Guide to Public Service Announcements

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Linked Learning PSA Guide

Spreading the word about Linked Learning is an important ongoing goal for all of us in the Linked Learning field. One tool at your disposal for spreading the word is the public service announcement.

Public service announcements (PSAs) are unpaid advertisements or announcements that are designed to inform the public about a specific issue or event. Whether it is a community calendar listing, newspaper classified, radio announcement, or television spot, a PSA provides viewers, listeners, or readers with valuable information that could positively affect their lives.

This guide contains tips and materials to help you develop and place PSAs about Linked Learning events and announcements at your school in local media outlets.
Ten Steps for Placing a PSA

1. **Do Your Homework**
   Before pitching PSAs to broadcast and print outlets in your area, research your local media organizations. They will appreciate that you took the time to understand their company and the media industry.

   - **Identify media outlets that reach your target audience.** Ask yourself: Does this station or newspaper reach business and civic leaders, teachers, or parents? In which language(s) does the station air programming and PSAs? You can find out more about the media outlet’s target audience by asking its advertising or sales department. By demonstrating your understanding of a station or publication’s target audience, you are showing these media professionals that you care about their business and are giving them a reason to care about your issue. Eliminate the outlets that do not reach your target audience(s).

   - **Research their current public service efforts.** Ask yourself: Does this outlet have an ongoing community or public service campaign that corresponds with the Linked Learning mission? Is this outlet promoting a particular community issue, such as education, on a regular basis? Does this newspaper, radio station, or television station already work with any members of your coalition like corporate partners or colleges? Can Linked Learning add value to their current community affairs work? A “yes” to any of these questions could translate into a valuable opportunity for your coalition to successfully place a Linked Learning PSA.

   Encourage local media outlets to use current and past public service commitments as a springboard for a new partnership with Linked Learning. For example, if a television station sponsors activities about education, Linked Learning materials and on-the-ground outreach efforts can add value to their community affairs work. If an outlet does not have an existing public service campaign, encourage your contact to consider working with Linked Learning. The outlet’s participation would give it the opportunity to provide a tangible service to its readers, viewers, or listeners.

   - **Prepare local facts and figures.** Before agreeing to run a PSA, public service professionals will want to know why they should promote Linked Learning. They will want to understand student dropout rates and college readiness in their media market and how Linked Learning can both help students succeed and help the local economy. This guide has a FAQ that will help you work with local media. Also be prepared to share real and powerful student success stories.

   - **Prepare a media list.** Once you have determined which media outlets you will target, prepare a media list. The list should include the contact information for the public service director, community affairs director, or public affairs department. Call the stations and newspapers in your area to prepare the media list or consult their websites. Include:
     - Name and title of contact
     - Mailing address and email address
     - Fax and phone numbers
     - Specific instructions the outlet provides for submitting PSAs
2. **Tailor Your PSAs**
   Know your audience. Focus your PSA on career readiness and work-based learning opportunities for business publications. Focus on student success and personal stories for outlets targeting parents. Identify which Linked Learning message will resonate most with your outlet’s target audience and highlight that message. There are sample PSA scripts in this guide that will help you get started.

3. **Prepare Your Pitch**
   In addition to PSAs, there are several documents that you should customize with information about your school’s Linked Learning program, including:
   - **Pitch memos:** Pitch memos are your first line of communication with a media outlet. They outline the problem, identify the solution, and suggest how the station or newspaper can reach your target audience. These memos, when written persuasively using state and local data, will be the key to capturing the attention of a public service director.
   - **Pitch kit:** Along with a pitch memo, a pitch kit is designed to inform media professionals about your cause quickly. A standard kit contains fact sheets about Linked Learning (available at [LinkedLearning.org](http://LinkedLearning.org)), an event summary or flier if applicable, local pathway information, and other information about Linked Learning programs in your district/media market. Don’t forget to insert suggested scripts for the PSAs—including television and radio scripts for taped spots. (Reminder: Only send radio scripts to radio stations and television scripts to television stations.)
   - **PSA tracking email:** This short email is designed to help you track which media outlets are running your PSAs. These emails will help you gather feedback that can help you plan a future PSA campaign. While there is no guarantee that the public affairs director will respond, you increase your chances of response by keeping your questions brief and sending one gentle reminder.

4. **Prepare a Linked Learning Spokesperson**
   Once you begin pitching your PSAs, some media contacts may request interviews. Often, organizations have found that PSAs can be the impetus for news coverage. These interviews offer the opportunity to highlight Linked Learning and the positive outcomes in your district. You can find templates for talking points and FAQs on the [Linked Learning Alliance website](http://LinkedLearning.Alliance website). Use the materials that you prepared for your pitch kit to customize these message points. Personal stories of student success are especially compelling for the media. Be ready to highlight one or two student success stories from your district. Remember: the best success stories aren’t always from your A+ students. Rather, they often come from students who never imagined going to college or having a promising future, but now have a bright path forward thanks to Linked Learning.

5. **Make Preliminary Calls**
   Make introductory pitch calls before sending your PSAs to media outlets. These initial calls give you a chance to double-check your contact information and build a rapport with public service and community affairs professionals. Rehearse your pitch before making the calls and remember that media are extremely busy so be sure to keep your conversations short and to the point.

   Begin the call by introducing your organization, consortium, or school. Use these first few moments to briefly explain the purpose of your call—to learn more about the outlet’s policy for placing public service or community announcements.
Once you have identified the appropriate contact person and understand the submission process, you can either: 1) let your contact know that you will follow up by sending or delivering an information package including the PSAs or 2) ask if they have a minute to discuss your effort.

If the public affairs representative is interested in learning more about Linked Learning, take a few moments to brief them on three important points:

- **The problem.** Low high school graduation and college attendance rates in California and in the region.
- **The solution.** Linked Learning, a proven approach to high school education that is yielding positive results.
- **The need for their involvement in your outreach campaign.** Generate awareness about your upcoming Linked Learning event or the cause to foster support and potential partnerships with local businesses.

Follow up on this conversation and email a fact sheet to your contact before mailing or hand-delivering the full PSA kit. To ensure that this issue is still fresh in their minds, be sure that your PSA kit reaches your contact within a few days of this conversation. Hopefully, this is the start of an ongoing discussion and future media partnerships.

6. **Distribute and Follow Up on Your PSA Kits**
   Consider personally delivering your PSAs and pitch kits to the media contacts with whom you have spoken. If you have not established a relationship yet, mail your materials. Follow up with everyone who received a PSA kit about one week later.

   Use the follow up call to pick up where you left off in your first conversation. Take a few moments to run through the problem, solution, and need for this PSA effort. Keep a log of your conversations with media contacts, especially if there are questions that you need to answer.

7. **Respond to Requests from Your Contact**
   As you pitch your PSAs, your contact may ask for information that might not be at your fingertips. If you need to follow up on a request, be sure to do so quickly.

8. **Nail Down a PSA Placement Commitment**
   You have informed your media contacts about Linked Learning in your community and pitched your PSA aimed at reaching your target audiences. Now it is time to close the deal. Often, the public service or community affairs director will not be able to commit right away on the placement of your PSA. They might have to send it through a committee or wait for space to open up in their rotation. You may need to continue placing follow-up calls for several weeks to find out if your announcement will run.

   Based on the relationship you have built with your media contacts, you will know how much follow up is required in the future. If your contact cannot provide concrete information about the timing or duration of the PSA placement, tell them you will check back in a few weeks.

   Track your PSAs once they begin airing. If you have a general idea when the spots will be used, consider assigning one or more people the task of monitoring specific media outlets to know when your PSAs run.
9. **Evaluate the Impact of Your PSA Campaign**
   If your contact provides you with specific placement information, like a television or radio time slot when the PSA will air, encourage the public service or community affairs director to return the PSA Tracking Postcard in the pitch kit. Also ask for information about its audience during that period.

   Tracking PSAs can be challenging. Media outlets often use PSAs as “filler,” running them when a paid spot is unexpectedly cancelled or during time periods that have not been claimed by advertisers. And because it is impossible to control the time or frequency of your PSA placements, as you can with paid spots, the number of people who will hear and respond to your announcements will not be as large as with a paid advertising effort. However, they are still worthwhile as you’re getting the Linked Learning story out there.

10. **Share and Build on the Results**
    Your coalition will be interested in learning about the impact of your PSA effort. Compile your evaluation findings into a memo or presentation. If your campaign was particularly effective, you should share this information with the media outlets that aired or printed your PSA. Be sure to thank the community affairs and public service directors at the media outlets that used your PSAs.

    Based on the success of your PSA campaign, you may want to consider taking this media relationship to a new level—a media partnership. In a media partnership, your organization agrees to spend a certain dollar amount on paid advertising with the agreement that the station or outlet would then match your investment dollar-for-dollar or better with additional unpaid placements. For more advice on launching a media partnership, contact LinkedLearning@gmmb.com.
Template PSA Cover Letter and Radio Reader Scripts

TO: [NAME], Public Affairs Director, [STATION]
FROM: [NAME], [ORGANIZATION]
RE: Linked Learning in Action in [CITY/DISTRICT]
DATE: [DATE]

Every day, parents and educators across the state work hard to ensure that students are prepared to succeed in the fast-paced, ever-changing world we live in today. In [CITY/COUNTY], Linked Learning pathways are helping local students meet those challenges. Linked Learning is a successful approach to education based on the idea that students work harder and dream bigger if their education is relevant to them. The Linked Learning approach integrates rigorous academics that meet college-ready standards with sequenced, high-quality career-technical education, work-based learning, and supports to help students stay on track. Students graduate with the skills and confidence to succeed in college, career, and life.

The Linked Learning pathways in [DISTRICT/REGION] are producing exemplary results. To celebrate the many successful accomplishments of Linked Learning, [SCHOOL] will be hosting an [EVENT] showcasing [NEWS HOOK].

We need your help to tell parents and businesses in our community about this innovative approach to education. Below are 10-, 15-, and 30-second live-read scripts for PSAs notifying your audience of the upcoming [EVENT]. We would appreciate it if your on-air talent would read these announcements as often as possible before the event on [DATE]. This PSA has an end date of [DATE].

In addition, we would be grateful if you would consider posting the PSA, in voiceover or text form, to your website, and posting the event on your community calendar. We also encourage you to share the event on your social media channels and invite you to [LOCATION] on [DATE] at [TIME] to participate in the event, as well as to receive a private tour at your convenience.

If you have any questions regarding this PSA or to arrange a tour of [LOCATION], please contact [NAME] ([PHONE], [EMAIL]).

Thank you in advance for your support of this important educational movement that is making a difference in the lives of our students, our community, and our state.

Radio (10 seconds)

Radio (15 seconds)
ANNOUNCER V/O: Add the Linked Learning [EVENT] to your calendar. On [DATE] at [TIME], find out how Linked Learning inspires students to work harder, dream bigger, and learn more by exposing them to previously unimagined career opportunities. Visit www.LinkedLearning.org for more information.
Radio (30 seconds)
ANNOUNCER V/O: Add the Linked Learning [EVENT] to your calendar. On [DATE] at [TIME], find out how Linked Learning ensures that students graduate with the skills and confidence to succeed in college, career, and life.

Linked Learning is a proven approach to education that integrates rigorous academics that meet college-ready standards with sequenced, high-quality career-technical education, work-based learning, and supports that help students stay on track.

Linked Learning answers the question, “Why do I need to know this?” and inspires students to work harder, dream bigger, and learn more by exposing them to previously unimagined career opportunities. For more information, visit www.LinkedLearning.org. That’s www.LinkedLearning.org.

Sincerely,

[NAME]
[TITLE]
[ORGANIZATION]
[FULL CONTACT INFORMATION]

NOTE: Remember to put your letter on your organization’s letterhead and include the Linked Learning logo, available at www.LinkedLearning.org/get-involved/resources.
Template Television Reader and Spokesperson Scripts

For television PSAs, you can elect to 1) feature an expert spokesperson to read your script to be taped at the news station or 2) send the news station footage along with a taped recording of your script to be used as a voice over.

1. Spokesperson

Television (30 seconds)

Teacher: As a teacher at [SCHOOL], I’ve witnessed firsthand how Linked Learning is having a positive impact on [REGION/DISTRICT] students.

Our students complete challenging courses that relate to their interests in [INDUSTRY] and participate in job shadowing and internships with real [INDUSTRY] professionals.

Linked Learning answers the question, “Why do I need to know this?” and inspires students to work harder, dream bigger, and learn more by exposing them to previously unimagined career opportunities.

See what students are gaining from Linked Learning and how you can get involved with Linked Learning, come to [EVENT] on [DATE] at [TIME].

Television (30 seconds)

Business Leader: I’m [NAME], [POSITION] at [COMPANY]. [INDUSTRY] is one of the biggest economic drivers in the [REGION/DISTRICT/STATE]. Yet, [COMPANY] struggles to find qualified workers to fill in-demand jobs.

An approach to education called Linked Learning is preparing students to succeed in college and career by integrating rigorous academics that meet college-ready standards with sequenced, high-quality career-technical education, work-based learning, and supports to help students stay on track.

[COMPANY] provides internships to students at [SCHOOL] interested in [INDUSTRY]. We see this as an investment in our future workforce by helping kids get on the path to build and grow meaningful careers.

To learn about the fantastic work [STUDENTS] did for [COMPANY] this year and to learn how you can partner with a Linked Learning school, come to [EVENT] on [DATE] at [TIME].

2. B-Roll (stock) Footage and Voiceover

Television (30 seconds)

ANNOUNCER V/O: Add the Linked Learning [EVENT] to your calendar. On [DATE] at [TIME], find out how Linked Learning inspires students to work harder, dream bigger, and learn more by exposing them to previously unimagined career opportunities.
Linked Learning ignites students’ passions by integrating rigorous academics that meet college-ready standards with sequenced, high-quality career-technical education, work-based learning, and supports to help students stay on track. Students graduate with the skills and confidence to succeed in college, career, and life.


Recommended Footage: Focus your footage (also called b-roll) on students. Images of students in the classroom, at internships, or presenting at past events are compelling to audiences. You will need to make sure all appropriate legal forms are signed for students to appear in a PSA.
Community Calendar/Classifieds Cover Letter and Listing
(Choose the appropriate listings for your activities)

Dear Community Calendar Editor:

As we prepare [for a successful school year/for a successful legislative session/to wrap up another school year], educators and policymakers are renewing their focus on providing the best possible education for California students. [SCHOOLS] in [DISTRICT/REGION] are adopting Linked Learning which is a proven approach to education that integrates rigorous academics that meet college-ready standards with sequenced, high-quality career-technical education, work-based learning, and supports to help students stay on track. Research shows that compared with their peers, students in certified Linked Learning pathways earn more credits in the first three years of high school, report greater confidence in their life and career skills, and say they are experiencing more rigorous, integrated, and relevant instruction.

On [DATE] at [TIME], [SCHOOL] will be hosting an event about Linked Learning. Educators, parents, and the larger community are invited to attend to receive information about Linked Learning and how they can get involved. Business representatives involved in Linked Learning internship programs will be on hand to answer questions as well [OR OTHER INCENTIVES IF APPLICABLE]. [INSERT SENTENCE TAILORED TO THE ACTIVITIES AVAILABLE AT YOUR EVENT.]

Please include the following notice in your community calendar listing on-air, online, and in print. We’d appreciate it if you could also share this information with your audiences by posting it on your station’s social media channels or blogs. I will follow up with you in the next few days. If you have any questions in the meantime about our program or if anyone at your organization would like to visit a participating school for a more in-depth look at our success, please contact me at [PHONE].

Thank you for your consideration.

[NAME]
[TITLE], [ORGANIZATION]

Information about the Event for the Community Calendar:

Linked Learning: Transforming Education in California
When students love what they’re learning, they work harder, dream bigger, and learn more. Find out more about Linked Learning, a transformative approach to education that is helping create an engaged and productive future workforce for California that is ready to succeed in college, career, and life. On [DATE] at [TIME], [ORGANIZATION] will be hosting [EVENT] that will feature the success of the Linked Learning pathways in [DISTRICT/REGION]. Stop by to learn about Linked Learning in the community and how you can get involved. For more information, please call [PHONE].

NOTE: Remember to put your letter on your organization’s letterhead.
Talking Points

Basic Definition
Linked Learning is a successful approach to education based on the idea that students work harder and dream bigger if their education is relevant to them. The Linked Learning approach integrates rigorous academics that meet college-ready standards with sequenced, high-quality career-technical education, work-based learning, and supports to help students stay on track. For Linked Learning students, education is organized around industry-sector themes. The industry theme is woven into lessons taught by teachers who collaborate across subject areas with input from working professionals, and reinforced by work-based learning with real employers. This makes learning more like the real world of work, and helps students answer the question, “Why do I need to know this?”

What Makes Linked Learning Different
• It’s about college AND career. Linked Learning is defined by a central commitment to college and career success for all students.
• It’s an approach, not a program. Linked Learning is not a program or a curriculum, but rather an integrated, systemic approach involving collaboration between high school and postsecondary educators, employers, and community leaders. Linked Learning is a strategy for transforming education and regional economic development. Implementing Linked Learning successfully can require systemic change at the classroom, school, district, and regional levels.
• It’s for all students. Linked Learning is the right fit for students of all achievement levels and aspirations, with an essential commitment to equity and a focus on improving postsecondary and career outcomes for all students, including students of color and students from low-income backgrounds.

Four Core Components
Students are provided with an educational experience that integrates:
• Rigorous academics that prepare students to take college courses and meet the admission standards of California’s public universities;
• Sequence of high-quality career-technical education courses that deliver concrete knowledge and skills, emphasizing real-world applications of academic learning;
• Work-based learning in real-world workplaces via job shadowing, apprenticeships, internships, and other professional skill-building opportunities; and
• Comprehensive supports and services that are embedded as central components of a program of study to ensure that all students stay on track and graduate ready to transition to the next phase of their education or career.

Topline Messaging
Please use these talking points to make the case for Linked Learning with all audiences to engage and inspire them to share the Linked Learning story:
• Linked Learning is a successful approach to education based on the idea that students work harder and dream bigger if their education is relevant to them. Linked Learning integrates rigorous academics that meet college-ready standards with sequenced, high-quality career-technical education, work-based learning, and supports to help students stay on track.
• Linked Learning students attend pathways organized by industry-sector themes, such as engineering, health care, performing arts, energy and law, ensuring that students graduate with skills applicable to career paths in one of California’s largest industries and the skills needed to succeed in college.

• The industry-sector themes are woven into lessons taught by teachers who collaborate across subject areas and incorporate input from industry professionals. This makes learning more like the real world of work, and helps students answer the question, “Why do I need to know this?”

• Linked Learning is helping to address California’s need to better prepare students to graduate from high school ready for college, and with skills needed to thrive in the workplace. Students engage in professional learning and skill-building through career-technical training in school and through work-based learning, such as job shadowing, apprenticeships, and internships.

• With learning organized around a broad industry sector theme, students get exposure to a wide array of career options, and learn what professional and postsecondary training is needed to be successful in a career in that industry.

• Research shows that, compared with their peers, students in certified Linked Learning pathways earn more credits in the first three years of high school, report greater confidence in their life and career skills and say they are experiencing more rigorous and relevant instruction. The data also show students who had low achievement scores in earlier grades make significant progress when they participate in Linked Learning.

• Research also shows that Linked Learning students graduate with the skills and confidence to thrive in college and the workplace, and to contribute meaningfully to California’s economy and society.

• As a result of the mounting evidence of Linked Learning’s effectiveness, there has been exponential growth in recent years in the number of California school districts offering or planning to offer Linked Learning.

• The challenge now is to meet this rapidly expanding demand with the appropriate support and systems that incentivize and reward high quality Linked Learning because Linked Learning delivers better outcomes for students when it is implemented with fidelity to the model.

**Evidence of Success**

• Linked Learning certified pathway students are less likely to drop out and more likely to graduate than similar students in traditional high school programs.\(^1\)

• Linked Learning students are earning more credits than similar peers in traditional high schools, which is critical for on-time graduation.\(^2\)

• Students coming into Linked Learning with low achievement scores demonstrate greater academic success than similar students enrolled in traditional high schools.\(^3\)

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\(^2\) Ibid.

\(^3\) Ibid.
• English language learners earned 15 more credits, and African American students earned nearly double that—equalling more than an additional semester’s worth—than similar students in traditional high school programs.¹

• Compared with their peers, students report greater confidence in their life and career skills, and say they are experiencing more rigorous, integrated, and relevant instruction.²

• As a result of the mounting evidence of Linked Learning’s effectiveness, the State of California has committed approximately $2 billion to help schools and regions establish and expand Linked Learning pathways. The State Linked Learning Pilot Program includes 63 participating school districts and county offices of education. CDE, California Community Colleges and James Irvine Foundation are providing $7 Million for pilot implementation. The state budget also includes two rounds of $250 million for the California Career Pathways Trust, a grant program incentivizing collaboration between schools and employers to support Linked Learning pathways and provide work-based learning opportunities for students.

The Vision for the Future of Linked Learning

• Linked Learning has the potential to achieve the best outcomes for our students and for our state’s economy. We seek to make Linked Learning a permanent, sustainable pillar of education across California, and beyond.

• The Linked Learning movement is owned by the field, with many partners working together to expand and improve high-quality Linked Learning opportunities for students.

• As a result of the mounting evidence of Linked Learning’s effectiveness, the State of California has committed approximately $2 billion to help schools and regions establish and expand Linked Learning pathways. This has resulted in exponential growth in the number of school districts across California that are offering or planning to offer Linked Learning. The field’s challenge now is to meet this rapidly expanding demand with systems that support, incentivize, and reward quality Linked Learning so that students get the maximum benefit and full preparation for college, career, and life.

¹ Ibid.
Common Media Questions for Spokespeople

Q: What is Linked Learning?
A: Linked Learning is an approach to education that transforms the traditional school experience by integrating rigorous academics that meet college-ready standards with sequenced, high-quality career-technical education, work-based learning, and supports to help students stay on track. For Linked Learning students, education is organized around industry-sector themes. Students choose a pathway in a field such as engineering, health care, or the performing arts. The industry theme is woven into lessons taught by teachers who collaborate across subject areas with input from working professionals, and reinforced by work-based learning with real employers. This makes learning more like the real world of work, and helps students answer the question, “Why do I need to know this?”

Q: How does Linked Learning work and what are its components?
A: Linked Learning pathways currently offer high school students from grades 9 through 12 a rigorous academic curriculum integrated with career-based learning in the classroom and work-based learning in real-world workplaces as well as integrated support to help students succeed. This approach prepares students for the full range of postsecondary options. Linked Learning can be implemented using different models and in various settings. Linked Learning also can be applied in middle school or even earlier, as well as in college-level learning.

All Linked Learning pathways include:

- A rigorous academic component that includes English, mathematics, science, history and other pertinent courses.
- A career-based learning component of three or more courses that help students graduate with the skills and confidence to succeed in college, career, and life.
- Work-based learning in real-world workplaces, via job shadowing, apprenticeships, internships, and professional skill-building which helps students understand all the possible choices available to them after high school.
- Integrated student support services including resume and interview counseling and supplemental instruction in reading, writing, and mathematics that help ensure students are successful in school and life.

Q. Does Link Learning track students?
A: Linked Learning does not track students. Pathways provide students with the academic and professional skills and experiences they need to succeed in any college program or career. Linked Learning helps students discover their interests and how their passions can parlay into careers.

Q. How do Linked Learning student outcomes compare to traditional high schools in California?
A: The Linked Learning approach already has transformed the lives of thousands of students in California. Districts and schools currently offering a Linked Learning approach consistently demonstrate better student outcomes than traditional high schools. Research shows that compared with their peers, students in certified Linked Learning pathways earn more credits in the first three years of high school, report greater confidence in their life and career skills, and say they are experiencing more rigorous, integrated, and relevant instruction. Though Linked Learning is a relatively new model for improving
education, research supports the case for making the Linked Learning approach a focus of high school reform.

Q. How is Linked Learning different from Career Technical Education (CTE) and career academies or charter schools?
A: Linked Learning is unique in that the approach encompasses effective features of CTE and the flexibility of charter schools, paired with rigorous and relevant college-prep academics, to prepare students for college, career, and life. Linked Learning allows students to apply classroom knowledge in real-world situations. Through its integration of college- and career-readiness practices, Linked Learning ensures that every student is equipped with the necessary experience and training to succeed in school and become a skilled member of the California workforce.

Q. How much does Linked Learning cost?
A: The Linked Learning approach is an affordable and sustainable long-term investment in student success. By creating a workforce that is better equipped to succeed in a postsecondary education program and handle the jobs of the future, Linked Learning benefits the state’s businesses, tax base, and economy.

Linked Learning does entail start-up costs and will benefit from higher ongoing expenditures. However, successfully implementing Linked Learning is first and foremost about using existing resources differently. While Linked Learning can benefit from additional resources, the districts already practicing Linked Learning prove that successful implementation can be achieved by reallocating existing resources. Resources already earmarked for teacher prep time, professional development, counseling, supplemental instruction, and after-school activities need to be squarely focused on advancing a district-wide system of Linked Learning.

Q. Does Linked Learning meet the state standard requirements?
A:
- The Linked Learning approach meets the state standard requirements. Like Linked Learning, the new standards represent a shift from memorizing facts and figures to challenging students to develop a deeper understanding of subject matter, think critically, and apply learning to solve complex, real-world problems.
- To ensure that all students are prepared for college and career success after graduation, the California Common Core Standards set clear, consistent guidelines for what students should know and be able to do at each grade level in math and English language arts.
- California is among the more than 40 states that have voluntarily adopted the new standards with the goal to prepare students to succeed in today’s economy.
- Linked Learning is an approach used by many California schools working to meet these new, higher standards. Like Linked Learning, the new standards represent a shift from memorizing facts and figures to challenging students to develop a deeper understanding of subject matter, think critically, and apply learning to solve complex, real-world problems.
- The California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) will replace existing state tests. The new assessments provide a more accurate picture of students’ knowledge than previous tests because students are asked to demonstrate and apply what they know, instead of just picking from multiple-choice questions.
Like the new learning goals they were designed to measure, the CAASPP tests in ELA and mathematics are too fundamentally different from the old exams to make any reliable comparisons between old scores and new. Therefore this year’s scores are a baseline to map student’s future progress.

As with any change, there is a period of adjustment as teachers and students get used to the new standards and tests. The Department of Education expects many, if not most, students will need to make significant progress to reach the standards necessary for success in college and career.

The new assessments provide an academic checkup and help teachers and parents know whether students are on track to be ready for college and career each step of the way.

For students in grade 11, individualized reports will also indicate their readiness for credit-bearing college-level work and if further preparation is needed, what areas to focus on in their senior year.

For students in grades 5 and 8, individual reports also will include student scores from the California Standards Test for Science. California is in the process of developing a new state science assessment aligned with the recently adopted science standards.

The assessments will also give education officials and teachers' critical information that can inform decisions around what supports students and teachers need to be successful.

Additional Resources:


Communications tips PPT for school districts: [www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ca/documents/sbcommtips.ppt](http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/ca/documents/sbcommtips.ppt)

Q. How can [COMMUNITY] get involved?

A: Local businesses and organizations can partner with schools to offer professional learning and internship programs for students. Business leaders are fantastic spokespeople for Linked Learning and can help make the case for policymakers, teachers, and parents. For more information about getting involved, visit [www.linkedlearning.org](http://www.linkedlearning.org).
Example Pitch Memo
(Not for Use with Radio Reader Scripts or Community Calendar Listings)

Each year, thousands of young people in California don’t complete high school. In 2012, the state’s graduation rate was only 78.5 percent. Young people of color are at an even greater risk of not earning a high school degree with 73.2 percent and 65.7 percent of Latinos and African Americans graduating respectively.  

The majority of low-wage jobs in California today require at least a high school diploma. That means that to excel in today’s economy, a student needs some form of education beyond high school, be it an apprenticeship or a two- or four-year degree. As of 2010, 59 percent of jobs require a postsecondary credential. By 2018, this figure will grow to 63 percent of all jobs, a trend that is likely to continue to grow. 

A proven approach to high school called Linked Learning is transforming education in the state. Linked Learning integrates rigorous academics that meet college-ready standards with sequenced, high-quality career-technical education, work-based learning, and supports to help students stay on track. Centered around industry themes in high school that make learning relevant, Linked Learning ensures that students graduate with the skills and confidence needed to succeed in college, career, and life. Through Linked Learning pathways, students choose a topic to inform their curriculum (such as engineering or healthcare) and apply their classroom knowledge in a practical, real-world setting through job shadowing and internships, all with the oversight and guidance from adult mentors.

[SCHOOLS] in [COMMUNITY/DISTRICT/REGION] implemented Linked Learning, and are seeing its benefits every day. Since starting the program in [YEAR], [DISTRICT/REGION] has seen thousands of students graduate and continue their education at community colleges and universities.

For Linked Learning to succeed, businesses, policymakers, teachers, and parents need to be engaged and involved.

[MEDIA OUTLET] is a trusted source of education news and information. I am writing with the hope that [MEDIA OUTLET] will consider running public service announcements about Linked Learning and how it’s transforming education in California. Enclosed you will find [LIST TYPE OF PSAs ENCLOSED]. These PSAs include information specific to [COMMUNITY] schools, including:

- Statewide facts about Linked Learning
- Schools currently practicing Linked Learning programs
- How stakeholders can become involved and support Linked Learning in their communities
- Where stakeholders can learn more about Linked Learning

I would like the opportunity to discuss Linked Learning and how [MEDIA OUTLET] can get involved in outreach activities throughout [STATE/CITY]. Enclosed you will find additional information about our

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efforts. I will follow up with you in the next few days. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at [PHONE] or [EMAIL ADDRESS].

**NOTE:** Remember to put the memo on your organization’s letterhead.
PSA Tracking Email

Dear [NAME],

In an effort to assess our PSA outreach, we would be most grateful if you would please fill out the below card and email to [EMAIL ADDRESS].

Sincerely,

[NAME]

[SCHOOL LINKED LEARNING] Public Service Announcement Reply Card

Media Organization ________________________________________________________________

Contact Name _________________________________________________________________

Will you [air/print] the Linked Learning PSA? _____ YES _____ NO

If yes, when and how often? ______________________________________________________

If not, why? ___________________________________________________________________

If you have any questions about these PSAs or Linked Learning, please call [NAME] at [PHONE NUMBER].

Thank you for your assistance!