



MODERN LEARNING STRATEGY

CONTEXT

The York Region District School Board (YRDSB) expects schools to provide learning environments which prepare students to adapt, achieve and excel in a world that is constantly changing. School engagement has far-reaching societal implications; therefore, schools must be places where students are engaged deeply in learning and challenged to develop the skills and mindsets that are integral to modern learning. District data indicates that students feel that doing well in school is important; it also shows that both elementary and secondary students would like school to be more interesting. National and district data indicate a downward trend in students' interest in school as they progress through the grades. To be more engaged, all students need to have input into their learning as well as opportunities to investigate and address real-life issues.

The Modern Learning Strategy provides direction for actions in classrooms, schools and the system to engage students in authentic, relevant and deep learning that enables them to create, connect, communicate and share their learning with the world and to be future ready.



BUILDING KNOWLEDGE AND CAPACITY

Building Knowledge and Capacity involves connecting research and practice to develop an understanding of the interrelationships between deep learning, skills and mindsets to support each learner as engaged and caring citizens of the world. This is particularly important for those with marginalized identities including Indigenous, racialized and 2SLGBTQ+ students, ELLs, students with special education needs, children and youth in care and those students in difficult economic circumstances.

ACTIONS

System

Build collective understanding of the Modern Learning Frame and how it may be used to create equitable, accessible and inclusive learning experiences

Learn with and from diverse researchers, educators, students and communities, including those with expertise in equity and inclusivity, to support ongoing strategic planning, implementation and monitoring of the Modern Learning Strategy

Investigate, communicate and ensure access to emerging resources which support modern learning and are reflective of the diverse learning communities across schools

Use equitable and inclusive approaches to engage a diversity of stakeholders to identify and nurture the development of innovative practices to build system capacity (e.g., School-Based Collaborative Learning Projects)

Use equitable and inclusive approaches to engage a diversity of stakeholders to create and support educational networking strategies that connect school communities with research, resources and practical tools

Support system and school leaders to build capacity for modern learning approaches through transparent structures that ensure equitable access to leadership and professional learning opportunities

Revise the Modern Learning Frame to explicitly:

- define student voice as: "the co-design and co-implementation of both learning and assessment,"
- elevate the role of experiential learning and
- integrate equity as a through-line

School

Use equitable and inclusive entry points to build a collective understanding of the Modern Learning Frame and make connections among the specific components through professional conversations and the development of professional learning opportunities

Review modern learning research and resources through the BWV Modern Learning Page

Classroom

Develop approaches that are responsive to students' social identities and use research and resources linked to the Modern Learning Frame

Identify, learn about and implement research-based instructional and assessment strategies found on the BWV Modern Learning Page to support student learning



LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

Learning, Teaching and Assessment involves educators, students and community partners in co-creating learning opportunities that are authentic, experiential, flexible and personalized and that reflect and respond to the needs of the diversity of learners.

ACTIONS

System

Provide experiential, social and formal professional learning opportunities and resources for teaching, learning and assessment

Create guidelines for libraries and Makerspaces as components of the Learning Commons that promote and support universal design and an inclusive learning environment for all

Provide teachers with equitable access to technology that supports enhanced pedagogy through the Teacher Technology Engagement Program (TTEP)

School

Implement and personalize modern learning approaches with staff, reflective of the interconnectedness of mindsets, deep learning and skills

Support interdisciplinary/integrated learning, experiential learning opportunities and flexible structures which foster equitable and inclusive learning environments through Universal Design for Learning (e.g., time, space, resources)

Promote libraries and Makerspaces as key components of the Learning Commons to extend and enhance purposeful, culturally relevant and responsive curriculum-based student learning

Develop mindsets and skills that value and leverage student voice in learning, assessment and decision-making

Classroom

Implement and personalize modern learning approaches with students reflective of the interconnectedness of mindsets, deep learning and skills

Mindsets

- Create spaces in which all students are supported to take risks, think creatively and be innovative, particularly students with marginalized identities
- Model, promote and teach digital, environmental and global citizenship and responsibility
- Use language that aligns with a growth mindset and supports students' willingness to take risks, to innovate and to persevere

Deep Learning

- Engage in a process of assessment for and as learning when co-designing learning with/for students to promote student voice and engagement
- Promote personalized learning models to recognize who the learner is and to meet their needs in a manner and environment that is culturally responsive and relevant
- [Co-learn with students](#) through [inquiry based learning](#), authentic tasks and critical thinking approaches
- Explore modern learning through the lens of the Instructional Core
- Embed strategies that support innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship in the context of authentic challenges
- Elevate the role of experiential learning

Skills

- Foster students' capacity to be their own assessors and to ultimately become independent and autonomous learners
- Develop learners' ability to analyze, evaluate, interpret and synthesize information in order to navigate, question, challenge the status quo and transform understanding (e.g., teach learners to critically assess bias and voice within media)
- Develop opportunities for creative problem solving and idea generation in partnership with students



ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

Environmental Design attends to both technological infrastructure and physical spaces. Sustainable and flexible environmental design is intentional and responsive to students' social identities, their strengths and needs.

ACTIONS

System

Ensure the digital systems teachers and students depend upon are secure and operational

Support the strategic implementation of a K-12 Engagement Platform that allows for collaboration and personalization of learning

Investigate innovative approaches to designing and reimagining flexible learning spaces which incorporate universal design

Provide teachers with equitable access to technology that supports digital learning environments through the Teacher Technology Engagement Program (TTEP)

Develop guidelines with students to support app creation that incorporate student voice and allow for relevant learning opportunities and development of skills

Update Blueprint for Technology Acquisitions to support decisions about the appropriate purchase and use of technology

Refine the Help Desk Strategy to support self-directed processes for troubleshooting

Develop and sustain collaboration across teams and departments to support modern learning

School

Explore the use of educational social networks to connect staff with other professionals, resources and innovative practices

Teach digital citizenship and responsibility to support the appropriate use of digital media and tools

Use the Blueprint for Technology Acquisitions, in collaboration with schools, communities and families, to support decisions about the appropriate purchase and use of technology

Partner with students to implement innovative approaches to designing and reimagining flexible learning spaces that incorporate universal design

Classroom

Explore flexible modern learning environments which foster inclusivity and are accessible to and accommodating of each student's needs (e.g., [third teacher](#), outdoor classrooms)

Leverage digital tools to enhance pedagogy, learning and communication



COLLABORATIVE LEARNING COMMUNITIES

Collaborative learning communities build, support and value partnerships among students, educators, families and communities within dynamic and flexible learning environments, where all stakeholders feel a sense of belonging. Learners in collaborative communities embrace challenges, creativity and problem solving with a commitment to and responsibility for contributing to the shared learning of all members of a safe, caring and supportive learning community.

ACTIONS

System

Model collaborative learning (e.g., [collaborative inquiry approach](#))

Support dynamic, collaborative learning across schools and CECs

Support a Student Trustee Innovation grant and proposal system to directly support student innovation projects

Explore and foster external partnerships that reflect the many dimensions of diversity to enhance educational opportunities in support of student innovation and entrepreneurship

Create, model and support educational social networking by building online and face-to-face professional learning communities

School

Support staff in developing collaborative learning environments and engaging families and communities in dialogue to create responsive and equitable learning opportunities for all students (e.g., Promoting Collaborative Learning Cultures, Principals as Co-Learners: Supporting the Promise of [Collaborative Inquiry](#))

Develop a Modern Learning Representative Team to engage in opportunities to deepen knowledge and share learning

Engage with external partners to provide Community Connected Experiential Learning (e.g., experiential learning, apprenticeship, co-op, entrepreneurial learning opportunities)

Use an anti-oppressive lens to surface and interrupt barriers to Community Connected Experiential Learning

Foster and enhance family and community engagement in support of student learning and well-being by soliciting input to inform planning (e.g., new K-12 Student/Teacher/Family Engagement Platform, community partnerships, Parent Symposiums)

Classroom

Create classroom-based collaborative learning communities in which safety, risk taking, innovation and shared ownership for learning are central

[Co-learn with students](#)

Create conditions that support leadership opportunities for students, particularly those who have been marginalized and underserved

Engage students in local and global issues to develop and deepen understanding of critical literacy and social justice by working with other educators and community organizations to make connections beyond the classroom

Implement classroom practices that strengthen home-school connections and integrate the voices of families to frame learning and support personalization

Use technology-enabled learning to support collaboration and communication as well as local and global environmental and digital citizenship

Use an anti-oppressive lens to surface and interrupt barriers to experiential learning

Engage students in experiential learning opportunities that connect to their lived experiences, families and communities

RESOURCES

Aligning resources effectively, purposefully and efficiently to focus on what matters most is a key leadership function. Resources have been identified to support the implementation of the Modern Learning Strategy.

They are organized into categories:

- Core Resources
- Facilitation Resources
- Parent/Guardian/Family Resources
- Supporting Specialized Populations Resources