
Educator and Administrator Fact Sheet

Linked Learning

- Offers students a personally relevant, wholly engaging, rigorous academic and career-based curriculum with real-world professions.
- Ensures students graduate from high school well prepared to enter a two- or four-year college or university, an apprenticeship, or formal job training.
- Exposes students in high school to previously unimagined college and career opportunities.

Four Core Components of Linked Learning

- **Rigorous academics.** An academic component that includes college preparatory English, mathematics, science, history, and sometimes foreign language courses.
- **Real-world technical skills.** A challenging career-based component of three or more courses that help students gain the knowledge and skills that can give them a head start on a successful career.
- **Work-based learning.** A series of work-based learning opportunities that begin with mentoring and job shadowing and evolve into intensive internships, school-based enterprises, or virtual apprenticeships.
- **Personalized support.** Support services including counseling and supplemental instruction in reading, writing, and mathematics that help students master the academic and technical learning.

Proven Success

- Research shows that Linked Learning students of all demographic profiles have higher persistence and graduation rates than their peers at traditional high schools.

An Affordable, Sustainable Approach

- Despite a 15.3 percent drop in state funding for K-12 education from 2007-2008 to 2009-2010, California districts are sustaining their commitment to Linked Learning because of the positive results they are seeing.ⁱ
- By reallocating resources and securing funds through both private and philanthropic partnerships, Linked Learning pathways are able to operate in this challenging fiscal climate.
- Studies have found that upfront investment in Linked Learning results in benefits to the district and to taxpayers that far exceed the cost. Once the infrastructure for Linked Learning is established, costs significantly decrease due to sharing of resources and economies of scale.ⁱⁱ

Students Better Prepared for College and Career

- As of 2010, 59 percent of jobs require a postsecondary credential. By 2018, this figure will grow to 63 percent of all jobs, a trend that is likely to continue to grow.ⁱⁱⁱ
- In 2012, the state's graduation rate was 78.5 percent statewide. The graduation rate for Latino students was 73.2 percent and for African American students 65.7 percent.^{iv}
- Barely one-third of all students who graduate high school (36 percent) complete all the A-G courses necessary for admission to a University of California (UC) or California State University (CSU) school.^v
- Linked Learning prepares students for a postsecondary education. Many Linked Learning schools ensure students successfully complete the necessary A-G coursework for admission to a UC or CSU. In fact, 57 percent of graduates from California Partnership Academies (CPAs), one type of practiced Linked Learning pathway, fulfilled the courses required for admission to UC or CSU systems compared to 36 percent statewide.^{vi}
- In 2010, 95 percent of students who attended the 500 CPAs, which practice a form of Linked Learning, graduated. CPAs also posted higher graduation rates for Latino and African American students compared to the state average with 79 percent and 84.5 percent rates respectively.^{vii}

Aligned to the Common Core State Standards

- In 2015, California will begin assessing student achievement based on the new, more rigorous Common Core State Standards adopted by the vast majority of states. Linked Learning principles are aligned with the new state standards' focus on critical thinking, analysis, and applying knowledge to solve real-world problems. Linked Learning is a solution for schools struggling to find ways to meet the new standards.
- California and others states in the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium are creating new assessments aligned to the Common Core State Standards and will be using these assessments in the 2014-15 school year. Under these new, more challenging tests, statewide proficiency rates based on student performance on these new more challenging tests are likely to be lower than they have been, prompting a public discussion about what schools can do to better prepare students for success in college and the workplace. Making Linked Learning available to more students is one solution.
- Common Core-aligned professional development opportunities for teachers in the next few years are likely to promote greater accountability and the need for more school-wide collaboration to help students meet the expectations embedded in the new standards. This already is a key principle of the Linked Learning approach.

ⁱ California Budget Project. (2011). A Decade of Disinvestment: California Education Spending Nears the Bottom. http://www.cbp.org/pdfs/2011/111012_Decade_of_Disinvestment_%20SFF.pdf

ⁱⁱ Parsi, Ace, David Plank, and David Stern. Policy Analysis for California Education (PACE). Costs of California Multiple Pathway Programs p.4. http://www.edpolicyinca.org/sites/default/files/2010_PR_PLANK_STERN.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce. Help Wanted: Projections of Jobs and Education Requirements through 2018. P v. <http://www9.georgetown.edu/grad/gppi/hpi/cew/pdfs/FullReport.pdf>

^{iv} California Department of Education. (2013). State Schools Chief Tom Torlakson Announces Continued Improvement in State's High School Graduation Rate. <http://www.cde.ca.gov/nr/ne/yr13/yr13rel42.asp>

^v Profile of the California Partnership Academies 2009-2010, UC Berkeley. (2011). http://casn.berkeley.edu/downloads/CPA-report-execSum_2010-11.pdf

^{vi} Profile of the California Partnership Academies 2009 - 2010. UC Berkeley. (2011). http://casn.berkeley.edu/downloads/CPA-report-execSum_2010-11.pdf

^{vii} Profile of the California Partnership Academies 2009-2010, UC Berkeley (2011) http://casn.berkeley.edu/downloads/CPA-report-execSum_2010-11.pdf