

# The Deeper Learning Network



These high school students at ConnectEd in California learn science by working together on a hands-on project. This kind of collaboration, communication, and problem solving are hallmarks of deeper learning.

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

## RICHER ASSESSMENTS: A First-Rate Yardstick for a First-Rate Education

### Envision Education

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.

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

#### 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.

### New Visions for Public Schools

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.

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

## NEW PERSPECTIVES: Preparing for an increasingly diverse and interconnected world

### Internationals Network for Public Schools

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.

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

#### 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.

### Asia Society

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.

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

## 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](http://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](http://www.connectedcalifornia.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](http://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.

## 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](http://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](http://www.edvisions.com)

### Expeditionary Learning

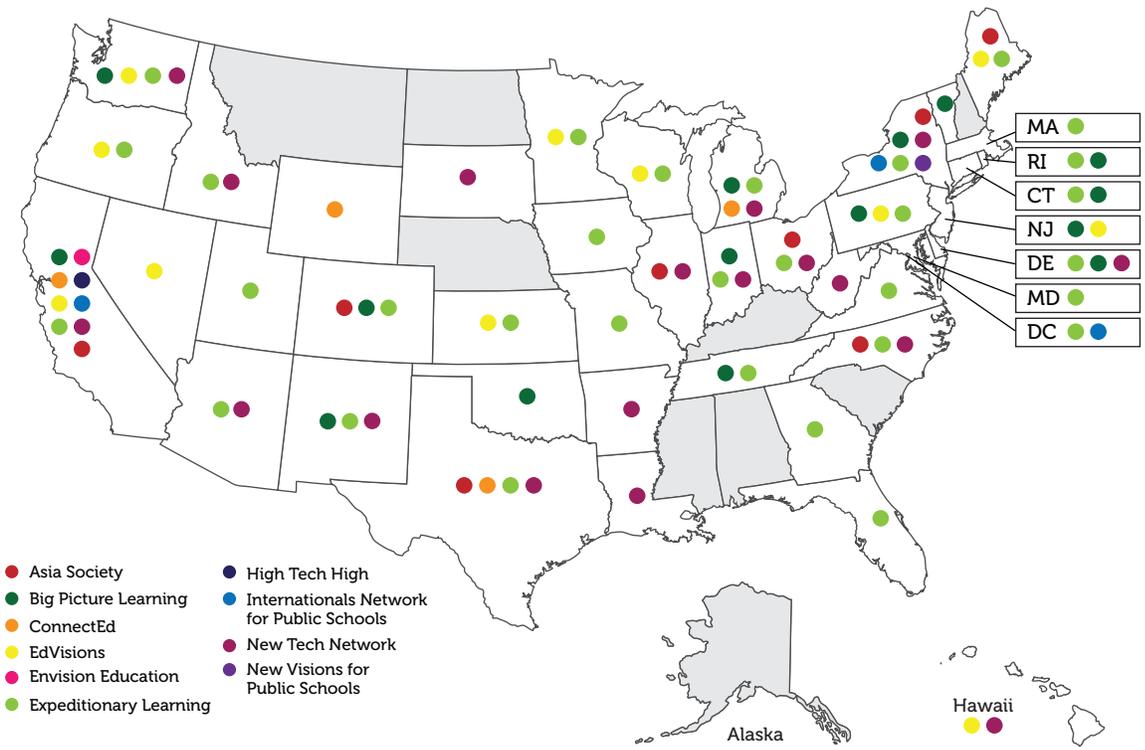
Learning experiences outside the classroom connect students to their communities and teach them the value of service.

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](http://www.hightechhigh.org)

# 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

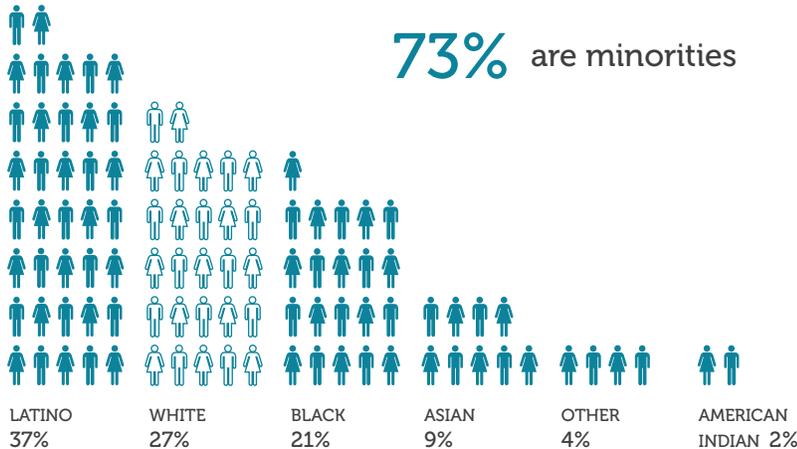


**13,800**  
teachers



**227,000**  
students

## Their students look like this ...



**63%**  
qualify for free or reduced lunch



## And they accomplish this ...



## Plus ...



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