

# WHY CONNECTED LEARNING

For more than a century, educators have strived to customize education to the learner.

Connected Learning leverages the advances of the digital age to make that dream a reality—connecting academics to interests, learners to inspiring peers and mentors, and educational goals to the higher order skills the new economy rewards.

Six principles (below) define it and allow every young person to experience learning that is social, participatory, interest-driven and relevant to the opportunities of our time.

## INTEREST-POWERED



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Interests foster the drive to gain knowledge and expertise. Research has repeatedly shown that when the topic is personally interesting and relevant, learners achieve much higher-order learning outcomes. Connected learning views interests and passions that are developed in a social context as essential elements.

## PRODUCTION-CENTERED



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Connected learning prizes the learning that comes from actively producing, creating, experimenting and designing because it promotes skills and dispositions for lifelong learning and for making meaningful contributions to today's rapidly changing work and social conditions.

## PEER-SUPPORTED



### PEER SUPPORTED

Connected learning thrives in a socially meaningful and knowledge-rich ecology of ongoing participation, self-expression and recognition. In their everyday exchanges with peers and friends, young people fluidly contribute, share and give feedback. Powered with possibilities made available by today's social media, this peer culture can produce learning that's engaging and powerful.

## SHARED PURPOSE



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Today's social media and web-based communities provide unprecedented opportunities for caring adults, teachers, parents, learners and their peers to share interests and contribute to a common purpose. The potential of cross-generational learning and connection unfolds when centered on common goals.

## ACADEMICALLY ORIENTED



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Connected learning recognizes the importance of academic success for intellectual growth and as an avenue towards economic and political opportunity. When academic studies and institutions draw from and connect to young people's peer culture, communities and interest-driven pursuits, learners flourish and realize their true potential.

## OPENLY-NETWORKED



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Connected learning environments link learning in school, home and community because learners achieve best when their learning is reinforced and supported in multiple settings. Online platforms can make learning resources abundant, accessible and visible across all learner settings.

*For more information, visit [The Connected Learning Alliance](#).*