New Pedagogies for Deep Learning: Flourishing in a Complex World
Learning Partnerships

SPEAKER 1: Deep learning educators recognize that they can't be the only experts in the room. Meaningful partnerships within and beyond the school not only make the learning more interesting and relevant, but students become exposed to diverse backgrounds and points of view.

SPEAKER 2: In the deep learning, one of the elements that we focus on would be the learning partnerships. We are not only breaking down the walls of the classroom, but we're also looking at ways that we can take down the walls of the school, bring the community into the school and bring our students out into the community. It is all about making connections to different things. And we've seen tremendous opportunities for deep learning, where two schools, a high school and an elementary school can connect together and make the learning authentic for the students. And then we see the engagement skyrocket, even for the reluctant learner.

SPEAKER 1: Partnerships can include peers, cross-grade or cross-school connections, parents, community members and global contacts. The partnerships can be face-to-face or virtual.

SPEAKER 3: Throughout the district, we always had partnerships with parents, we would bring in guest speakers. We were starting to do Skyping and Google Hangouts. But now with an intentional focus on learning partnerships, we're seeing that we're connecting not just classroom to classroom, but grade to grade, grade to other schools, school to school, outside the province, across the country, globally. And that really is something that engages our students.

SPEAKER 4: The partnerships don't just come out of nowhere, I think, when you're looking at forming partnerships. You're thinking about first, what are we learning about in the classroom? Why is it meaningful to us? How can we kind of look for other people as resources to help us support our learning journey? We had an opportunity this year to work with National Geographic and Google on a really cool project, where students were actually testing out a new software that Google has still yet to launch.

SPEAKER 1: There is an authentic spirit of equity, and the relationships between and among students and the partners. The relationships, learning outcomes, processes and expectations are transparent, and there is true consensus among all partners about what success looks like, and how they will get there. Most importantly, students see themselves as critical partners. Student voice, agency and contribution are foundational to the deep learning classroom.

SPEAKER 5: There's a bunch of children in Canada, and I feel that it's really nice just to show people that you need to help them, not just yourself, such as, don't be greedy.

SPEAKER 1: Learning goals and tasks are co-created between students, teachers and the family with a clear focus by all on the deep learning outcomes; character, citizenship, collaboration, critical thinking, creativity and communication.

SPEAKER 6: I think we've learned a lot over probably the last six years about how important student voice and student choice is, and how pencil and paper tasks don't always elicit what the student's voice really means. And unless you talk to students, unless you conference with them, unless you give them very specific feedback, they're not going to grow as a learner in a way that they could grow.

SPEAKER 1: Teachers cultivate relationships with students and create partnerships with them that promote their voice and choice.

SPEAKER 6: They own their own learning. They have their own voice. And students, I think when they really reflect upon things, they really know more deeply about what it is they're talking about. So in terms of any subject matter, they've learned deeply. They've practiced and practiced. They've reflected and reflected. They've set goals for themselves , we've set goals for them, and they become builders of their own knowledge and builders of other people's knowledge.

SPEAKER 7: This year, they've moved much more into open projects and looking at the bigger picture of what they're learning. I guess applying what they're learning to the wider world, learning about the global goals. Being able to take projects that they've done out into the community, to things like the Ottawa Maker's Fair -- yeah, seeing how their work can connect to the broader community.

SPEAKER 1: Partnerships also provide students with opportunities for authentic feedback on their work. In this grade six classroom, students are receiving feedback on their water filter designs from research partners at a neighbouring university. The experiencing of learning with partners enhances learning for students.

SPEAKER 8: Even though we're a class of 27, collaborating with the classes around the school board or classes within our school and different adults that came in and shared business concepts with the kids, it just opens up a completely new realm for them. I find that it might seem like something that is a huge mountain to overcome. But once you start doing it and seeing the changes in the students, the deep learning, I mean, it just erupts.