



# ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal Year 2015-2016



DARRELL STEINBERG

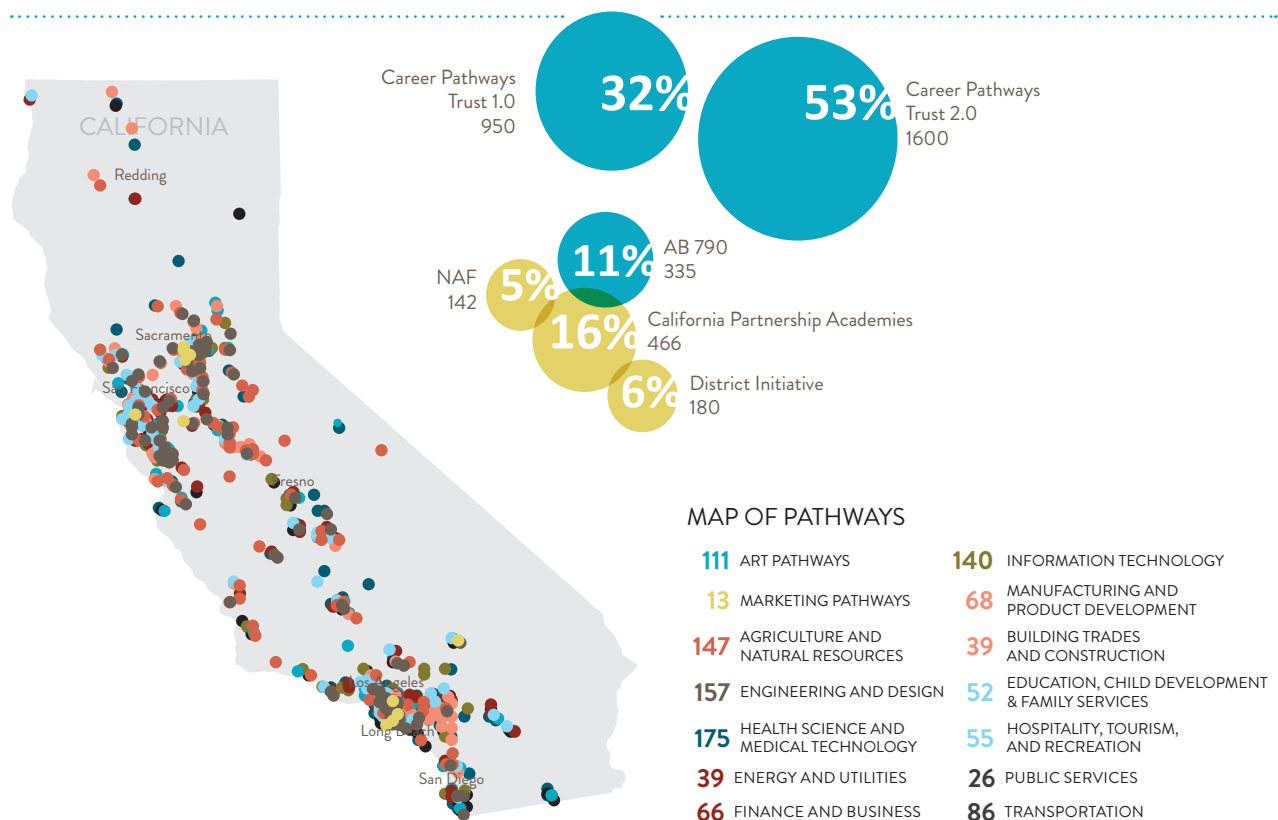


CHRISTOPHER CABALDON

## MESSAGE FROM LINKED LEARNING ALLIANCE BOARD CHAIR DARRELL STEINBERG AND LINKED LEARNING ALLIANCE PRESIDENT CHRISTOPHER CABALDON

The Linked Learning field has come a long way since its inception more than a decade ago. Districts that have embraced Linked Learning have seen their students flourish. Linked Learning is now rapidly expanding across California and beyond, thanks to foundational investment from the state of California that are supporting consortia of K-12 districts, postsecondary institutions, employers and civic partners to transform regional education and workforce development systems. Increasing interest from industry leaders, community partners, educators, parents, and students has been, and will continue to be, critical to scale and sustain this work.

The past year has been eventful one for Linked Learning – the number of districts and pathways continues to grow, in no small part due to significant state and federal policy wins, and an expanding network of employer and civic champions. It has also been eventful for the Linked Learning Alliance, as the Alliance has transitioned from a statewide coalition into a fully operational 501(c)(3) and also expanded from its early work in policy and coalition building into work in educational technology, research and analytics, and pathway quality support.



# VISION FOR THE LINKED LEARNING FIELD

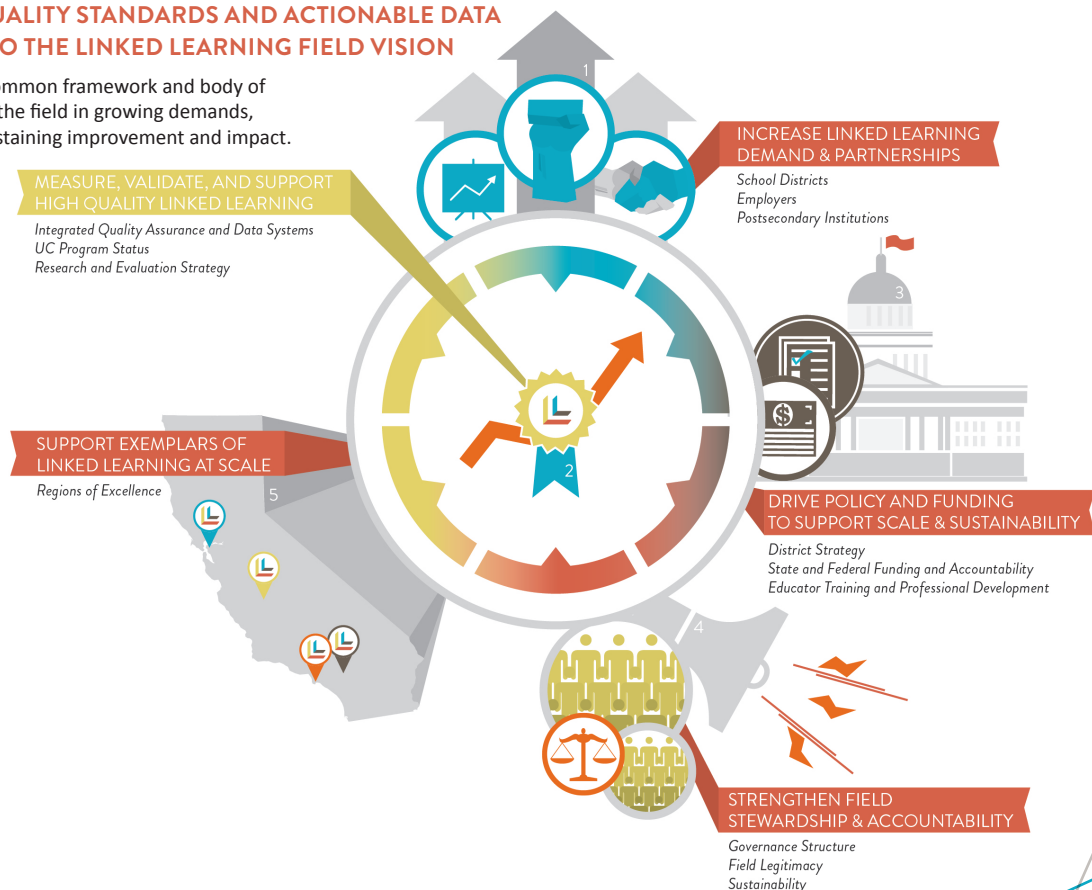
With rapid growth come growing pains. The Linked Learning field embraced this challenge in 2015, articulated a vision to ensure that the massive increase in scale of Linked Learning implementation is accompanied by a commitment to pathway quality. The Linked Learning Alliance and partners established a multifaceted plan to guide the Linked Learning movement through the year 2020 with the ultimate goal of ensuring that more students, particularly underserved students, benefit from the Linked Learning approach, ultimately earning a college degree and/or professional credential, and entering financially sustainable and personally-relevant careers.

To meet these ambitious goals head on, the Linked Learning Alliance officially launched as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization in 2015. At the direction of the Board of Directors, the Linked Learning Alliance – as the hub organization for the field of Linked Learning – has developed a thoughtful work-plan that represents the most important milestones to achieve this vision on the path to 2020. To achieve this vision, Linked Learning field leaders have set interconnected milestone goals towards realization of the vision:

- Build greater demand for quality Linked Learning among districts and postsecondary institutions by demonstrating how Linked Learning can support successful student outcomes;
- Build greater demand for Linked Learning graduates from employers and postsecondary institutions;
- Drive improvement in practice through effective and scalable technical assistance, learning communities, and best-practice sharing;
- Better understand and improve the Linked Learning model through measurement of and research on the connection between specific practices and student outcomes;
- Test the efficacy of the regional model to achieve improved student outcomes and accelerate scale;
- Establish quality standards and assessment systems to define and measure high-quality Linked Learning, and develop data standards that support measurement of Linked Learning practices and outcomes across multiple systems; and
- Develop a clear and sustainable means of stewarding and governing the field's ongoing success and growth.

## CONSISTENT QUALITY STANDARDS AND ACTIONABLE DATA ARE CENTRAL TO THE LINKED LEARNING FIELD VISION

They will provide a common framework and body of evidence to advance the field in growing demands, driving policy, and sustaining improvement and impact.





ON THE PATH TO

# SUCCESS



Linked Learning is a proven approach to education that combines college-focused academics, work-based learning and intensive student supports. By centering high school around industry themes, learning becomes relevant. Students graduate with the skills and confidence to succeed in college, career and life. To learn more, visit [LinkedLearning.org](http://LinkedLearning.org)



High  
School

English language learners earned 15.2 more credits and African American students earned 29.3 more credits—more than an additional semester's worth—than similar students in traditional high school programs.<sup>1</sup>



Linked Learning students, on average, accumulated 13.3 more credits—equivalent to 2.6 more courses or about a half of a semester—over the four years of high school.<sup>1</sup>



Students coming into Linked Learning with low prior achievement were less likely to drop out, accumulated more credits, completed more a-g courses, and had higher GPAs than similar students enrolled in traditional high schools.<sup>1</sup>



Linked Learning certified pathway students are less likely to drop out and more likely to graduate than similar students in traditional high school programs.<sup>1</sup>



College



Compared with their peers, more pathway students (+10 percentage points) reported seeing connections between what they learned in the classroom and the real world.<sup>2</sup>



Pathway students are +12 percentage points more likely to report having support navigating decisions on what they wanted to do after graduation than their peers.<sup>2</sup>



Career

Compared with their peers, Linked Learning students were more likely to report that high school prepares them for working with people in professional settings



and for working in a group to achieve a shared goal.<sup>2</sup>



Linked Learning students reported improvement in specific professional skills. When compared with their peers:



Linked Learning students were more likely to report improved presentation skills.<sup>2</sup>



Linked Learning students were more likely to judge correctly whether they can trust the results of an online search.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Warner, M., Caspary, K., Arshan, N., Stites, R., Padilla, C., Park, C., Patel, D., Wolf, B., Astudillo, S., Harless, E., Ammah-Tagoe, N., McCracken, M. & Adelman, N. SRI International. (2015). Taking stock of the California Linked Learning District Initiative. Sixth-year evaluation report. Menlo Park, CA: SRI International.

<sup>2</sup> Guha, R., Caspary, K., Stites, R., Padilla, C., Arshan, N., Park, C., Tse, V., Astudillo, S., Black, A., & Adelman, N. (2014). Taking stock of the California Linked Learning District Initiative. Fifth-year evaluation report. Menlo Park, CA: SRI International.

# INNOVATIVE PLATFORMS TO SUPPORT PRACTICE

A key area of expansion for the Alliance has been into education technology – addressing key field needs in the areas of work-based learning, pathway quality assurance, and pathway analytics.

## LINKED LEARNING CERTIFICATION AND ANALYTICS

The Linked Learning Alliance, in partnership with IDEO, led the development of a next-generation certification and analytics system, and laid the groundwork to establish interconnected standards for pathway certification and a student credential that is informed by postsecondary and employer preference considerations. The result will be a data-driven approach to pathway certification which identifies and assesses high-quality Linked Learning pathways and supports them to improve quality over time. Schools and districts will be able to use powerful data analytics to measure and track outcomes, leverage data to inform relevant suggestions for improvement, and support ongoing student and pathway progress.

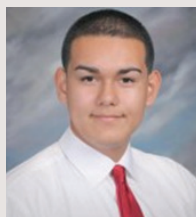
Districts are invited to join Linked Learning Analytics which launched in fall 2016. Linked Learning Certification will become available in January 2017.

Sign up here to learn more about both platforms: [www.linkedlearning.org/register-your-pathway/](http://www.linkedlearning.org/register-your-pathway/)



LaunchPath is an online tool designed to connect employers, educators, and Linked Learning students to strengthen our workforce and close the skills gap in California. Through internships and work-based learning experiences, prepared high school and community college students have the opportunity to make substantive contributions and gain valuable experience. Recent upgrades to the tool include matching functionality across the work-based learning continuum and 21st century skills badging. LaunchPath saves time, reduces risk, simplifies partnerships, and accelerates talent acquisition. LaunchPath is a joint project of the [Foundation for California Community Colleges](#) and the Linked Learning Alliance, made possible through seed funding by [JPMorgan Chase](#) Global Philanthropy and sustained through a combination of public and private support.

Visit the website to learn more and register: [www.launchpath.com](http://www.launchpath.com)



## LINKED LEARNING SCHOLARSHIP ESTABLISHED

### RICARDO SOLIS-CUEVAS

*"The Law & Public Service Pathway has helped shaped me to be the person I am today. Having started this pathway when I entered high school, I had the opportunity to bond and grow with my peers," said Solis-Cuevas. "The pathway has truly helped me to discover what I enjoy doing and what I want to do in life. I learned how much of a giving person I am that I want to pursue a career that will allow me to give back to my community."*

The Linked Learning Scholarship was established in 2016, and the first scholarship awarded went to Ricardo Solis-Cuevas, a Law & Public Service pathway student who graduated from Pasadena High School in June. Ricardo completed an internship aligned with his course of study at the Pasadena Ronald McDonald House. He plans on attending California State University, Los Angeles and would like to pursue a major in Sociology.

Linked Learning Scholarship winners are selected based on academic achievement and accomplishments in a student's Linked Learning pathway, financial need, persistence, and leadership. All applicants must have completed an internship aligned with their course of study and be nominated by both a high school teacher in their Linked Learning pathway and a supervisor from their Linked Learning work-based learning experience.

# STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS

The Linked Learning Alliance aims to build a collective voice and coordinate efforts to expand high quality Linked Learning opportunities for young people.

As the Linked Learning approach continues to gain momentum, the Alliance works together as a group of educators, policymakers, state agencies, business and industry leaders, districts, and higher education institutions to bring the benefits of Linked Learning to more students by promoting policy and practices that will ensure future sustainability of the approach.

Over the last year, our strategic communications has enhanced how we interact with the Linked Learning field, and more people are using social media to engage with Linked Learning than ever before.

## ENHANCED VISIBILITY THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS AND WEBSITE



The total 'likes' on our [Facebook](#) page has doubled and our post reach continues to increase;



Active engagement and the number of impressions through [Twitter](#) continue to grow along with our followers;



A LinkedLearning Alliance [Instagram](#) account was launched to share dynamic visuals from Linked Learning site visits and other highlights from the field; and



During the year we totaled over 100,000 views on our [website](#).

**INCREASED COMMUNICATION WITH THE LINKED LEARNING FIELD** through alerts, news releases, interactive webinars and bi-monthly Linked Learning Alliance newsletters that provide the field with policy updates, highlight important opportunities that partners can take advantage of, and support high quality Linked Learning implementation. The webinars support peer-to-peer learning in the field and fosters a shared commitment to making high quality Linked Learning opportunities available to all students.

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# STATE AND FEDERAL POLICY

The Linked Learning Alliance partners with education advocates, legislators, state agencies, and the California State Board of Education to find strategic solutions to current policy obstacles. Without any lobbying activity, the Linked Learning Alliance partners closely with leaders throughout California and across the country and to develop policy strategies that build, sustain, and refine the Linked Learning space.

- **Accountability:** Over the past year, the Linked Learning Alliance was instrumental in passing the California's first ever measure of College and Career Readiness and is continuing its efforts to ensure that the measure is empirically meaningful while incentivizing high quality college and career pathways as a matter of educational and social equity. The Linked Learning Alliance also developed a resource for districts developing Local Control Accountability Plans (LCAP) that provides sample language supportive of college and career pathway implementation suitable for inclusion in districts' LCAP. This resource helps districts develop and articulate goals related to pathway development, achievement gap closure, decrease in dropout rates, and increasing college and career readiness opportunities.
- **Legislation:** the Linked Learning Alliance provided essential information on a unanimous measure (AB 2063) that opened access to work based learning and job shadowing to High School sophomores.
- **Policy Implementation:** When California proposed the \$900 Career Technical Education Incentive Grant program, the Linked Learning Alliance led efforts to organize strategic input from educators and practitioners, ensuring the program would meet the needs of the Linked Learning field. Then, once the funds became available, the Alliance brought in the Los Angeles Unified School District, NAF, College & Career Academy



Success Network and the California Department of Education for a webinar series that advised potential applicants on the application process and that guide recipients of best practices for strategically implementing their proposals to improve Linked Learning practice.

- **Federal Legislation:** in partnership with the Alliance for Excellent Education the Linked Learning Alliance provided substantive direction for the reauthorization of the federal Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, the single largest source of federal funds for CTE. As a result, thirteen Linked Learning- aligned items were included in the bill approved by the House Education and Workforce Committee (HR 5587) in July. National Policy: The Linked Learning participated in the first-ever White House Summit on Next Generation High Schools where California's commitment to expand Linked Learning pathways was promoted.

## RECOGNIZING LINKED LEARNING CHAMPIONS

The Champion Awards recognize individuals or organizations that have demonstrated extraordinary commitment, leadership, and success in implementing and expanding quality Linked Learning opportunities for students. The winners were honored at the [Linked Learning Policy Convening](#) on April 25, 2016 at the Crocker Art Museum in Sacramento, CA. The 2016 Linked Learning Champions were:



**EDUCATOR CHAMPION**  
**CYNTHIA BROWN**, *Director of Pathways at Porterville Unified School District*

Cynthia Brown has been actively involved and instrumental with the implementation of Linked Learning and Pathways with the Porterville Unified School District. She began as a high school counselor when Linked Learning pathways were developed and serves as a mentor for the 10 high schools serving districts in the Tulare-Kings consortium funded under the California Career Pathways Trust grant program. Cynthia Brown leads professional learning and mentoring opportunities for Linked Learning educators.

Districts are invited to join Linked Learning Analytics which launched in fall 2016. Linked Learning Certification will become available in January 2017.



**POLICYMAKER CHAMPION**  
**ASSEMBLYMEMBER CHRIS R. HOLDEN**

Assemblymember Holden authored Assembly Bill 288 which expands access to dual enrollment opportunities for high school students. This legislation will greatly expand opportunities for Linked Learning students to participate in dual enrollment by easing the formation of secondary and postsecondary partnerships.



**EMPLOYER CHAMPION**  
**ED HIDALGO**, *Director of the World of Work initiative at the University of San Diego's Mobile Technology Learning Center*

Before joining the University of San Diego, Ed Hidalgo spearheaded the launch of an initiative called the Qualcomm Thinkabit Lab, which works to expose San Diego middle school youth to technology and engineering careers, while also providing on-site volunteer opportunities for Qualcomm employees. Building from Hidalgo's success at Qualcomm, San Diego has launched a new workforce program that will enlist the help of local employers like Northrop Grumman, Raytheon and SeaWorld to replicate the Thinkabit Lab experiences at five locations throughout the region. Hidalgo currently serves on the Linked Learning Alliance Council of Employers.



**THE ANNE B. STANTON**  
**IMPACT CHAMPION**  
**CONNECTED: THE CALIFORNIA CENTER FOR COLLEGE & CAREER**

ConnectEd is a founding leader in the Linked Learning movement, and was instrumental in establishing and supporting the Linked Learning network of schools, and the Linked Learning District Initiative. ConnectEd provides outstanding technical support for districts and educators so they can build their own capacity to expand and improve Linked Learning in the classroom. ConnectEd also led the effort to establish and coordinate the first iteration of certification for the Linked Learning field, grounding the movement in its commitment to high quality practice and continuous improvement.

# LINKED LEARNING ALLIANCE GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS

## 2015-2016 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Linked Learning Alliance Board of Directors is the governing body for the Alliance empowered to:

- Oversee the Linked Learning Alliance as it operates as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.
- Set policy for the Linked Learning field.
- Develop and codify Operating Rules and Policies consistent with the Bylaws.
- Approve and oversee implementation of a strategic plan.
- Convene advisory Alliance Linked Learning Councils and auxiliary panels.
- Convene the Linked Learning Alliance field at the annual convention and other meetings.

### **Darrell Steinberg**

Sacramento Mayor-Elect  
*Chair*

### **Arun Ramanathan**

Pivot Learning Partners  
*Vice-Chair/Secretary*

### **David Rattray**

Education & Workforce Development  
*Co-Chair*

### **Cindy Marks**

CSBA  
*Treasurer*

### **Chris Steinhauser**

Long Beach USD

### **David Plank**

PACE

### **Elizabeth Gonzalez**

The James Irvine Foundation

### **Gary Hoachlander**

ConnectEd: The California Center for College & Career

### **JD Hoye**

National Academy Foundation

### **Jeanne Fauci**

Center for Powerful Public Schools

### **Joan Bissell**

CSU Chancellors office

### **Joel Vargas**

Jobs for the Future

### **Kari D. Decker**

JP Morgan & Chase Co.

### **Kathy Booth**

WestEd

### **Linda Collins**

Career Ladders Project

### **Liz Guillen**

Public Advocates

### **Matt Roberts**

California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office

### **Noemi Donoso**

The Wonderful Company

### **Patricia A. Rucker**

California Teachers Association

### **Paul Hirsch**

STEM Academy of Hollywood

### **Peter Callstrom**

San Diego Workforce Partnership

### **Ramona Bishop**

Vallejo City USD

### **Sheila Thornton**

Coachella Valley Economic Partnership

### **Tim Rainey**

California Workforce Development Board

### **Tom Adams**

California Department of Education

### **Tomas D. Morales**

CSU San Bernardino

### **David Stern**

College and Career Academy Support Network



## **THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS ESTABLISHED FIVE ADVISORY COUNCILS TO PROVIDE GUIDANCE, INSIGHT, AND FOSTER LEADERSHIP AMONG KEY FACETS OF THE LINKED LEARNING FIELD.**

### **EQUITY COUNCIL**

To ensure that equity remains central to the Linked Learning mission and practice, so that an increasing share of students have equitable access to high quality Linked Learning opportunities, and that equity is considered in efforts to expand access to high quality Linked Learning in and across districts and regions.

### **COUNCIL OF EMPLOYERS**

To more deeply engage the business community on a systemic basis to advance the scale, reach, quality and equity of work-based learning in support of students pursuing integrated college and career pathways such as Linked Learning.

### **COUNCIL OF CHANCELLORS AND PRESIDENTS**

To build greater demand for the Linked Learning approach and alignment among districts and postsecondary institutions by communicating and demonstrating how it can support the student outcomes they seek.

### **COUNCIL OF SUPERINTENDENTS**

To advance the Linked Learning field as it pertains to the K-12 experience, through work that supports and sustains district and county office capacity and coordination of Linked Learning, and reflects the roles of administrators, teachers, and support personnel in promoting student success through preparation for college, career, and civic life.

### **COUNCIL OF CAPACITY BUILDING SUPPORT PROVIDERS AND NETWORKS**

The purpose of this council is to develop and support coordination of a coalition of capacity building support providers and network that agree to uphold and support high quality Linked Learning implementation. This council will provide a forum for such a coalition to formally work together on field governance issues and coordinate to ensure that services that support for high quality Linked Learning implementation, including leadership development and strategic advising, meet the Linked Learning field needs at scale.

## **THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS ALSO ESTABLISHED THREE SUBSIDIARY ENTITIES TO PROVIDE A VENUE FOR A MULTIPLE MEMBERS OF THE ALLIANCE TO EXECUTE LEADERSHIP IN CERTIFICATION, DATA, RESEARCH, AND POLICY RELATED EXPERTISE AREAS TO ADVANCE THE LINKED LEARNING FIELD.**

### **RESEARCH, DATA, AND EVALUATION PANEL**

The Research, Data and Evaluation Panel guides the Linked Learning field by advising on research and evaluation priorities, data collection, and the development and revision of certification standards and policy priorities based upon evidence-based practices and data feasibility. In the areas of research and evaluation, the primary roles of the panel are to guide the research agenda of the Linked Learning Alliance Board of Directors, serve as a coordinating platform for research and evaluation initiatives, and advise the Alliance Board and partner entities on research and evaluation contracts to advance collective understanding of effective and necessary Linked Learning standards of practice. With regards to data, the Panel serves an oversight role with the Linked Learning data system, informing the data elements within the system, developing data access and use parameters, and setting criteria for the approval of Linked Learning-related data requests.

### **QUALITY STANDARDS PANEL**

The Quality Standards Panel ensures that evidence-based practice is advanced through high standards that incentivize broad adoption, and facilitate continuous improvement of the Linked Learning approach. The panel does so by reconciling research and data on effective practices with the realities of the Linked Learning 'marketplace' in light of the exigencies of civic, postsecondary, and employer success. The panel provides a formalized oversight structure for the operation and calibration of Linked Learning pathway and student certification standards, guiding their development to ensure that certification drives excellence in a manner conducive to the recognition of outcomes. The panel also serves as a platform from which other types of certification, professional recognitions, or badging can be discussed and developed.

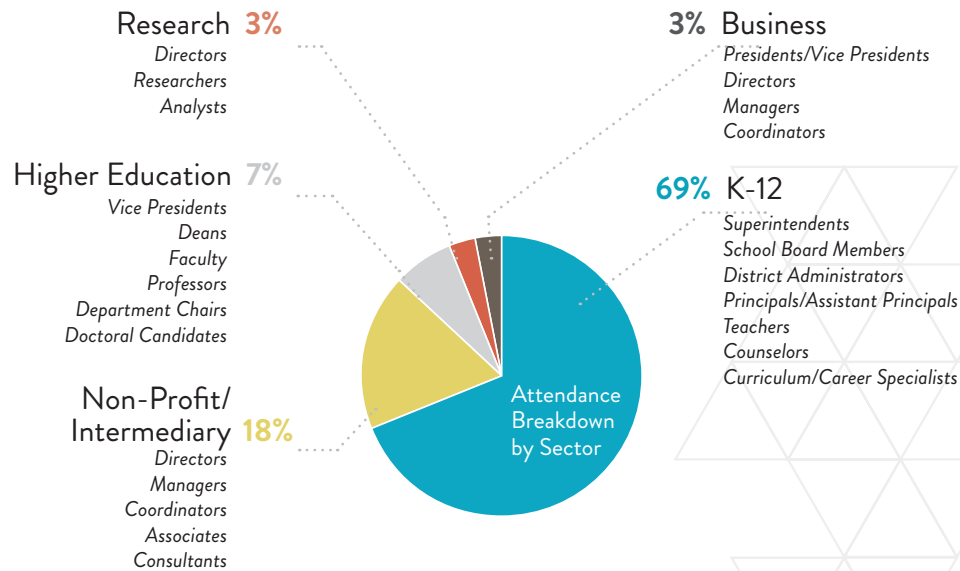
### **ADVOCACY PANEL**

The Advocacy Panel advises the field on state and federal policy, recommending a policy agenda to the Alliance Board of Directors, and providing a platform for coordination of advocacy among constituent organizations. Subsequent to the direction of the Alliance Board at its October 2015 meeting, at which staff was directed to develop a proposal for the establishment of a 501(c)(4), the Advocacy Panel will also serve an advisory role to the board of the 501(c)(4) when established.

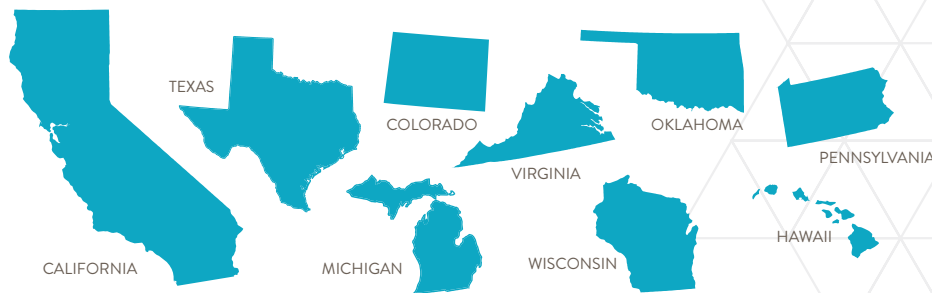


**THE CONVENTION CREATES AN OPPORTUNITY** for leaders in the Linked Learning field to come together in order to expand high-quality Linked Learning opportunities for many more young people, ultimately preparing them for high-wage, high-skill careers of their choice. Your investment helps ensure that Linked Learning students throughout California are receiving top-quality instruction and work-based learning experiences that will deeply impact their personal and professional trajectories.

#### RETURN ON INVESTMENT



#### 9 STATES REPRESENTED



#### GROWTH IN ATTENDANCE



**938**  
ATTENDEES



**15K TWEETS**  
over the span of **3 days**.

**5.1K IMPRESSIONS**  
per day



**494**  
CONVENTION  
MOBILE APP DOWNLOADS



**11,486**  
WEBSITE HITS  
(October - Present)



On average we reach out to a little over **700 PEOPLE PER WEEK**

# RESOURCES & FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

## REVENUE

The Linked Learning Alliance reports information regarding our financial position and activities according to three classes of net asset: Unrestricted, temporarily restricted, and permanently restricted. The Alliance has no permanently restricted net assets. Service Agreements income is earned in the period when services are rendered. Other income is from other grants and contributions considered available for unrestricted use unless specifically restricted by donors for future periods or specific purposes.

Revenue	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total
Grants and contributions	\$129,922	\$6,549,151	\$6,679,073
Services agreement	126,990	-	126,990
Interest income	275	-	275
Net assets released from restrictions	509,031	(509,031)	-
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$766,218</b>	<b>\$6,040,120</b>	<b>\$6,806,338</b>

## 2015 – 2016 SPONSORS AND FUNDERS

### Philanthropic Supporters

- The James Irvine Foundation
- JP Morgan Chase
- The California Endowment
- California Workforce Development Board
- US Chamber of Commerce Foundation

### Sponsors

- SunPower
- The Resnick Family Foundation – Wonderful Company
- CSU Chancellor's office
- CSU Collaborative for the Advancement of Linked Learning
- Hobsons
- Pearsons

## EXPENSES

The costs of providing the program and supporting services are summarized on a functional basis. Accordingly, certain costs have been allocated among the program and supporting services based on management's estimate of the usage of resources.

Expenses	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Total
Program services	\$484,586	\$-	\$484,586
Supporting services			
• General and Administration	105,327	-	105,327
• Fundraising	14,706	-	14,706
<b>TOTAL SUPPORTING SERVICES</b>	<b>\$120,033</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$120,033</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$604,619</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$604,619</b>

<b>INCREASE IN NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$161,599</b>	<b>\$6,040,120</b>	<b>\$6,201,719</b>
<b>NET ASSETS, BEGINNING OF YEAR</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR</b>	<b>\$161,599</b>	<b>\$6,040,120</b>	<b>\$6,201,719</b>

## WHAT'S TO COME!



# LINKED LEARNING CONVENTION

OAKLAND 2017

The Linked Learning Convention theme for 2017 is Accelerating Quality and Building Scale. The Convention will bring together more than 1,200 leaders in education, business, workforce development, and policy for strategic conversations and meaningful professional learning aimed at ensuring all students are well prepared for college, career, and life. *This is your opportunity to:*

- Hear from dynamic speakers
- Network
- Strategic Planning
- Professional Learning from Peers
- Participate in breakout sessions
- Learn through experiential site visits
- Interact with Linked Learning students
- The Resnick Family Foundation – Wonderful Company

*The Linked Learning Convention 2016 sold out quickly, with more than 900 attendees from across California and eight other states. If you have an interest in preparing all students for college, career and life—**don't miss out!***

[www.linkedlearning.org/convention-2017/](http://www.linkedlearning.org/convention-2017/)

