

STATE-LEVEL POLICY AND
CONDITIONS LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

Progress and Possibilities to Support Learner-Centered Education and Ecosystem Design

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Foreword

To be truly visionary, we have to root our imagination in our concrete reality while simultaneously imagining possibilities beyond that reality.

—
bell hooks

Imagine public education where each learner's voice is honored and considered integral in creating their learning pathway. Imagine an education where learners develop agency and new curiosities as they navigate their experiences along the way. Imagine learning that is inherently a social experience, during which strong human bonds are formed, and a sense of belonging is nurtured. Imagine learning that is not bound to a building, but is integrated with the community, helping learners to actively connect with and contribute to society. Imagine learning where progress is determined by competency, not by time spent. And fundamentally, learning is relevant and tailored to each young person's passions, holistic needs, and gifts.

At Education Reimagined, we call this learner-centered education. Our vision for public education is one where this learning can be realized for every young person. Fortunately, we don't have to just imagine anymore.

After over a decade of learning and working with thousands of educators, we have seen the power of this approach in action. Founded on the wisdom of so many who have come before us, this vision has been brought to life and led to secure and fulfilling lives for young people in diverse communities across the country.

Unfortunately, the concrete reality is that so many of our young people do not have access to this kind of education. We inherited a public system that was largely designed toward a different vision, making it challenging for learner-centered education to spread and thrive. But as the world's contexts—democracy, economy, and technology—shift dramatically, so must our approach to public education. We need a modern public system equitably set up for whatever the future might hold.

We believe this modern system looks a lot more like an ecosystem—one that is not bound by a single building but rather is a connected network of supports and spaces within a community. Learning happens in home bases (where lasting adult and peer relationships are forged and nurtured), learning hubs (where academic concepts are unpacked) and field sites (where learning is applied in context of real world projects and activities). Ecosystems are more flexible and dynamic than our current systems, and have the ability to meet the moment, and adapt to changing dynamics.

We know if an ecosystem approach is to become a reality, it will require enabling conditions and policy to support and sustain it. We need to understand the current policies that are at play, and make space for new possibilities for change in our K-12 system. Policy might be thought of only as the regulating or binding force that holds us to our current reality, putting barriers in place to change. However, policy can be one of the best mechanisms to propel us forward toward better futures.

Therefore, as we take up work to catalyze systems change, we're committed to growing our capacity and community in this arena. The first step in our pursuit was to explore the field, including understanding the current policy headwinds and revealing the tailwinds that can enable equitable reach.

Sarah Bishop-Root, Education Reimagined's Partner for Policy Leadership, took up this charge and examined the policy landscape. She surfaced insights about the potential for learner-centered ecosystems and what possibilities more aligned policies might create. The benchmarking report is a starting point to spark deeper policy-oriented conversations, and open doors for interested stakeholders eager to see learner-centered education emerge and grow.

The good news is that in many cases, flexibility exists for this work to begin, deepen, and thrive. The better news is that we have a policy foundation upon which learner-centered visionaries can build upon in partnership with the leaders in their communities and states.

So bringing it back to the words of bell hooks, this report roots our imagination in the concrete reality of our policy landscape, to empower learner-centered stakeholders in advancing their work, and realizing the promise of a learner-centered future.

Emily Liebttag
Chief Innovation Officer



Introduction

Education Reimagined conducted a national landscape analysis to look holistically across state K-12 public education systems to understand the existing learner-centered policies and conditions that could be leveraged to enable a full spectrum of learner-centered design, from one-off models to [community-based, learner-centered ecosystems](#). Our goal is that it can serve as a starting point towards efforts to ignite deeper policy-oriented conversations and to empower learner-centered stakeholders. It lays out key takeaways from the research including: examples of state policies and conditions that enable learner agency, learner-centered design, and system transformation.

The power of the learner-centered paradigm is that it creates an opportunity for the development and growth of systems, governance, funding models, structures, and practices that center each learner in context with communities, rather than the system or school. We see this shift coming to life systemically through demonstrations of community-based, learner-centered ecosystems. This provides a radical new lens or design frame in which the landscape of existing education policy opportunities can be understood and woven together in new ways—with the ultimate aim of system transformation.

We hear consistently through our work with learner-centered stakeholders—from education leaders to learners—when they do not feel constrained by a one-size-fits all approach, they are able to thrive. Systems that prioritize flexibility, with the guardrails in place to protect equity, lend themselves to the potential for creating a learner-centered future of education.

Flexibility in systems that expand where learning can happen, how learning is credentialed, and what roles are played by all participants, will result in ensuring that we are making systemic adjustments that are relevant and required for social mobility for all young people.

There are states and communities that have taken inspiring strides with intentional learner-centered system shifts, and there has been a movement of learner-centered models emerging within communities across the country. These efforts provide glimmers of hope for the potential of change, creating pockets of opportunity. Yet, these pockets have not led to the transformation at the scale that is needed for a collective paradigm shift. It is partly a systems challenge and partly a mindset and design challenge.

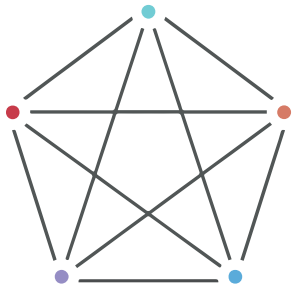
The broader system's signaling still dominates how education leaders and practitioners operate. Even if encouraged to explore innovative, learner-centered approaches, public

education stakeholders are still ultimately working within the overarching conventional system-fueled lens.

Although we ideally need federal and state policies, programs, and funding that enable R&D for innovation in education, we also recognize that there are an abundance of existing opportunities that can be utilized within states by learner-centered stakeholders. Our hope is that this report illuminates the policy possibilities that can be currently leveraged for learner-centered design and further ongoing momentum across the country.

Research Framework

In order to gain a deeper understanding of the existing opportunities, we framed our analysis by exploring state-level policies and conditions that could support the activation of the learner-centered design elements, as defined in Education Reimagined’s [Transformational Vision for Education in the United States](#). These interrelated elements are: learner agency; socially embedded; personalized, relevant, and contextualized; open-walled; and competency-based. In the context of the learner-centered paradigm, the system needs to support the activation of all of these elements working cohesively together to support the full expression of learner-centered education.



Learner Agency

Socially Embedded

Personalized, Relevant, & Contextualized

Open-Walled

Competency-Based

Using the learner-centered paradigm as our guide, we developed a framework for analyzing currently existing state education policies and conditions. We were then able to map the policies to three distinct “buckets” that support the learner-centered design elements:

- Existing learner-driven policies that enable learner agency,
- Existing policies that generate flexibility for learner-centered design, and
- State conditions that could contribute to learner-centered design.

This scan is intended to be an objective analysis of the current learner-centered education policy landscape and is not intended to insinuate policy positioning.

Research Highlights

Based on the research we conducted, we have compiled highlights of some of the state policy and conditions identified, and how they might be further leveraged in the context of learner-centered ecosystem design.

It’s important to note that these tables represent examples—not the comprehensive scope of the research. Our hope is that they demonstrate a window into the landscape of opportunities that exist that could empower learner-centered stakeholders.

1 | LEARNER-DRIVEN POLICIES THAT ENABLE LEARNER AGENCY

In the context of learner-centered education, policies that empower the learner to develop and leverage their agency, despite broader system constraints or local education design, are key. Examples of such policies exist in numerous states, and are providing funding and flexibility that allow young people to personalize their learning experiences, earn credit upon demonstration of mastery, validate the learning they are doing beyond the school walls, and connect to learning experiences and opportunities based on their interests. The correlating design elements are: learner agency, personalized, relevant and contextualized; and open-walled.

Learner-Driven Policies: Highlights and Insights

Note: This table reflects highlights, not the comprehensive scope of research conducted.

POLICY	DESCRIPTION	STATE EXAMPLES	IMPLICATION FOR ECOSYSTEM DESIGN
Credit for learning outside of the classroom	Enables a learner to earn credit for learning opportunities outside of the classroom.	Colorado: Innovative Learning Opportunities Pilot Program New Hampshire: Extended Learning Opportunities, Learn Everywhere, Work-Based Learning South Carolina: Work-Based Learning	Provides a way for learners to get credit for community-based learning in an ecosystem.

POLICY	DESCRIPTION	STATE EXAMPLES	IMPLICATION FOR ECOSYSTEM DESIGN
Learner-directed funding opportunities	Directs funding to learners to personalize and access opportunities outside of the classroom.	Idaho: Advanced Opportunities Indiana: Career Scholarship Account Virginia: Learning Acceleration Grants	Expands personalization and learner-agency, while potentially informing learner-centered funding models within an ecosystem.
Part-time enrollment	Allows a nonpublic school learner to be enrolled part-time in public school. Depending on the state policy, this can be applied to homeschooled students.	Alaska: Part-Time Enrollment in a Public School Idaho: Attendance at Schools Washington: Attendance Rights of Part-Time Public School Students	Allows a learner to personalize their learning through combined opportunities, within and outside of public education (could be particularly leveraged in an ecosystem’s early phases of development).
Open enrollment	Enables a learner to have access to public education options outside of their zoned school within their district or across the state, depending on state law.	Arizona: Open Enrollment Policies Iowa: Open Enrollment Kansas: Open Enrollment	Expands equitable access to who could participate in a public ecosystem demonstration.
Self-directed learner designation	Provides flexible learning opportunities to the learner, including allowing for flexible attendance, virtual school attendance, and learning outside of the classroom.	Idaho: Self-Directed Learner Designation	Provides the potential for extensive flexibility for learners to build personalized learning plans that leverage diverse learning providers and opportunities within the community, while still having their education take place in the public system.

POLICIES THAT GENERATE FLEXIBILITY FOR LEARNER-CENTERED DESIGN

Extensive flexibility from conventional public education system constraints can be discovered in statutes, rules, waivers, programs, and pilots, as well as through local control. Sometimes even slight nuances in how a bill is worded can create flexibility based on state interpretation.

As long as we are seeking flexibility from the conventional paradigm while operating within accountability systems informed by the conventional system, there will still be constraints that create tension, resulting in barriers to transformation. This is why federal and state support for education R&D is important. However, leveraging existing flexibilities provides openings to move toward an ecosystem vision and elevate the additional flexibilities that will ultimately be needed. In fact, if existing flexibility is fully leveraged within a state, it will create a more compelling case to policymakers and state education leaders that additional flexibility is necessary. These types of policies typically support four of the learner-centered design elements: learner agency; personalized, relevant and contextualized; open-walled; and competency-based.

Policies That Generate Flexibility for Learner-Centered Design: Highlights and Insights

Note: This table reflects highlights, not the comprehensive scope of research conducted.

POLICY	DESCRIPTION	STATE EXAMPLES	IMPLICATION FOR ECOSYSTEM DESIGN
College and career pathways	A program that creates opportunities for learners to earn college credit and industry credentials across K–12, postsecondary, and workforce systems.	Delaware: Career and Technical Education Programs Illinois: Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Act North Carolina: Career and College Promise	Generates new partnerships and cross-sector collaborations, personalized learning plans, and reveals the diversity of learning opportunities that exist outside of the classroom.
Credit based on mastery (seat-time flexibility)	Credits are awarded based on a child's demonstrated mastery instead of a combination of time and passing a course.	Kentucky: Minimum Requirements for High School Graduation Maine: High School Diploma Standards Vermont: Proficiency-Based Graduation Requirements	Removes the barrier of pace or place in the credentialing of learning.

POLICY	DESCRIPTION	STATE EXAMPLES	IMPLICATION FOR ECOSYSTEM DESIGN
Funding delinked from seat-time	Funding is not driven by the amount of time a learner spends in a classroom.	Arizona: Instructional Time Models Utah: Learner Validated Funding	Allows the funding to flow based on more diverse factors, creating opportunities to build pathways and demonstrate results for learning that happens outside of school.
Innovation programs	Statutory program that creates an application process for districts and schools to articulate an innovative design vision and request the flexibilities needed to support it.	Colorado: Innovation Schools Act South Carolina: District Innovation, Flexibility & Waivers Texas: Innovation Districts	Provides an opportunity for broad flexibility from conventional system constraints that could be leveraged within a district for ecosystem design.
Public charter schools	Public schools of choice that operate with autonomy, governance, and flexibility.	Maine: Public Charter Schools Minnesota: Charter Contract	Creates a mechanism for flexibility required for the creation of ecosystem pilots and demonstrations.
Waivers	A process for schools and districts to request flexibility from constraining statutory or regulatory requirements.	Indiana: 1003 Flexibility Waivers South Carolina: Legislative and Administrative Waivers	Creates an opportunity to access flexibility from specific conventional system constraints.
Personalized, competency-based education	Statute that defines and establishes an approach to education that is personalized and competency-based.	Missouri: Competency-Based Education Grant Program South Carolina: Competency-Based Education Utah: Personalized, Competency-Based Learning	Creates an opportunity to build upon this momentum to move toward all elements of a learner-centered paradigm.

STATE CONDITIONS THAT COULD CONTRIBUTE TO LEARNER-CENTERED ECOSYSTEM DESIGN

States that have had success with broader learner-centered transformation efforts have balanced fostering the conditions for sustainable transformation without being overly prescriptive. By setting a powerful, inclusive statewide vision, they have created a clear foundation from which local leaders can work, and have generated tools that can be leveraged and modified to local contexts.

This creation of a state-wide vision for learner-centered education, as well as providing the frameworks, programs, and technical support needed to design and implement the vision, leads to broader adoption and ignites momentum for additional change throughout the system.

State Conditions: Highlights and Insights

Note: This table reflects highlights, not the comprehensive scope of research conducted.

POLICY	DESCRIPTION	STATE EXAMPLES
Leadership	State-level education leaders who are advocates for transformation and creating space for learner-centered invention.	Kentucky North Dakota Utah
Portrait of a graduate	A shared vision of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that would enable all learners to graduate prepared for college and career. This provides an alternative or supplement to conventional graduation requirements.	Nevada: Portrait of a Nevada Learner Utah: Utah Talent: Mastery, Autonomy, Purpose South Carolina: Profile of the South Carolina Graduate
Learner-centered accountability redesign efforts	Some states are exploring, in collaboration with stakeholders, how accountability can be informed by communities and align with learner-centered education.	Indiana: Graduates Prepared to Succeed Kentucky: United We Learn Utah: Next Generation School Accountability Report

POLICY	DESCRIPTION	STATE EXAMPLES
<p>State-level competency frameworks</p>	<p>A set of competencies informed by a portrait of a graduate that guides a learner’s developmental path from pre-K through graduation.</p>	<p>Idaho: College and Career Readiness Competencies</p> <p>South Carolina: South Carolina Framework for Personalized, Competency-Based Learning</p> <p>Utah: Utah’s Portrait of a Graduate Competencies</p>
<p>Technical support for learner-centered design</p>	<p>Support provided to districts and schools to build capacity with learner-centered design.</p>	<p>Arkansas: Office of Innovation for Education</p> <p>South Carolina: PersonalizeSC PD</p>
<p>Enabling infrastructure</p>	<p>Intentional programs and structures developed at the state level to address challenges to learner access and opportunity, such as broadened digital access and transportation structures.</p>	<p>Arizona: Transportation Modernization Grants</p> <p>California: Expanding Broadband Access</p>
<p>State-wide virtual program</p> <p>(Also enables learner agency and learner-centered design.)</p>	<p>An online learning program that can be leveraged by any student within the state.</p>	<p>Georgia: Georgia Virtual School</p> <p>New Hampshire: VLACS</p> <p>North Carolina: North Carolina Virtual Public School</p>

State Spotlights

The research elevated states that have dynamic landscapes of policies and conditions that have the possibility for holistically supporting and enabling design and system transformation, if the landscape of flexibilities are mapped towards a learner-centered vision. In both of the unique state examples below, opportunities abound for learner-centered ecosystem invention.



INDIANA

Indiana has a wide range of opportunities in place that, if leveraged together, could create powerful openings for learner-centered ecosystem design. In addition to Indiana's [extensive design flexibility](#) through statute, programs, and local control opportunities, there is broader system signaling through a newly designed [performance dashboard](#) that includes learner-centered indicators. To name a few policy highlights, Indiana has seat-time flexibility, the ability for learners to earn credit for learning experiences outside of the classroom, part-time enrollment, a strong college and career pathways program, and a [cross-sector workforce cabinet](#). The Governor's Workforce Cabinet, anchored in a human-centered strategy, consists of stakeholders representing business, community, education, post-secondary postsecondary, and policymakers. This cabinet has been pivotal in the momentum needed and outlined a report titled "[Recommendations to Tackle Employer Talent Challenges and Accelerate the States' Economy](#)" prior to the 2023 Indiana legislative session.

Indiana is building on its momentum to improve cohesiveness between education and employers by passing a [comprehensive bill](#) (HB 1002) to create this expanded system alignment.

The bill expanded the role of the Workforce Cabinet and created [Career Scholarship Accounts \(CSAs\)](#) to direct funding to learners, enabling more flexibility and agency to build relationships with the community and businesses, and access work-based learning and apprenticeship opportunities. The bill also increases investment in intermediaries to help identify and connect learners to opportunities, which is essential to the learner-centered ecosystem vision. The Indiana Department of Instruction and State Board of Education is rethinking graduation requirements to embrace real-world experience and expand youth apprenticeship opportunities.



MONTANA

In 2017, a [report](#) was produced for Montana’s interim education committee to help inform the policy roadmap and priorities for learner-centered education system transformation efforts within the state. The report helped spark conversation that paved the way for the passage of many of the policies that are now in place in the state, creating new opportunities for learner-centered efforts. To name a few, these policies have enabled: seat-time flexibility, statewide virtual learning allowances; decoupling of funding from seat-time requirements; expanded definitions of pupil instruction outside of the classroom; and the establishment of a transformational learning program that gives districts and schools extensive flexibility and access to grant funding.

In 2019, Montana passed the [Advanced Opportunities Act](#), which “expands personalized career & technical education opportunities for middle and high school students; reduces out-of-pocket costs for students and families in support of a student’s postsecondary success; empowers students to actively engage in forming postsecondary success that aligns with their individual interests, passions, strengths, needs, and culture; and authorizes elected school boards to use advanced opportunity aid to invest in Montana students by supporting individualized pathways for career and postsecondary.”

Likewise, under the expanded definition of pupil instruction beyond the classroom, Montana has exemplary [code](#) language in which the teacher has been authorized to serve as an intermediary between the learner and the out-of-classroom learning experience, enabling young people to receive credit for these kinds of experiences (see definition of “pupil instruction”). Moreover, within the credit for [work-based learning statute language](#), authorization is further expanded to provide greater flexibility regarding who the facilitator needs to be for that credit to be procured: “Any individual licensed with a class 1 through 4 license is authorized to facilitate interfaces between the school and work-based learning partners. Work-based learning partnerships may be provided for any trade.”

Key Takeaways

- 1 | Given the complex work of learner-centered ecosystem infrastructure invention, it is vital to take a holistic, learner-centered view of the policy landscape to understand and proactively address the interdependencies of existing state-level policies and conditions.

In the context of the conventional system, education policies are often developed and leveraged for implementation in silos or approached in a piecemeal way. Understanding the comprehensive landscape of what currently exists, and viewing it with a lens for learner-centered opportunities, invites us to identify how policies can be leveraged holistically as a set of tools to both empower design and promote learners' agency. We can better see where—even when design flexibility is created—other policy requirements stand in the way of that flexibility being fully utilized.

For example, a state may allow credit based on the demonstration of mastery, but requires a certified teacher to oversee the learning experience in order for a learner to receive credit. This means that although a state could have some flexibility for the kinds of experiences learners can access through work-based learning opportunities or youth apprenticeships, the limitation on who is required to be present during that experience ultimately creates a barrier in practice.

In another case, a state that has a college and career pathway program may have funded and created the role of a navigator—whose responsibility is to support a learner in identifying opportunities and shaping their learning experience. This kind of role would be pivotal in a learner-centered ecosystem. However, if that role can only be created in the context of the pathways program, it will have a limited impact because of those narrow parameters.

Understanding the landscape of policy opportunities within a state will enable the identification of creative solutions through reframing and connecting various policy opportunities to support communities in ecosystem design. It will also clarify the kinds of policy change or level of flexibility for which we can advocate. Without this holistic, learner-centered lens, we will run the risk of inequitable, sporadic implementation, and lack the clarity to understand how and when to conduct research on the impact of this work.

- 2 | The existence of state policies that enable or support learner-centered approaches is not enough; leadership is needed, along with a shared learner-centered vision, the capacity to leverage policy opportunities to support design and implementation, and a political climate in which new approaches are acceptable.

There are several states that have extensive flexibility to enable learner-centered design. Yet, the extensive flexibility afforded is not being leveraged as it could be. This is an indication that simply having the policies in place is not enough. Sustainable transformation will not happen overnight. Likewise, education transformation is unlikely to be driven solely by policy change. It will require intentional multifaceted steps that integrate work across practice, policy, culture, and systems design to create lasting systems change that leaves doors open for continuous system improvements.

For example, Utah has been making strides toward learner-centered system shifts since creating the groundwork for competency-based education in 2013. The state’s strategic plan identifies four goals, one of which is “to ensure all students and educators have access to personalized learning experiences through which instructional practices are adapted to the needs of individual students and groups of students.” Utah continues to prioritize identifying the building blocks needed to enable local implementation of Personalized, Competency-Based Learning (PCBL), including launching a grant program to support efforts across the state. Additionally, Utah created a state-level [Portrait of a Graduate](#), [Portrait of a First Year Teacher](#), and a [PCBL framework](#).

3 | There is an emerging trend to watch in which states are transitioning from a top-down design approach to one that is community-driven.

Far too often the fragility of systems change is demonstrated with shifts in leadership or political climates. There are examples within states in which years of momentum to support learner-centered efforts quickly become deprioritized when the learner-centered champion no longer has a seat at the table. When system redesign efforts seek to include and honor more diverse voices, perspectives, and lived experiences, communities are then empowered to have a voice in shaping redesign efforts that are sustainable.

Kentucky is an example of a state that has both embodied this community-driven approach and created space for learner-centered system redesign. Under the leadership of former Commissioner Jason Glass, the State Education Agency developed a process for reciprocal community-driven learning partnerships that is now informing the state's work in learner-centered system transformation, including accountability and assessment redesign. The work culminated in a grounding statewide vision for the future of education called "[United We Learn](#)," which emphasizes student experience, school innovation, and community collaboration. The buy-in and engagement this process has generated of not only school and district leadership but also parents, youth, and community members have created sustainable transformation efforts, despite leadership change.

Nevada is another example of a state creating very intentional steps towards system redesign through engaging and empowering stakeholders across the system. Leveraging the post-pandemic opportunity to rethink education, the [Blue Ribbon Commission for a Globally Prepared Nevada](#) was formed, which began to explore the future of learning in the state and the policy frameworks required to support it. Building upon this effort, Nevada engaged community stakeholders, including learners, to inform the development of its [Portrait of a Nevada Learner](#).

4 | There are already a number of states that have made significant system-wide efforts to move away from the conventional paradigm and create space for learner-centered innovation.

By identifying the states that have made significant progress, we can look to them as fertile ground in which to pilot and invent new learner-centered infrastructure and as a source of guidance, lessons learned, and inspiration for other interested states and policymakers.

New Hampshire's long-term system-wide transformation efforts serve as an example. Its effectiveness began with leadership that brought a grounding learner-centered vision and engaged in the ongoing, iterative work necessary to develop and expand the policies and conditions to support it. This now includes a competency-based system, an aligned accountability system, and a variety of extended learning opportunities with the structures to have them “count” on the learner’s public record. The state is also home to the [Virtual Learning Academy Charter School \(VLACS\)](#), which is a statewide offering that accepts both full-time and part-time enrollment and has a learner-centered funding model. Through online and in-person experiences, VLACS provides extensive flexibility for learners to personalize their education experience.

Opening up the aperture of learning experiences that “count” in New Hampshire is a lesson in iterative, vision-led policy change unto itself. New Hampshire began by defining extended-learning opportunities as “a credit-bearing learning experience that takes place outside the traditional classroom.” In 2016, a report was published that spotlighted the impacts on young people of this expanded definition, representing the momentum behind this sort of policy change. Building on this evidence, New Hampshire has since expanded extended learning opportunities and added the [Learn Everywhere Program](#), which allows learners to create a path to earn credit for out-of-the-classroom learning experiences offered by approved providers.

Further amplification of New Hampshire and other states that have already forged significant pathways for learner-centered education will be essential, particularly to deepen public understanding of how they have created, sustained, and cultivated use of such opportunities.

5 | Clarifying a learner-centered intent in state legislation matters when it comes to creating space for learner-centered invention and connecting policy to practice.

As this report demonstrates, learner-centered leaders can certainly leverage existing policies for learner-centered design. Yet as policymakers seek to expand opportunities, it will make a significant difference if the language in their state statutes is intentionally written to connect back to how the policy will support elements of the learner-centered paradigm. Attentiveness to how the language is written can also avoid misinterpretation from a conventional system lens when translated into rule.

Hawaii passed a [joint resolution](#) in the 2023 legislative session that encapsulates this intentionality. The resolution creates a call to action for the board to explore the best approach for providing access and credit to all learners for learning experiences outside of the classroom. The bill specifically points out how extended learning opportunities correspond to Hawaiian culture and promotes the importance of enabling students to learn from different sources and in different ways.

6 | Policies and conditions that enable ecosystems to emerge from outside of the current system, but allow them to plug into the public education system and its funding, are important to expanding the potential for the development of learner-centered ecosystem demonstrations.

Through our work with learner-centered communities, we have found that learner-centered design can emerge from many entry points both within and outside of the public education system, such as youth development or postsecondary. The current silos created by the conventional paradigm make it difficult to optimize promising opportunities that can be leveraged outside of public education and key partnerships across sectors. States that have taken strides to intentionally create cross-sector partnerships, such as [state children's](#) or [workforce cabinets](#), will inevitably create openings for the development of learner-centered ecosystems.

Conclusion

At times it might feel that navigating through the thicket of the current system constraints to move toward a learner-centered future is overwhelming and difficult. Yet, as shown in this report, there are unharvested policy and conditions opportunities that can be leveraged to make what might feel impossible, possible. This shift to an asset-based mindset is the essence of community-based, learner-centered ecosystems.

However, making this shift demands a broader perspective, one that embraces flexibility to usher in new and transformative possibilities for the future of education. While creating flexibility through policies and conditions is a first step, seizing the power of that flexibility is much more complex. It must be grounded in human-centeredness, including relationships, trust, and shared vision and buy-in for what needs to be changed. It requires the willingness for stakeholders across systems to acknowledge that taking risks to create space for invention is required to break down the historical systemic walls that hold the current system intact.

There are states and communities that have taken inspiring strides in this direction with intentional learner-centered system shifts, creating pockets of opportunity. These opportunities that currently exist must be leveraged to create community-informed feedback loops that can generate the case for change. Policies and conditions must evolve and be fueled by the vision that communities hold so they can come to life in the unique manifestations of these powerful expressions.

We encourage learner-centered stakeholders to continue to identify opportunities to support the spread of learner-centered education, and then amplify the existing policies and conditions that can be leveraged for design and implementation. We hope this report is a meaningful resource for those engaging in learner-centered design and advocacy. Ultimately, how we collectively reframe the purpose of education, empower communities to reflect that purpose in contextualized model and system design, and leverage the tools that enable flexibility will determine our ability to transform the public education system.

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