

LINKED LEARNING STUDENT SURVEY

College and career pathway students reflect on the 2023 academic year and their aspirations for life after high school



The Golden State Pathways Program (GSPP) is a \$500 million investment in college and career preparation, based on the Linked Learning approach to educational transformation and student success. More than a decade of practice and independent evaluation proves this approach works—and the GSPP builds on this evidence to ensure young people across our state graduate ready to thrive and meet the demands of California's rapidly evolving economy.

Now, as new fiscal challenges have put the GSPP investment at risk, it is more critical than ever to understand the impact high-quality college and career pathways have on California's young people—and to bring their needs and aspirations into the statewide conversation.

The Linked Learning Alliance regularly fields a survey* of young people who participate in Linked Learning college and career pathways throughout the state. This document presents preliminary findings for the most recent academic year.

ABOUT SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

2,500

students
responded

96%

of respondents
identify as a
student of color

61%

will be a first-
generation
college student

School districts represented:

Antelope Valley Union HSD,
Fresno USD, Los Angeles USD,
Oakland USD, Pasadena USD,
San Bernardino City USD

*This is not considered a scientific survey, and results should not be interpreted as applying to a larger audience of students beyond those who responded.

WHAT STUDENTS SAY

Students feel more motivated and ready for the future in pathways.

Pathway students see the value of their high school experience. The rigorous academics integrated with high-quality career-connected learning leave young people feeling empowered and well-prepared for both college and career.

82% say they feel **motivated to learn** in their pathway

93% of students rate their high school experience as **valuable**

“My teachers and other adults in my pathway are very helpful and motivating because they really understand us and talk to students about our interests.”

- 11th grader, Antelope Valley High School District

“My pathway is a community where we uplift and value each other. It is also a great creative space for me to experiment and build my skills.”

- 11th grader, Pasadena Unified School District



Students feel supported and valued by their educators and mentors.

Pathways link educators and students across subjects and disciplines to better coordinate academic and student support services and ensure that every young person is known and seen.

85%
believe they are
in a **supportive
and inviting**
place to learn

81%
feel **seen and
respected** by
adults in their
pathway

78%
feel that their
life experiences
are valued

76%
say their high school
experience has allowed
them to build **meaningful
connections** with adults

“My relationships with the teachers and other adults in my pathway or academy are awesome. I feel as if I can really talk to the teachers about any problems I am experiencing, and they’ll always work with me on it.”

- 12th grader, San Bernardino City Unified School District

“I felt deeply connected when one of my teachers set up one-on-ones to help understand a difficult concept, to help further the class’s progress within that class. It was meaningful because I never had a teacher that talked to each of their students one-on-one to help them learn a concept better.”

- 12th grader, Oakland Unified School District

Strong connections between high school, college, and career create coherent student experiences.

Because Linked Learning pathways connect traditional academic subjects with real-world professions, participating students are introduced to career possibilities they might never imagine on their own. They see the importance of a college degree as the way to turn their aspirations into a rewarding career.

83%

say they have had a chance to try out new things and **discover their interests**

"In my pathway, we did a lab on pollution in water and tested three different sources of water, including the water that comes from my city. It was valuable because it made me feel connected to my community and more interested in learning."

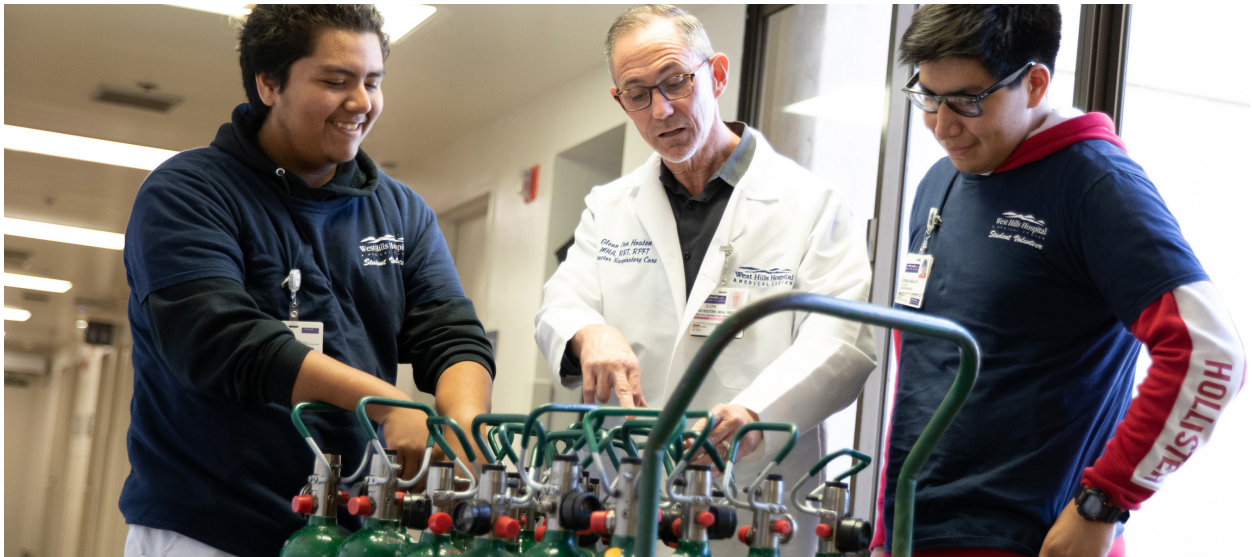
- 12th grader, San Bernardino City Unified School District

80%

say they have opportunities to apply what they are learning in academic classes to **real world learning opportunities**

"I loved seeing how subject matter work can be applied to the real world. It's helped me really understand the value of what I learned."

- 12th grader, Oakland Unified School District



"I felt really connected to my learning when I went to El Camino College and I was able to learn more about my career learning pathway. It was meaningful because I was able to think of what my future in this pathway can look like when I'm in college."

- 10th grader, Los Angeles Unified School District

78%

say they have had the opportunity to participate in **college classes** while in high school

73%

say they have opportunities to **build relationships** with mentors from the **business community**



Pathways prepare students for a full range of postsecondary options.

In college and career pathways, students embrace a sense of readiness for life beyond school. They gain clarity on their post-high school aspirations, design a path forward, and navigate the transition into postsecondary education more seamlessly and with confidence.

75% feel **confident about their future** after high school

79% say they have **built confidence** that they can be professional and have the **skills needed for success**

76% say their high school experience has helped them to **identify college and career goals**

"I have multiple opportunities to begin the start of my career in the medical field. It's been meaningful because I am able to start planning my career and future."

- 9th grader, San Bernardino City Unified School District

"I feel super engaged in learning when my pathway teachers present clear opportunities for me and connect those opportunities to my studies."

- 10th grader, Antelope Valley High School District

"I felt deeply connected to my learning when I realized the college credit I can get from being a dual enrollment student through Pasadena City College. The more college credits I do now, the less classes I'll have to take in college."

- 9th grader, Pasadena Unified School District

72% feel well-prepared to find a **high-paying job** after college

70% plan to attend a four- or two-year **college immediately** after high school

78% feel that their high school experience has **given them what they need** to successfully **transition to adulthood**



Students value their own high school experience and want to see opportunities that fuse college and career-based learning expanded to more young people in California.

80%

feel fortunate for their
college and career
pathway experience

82%

wish others could have the
same opportunity to
experience a college and
career pathway education



TAKING NEXT STEPS TOGETHER

Despite COVID-related disruptions to their education, Linked Learning students remain steadfast in their plans to achieve postsecondary success. With Golden State Pathways, we have an opportunity to deepen our investments in these young people and expand proven approaches to college and career readiness to tens of thousands more.

The Linked Learning Alliance is part of a vast community of educators, business leaders, and community partners committed to keeping young people linked to the futures they deserve. Contact the Alliance to find out more about how you can support students in your community: [LinkedLearning.org](https://www.linkedlearning.org).