



# Map of Learner-Centered Environments



# An Invitation for Engagement and Feedback

We are excited and encouraged by the transformational learning environments and efforts that we are encountering. Each is committed to a similar vision of transforming our Industrial-era education system to one that is learner-centered. Looking across these environments, we are discovering the variety of ways that learner-centered education is being brought to life and supported. We see an emerging learner-centered field of education.

This map is intended to be an iterative and ever-growing collection of the learning environments and efforts that populate this burgeoning field.

1. We hope it serves as a resource for you to learn about other learner-centered environments.
2. We request feedback from readers regarding the information included. The details listed were gathered from websites, videos, articles, blog posts, and, when applicable, conversations. Please notify us of any revisions or updates.
3. We ask for suggestions of other learner-centered environments that should be included.

**Learner-Centered Environments** include schools, districts, networks of schools, organizations, programs, and beyond-school opportunities.

Our understanding of learner-centered education and evaluation of learning environments is guided by:

**[A Transformational Vision for Education in the US.](#)**

This vision was created by a group of ideologically diverse education leaders and thinkers through an 18-month dialogue process—a vision for learner-centered education that recognizes learners as wonderful, curious individuals with natural excitement and eagerness to discover and learn. This focuses on the development of learners' knowledge, skills, and dispositions and outlines five elements that, when taken together, characterize great learning experiences: 1) competency-based; 2) personalized, relevant, and contextualized; 3) learner agency; 4) socially embedded; and 5) open-walled.

Thus, we identify an environment's **Key Areas of Learner-Centered Education** by looking and listening to a set of indicators that correspond to the vision. These indicators are outlined on page 4, preceding the map of learning environments.

If you would like to provide feedback on the map or learn more about the way we distinguish each term, please reach out to us at:

**[educationreimagined@convergencepolicy.org](mailto:educationreimagined@convergencepolicy.org)**



# Key Areas of Learner-Centered Environments

We used indicators to identify each pioneering learning environment's key areas. These indicators are practices and attributes evident in learner-centered environments. They are categorized according to the five elements that characterize great learner-centered learning experiences. An indicator may appear under more than one element. This list of indicators is neither exhaustive nor limiting. Rather, it encompasses the expressions of each element that we've encountered to date.

This process is not an exact science. While a mark for a particular element signifies the existence of at least one indicator for the element, it neither reflects the number of indicators present in that environment nor the total extent to which that element is exemplified by the environment. The elements "learner agency" and "socially embedded" are particularly challenging to identify from the resources available to us.



## **Pioneer Lab Community Member**

Please note the check mark indicates environments that are members of the Pioneer Lab Community, a stream of work supported by Education Reimagined.

- **Knowledge, Skills, & Dispositions (KSD)**  
Learning experiences that value and incorporate the development of knowledge, skills, and dispositions that prepare learners for lifelong success
- **Competency-Based (CB)**  
Learning experience organized around building a learner's capacity to do things proficiently
- **Personalized, Relevant, & Contextualized (PRC)**  
Learning that is responsive and adaptable to each learner's individual needs, strengths, and circumstances; is applicable to the learner's real-world challenges, interests, experiences, and/or aspirations; and is effectively embedded within a context
- **Learner Agency (LA)**  
Methodological development of the capacity and freedom of learners to organize and drive their own learning experience
- **Socially Embedded (SE)**  
Learning rooted in learning communities in which learning with others is a central part of the learner's journey
- **Open-Walled (OW)**  
Learning unconstrained by time or space that leverages and integrates opportunities beyond the limits of the primary learning environment

# Element Indicators Used to Identify **Key Areas of Learner-Centered Education**

Knowledge, Skills, & Dispositions (KSD)	Competency-Based (CB)	Personalized, Relevant, & Contextualized (PRC)	Learner Agency (LA)	Socially Embedded (SE)	Open-Walled (OW)
<p>Learning standards explicitly include development of skills and/or dispositions</p> <p>Learning experiences that intentionally provide opportunities to develop skills and dispositions (e.g. project-based or real-world learning)</p> <p>Social-emotional learning emphasis</p> <p>Performance-based assessments that include and value KSD development (e.g. performance assessments)</p>	<p>Competency is the constant and time is the variable</p> <p>Utilized as alternative to age- or grade-based learning</p> <p>Competency-based credentialing and graduation requirements uncoupled from seat-time</p> <p>Competency-based assessment and reporting</p> <p>Learners' trajectories toward competency are monitored and guided</p> <p>Flexible and/or mixed groupings of learners</p> <p>Different learners progress at different paces</p> <p>Supports badging and/or other competency-based credentialing programs</p> <p>Learners guided to self-assess, incorporate feedback, and develop their metacognitive capacities</p>	<p>Flexible and varied learning pathways, methods, and assessment options</p> <p>Personalized/Individualized Learning Plans (PLP/ILPs)</p> <p>Processes in place to identify and address challenges in health, safety, economic situation, emotional well-being, social interactions, and/or competency development</p> <p>Learners guided to self-assess, incorporate feedback, and develop their metacognitive capacities</p> <p>Project-based learning</p> <p>Passion-/ interest-based learning</p> <p>Community-based learning</p> <p>Learning engages with real-world challenges</p> <p>Workplace opportunities (e.g. intern- or externships)</p> <p>Creative and play-based learning opportunities</p>	<p>Learners supported to ultimately take full ownership of their learning</p> <p>Learner ideas, thoughts, and opinions are paramount in organizing learning experiences</p> <p>Passion-/ interest-based learning</p> <p>Learners co-create learning pathways and experiences</p> <p>Educators assume a supportive, coaching role</p> <p>Learners guided to self-assess, incorporate feedback, and develop their metacognitive capacities</p>	<p>Learning rooted in meaningful, sustained relationships</p> <p>Learners feel they are known and belong to a learning community</p> <p>Learners engaged with adults/peers who have something to share with them</p> <p>Shared discovery among a group of learners</p> <p>Learners share what they've previously learned with peers</p> <p>Advisories, mentorships, or other systems for adult and peer support</p> <p>Learning community is expansive and includes learners, families, professional educators, community members, and others</p>	<p>Entire community and its assets are the playground for learning</p> <p>Experiences that leverage community resources</p> <p>Credentialing outside experiences (e.g. digital badging)</p> <p>Learners connect learning with real-world challenges</p> <p>Community-based health and social services leveraged for learners</p> <p>Online, virtual, multimedia, and computer-based opportunities</p> <p>Workplace opportunities (e.g. intern- or externships)</p> <p>Learning expeditions</p> <p>Classes at colleges, technical schools, etc.</p> <p>Opportunities for unstructured play and recreation</p> <p>Life experiences valued as learning experiences (e.g. travel, personal reading, hobbies)</p> <p>Community-based learning opportunities (e.g. theater, scouting, athletics)</p>

Organization	Type	City	State	Ages Served	ELEMENTS DEMONSTRATED						Pioneer Lab Community
					Knowledge, Skills, & Dispositions	Competency-Based	Personalized, Relevant, & Contextualized	Learner Agency	Socially Embedded	Open-Walled	
<b>A+ Unlimited Potential (A+UP)</b>	public charter school	Houston	TX	11-14			●			●	✓
<b>A Place Called Home</b>	organization	Los Angeles	CA	8-21	●		●	●	●		
<b>Acton Academy</b>	private schools (network)		10 states & international	4-18	●	●	●	●	●	●	
<b>Alamo Heights Independent School District</b>	district	San Antonio	TX	4-18	●		●		●		✓
<b>Albemarle County Public Schools</b>	district	Charlottesville	VA	4-18	●	●	●	●	●		
<b>AltSchool</b>	private schools (network)		CA, NY	4-14		●	●		●	●	✓
<b>Anne Frank Inspire Academy</b>	public charter school	San Antonio	TX	5-17	●		●	●		●	
<b>Avalon Charter School</b>	public charter school	St. Paul	MN	11-18	●	●	●	●	●	●	
<b>Avenues: The World School</b>	private school	New York City	NY	4-18	●		●			●	
<b>Aveson Charter Schools</b>	2 public charter schools	Altadena	CA	4-18	●	●	●	●	●		
<b>Big Picture Learning</b>	public and charter schools (network)		22 states & international	5-18	●	●	●	●	●	●	✓
<b>Big Thought</b>	organization	Dallas	TX	5-18	●	●	●	●	●	●	✓
<b>Blue School</b>	independent school	New York City	NY	4-14	●		●	●	●		

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<b>Boston Day &amp; Evening Academy</b>	public charter school	Boston	MA	16-22	●		●	●	●		✓
<b>Brightworks</b>	private school	San Francisco	CA	5-18	●	●	●	●	●	●	
<b>Camden Big Picture Learning Academy</b>	public school	Camden	NJ	11-18	●		●	●	●	●	✓
<b>Carroll Gardens School</b>	public school	Brooklyn	NY	11-14		●	●		●		
<b>Chicago City of Learning</b>	initiative	Chicago	IL	all ages	●	●	●	●	●	●	
<b>Chugach School District</b>	district	Anchorage	AK	5-18	●	●	●	●	●	●	
<b>City Neighbors Charter Schools</b>	charter schools (network of 3 schools)	Baltimore	MD	5-18	●		●	●	●	●	✓
<b>City Pathways</b>	organization	New York City	NY	10-14	●		●	●		●	
<b>Cloud 901—Teen Learning Lab</b>	program	Memphis	TN	13-18	●		●	●	●	●	
<b>Compass Academy</b>	public charter school	Denver	CO	11-12	●		●		●		
<b>Cornville Regional Charter School</b>	public charter school	Cornville	ME	5-14	●	●	●	●		●	
<b>Creativity Challenge Community (C3)</b>	public school	Denver	CO	5-11	●		●	●	●	●	
<b>Da Vinci Schools</b>	charter schools (network of 5 schools)	Hawthorne	CA	5-18	●	●	●		●	●	

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<b>Denver School of Innovation and Sustainable Design</b>	public school	Denver	CO	14-16	●	●	●	●	●	●	
<b>Design39Campus</b>	public school	San Diego	CA	4-14	●	●	●	●	●	●	✓
<b>El Centro de Estudiantes</b>	public school (accelerated program)	Philadelphia	PA	16-21	●	●	●	●	●	●	
<b>EPiC Elementary School</b>	public school (open enrollment)	Lincoln	MO	5-11	●		●			●	
<b>Eagle Rock School</b>	private school (tuition-free)	Estes Park	CO	15-18	●	●	●	●	●	●	✓
<b>Embarc</b>	program	Chicago	IL	15-18	●		●		●	●	
<b>Evergreen State College</b>	public liberal arts college	Olympia	WA	18+	●	●	●	●	●	●	
<b>Fannie Lou Hamer Freedom High School</b>	public school (school of choice)	Bronx	NY	14-18	●	●	●		●	●	
<b>Francis W. Parker Charter Essential School</b>	public charter school	Devens	MA	12-18	●	●	●	●	●		
<b>Furr High School</b>	public school	Houston	TX	14-18	●		●		●		✓
<b>Fusion Academy</b>	private school		10 states	11-18	●	●	●	●	●		
<b>Future School of Fort Smith</b>	public charter school	Fort Smith	AR	14-18	●		●	●	●	●	
<b>GCE Lab School</b>	private school	Chicago	IL	14-18	●		●	●	●	●	

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<b>Henry County Schools</b>	district	McDonough	GA	3-18	●	●	●	●			✓
<b>Highland Academy</b>	public charter school	Anchorage	AK	11-18	●	●	●	●		●	
<b>High School for Recording Arts</b>	alternative school	St. Paul	MN	14-21	●		●	●	●	●	
<b>High Tech High</b>	charter schools (network of 13 schools)	San Diego	CA	4-18	●		●	●	●	●	
<b>Innovations Early College High School</b>	public school	Salt Lake City	UT	14-18	●	●	●	●	●	●	
<b>Innovations High School</b>	public school	Reno	NV	14-18	●		●		●	●	
<b>Iowa BIG</b>	public school (network of 3 districts)	Cedar Rapids	IA	14-18	●	●	●	●	●	●	✓
<b>Jenaplan School</b>	public school	Jena	Germany	3-20		●	●	●		●	
<b>Kettle Moraine School District</b>	district	Waukesha County	WI	3-18	●	●	●	●	●	●	✓
<b>Khan Lab School</b>	private school	Mountain View	CA	5-13		●	●	●	●		
<b>KoSchool</b>	private school	Austin	TX	13-20	●		●	●	●	●	
<b>LaFayette Big Picture High School</b>	public school	LaFayette	NY	14-18	●		●	●	●	●	
<b>Lindsay Unified School District</b>	district	Lindsay	CA	3-18	●	●	●	●	●		✓



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<b>LRNG</b>	organization	11 cities	8 states		●	●	●	●		●	
<b>Making Community Connections (MC<sup>2</sup>) Schools</b>	2 charter schools	Manchester & Keene	NH	12-18	●	●	●	●	●	●	✓
<b>McComb School District</b>	district	McComb	MS	3-18	●	●			●	●	✓
<b>Mesa County School District 51</b>	district	Grand Junction	CO	4-18	●	●	●				✓
<b>Millennium School</b>	independent school	San Francisco	CA	11-14	●	●	●	●	●	●	
<b>Minnesota New Country School</b>	public charter school	Henderson	MN	4-18	●	●	●	●			
<b>Mount Vernon Presbyterian School</b>	private school	Atlanta	GA	6 weeks - 18 years	●	●	●		●	●	✓
<b>MUSE School</b>	private school	Calabasas	CA	2.5-14	●		●	●	●	●	
<b>Nashville Big Picture High School</b>	public school	Nashville	TN	14-18	●		●	●	●	●	
<b>New Directions Alternative Education Center</b>	public charter school	Manassas	VA	14-22	●	●	●			●	
<b>NEXT High School</b>	public charter school	Greenville	SC	14-18	●	●	●	●	●	●	✓
<b>Norris Academy</b>	public school	Mukwonago	WI	5-18	●	●	●	●	●	●	
<b>NuVu Studios</b>	private schools (network)	Cambridge	MA	11-17	●	●	●	●	●	●	

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<b>One Stone</b>	independent school (tuition-free)	Boise	ID	14-18	●	●	●	●	●	●	
<b>Pike Road School</b>	district	Pike Road	AL	4-14	●	●	●				✓
<b>Pittsfield School District</b>	district	Pittsfield	NH	3-18	●	●	●	●			
<b>Portfolio School</b>	independent school	New York City	NY	5-10	●	●	●	●	●	●	
<b>Red Bank Elementary School</b>	public school	Lexington	SC	3-11	●	●	●	●			
<b>Remake Learning Network</b>	organization		PA, WV	4-18	●	●	●	●	●	●	✓
<b>ReSchool Colorado</b>	initiative		CO	4-18+	●	●	●	●	●	●	✓
<b>Regional School Unit 2 (RSU 2)</b>	district	Hallowell	ME	4-18	●	●	●	●	●		✓
<b>Sanborn Regional School District</b>	district	Kingston	NH	4-18	●	●	●				
<b>Science Leadership Academy</b>	2 public schools	Philadelphia	PA	14-18	●		●	●		●	
<b>Smart City Saturday</b>	program		CA, MI, MO, NY, TX	14-18	●		●		●	●	
<b>Springhouse Community School</b>	private school	Floyd	VA	12-18	●	●	●	●	●	●	✓
<b>Springfield R-12</b>	district	Springfield	MO	5-18	●		●		●	●	

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<b>Summit Public Schools</b>	charter schools (network)		CA, WA	11-18	●		●	●		●	✓
<b>Taylor County School District</b>	district	Campbellsville	KY	4-18	●	●	●	●	●	●	
<b>Teton Science Schools</b>	2 independent schools (organization)		WY, ID	4-18	●	●	●			●	✓
<b>The MET (The Metropolitan Regional Career and Technical Center)</b>	public school (network of 6 schools)	Providence	RI	14-18	●	●	●	●	●	●	
<b>Tremont School</b>	independent school	Weston	MA	10-18	●	●	●		●		
<b>Venture Academy</b>	public charter school	Minneapolis	MN	11-14	●	●	●	●		●	
<b>Virtual Learning Academy Charter School (VLACS)</b>	public charter school		nationwide	11-18+	●	●	●	●	●	●	
<b>Washtenaw Alliance for Virtual Education (WAVE)</b>	districts (network of 9 districts)	Ypsilanti	MI	14-18	●	●	●	●		●	
<b>Waukesha STEAM Academy</b>	public charter school	Waukesha	WI	5-14	●	●	●	●			
<b>Wausau Engineering and Global Leadership Academy</b>	public charter school	Wausau	WI	14-18	●	●	●		●	●	
<b>WIT: Whatever It Takes</b>	program	San Diego	CA	14-18	●		●	●	●	●	
<b>YOUMedia Network</b>	programs (network)		22 states	13-19			●	●	●	●	

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