Our Design Principles

Since our inception more than 20 years ago, student character has been embedded in our design principles and work in schools to transform teaching, learning and the culture of schools.

These principles animate our research-based model for transforming teaching, learning, and the culture of schools.

1. The Primacy of Self-Discovery
2. The Having of Wonderful Ideas
3. The Responsibility for Learning
4. Empathy and Caring
5. Success and Failure
6. Collaboration and Competition
7. Diversity and Inclusion
8. The Natural World
9. Solitude and Reflection
10. Service and Compassion

Cover illustration by preschool students at Conservatory Lab Charter School.
Learning
with rigor and joy

A new vision for education—and the tools and resources that get us there. That is the promise of EL Education.

Since its founding as Expeditionary Learning over 20 years ago, EL Education has been empowering teachers and challenging students to meet the highest standards and beyond. Research by Mathematica Policy Research found that EL Education students were over 10 months ahead in math and 7 months ahead in reading after 3 years.

Remarkable results unfold every day in diverse EL Education schools across the country, from large urban areas to isolated rural districts. We are transforming education for over 50,000 students with resources and professional learning built on powerful practices, refined in close partnership with educators over our decades-long journey.

Our definition of achievement includes mastery of complex academic content and rigorous preparation for college, but it doesn’t end there. At EL Education, pride in the creation of complex, authentic work, and meaningful contributions to a better world are part and parcel of our three dimensions of student achievement:

» Mastery of knowledge and skills
» Positive character
» High quality work

Illustration by 6th grade students at Santa Fe School for the Arts & Sciences
“This kind of innovative school... is an example of how all our schools should be.”

President Barack Obama at Capital City Public Charter School, an EL Education Mentor and Credentialed School in Washington, D.C.
Delivering results

High expectations lead to achievement for all students

Our results encompass high academic achievement and college readiness as well as pride in the mastery of complex, authentic work, and the passion and capacity to contribute to a better world.

Test scores are only the beginning of our story. For EL Education, building character has always been central to education. Through meaningful experiences that empower students in their communities, positioning them as contributors, our students not only gain important academic skills, but also the capacity—and the passion—to be leaders, creators, and innovators.

*Data from 2014-2015. All highly implementing schools in the EL Education network are included in these analyses.

**Study by Mathematica Policy Research. View the full study online here: https://goo.gl/JMTTvo

More time in the EL Education network is linked to higher student performance*
Percent of EL education schools outperforming the other schools in their district on state reading and math tests, by number of years in our network.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years in Network</th>
<th>Reading Tests</th>
<th>Math Tests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;4 years</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4+ years</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10+ years</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After three years, EL Education students are:**

- 10 months ahead in math
- 7 months ahead in reading
Students in EL Education schools outperform peers*
Average amount EL Education schools outperform their local district in students reaching proficiency on English Language Arts (■) and Math (■) tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Students</td>
<td>+11 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>+7 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latina/o</td>
<td>+9 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low income</td>
<td>+8 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>+9 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>+3 pts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Illustrations by kindergarten students at Alice B. Beal Elementary
“We thought we were going to change our city, but what we really did was change ourselves.”

Polaris Charter Academy 7th graders, reflecting on their work to curb gun violence in their Chicago community.
Empowering teachers
to unleash the potential of their students

Our best-in-class professional learning and resources inspire teachers to lift their practice and transform their classrooms.

Engaging and Inspiring Learning
Our classroom-based coaching, national institutes and instructional resources inspire new and experienced teachers to improve their practice and create classrooms that ignite student learning.

Compelling Curriculum
Our highly rated, open-source literacy curriculum, described by teachers as “engaging, rigorous, challenging, exciting, and successful,” has been downloaded more than six million times and is transforming classrooms in more than 500 districts in 43 states.

Best-selling Publications
Practical guides to creating remarkable schools and classrooms, featuring effective practices gleaned from EL’s best schools across the country.

Rich Online Resources
Our rich library of online resources, including Models of Excellence—the largest online resource of student work—and more than 100 teacher practice videos, are setting the standard for teaching excellence.

Illustration by 7th grade students at King Middle School

1 million+
Views of our teacher practice videos

6 million+
Downloads of our open source ELA curriculum
152
Schools in our network

50,000
Students in EL Education schools

Diverse students

- White | 41%
- Latino/a | 26%
- Black | 25%
- Asian | 4%
- Other | 4%

Diverse locales

- City | 54%
- Rural | 17%
- Suburban | 20%

Diverse governance

- District | 46%
- Charter | 50%
- Independent | 4%

Diverse grades

- Elementary | 42%
- Middle | 40%
- High School | 18%
Vision

When students and teachers are engaged in work that is challenging, adventurous and meaningful, learning and achievement flourish.

Mission

To create classrooms where teachers can fulfill their highest aspirations, and students achieve more than they think possible, becoming active contributors to building a better world.

Approach

Our approach is grounded in respect for teachers and school leaders as creative agents in their classrooms. We build their capacity to ignite each student’s motivation, persistence and compassion to propel growth and success in school, college, career and life.

Our definition of student success combines academic achievement, character and high quality work. We believe that academic success is built on strong character qualities of collaboration, perseverance, responsibility and compassion, and that character is shaped through engaging and challenging academic work.