

Linked Learning: Pathways to College and Career Success

Linked Learning transforms students' high school experience by bringing together strong academics, demanding technical education and real world experience to help students gain an advantage in high school, postsecondary education and careers. Linked Learning students follow industry-themed pathways in a wide range of fields, such as engineering, arts and media, biomedicine and health. These pathways connect learning with students' interests and job preparation, leading to higher graduation rates, increased postsecondary enrollments, higher earning potential and greater civic engagement. Used in schools throughout California, this integrated approach helps students build a strong foundation for success in college and career – and life.

What is the Linked Learning approach?

Linked Learning offers secondary students a multi-year program of study that combines academic and technical learning organized around broad industry sectors, such as biomedical and health sciences; construction and building design; agriculture and renewable resources; and arts, media and entertainment. Linked Learning prepares high school students for a full range of postsecondary options including two- and four-year college or university, apprenticeship, formal employment training and career. The Linked Learning approach challenges and inspires students to learn, and creates well-rounded, highly skilled individuals with the foundation for lifelong success.

Growing and Expansion: The Linked Learning District Initiative

Linked Learning is gaining in popularity because it makes schools more competitive and attractive to students, generates higher academic achievement and can lead to increased post-secondary attendance rates, higher earning potential after graduation and greater civic engagement.

To expand the approach to more California high school students, the Linked Learning District Initiative has awarded grants to six California school districts to develop and implement Linked Learning programs in their schools. Each district will develop six to eight high-quality Linked Learning pathway programs for students to choose. As part of the District Initiative, SRI International will conduct an independent evaluation of the Linked Learning pathways programs to measure their impact on student outcomes, and findings will be shared with educators and education policymakers.

Linked Learning Alliance

The Linked Learning approach has gained a broad base of support. This may be best evidenced by the Linked Learning Alliance – a statewide alliance of more than 140 education, business, industry and community organizations. The Alliance brings a collective voice and coordinated effort to expanding access to Linked Learning for California's students. It seeks to build awareness of the Linked Learning approach, optimize resources to support further development of Linked Learning, and encourage policy development that will support the Linked Learning approach.

Linked Learning is the new name for the educational approach formerly known in California as "multiple pathways." After extensive public opinion research, the schools and organizations implementing this approach selected the Linked Learning name to more clearly convey its unique benefits to students, educators, parents and policymakers.