportunity to not only master academic content, but successfully engage in deep learning.

**WHY DEEPER LEARNING?**

The U.S. education system must prepare students to be engaged citizens and to succeed in the high-skilled jobs that are increasingly required in the global economy. To meet these demands, students will need “deeper learning,” a mix of knowledge, skills, and dispositions that include critical thinking and problem solving, effective communication, collaboration, an academic mindset, and the ability to learn how to learn—all applied to the mastery of academic content.

**WHAT IS THE DEEPER LEARNING NETWORK?**

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**THE NETWORK:** Asia Society, Big Picture Learning, ConnectEd/Linked Learning, EdVisions Schools, Envision Education, Expeditionary Learning, High Tech High, Internationals Network for Public Schools, New Tech Network, and New Visions for Public Schools.

www.deeperlearning4all.org

**DEEPER LEARNING IN ACTION**

Over several weeks in the fall of 2012, fifteen New Tech Network schools from around the country participated in #myparty12, a national, online project designed to engage students in the 2012 presidential election and help them learn about politics and the role of the media in an election. Participating students were a good representation of the national electorate and came from rural, suburban and urban schools, various ethnic and economic backgrounds, and all aspects of the political spectrum. Students were challenged to develop their own political parties and establish a set of common beliefs, which required collaboration and critical thinking. They developed party platforms, determined ways to affect public policy, and created short campaign videos that detailed their party platforms, which drew upon writing and presentation skills. More than 7,500 New Tech Network students and teachers then voted to select five finalists, who participated in a network-wide virtual debate held on YouTube using Google Hangout, moderated by a veteran public affairs consultant. The project encouraged students to experience what active, engaged citizenship feels like and gave them opportunities to use technology in creative ways to communicate their views and discuss issues with others.
apply content in solving a real-world challenge.

**PERVASIVE USE OF TECHNOLOGY TO SUPPORT TEACHING AND LEARNING**

The pervasive use of technology supports New Tech Network’s innovative approach to instruction, culture, and anytime learning. New Tech schools embrace one-to-one computing and access to the Internet anywhere on campus and outside school hours for students using devices such as laptops, iPads, or smart phones. All schools use Echo, New Tech Network’s Web-based learning management system that facilitates Project-Based Learning and provides resources for teachers. Teachers can use Echo to track student progress and grades and also to share curricular materials with other teachers across the network. With access to Echo, the Internet, and the latest in collaborative learning technology, every New Tech Network student becomes a self-directed learner who no longer needs to rely solely on teachers or textbooks for knowledge and direction. Students also engage in cross-site collaboration with other students, an experience that parallels the real-world work of an increasing number of adults in our society.

**DOCUMENTED OUTCOMES WITH A DIVERSE STUDENT BODY**

According to New Tech Network, and based on information provided by the National Student Clearinghouse, an average of 74 percent of students who graduated from New Tech Network schools in 2011 enrolled in postsecondary education, a rate 9 percentage points higher than the national average. Of New Tech’s graduating class of 2010, 90 percent of those attending four-year institutions continued from their freshman year into their sophomore year, a persistence rate 17 percentage points higher than the national average, and 79 percent of those students attending two-year institutions continued past their first year, a rate 46 percentage points higher than the national average. Also, a national comparison sample of the College and Work Readiness Assessment (CWRA), administered by the Council for Aid to Education, found that New Tech students demonstrated 75 percent more growth in measures of critical thinking and writing between their freshman and senior years than a comparison group.
New Visions for Public Schools designs, creates, and sustains schools for New York City’s highest-need students and provides educators with the tools and training they need to analyze student performance, diagnose problems, and design solutions to improve instruction. New Visions uses teacher-led inquiry as a fundamental strategy to translate higher standards into classrooms. In partnership with the New York City Department of Education, New Visions provides operational and instructional support to a network of seventy-five small public schools serving nearly 50,000 students. In addition, New Visions hosts a charter management organization, which operates a growing network of charter high schools in under-resourced neighborhoods.

**A Focus on Teachers to Help Students Learn**

New Visions for Public Schools believes that the best way to help students learn is to develop the professional capacity of teachers, principals, and administrators. New Visions supports groups of teachers and administrators—called school inquiry teams—to meet regularly to develop instruction, evaluate their efforts, and modify teaching practices based on assessments of student progress. The “inquiry team” approach builds staff capacity to use student data and lead school improvement efforts and creates a space for teachers to collaborate to identify emerging challenges and implement solutions. The result is a dedicated process for ensuring continuous whole-school improvement.

New Visions and its higher education partner, Hunter College School of Education, place a strong emphasis on teacher and school leader development and certification and offer two special-focus programs. The Urban Teacher Residency Program prepares individuals for careers as teachers of special education and English language arts for grades seven through twelve. The Math and Science Teacher Residency (MASTER) program brings ambitious and rigorous math and science pedagogy to the highest-need classrooms by training prospective teachers under the guidance of an experienced mentor teacher. These teacher and school leader development and certification and offer two special-focus programs. The Urban Teacher Residency Program prepares individuals for careers as teachers of special education and English language arts for grades seven through twelve. The Math and Science Teacher Residency (MASTER) program brings ambitious and rigorous math and science pedagogy to the highest-need classrooms by training prospective teachers under the guidance of an experienced mentor teacher. These teacher and school leader development and certification and offer two special-focus programs. The Urban Teacher Residency Program prepares individuals for careers as teachers of special education and English language arts for grades seven through twelve. The Math and Science Teacher Residency (MASTER) program brings ambitious and rigorous math and science pedagogy to the highest-need classrooms by training prospective teachers under the guidance of an experienced mentor teacher. These teacher and school leader development and certification and offer two special-focus programs. The Urban Teacher Residency Program prepares individuals for careers as teachers of special education and English language arts for grades seven through twelve. The Math and Science Teacher Residency (MASTER) program brings ambitious and rigorous math and science pedagogy to the highest-need classrooms by training prospective teachers under the guidance of an experienced mentor teacher. These teacher and school leader development and certification and offer two special-focus programs. The Urban Teacher Residency Program prepares individuals for careers as teachers of special education and English language arts for grades seven through twelve. The Math and Science Teacher Residency (MASTER) program brings ambitious and rigorous math and science pedagogy to the highest-need classrooms by training prospective teachers under the guidance of an experienced mentor teacher. These

**New Visions Students Graduate at a Higher Rate Than Their District Peers**

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<td>Graduation Rate</td>
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**Deeper Learning in Action**

In a New Visions Charter School ninth-grade science class, a physics teacher challenged his students to use physics concepts to explain why certain New York City intersections were dangerous and to suggest improvements. The students learned about physics rules on velocity, speed, and other forces. They conducted research using Google maps, visited the intersections to measure the reaction time, velocity, and speed of cars and pedestrians, used problem-solving and critical thinking skills to recommend changes, and prepared diagrams of their findings. But rather than simply present their findings to each other or to their teacher, they were able to present to real-world experts, including New York City’s leading transportation advocacy organization and a New York City councilwoman. The students eagerly explained their findings to these guest judges, adapting their arguments based on feedback and contesting each concern that was raised. Understanding the physics was only half of the challenge—the students had to be able to present their work and defend their conclusions, drawing upon content knowledge, communication, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills.
well-trained teachers will be prepared to help all levels of students master rigorous academic content aligned to the Common Core State Standards.

**INTENSE SUPPORT FOR STRUGGLING STUDENTS**

School inquiry teams also focus on understanding and improving support for struggling students. They examine three critical questions: (1) Which students are drifting off track? (2) What are the barriers to success? (3) How can students be brought back on track and up to speed? The team identifies students who are struggling and investigates what is holding them back, such as underdeveloped skills, learning gaps, or a lack of social support. Throughout the process, the team uses data to drive its decision-making and identifies best practices by examining research. The teams believe that, by improving outcomes for the lowest-performing students, they will uncover instructional gaps or school-design issues that affect all students in the school. By addressing those deficits that contribute to poor student outcomes, the inquiry teams are able to strengthen instructional, counseling, scheduling, and support systems for all students within their schools, enable more students to succeed and master deeper learning skills.

**STUDENTS ARE CHALLENGED AND MAKE PROGRESS**

New Visions schools hold high expectations for their students and help them master the skills needed to be college ready – and they are seeing positive results. New Visions schools require students to take the most challenging combination of courses in which they can be successful. Students practice writing in every core subject with rotating writing assignments, so that they are constantly writing and getting feedback on their progress. They are challenged in their lessons to discover new knowledge and to prove the basis for their arguments in group discussions, a practice that helps them become better writers, problem-solvers, critical thinkers, and communicators. As a result, the number of ninth graders earning eleven credits or more (a positive indicator of progress to graduation) increased by nine percentage points and the number of students passing at least one New York State Regents exam went up by sixteen percentage points. In 2012, New Visions schools had an average four-year high school graduation rate of 73.5 percent, nearly nine percentage points higher than the citywide average of 65.5 percent. Also, an evaluation by Policy Studies Associates found that students in the New Visions high schools outperformed their peers on multiple academic measures.