THE LINKED LEARNING ADVANTAGE

Linked Learning is a proven systemic approach to transforming education based on this simple idea: students work harder and dream bigger if their learning connects with them, and connects them to the world. Young people are introduced to career possibilities in sectors that drive their region’s economy, making education relevant—and inspiring them to graduate from high school with the coursework and skills they need to thrive in college, career, and life.

An integrated approach

Linked Learning students learn through career-themed pathways tied to local industry sectors. Each pathway integrates four essential components: rigorous academics that prepare students to succeed in college; career technical education courses in sequence, emphasizing real-world applications of academic learning; work-based learning that provides exposure to real workplaces and teaches the professional skills needed to thrive in a career; and comprehensive support services to address the individual needs of all students, ensuring equity of access, opportunity, and success.

Data that follows is from a multiyear independent evaluation of Linked Learning in nine California school districts serving a high percentage of low-income students. All differences reported are statistically significant at $p < .05$ (i.e., large enough that they are unlikely to have arisen by chance).

ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Linked Learning students are more likely than similar peers in traditional high schools to graduate and be ready for college.

![Diagram showing academic success]

- More credits earned by the end of high school: +8.9 more credits
- Less likely to drop out of school before 12th grade: +2.1 percentage points
- More likely to graduate high school: +3.1 percentage points
- More likely to be classified as ready or conditionally ready for college in English Language Arts: +5.3 percentage points
- More college preparatory semester courses: +0.9 more college prep

SEE SOURCE 1

CLOSING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP

Linked Learning advances equitable outcomes for student groups often underserved in traditional education.

- Latino students were less likely to drop out and more likely to graduate, and accumulated more credits than similar peers.
- African American students earned more credits than similar peers: +15.2 more credits
- English language learners completed one more college prep requirement than similar peers: +1 college prep requirement
- English language learners earned more credits—equivalent to more than two courses—than similar peers: +11.7 more credits
- African American students who enrolled in a postsecondary institution were more likely (by 12.4 percentage points) to enroll in a 4-year college than similar peers: +12.4 4-year college
- English language learners earned more credits—equivalent to more than two courses—than similar peers: +11.7 more credits

SEE SOURCE 1


Learn more at LinkedLearning.org
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Linked Learning students are more likely than comparison students to report that their pathway experiences helped them develop skills needed for success after high school, including 21st century skills, productive dispositions and behaviors, and professionalism.

Linked Learning students going to college are more likely than comparison students to rate high school influences as important to their choice of postsecondary goals and plans.

Linked Learning students employed during the year after high school graduation are more likely than comparison students to have a job with good benefits.

**DEVELOPING PROFESSIONALISM**  
SEE SOURCE 2

- +20 percentage points  
  Gained knowledge of expectations for professional behaviors

- +22 percentage points  
  Gained ability to create résumé or job application

**INFLUENCES ON POSTSECONDARY STUDIES**  
SEE SOURCE 1

- +11 percentage points  
  Took high school courses that sparked interest

- +14 percentage points  
  Were encouraged by counselor or other adult in high school

**EMPLOYEE BENEFITS**  
SEE SOURCE 1

- +11 percentage points  
  Health insurance

- +7 percentage points  
  Sick days

- +14 percentage points  
  Paid vacation

**Linked Learning students are more likely than comparison students to report receiving guidance from adults regarding postsecondary planning.**  
(percentage point difference, Linked Learning and comparison students)

SEE SOURCE 2

How to choose a career training or trade school

- +8

What kind of training is necessary to prepare for a career

- +12

What they want to do after high school

- +12

How to choose a 2- or 4-year college

- +11

High school graduation requirements

- +11

How to pay for college or training

- +12

High school courses needed to get into college

- +13

**Linked Learning students are more likely than peers to report improved 21st century skills.**  
(percentage point difference, Linked Learning and comparison students)

SEE SOURCE 2

Communicate with adults outside the family

- +11

Speak in public

- +16

Achieve a shared goal

- +20

Present to a group

- +22

Work with people

- +21

Get along with people from different backgrounds

- +10

Develop the ability to use information to make good decisions

- +17

Conduct online searches to answer a question

- +16

Summarize information from multiple sources

- +13

Judge whether they can trust the result of an online search

- +17


**SOURCE 2:** SRI INTERNATIONAL. (2014). TAKING STOCK OF THE CALIFORNIA LINKED LEARNING DISTRICT INITIATIVE: FIFTH-YEAR EVALUATION REPORT.

Learn more at LinkedLearning.org

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