



## **Linked Learning FAQs**

### ***What is Linked Learning?***

Linked Learning is a successful approach to education based on the idea that students work harder and dream bigger if education is relevant to them. It prepares young people to graduate high school ready for college with the skills needed to thrive in the workplace.

### ***What are the core components of Linked Learning?***

Linked Learning's power comes from the close integration of four core components:

1. Rigorous academics that prepare students to succeed in college.
2. Career-technical education courses in sequence, emphasizing real-world applications of academic learning.
3. Work-based learning providing exposure to real-world workplaces and teaching the professional skills needed to thrive in a career.
4. Comprehensive support services to address the individual needs of all students, ensuring equity of access, opportunity, and success.

### ***Where are Linked Learning hubs?***

Since 2006, Linked Learning has expanded from a small demonstration in a few high schools to pilot Linked Learning in nine districts across the state, and then to a rapidly growing movement to fundamentally transform high school in scores of districts serving hundreds of thousands of California youth.

Today there are four key regions across California. These are:

1. East Bay Area (Oakland)
2. Tulare-Kings Counties
3. Long Beach
4. San Bernardino

The Oakland Chamber of Commerce, along with school districts, community colleges, and industry employers from Contra Costa and Alameda counties, is actively addressing the need to align educational opportunities with the workforce needs of industry in the region.

A prime example of the Chamber's work is the recently launched East Bay Linked Learning Hub of Excellence, a multi-year initiative made possible with the support of the James Irvine Foundation. By turning high school education into a personally relevant, engaging experience for all students, Linked Learning exposes them to previously unimagined college and career opportunities.

### ***Why Linked Learning?***

Almost a third of our students nationwide leave high school without the skills necessary to succeed in college, participate in a 21st century workforce, or earn a family-supporting living. For low-income students, the numbers are even worse. Linked Learning can help change that.

Research shows Linked Learning students have higher rates of engagement and higher graduation rates and greater confidence in their life and career skills than peers at traditional high schools. This approach to education is helping create an engaged, disciplined, and productive future workforce for California, ready to succeed in college, career, and life.

### ***What are Linked Learning's guiding principles?***

The following six principles guide Linked Learning. These principles are:

1. Preparing students to succeed in college, career, and life.
2. Preparing high school students for a full range of post-graduation opportunities.
3. Connecting academics to real-world applications.
4. Improving student engagement
5. Following an approach, not a program.
6. Linked learning is for all students regardless of achievement levels or aspirations.

### ***Does Linked Learning work?***

Since its inception in 2006 to the four major regions across the state today, Linked Learning has proven to be effective.

- Linked Learning certified pathway students are less likely to drop out and more likely to graduate than similar students in traditional high school programs.
- Linked Learning students are earning more credits than similar peers in traditional high schools, which is critical for on-time graduation.
- Students coming into Linked Learning with low prior achievement scores demonstrate greater academic success than similar students enrolled in traditional high schools.
- English language learners earned 15 more credits, and African American students earned nearly double that— equaling more than an additional semester's worth—than similar students in traditional high school programs.
- Compared with peers, students report greater confidence in their life and career skills, and say they are experiencing more rigorous, integrated, and relevant instruction.

As a result of the mounting evidence of Linked Learning's effectiveness, the State of California committed approximately \$2 billion to help schools and regions establish and expand Linked Learning pathways. The State Linked Learning Pilot Program includes 63 participating school districts and county offices of education. The California Department of Education (CDE), California Community Colleges and The James Irvine Foundation are providing \$7 million for pilot implementation. The state budget also includes two rounds of \$250 million for the California Career Pathways Trust, a grant program incentivizing collaboration between schools and employers to support Linked Learning pathways and provide work-based learning opportunities for students.

### ***How can I get involved with the Oakland Linked Learning Hub of Excellence?***

There are many ways you can involve yourself in the Linked Learning program. You can:

- Donate computers and other computer equipment to OTX, refurbishment partner for the Oakland Unified School District.
- Fund the cause to close the connectivity gap for Oakland families.
- Support East Bay College Fund with your time or donations.
- Host a high school student for a summer internship
- Become a Linked Learning community partner as a guest speaker or mentor.