**EDVISIONS SCHOOLS**

**WHY DEEPER LEARNING?**
The U.S. education system must prepare students to be engaged citizens and to succeed in the high-skilled jobs that are increasingly required in the global economy. To meet these demands, students will need “deeper learning,” a mix of knowledge, skills, and dispositions that include critical thinking and problem solving, effective communication, collaboration, an academic mindset, and the ability to learn how to learn—all applied to the mastery of academic content.

**WHAT IS THE DEEPER LEARNING NETWORK?**
A national “Deeper Learning Network” of more than 500 schools is delivering deeper learning to students in forty-one states. Composed of ten school networks it collectively serves more than 227,000 students, most of whom are low-income minority students. Each school network has a unique approach, but all foster the deeper learning skills that prepare young people for economic and civic success.

**THE NETWORK:** Asia Society, Big Picture Learning, ConnectEd/Linked Learning, EdVisions Schools, Envision Education, Expeditionary Learning, High Tech High, Internationals Network for Public Schools, New Tech Network, and New Visions for Public Schools.

www.deeperlearning4all.org

**EDVISIONS STUDENTS OUTPERFORM THEIR PEERS ON COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACT Scores</th>
<th>SAT Scores</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>EdVisions Average</strong></td>
<td><strong>1749</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>National Average</strong></td>
<td><strong>1518</strong></td>
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**SMALL AND PERSONALIZED**
The founders of EdVisions found that students often leave traditional schools due to impersonal curricula and time-driven instruction that pays little attention to relationships and relevant learning opportunities. Through small learning communities, every student at an EdVisions school is treated as an individual. Strategies to support students include the use of personalized learning plans that are designed by students, parents, and teachers; personalized workspaces that are equipped with technology that tracks student progress against their learning plans; full-time student advisors; and a curriculum that emphasizes student projects and presentations. To foster a culture of student ownership, students manage the library, music class, school congress, and multiple student clubs, giving them additional authentic opportunities to develop communication, collaboration, and critical-thinking and problem-solving skills.

EdVisions also focuses on students’ non-academic needs, which helps students think about their own learning by measuring their ability to set reasonable goals, make plans to meet those goals, and persist to achieve those goals.

**SELF-DIRECTED, PROJECT-BASED LEARNING**
A core component of the EdVisions approach is the use of self-directed, Project-Based Learning opportunities in which students explore real-world problems and challenges, allowing them to obtain a deeper knowledge of a subject. A central goal of these individual or group projects is to build student mastery through rigorous interdisciplinary content that is relevant to

Brooke, an EdVisions student, undertook a project on factory farming and slaughterhouses after she began questioning whether vegetarianism was a legitimate way to stay healthy. She investigated the presence of antibiotics and hormones in meat products, the history of husbandry and slaughtering techniques, and laws governing the U.S. meat industry compared to other countries. She produced a research paper and a visual presentation and exhibit, using samples of vegetable sources of protein, examples of chemicals used in raising meat, and photos of slaughterhouse practices. Her project met standards in biology, environmental science, history, and civics, and gave her a chance to develop her critical-thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills.
the students’ lives. One student who was interested in music learned physics through an exploration of sound. Another built on her interest in gardening through a study of the genetics of heirloom tomatoes. Teacher advisors guide students as they develop their individual or group projects. Academic learning standards are embedded into each of these projects and used to demonstrate high levels of understanding. Students demonstrate their learning through online portfolios or publicly through presentations to their peers, parents, and the community.

**AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT**

Authentic assessment measures students’ ability to solve real-life problems. For example, while a traditional assessment for a chemistry class might consist only of multiple choice questions that require little more than memorization, an authentic assessment engages students in scientific inquiry and might ask test-takers to propose their solution to helping their community clean up a chemical spill in a local lake. EdVisions students are held to high standards in their project-based learning, not only by their teachers and advisors, but by parents and content specialists outside of the classroom as well. Teachers help guide students’ work and ensure that they are meeting content standards and preparing for graduation. Students first develop a project proposal, which is vetted and edited with parents and multiple advisors and content area teachers. Upon approval, a contract is signed to set expectations. Advisors then pay close attention to the student’s progress throughout a project, using the contract, content standards, and rubrics as a guide. An advisor might help a student incorporate the algebra skills needed to pass a standardized test into an upcoming project. Or the advisor might emphasize critical thinking or collaboration skills in which a student needs practice and help the student create a plan to meet those goals. Teachers believe in the philosophy that “a student’s best work looks different for every kid,” and they demonstrate that belief through multiple forms of authentic assessment.

**TEACHER OWNERSHIP AND DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE**

EdVisions embraces the principle of teacher ownership of every aspect of the learning environment. They engage “teachers as owners” of a democratic learning community by granting teachers control over numerous core aspects of school management, such as budgeting and staffing choices. Teachers are evaluated by peers, students, and parents. New staff are incorporated within the school culture and offered continuous improvement support by a teacher-led coaching and mentoring plan. This approach is grounded in the belief that in order to successfully engage students and promote deeper learning, the school must espouse a culture of strong leadership and ownership at all levels.

**GETTING RESULTS**

EdVisions reports that students in their schools earn higher scores on the SAT, that approximately 80 percent of their students graduate, and 82 percent of students have gone to a two- or four-year college. In their flagship school, 69 percent of students have graduated from postsecondary institutions, while 22 percent are still enrolled, for a total of 91 percent. Additionally, EdVisions students consistently outperform their peers at similar schools on growth in their social and emotional skills.