IF I COULD MAKE A SCHOOL
A Student-Driven Participatory Design Studio to Re-imagine Education
What if we put students in the driver’s seat of a new kind of R&D to transform education? One that provided a platform for engaging students more fully in a real world effort that also involved faculty, principals, school administrators, board members, parents and other key people who are integral to the success of students. Could we improve a student’s education experience? Could we take it a step further and improve the education model? Could we reach for the stars and create an entirely new education system?

The Business Innovation Factory’s Student Experience Lab explores how good design can improve the quality of experience for students by not only listening to the voices of the students but also engaging them in the conceptual development of new systems.

Using BIF’s student-centered participatory design approach we seek to:

1. Put the student at the center of the innovation in education conversation
2. Develop and test innovative design concepts for new school experiences
3. Provide new life and learning skills for students

It's student-led R&D. And it works.

**About The Business Innovation Factory**

The Business Innovation Factory (BIF) is a platform for transforming our most intractable systems, like healthcare, education, entrepreneurship, and energy, where players – both private and public – can design and test new solutions in a real-world environment.

BIF’s Student Experience Lab provides an integrated model of design research that directly engages students in real-world R&D. By breaking through the bottlenecks that exist within education structures, BIF is pioneering a pathway that takes student-driven research and design off the whiteboard and into the real world.
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“I like finding out about myself. At school you’re met with challenges that you either accomplish or fail that shape who you are and what you’re good at.” - Isaiah, 19
Like its national counterparts, Rhode Island’s public education students face many obstacles during the course of their school journey. Sadly, far too many of today’s middle and high schools do not offer all students the programs, classes and support structures necessary to prepare them for college, career, and responsible participation in public life.

To accelerate the understanding of the secondary school experience in Rhode Island, the Business Innovation Factory’s (BIF) Student Experience Lab and the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) convened a day-long youth charette to explore students’ experiences and perspectives interacting with public education in the state. Specifically, we wanted to learn more about:

- Tightly linking a student’s (changing or evolving) personal, strategic, academic and financial objectives to their educational experience;
- Connecting independent education pathways together to learn from and engage with one another for the betterment of the student;
- Providing an easily navigable process for student self-discovery and self-actualization; and
- Student ideas for transforming the single pathway approach to education into a multiple pathway system.

Forty students, ages 13 - 22, partook in this unique opportunity to have their voices heard and captured as part of a video autobiography that tells the story of education in Rhode Island. By sharing their experiences and walking through new doors of opportunity, students were able to brainstorm novel ideas for innovation in education.

With the introduction of this “meeting of the minds,” we hope to inspire, inform, and motivate education stakeholders to include students more fully in the innovation process and begin to design a new student experience framework - one that is personal, comprehensive and flexible for each and every student.

1 The digital companion to this report which contains video stories depicting the student experience can be found at www.businessinnovationfactory.com/sxl
Rhode Island’s Education Ecosystem

There are currently four major learning environments in Rhode Island that provide an academic roadmap to a high school diploma: Traditional K-12 Schools; Alternative/Charter Schools; Career and Technical Education Institutions; and Virtual Schools.
The traditional K-12 school - perhaps the most familiar - has an average school day length of 7 hours, Monday-Friday. Classes included the core subjects: Math, English, Science, Social Studies, the Arts, and Foreign Language. Traditional K-12 public schools may include vocational, special, or alternative education, but these are NOT a primary focus. Often students can participate in an athletic program and miscellaneous clubs. The average guidance counselor to student ratio is 1:500. K-12 public schools serve the most students in the United States, and millions of students have graduated and gone on to be successful in their lives.

Alternative/Charter Schools provide students with the opportunity to receive an education through non-traditional settings. The number and length of classes can vary, and instruction may focus on a thematic concept such as health care, the arts, or STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math). Often, the school days are longer than the traditional 7 hours as well as the number of instructional weeks in the school year. Alternative/Charter schools typically offer smaller learning communities and a shared expectation for and dedication to innovative methods of education.

Career and Technical Education is driven by student interest and hands-on learning opportunities. Students work in areas that interest them, such as carpentry, computers, auto mechanics, or culinary arts, and are given authentic assessments. Often students gain entry-level employment skills with job specific skill development enhanced by industry certification. Many career and technical educational institutions are connected to, or located within, walking distance of a traditional high school, and the schedules are most often aligned.

Virtual learning is a nascent education model, with only a small percentage of the population taking advantage of it. New efforts in virtual high schools include calls to adopt local and district policy that supports a technology rich learning environment and allows for a fundamental rethinking the school day – including when and how instruction is offered. Virtual schools can provide flexibility, AP courses, credit advancement, credit recovery, dual enrollment, and access to adult education, as well as help with professional development, remediation, and blending learning. Currently in RI, we have high schools that have found online solutions for a small population of students to address credit recovery with some credit advancement.
With a general understanding of Rhode Island’s current educational ecosystem in hand, 40 middle school, high school and recently graduated students were given an enormous challenge to solve:

**Design a new student experience for a 21st century school where ALL students can thrive. The foundation of the experience must support different learning styles and different life circumstances.**

Youth were encouraged to dream big, have fun, and stretch their minds to create this new, student-centered experience – one that provides multiple and varied opportunities for education attainment. Along the way, students were guided through a 3-step experience design process. The process aided their exploration of the factors that surround the student experience today. Students were asked to explore the social motivations for attending school. Little focus was paid to technology-driven motivations. For the day, purpose prevailed over function to set the stage for breakthrough ideas.
"Education is a social process. Education is growth. Education is not a preparation for life, Education is life itself."

- John Dewey, 20th century American philosopher, psychologist and educational reformer

**Limitations**
- No choice of classes
- No art classes, music
- Better guidance counselors
- Too much workload, no enough time

**Opportunities**
- Younger teachers
- Challenging
- Small
- More guidance counselors
- Different schedule
**Step 1: Why Go To School?**

The reasons why students attend school and work towards completion of a degree originates from their desire to succeed, the support of others, and their understanding of the importance of school as a way to better themselves.

Many students consider school as a “gateway to success” or a means to an end. They believe that school guarantees them a better paying job and financial stability for their future family. High school provides a structured environment that prepares students for college and the work force through learning new things and broadening perspectives, while gaining valuable life skills like work ethic, responsibility and social skills.

Students are motivated by the expectations placed on them by others, including their families, teachers, and peers. In addition, students are driven by the fact that many parents have worked hard to give their children the opportunities they have, in order for their children to do better than they did. School serves as a social ground where students are able to meet new people and interact with friends. Students have the desire to be role models to both their siblings and peers. Some students also see school as a safe “escape” from home life.

To answer the question of ‘why go to school’ students were told to start with the obvious, i.e. ‘my parents make me’ or ‘because I’m supposed to’ and then challenge themselves to dig deeper: Why do you really go to school? Student responses generally fell into one of four categories: Teaching & Learning, Social/Emotional Growth & Support, Family Influence, and Future.

“(I go to school) to make my parents proud because they’re immigrants of Columbia and they immigrated here to give their four kids the opportunities that they didn’t have in Columbia. So I try hard in school and go to school to show them that I’m taking advantage of the opportunity that they gave me and showing it to them is my way of saying thank you.” - Cynthia, 17
An overwhelming number of responses reflected the importance of school as a source of social and emotional support. Common items included: meeting new people, being with friends, gaining life skills, gaining independence, being able to “escape” or “get away,” access to food, access to sports and other afterschool activities, and feeling safe.

Although a desire to socialize in a safe space dominated the responses, academics and the connection between school and the future repeatedly surfaced as priority reasons to go to school. Respondents were very aware of the connection between performance at school today and success at college and/or career later. The desire to become a better person, or have a better future, motivated the youth present to attend school.

 Academically, youth report they appreciate when learning is fun and hands-on. Internships, advanced training, and classes in the arts also presented as incentives to attend school. Responses regarding specific curriculum remained vague. Beyond peers, the most prominent figures in student responses were their parents/family.

Similar to the desire to succeed for one’s self, youth expressed the desire to succeed in connection to their families and communities.

“I want the educational experience. I want to make friends. I want to get the connections I can have in the future. I definitely want to learn new things and have peers I can rely on and talk to in the future.” - Jamie, 16
WHY GO TO SCHOOL?
FREQUENT RESPONSES

Investment In My Future
- Go to college
- Job readiness
- Life skills
- To be somebody
- Follow your dreams
- Active part in community
  - Success
  - Opportunity

Social & Emotional Reasons
- Social life, friends
- Get out of the house
- Safety
- Lunch, to eat
- To have structure
- Sports, afterschool activities
  - Independence
  - Guidance
  - Find yourself, experimentation
  - Teacher motivators

Academics
- Knowledge
  - To learn new things
  - To receive an education
  - Advanced training
  - To take classes you like
- Hands-on learning opportunities

My Family
- Parents make me go
  - Be 1st in my family to go to college
  - To be a role model, set an example
  - To make my parents proud
Step 2: Understanding what works (and doesn’t work) today so we can make it better for tomorrow.

What students like most about their current school varies among the types of learning and systems of support. The hands-on learning approach is mentioned frequently as being more gratifying and engaging in comparison to traditional learning out of a textbook. Students enjoy directly applying what they learned to something they can see and interact with directly.

Some schools have robust webs of support available that provide individualized attention, patient and passionate teachers, and a positive and accepting environment. Some schools allow students the freedom to explore their own interests, promoting independence, while being there for them if needed. Some schools were very fitting for certain students, like tech schools for students who enjoyed vocational training that prepared them for a career after high school. Students also appreciated the variety of student clubs and activities that their school provided and the opportunity to connect their school to issues in the surrounding community.

High frequency strengths included: hands-on learning, smaller classes, a caring/safe school environment, creative classes and activities, class variety, access to afterschool programs and sports, and dedicated teachers. High frequency weaknesses included: lack of engagement in the classroom, a lack of diversity in the student body, classes offered, and afterschool programs, no arts programming, a lack of technology, and a lack of guidance (from counselors).

“All the teachers don’t take time out of their day to sit down and really explain things to you. I feel like if more (teachers) were around, people would start to feel better about themselves and do better in school.” - Emily, 19
**Strengths of Current School**

- Hands on learning
- Teaching doesn’t always happen in the classroom
- Lots of fieldwork
- Small classes
- The opportunity to explore and ask questions
- Dedicated teachers
- Individualized attention
- Internships
- Leading my own curriculum
- Multiple AP classes
- Challenging
- Technology-Driven
- Sense of community
- Goal oriented teachers, instructors
- Clear instructions and understanding of what’s expected
- Mentoring programs
- Teachers staying afterschool and even coming before school to help students with work
- College preparation
- Career focused learning opportunities
- Different schedules

**Weaknesses of Current School**

- Boring and disengaging lectures
- Lack of technology: Internet, computers
- Teachers aren’t open to trying different methods of teaching to accommodate students
- Not enough teachers
- Curriculum stability
- Not enough elective choice
- Lack of teacher help after hours
- Language barriers when English isn’t first language
- The fast pace of the curriculum
- Standardized testing (i.e. NECAPs)
- Not being challenged academically
- Small selection of AP courses
- No art classes, music
- Consistency
- Not enough tutors
**SCHOOL CULTURE AND CLIMATE**

- **Strengths of Current School**
  - Team voice, working together
  - Social opportunities
  - Great guidance counselors
  - Friendly, safe, and positive student environment
  - Strong teacher-student, student-student relations
  - Community engagement with school
  - School spirit
  - Diversity
  - Students able to take leadership roles
  - Allowing students to find their interests and passions
  - Many support services (guidance, teachers, principals, clubs, counselors)
  - Spacious environment
  - Advisory times in small groups
  - Sports
  - Various extracurricular activities

- **Weaknesses of Current School**
  - Too many rules
  - Terrible attendance
  - Competitive
  - Not enough school spirit
  - Not enough student support
  - Supplies are scarce
  - Leaking walls & falling ceiling
  - Guidance counselors don’t have personal relationships with students
  - Lack of parental involvement
  - Lack of resources
  - Students do not feel a sense of unity and support from peers and school staff
  - Too much workload, not enough time
  - Overcrowded
  - Lack of diversity
  - Lack of after school activities
  - Lack of diversity in afterschool programs
You Can’t Build On Broken

Angela Blanchard, the president and CEO of Houston-based Neighborhood Centers Inc., has received international attention for developing powerful transformational models for community redevelopment. Angela joined the workshop virtually to introduce the framework “you can’t build on broken.” She suggested transformation begins from a position of strength, not weakness. By holding a “possibility-focused” mindset we can begin to shift from ‘lacking’ resources to being ‘resource-full’. Her challenge to the students stressed that tools for school improvement already exist to craft a brand new educational experience and youth simply need to invest in themselves to make their student experience stronger, safer, more vibrant and more inclusive.

“When we begin to ask that new set of questions like, What gives life to a school? What ignites our passion and curiosity? What inspires us?, [and] we examine with the same intensity what works as we’ve examined what hasn’t, then we find that we change. We change the way we feel about the people around us. We change the way we look at the world. And in that shift, [you find that] what you pay attention to you get more of.”
- Angela Blanchard
When students were asked what they would change about their school to help them better succeed, the topics included a more flexible and individualized learning approach and better support systems. Nearly all students expressed the need for an environment where they feel supported enough to try new things, be themselves and grow as individuals. Some students desired more hands on learning, encompassing real world application and relevance to their own interests. Others wanted more core subjects in their curriculum. They wanted a more flexible schedule that allows more room in their schedule for electives. Several students suggested a study hall or free period during the day that can be used to do work while in school for those who are too busy with extracurricular activities after school. They also wanted more accessibility to and knowledge of the existing clubs and activities going on.

Step 3: Brainstorming How School Should Be

“It’s easier to turn from bad to good if you know what good is.” - Niem, 17
In terms of support, having teachers who encourage them, a strong advising council, and an accepting student body allows students to feel motivated to succeed.

As it relates to environment, several students expressed their disappointment with the poor conditions of the school building and wished for better resources. Support systems within school were a frequently mentioned topic. Students desire better guidance that is more involved and encourages the success of each student’s goals. They wished for more engaged and passionate teachers while having smaller classes to allow for a closer teacher and student relationship.

Students also expressed a desire for more exposure to different pathways of success beyond the typical trajectory of graduating high school and then attending college. What’s interesting to note is that along with individualized and personalized education paths, students still saw the importance for their education to include the core subjects (math, science, English and history) that are provided at a traditional school.

Several students who attend career and technical schools wanted to be challenged more by having a division in classes based on learning ability—a model they remarked as being often exhibited in traditional schools.

Following is a summary of the attributes students requested for a better, stronger school experience. Strikingly, student solution ideas had MANY similarities while remaining innovative and creative. Note, weaknesses students listed in Step 2 became incorporated into strengths in the models each student team developed.

“I know [my school] doesn’t work for everyone, but it definitely works for me, because I’m an ambitious, hard worker and I like working independently. It’s also important to have someone there to fall back on and be supportive and my school provides that.” - Cynthia, 17
## If I Could Build a School... An Ingredient List for Change

### Curriculum/ Teaching
- Performing arts classes
- Exhibitions instead of tests
- Interactive classes
- 5 languages starting in Kindergarten
- Students narrow down language choices as they progress
- Hands on, early on
- Keep core classes, but choose your own pace
- Identify students’ learning methods
- Creative instruction
- Get students excited about learning
- Teachers who are racially diverse, passionate, effective, and student hired
- Scales, not grades
- Try and fail, let students try stuff, find their strengths
- Enjoyable classes
- Students able to introduce things to study
- System that challenges (AP classes)
- Peer-teaching
- Organize classes by class intensity, students work their way up
- Small groups
- Virtual

### Climate/Culture
- Music during announcements
- Students design experience in MS/HS
- Increase student investment
- Active/enjoyable learning environment
- Comfortable environment (feel safe, free to express)
- Built around diversity
- Focus on cultural expression
- Student set, student managed
- No labeling
- Focus on strengths, support for weaknesses
- Focus on positive energy

### Schedule/Time
- Open before and after school
- Longer lunch periods
- Students make own schedule
- 8 am – 1 pm: Core subjects & electives
- 1 pm – 3 pm: Internships/Extracurricular
- Room for creativity (flexible structure)
- Go at own pace
- Classes different lengths
- Dynamic, flexible
- Advisory services
- Offer night classes/late afternoon classes

### Physical Space/ Location
- Classrooms: comfortable chairs, round tables
- Good lighting
- Centrally located, accessible to public transportation
- Not constrained by single location (satellite locations exist)
- Form follows function
- Safe, clean

### Other Attributes
- Student-student tutors • Students cook lunch • Afterschool activities, new experiences • All students can attend, fits personal learning styles • Students learn & grow so they can adapt: job skills, career readiness, leadership skills • Application to help students choose right high school • Good guidance • Community counseling (people who have experience from outside the school, or alumni) • Peer-guidance • Mission: Every student feels like they can grow, make choices, find own person • For everyone, regardless of race or culture
The Value of Hands-On Learning

Many students expressed their preference for a more hands-on learning approach, where instead of just reading about a subject in a book, they are able to directly engage with the subject matter. For instance, one student’s singular motivation to attend school is her three blocks of culinary arts.

Eighth grader Cassandra Lin expressed that her favorite part of learning is when she is “working in groups, doing activities that are hands-on. Those kinds of activities motivate you to do more...You learn from experience.”

Although a career and technical education is the model that best exhibits this type of learning, students shared and explored ways that hands-on projects directly related to their interests might be integrated with traditional K-12 learning.

Internships, in particular, provide students with real world experience, where they have the chance to build meaningful and professional relationships while providing insight on that particular field as a potential career goal.
AN EQUATION FOR TRANSFORMATION

As much as real-world experience during high school helps students better decide their future career path, it is also important to have a supportive and encouraging group of people who can offer advice, guidance, and options to assist them in choosing what would work best for them while in high school and afterwards.

Many students expressed a desire for a “menu of options” where they are allowed the freedom to choose their own education path, based on individual interests and learning abilities. This not only applies to education while in middle and high school, but also options for students’ future education.

We see a clear opportunity for transformation through the integration of various webs of support with blended learning approaches and practices. How effectively (or ineffectively) students build their web of support impacts multiple facets of their success. Support webs should be innovative, highly personal mechanisms that allow students to navigate their educational journey. Existing resources should be adapted to suit the needs, desires or specific goals of each and every student.

Although each team crafted a unique vision for a new school model, similarities surfaced between each design. Students want an educational facility grounded in passion, flexibility and choice. No one designed a school with the tradition 7:30 – 2:30 day, but instead incorporated schedules that fit all learners’ lives, with the day beginning between 8 and 9 am, and broken up to allow internship opportunities. However, this is not to say the schools they envisioned did not accommodate early risers as well. Their schools were “open” schools, the doors opened before and after classes begin and end. As for who would teach these classes, students called for passionate and effective teachers with a hands-on, interactive teaching style. The core classes in Math, English, Science and History would still be taught, but students would have access to a variety of electives as well.
“I would like it better if school presented different types of opportunities, different programs for different students to reach certain types of success... not just one like graduate and go to college.”
- Isaiah, 19
As expressed in the students’ input on weaknesses in their current schools, smaller class sizes, more student voice and choice, and a strong student mentoring/guidance system were necessary factors in their new school designs. Finally, the importance of an environment conducive to learning surfaced again and again. The schools designed were located in an interactive, hands-on space that encouraged creativity and had a strong community connection.

In all the exercises conducted throughout the day, students clearly stated a need for flexibility in the traditional K-12 public school environment. They pointed to struggles with curriculum pacing, test based only assessments, and an inflexible school day. They do, however, like structure and support in school, and have an expectation that they should graduate prepared for a career or college. It was clear the majority of youth in the room go to school in part to succeed. Some go to prove they can, some go to make their parents proud, some go because they want a better life, and many go for all these reasons. Students in Rhode Island desire success, and they expect their schools to guide them there. However they also understand that this is not always the case. It is the responsibility of student and school, parent and teacher, family and community, to provide the support systems and learning opportunities to help all students succeed.

The following represents the characteristics of a student-developed multiple pathway system. We see a plethora of experimental opportunities that combine – in an integrated fashion – the characteristics of a web of support with blended learning approaches and practices.

“I feel kind of held back because kids don't learn as quickly as I do. So if I was in an environment where kids learn at the same pace as I do, then I would be able to excel.” - Kijiah, 15
Student-centered multiple pathway system combines a web of support with blended learning opportunities

How to Build a Web of Support

1. Transition from the exposure, intimidation, and inspiration of other students’ initiatives to encouragement and support of each student’s own pursuits, passions and ideals. Independence fused with mentorship (i.e. independent study block in schedule).
2. Provide individualized and group advising, exposing students to all the options that they have, connecting them to like-minded peers (develop both internal and external peer and mentorship programs). Guidance counselors should be knowledgeable of career goals and interests, allowing for better guidance towards successful pathways.
3. Provide students with more exposure to different career paths accompanying self-exploration, self-discovery and self-actualization activities.

How to Create a Blended Learning Curriculum

1. Balance core curriculum with interest-based pursuits and allow students to graduate with a major/focus.
2. Increase opportunities for students to experiment and explore what they like and don’t like by providing internships or electives to discover and evolve their interests and passions for the future.
3. Give core curriculum a real-world context and relevancy.
4. Increase discussion-based learning rather than lecturing.
5. Challenge students to be knowledgeable of a subject matter by engaging them in the conversation.
6. Increase virtual learning opportunities while maintaining critical teacher/student relationships.
7. Provide a “shopping period” where students are able to add/drop classes.
8. Launch a school district exchange program where students travel to various locations based on individual pathway needs, interests, passions.

continued...
How to Build a Web of Support

4. Cultivate student leadership and provide opportunities for students to play a role in the hiring of teachers
5. Encourage healthy student:student relationships
6. Shift mindset from teacher:student to mentor:mentee
7. Listen to the voice of the student to improve the experience

How to Create a Blended Learning Curriculum

9. Become more student-centered. For instance, length of classes should depend on how the student learns: “People learn at different paces, so it’s hard to determine how long the classes are going to be if we don’t know how the student learns.”
10. Provide an afterschool or in-school program that exposes students to community issues and encourages them to get involved in improving their own environment.

Students perform at their best when surrounded by a web of support structures.

A blended learning curriculum allows students to create their own individualized pathway through the educational system.
“If I were in a traditional school, they only have certain courses, certain majors that I can choose from, but [at my school] I am able to go specific and dive deep into what I want to do [and] have real life experiences like internships. I’m able to work one on one with the hairdresser and business counselor.” - Elicia, 20
Final Words

In order for student-led R&D in education to work, students must believe that their voice, their research and their ideas have merit. They must believe that stakeholders in the system – teachers, principals, administrators, parents, mentors, role models, guidance counselors and community leaders – are listening and willing to take action.

As the day came to a close, the need for increased and consistent youth choice and youth voice in our education system was apparent. Youth expressed a desire to get out in the field, reach beyond brainstorming in a single room and experiment with their ideas.

We are ideally positioned to use this work to build a credible and public case for not only incorporating the student voice into ongoing conversations about innovation in education but also giving students the opportunity to reinvent their educational journey. Our mission now is to take action. We invite you to join us for the ride.

Thank You

The findings in this report are made possible with the support and hard work of many individuals and organizations. We would like to acknowledge all by saying:

To the supporters of students who helped us,
Thank you for taking the time from your busy schedules to introduce, email, call, track down, check-in and, in some cases, transport the students who participated in this workshop. It took a tremendous amount of trust to expose your students to innovation by strangers, no matter how noble the cause. We hope when you recognize your students’ voices and hear their stories and ideas, you will find continued inspiration in the work you do. We certainly do.

continued...
IF I COULD MAKE A SCHOOL

A gathering of student minds to create a better, stronger school experience in Rhode Island

October 29, 2011
To youth-based organization Young Voices,
Thank you for your expert facilitation skills and contribution to co-creating this report. Your energy and passion kept the day moving and you played a critical role in the success of the gathering. Youth-led advocacy matters and you all were able to help students identify the important issues that needed to be addressed to improve their experience.

To our storytellers,
Storytelling is a powerful tool and a good story - the one that captures the human condition and enlightens the listener, has the power to change the world. We thank Angela Blanchard, Karsten Cash, Gerry Fernandez, Cassandra Lin, Elicia Welch and Chonda Womack for providing inspiration interludes to the student participants as they tackled a most important challenge. You were a gift for all.

And to the students,
Thank you for getting up on a Saturday morning to speak candidly, share your experiences and brainstorm new ways to improve the student experience. We hope you enjoyed and value your time spent as much as we did. With your voices and ideas as our guide, we take a step forward to address the challenges you face and the resiliency you demonstrate. We hope you will remain involved in this important work. Success won’t be found without you.

Schools and Organizations Represented

College Crusade of RI - Central High School
College Crusade of RI - Middle Level
E-Cubed Academy
Exeter Job Corps Academy
Mt. Hope High School
NAACP Providence Youth Council
Newport Family & Child Opportunity Zone
Newport Public Schools
PrYSM

Skills USA - CCRI
Skills USA - Middletown High School/ Newport Career & Tech Center
Skills USA - New England Tech
Skills USA - Providence Career and Tech Academy
Skills USA - Warwick Veterans Memorial H.S. / WACTC
STAND
The Greene School

The Met
YEAR UP/CCR
Young Voices
Youth Build Providence
Youth in Action - Classical High School
Youth in Action - Hope High School
Youth in Action - URI
“In the work that I do, I’m in meetings daily with other ‘grown-ups’ talking about what’s best for kids and making really important decisions that affect the lives of young adults and children. We don’t often enough listen to the students themselves. Our students are engaged right now in what’s happening in our schools. Their voice is incredibly important. And they can make a difference.”

- Rhode Island Education Commissioner Deborah Gist