



**LEAP**  
learning  
framework™  
for personalized learning

2020 EDITION | OVERVIEW

LEAP

# INTRODUCTION

At LEAP Innovations, we believe our rapidly shifting economy necessitates that we reshape our entire system of learning around the student. For every child to succeed in tomorrow’s unknown world, we need to focus on cultivating skills and knowledge for a future we can’t fully predict or imagine. We define learner success by strong academic outcomes, growth mindset, 21st-century skills (including relationship, problem-solving, self-management, and leadership skills), and wider, denser webs of support, as well as social capital. These cannot be mastered through teaching by telling and learning by listening, but instead require active, problem-based, performance-rich learning experiences.

The LEAP Learning Framework guides all of our work at LEAP Innovations. Much like our broader organization, it emerged out of a need to make learning science and research actionable in real-world classrooms. We have built and added to it since 2015 with the invaluable contributions of a diverse range of experts across the education field. The principles within it are not new—they are the amalgamation of research, learning science, ground-level evidence, and more than 100 years of best practices in teaching and learning. What makes the Learning Framework innovative is that it aggregates and combines these principles, functioning to help educators bring them to life in classrooms. It exists, like all of our work, at a rare cross-section between theory and practice; between research and the real world.

The 2020 Edition has been strengthened in its research foundation with extensive additional vetting from more than 50 experts around the field, and the new supplemental strategies throughout reflect what we’ve learned across more than 140 schools and five school years.

## GROUNDING PRINCIPLES

The LEAP Learning Framework is grounded in three evidence-based, fundamental principles:



### EVERY LEARNER CAN SUCCEED WITH SUPPORT THAT’S CUSTOMIZED TO THE CHILD’S INTERESTS AND NEEDS

When they are engaged in a more personalized manner, students will often master content well above curriculum standards or developmental guidelines. We can and should reframe how educators set and raise expectations for our students.



### EVERY LEARNER BRINGS STRENGTHS AND TALENTS TO THE CLASSROOM

The diverse knowledge bases, life experiences, languages and cultures of children are powerful assets for their learning—as well as the learning of those around them—and need to be leveraged as such.



### LEARNER AGENCY IS ESSENTIAL

Our world of work increasingly requires more leadership, agility and self-direction. At an early age, we must inspire our students to assume responsibility of their own learning, and help co-design it.

# WHAT IS PERSONALIZED LEARNING?

At LEAP, our definition of personalized learning lies within the construct of the LEAP Learning Framework's four core components: Personalized learning is **FOCUSED** on, **LED** with and **DEMONSTRATED** by the learner, and is **CONNECTED** to career-relevant, real-world skills and opportunities.

At large, personalized learning is an approach to learning and teaching built upon the idea that, in today's day and age, every student's learning experience can and should be holistic and tailored to fit and empower that student as an individual. Centering learners' educational experiences around their specific needs, strengths, and interests, personalized learning fundamentally inverts the traditional "one-size-fits-all" classroom model.

## COMPONENTS

### LEARNER FOCUSED

Learners are empowered to holistically understand their needs, strengths, and interests



### LEARNER LED

Learners are entrusted to take ownership of their learning



### LEARNER DEMONSTRATED

Learners can progress at their own pace based on demonstrated mastery



### LEARNER CONNECTED

Learning transcends location in relevant and valued ways, connected to learners' families, educators, communities, and networks



## GUIDELINES

### LEARNERS:

**LF.1** Deepen their understanding of themselves holistically, including:

- LF.1.1** academic needs, strengths, and interests
- LF.1.2** physical and mental health
- LF.1.3** social and emotional learning
- LF.1.4** cognitive skills (i.e. focus, working memory)
- LF.1.5** identity and culture
- LF.1.6** social and community context

**LF.2** Experience learning that is relevant, challenging, contextualized, and designed for their individual needs, strengths, and interests

### LEARNERS:

- LL.1** Articulate their needs, strengths, and interests
- LL.2** Partner in setting their learning goals
- LL.3** Partner in shaping their learning pathways and experiences
- LL.4** Assess, monitor, and reflect on their progress
- LL.5** Advocate for needed support from teachers, peers, technology, and other sources

### LEARNERS:

- LD.1** Begin at a challenging level appropriate to their prior knowledge and learning needs
- LD.2** Receive feedback on effort, process, and mastery throughout every learning experience
- LD.3** Advance or go deeper upon demonstration of mastery
- LD.4** Demonstrate learning in multiple ways
- LD.5** Receive recognition based on demonstrated mastery, not time

### LEARNERS:

- LC.1** Collaborate with peers, family, educators, and others
- LC.2** Cultivate meaningful relationships
- LC.3** Advance opportunities through connections
- LC.4** Engage in real-world experiences to develop:
  - LC.4.1** Academic skills & knowledge
  - LC.4.2** Community and civic engagement
  - LC.4.3** Workplace experience
- LC.5** Earn valued recognition for all learning, regardless of where and when it happens

# THE LEAP LEARNING FRAMEWORK

# HISTORY

In developing and vetting the Learning Framework, our priority was diversity—of perspective, profession and expertise. We believed, as we still do, that creating the most holistic, rigorously evaluated guide for personalized learning possible required we solicit and listen to a wide and diverse range of research and expert voices. We consulted not just learning scientists, but also leading experts in psychology, cognitive psychology, child development, career preparedness, pedagogy and technology as we developed the Framework’s base of research. And as we considered the applicability of our concepts and strategies in real-world contexts, we gathered the perspectives of educators on the ground. More than 20 educators gave feedback and suggestions on the Framework before it rolled out in 2016. Like our researchers, they varied in geographical location, gender, race/ethnicity and age—a fact which we’re confident gave the Learning Framework more power as a tool for adapting learning into specific contexts.

Today, our commitment to listening and pressure-testing our work with a large range of experts remains stronger than ever. As the field of student-centered learning continues to advance and evolve, the LEAP Learning Framework will grow and adapt alongside it.

## THE LEAP DESIGN METHODOLOGY

The fields of learning science and psychology are not static—new findings constantly change what we know and raise new questions. The Learning Framework, as such, is a dynamic document, adapting to reflect the latest insights.

We developed the Framework with the same four-phase “Praxis” Design Methodology that we use each time to re-evaluate or add to it. “Praxis” refers to the practical application of a theory, which for LEAP means we apply learning science and research to the contexts of educators. The structured approach to refining our work ensures that all of our ideas continue to be firmly rooted in real-world evidence, and powered by the diversity of perspective we’ve seen deliver success.

With each phase, we adapt to the feedback we receive.

### **PHASE 1: RESEARCH REVIEW**

What does the existing body of research—especially recent, K-12 empirical studies—say on this and related topics?

### **PHASE 2: REAL-WORLD AUDIT**

What examples are there of this in practice in the real world?

### **PHASE 3: DIVERSE CRITIQUES AND INTEGRATED DISCOURSES**

What diverse group of experiences and experts can push our design and help us directly address potential biases?

### **PHASE 4: OPEN PEER REVIEW**

What thoughts do peers and the general public have about the work in its preliminary form?

# TIMELINE

## LEAP Innovations is founded

Our first work in classrooms begins with many of our teachers seeking more tangible advice and strategies for guiding change to their practices.



2014



2015



## Using its four-phase praxis design methodology, LEAP begins development of the LEAP Learning Framework

Partnering with LEAP, the American Institutes for Research (AIR) examines the existing body of evidence around concepts related to personalized learning. LEAP and AIR co-facilitate critiques with a diverse team of learning scientists, national experts, researchers, and educators.

## LEAP releases the LEAP Learning Framework

The first Edition features guidelines and starting strategies for the Learner Focused, Learner Led and Learner Demonstrated components. The same year, LEAP begins creating guidelines and strategies for the Learner Connected component through a separate praxis design methodology process. LEAP also begins development of the Personalized Learning Teacher and Student Surveys with AIR to measure implementation of the Framework in classrooms.



2016



2017



## LEAP expands the Learning Framework

The updated Edition introduces guidelines and strategies for the Learner Connected component, rounding out the four core component structure that remains today. Separately, Amelia Peterson, a Fellow at Harvard University's Education ReDesign Lab, begins a research review of the Learning Framework's base of evidence, ultimately exploring over 600 studies over the course of her vetting.

## External Review of the LEAP Learning Framework begins

Inspired by the medical field's AGREE II methodology to evaluate the guidelines, Chris Dede of Harvard University's Learning Technologies, Technology, Innovation, and Education Program plus Edith Gummer, the Executive Director of Data Strategy for the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College at Arizona State University, lead the External Review process.



## LEAP to roll out the 2020 Edition of the Learning Framework and Educator User Guide

This Edition stems from Dede and Gummer's External Review, Peterson's Research Review and on-the-ground findings from work with more than 140 schools and 2,400 educators. Aligned with the 2020 Edition Components and Guidelines, the User Guide will help educators add depth and context to classroom strategy development.



## Dede and Gummer complete the External Review

Fifty-eight participants—ranging from researchers to educators to policymakers—from 23 states critique the Learning Framework. Panels affirm the rigor of its development process.



# LEAP LEARNING FRAMEWORK ADOPTION

EDUCATORS IN MORE THAN

**140**

schools have transformed their learning design into a personalized model with the Framework as the foundation of their innovation.

MORE THAN

**2,400**

in-service and pre-service educators have strengthened their practice via the principles and strategies included in the Framework.

OVER ACROSS

**400** **23**  
SCHOOLS STATES

(totaling nearly 100,000 responses from teachers and students) have reflected on the progress of their personalized learning implementation via the LEAP Personalized Learning Surveys, whose reports map to the Framework.

IN

**2018**

the Utah State Board of Education adopted the LEAP Learning Framework as the basis of its state-wide Competency-Based Education initiative.

FOR THEIR

**2018**  
REPORT

Researchers from iNACOL and the Center on Reinventing Public Education used the LEAP Learning Framework and LEAP Personalized Learning Surveys as grounding for their National Landscape Scan.