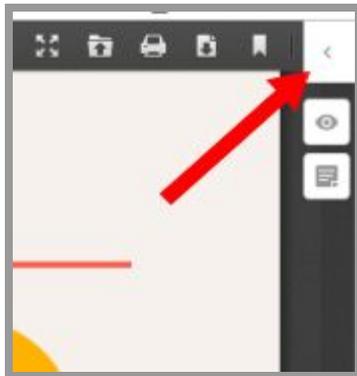


How to Give Feedback via Hypothesis

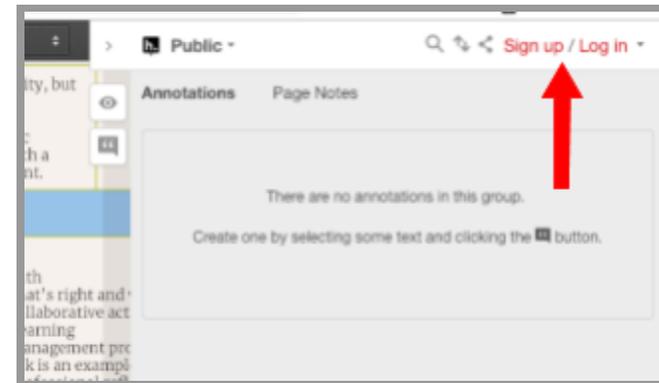
hypothes.is is an open-source, public annotation tool that allows you to select and add public highlights or annotations that you can share or keep private. See [this example](#).

To Get Started

1. View the Connected Learning Guide online via Hypothesis with this link (note: you may already be there):
<https://via.hypothes.is/https://resources.chicagolx.org/clguide/connectedlearningguide-clx-public-comment-draft-3-4-19.pdf>



2. Expand the sidebar by clicking here



3. Sign in or register here



4. Then highlight text and annotate (public) or highlight (private).

5. Need more? See this [Quick Start Guide for Teachers](#).

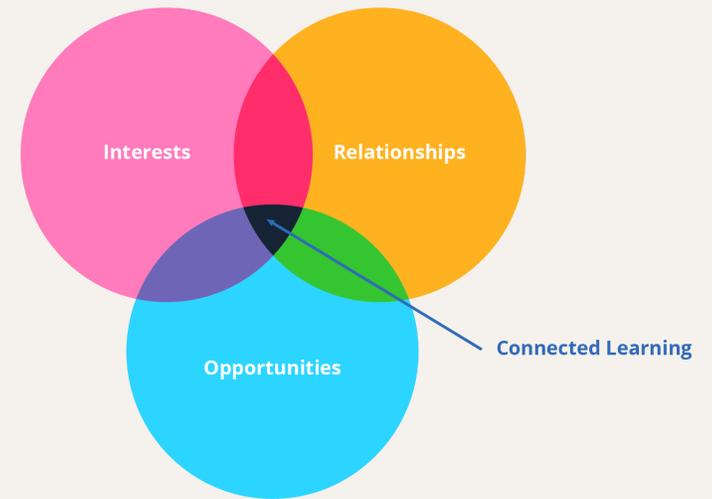
Connected Learning Guide

Quick Reference for Practitioners—Public Comment DRAFT

Why Connected Learning?

Connected learning is a model for youth engagement and includes a set of powerful design principles based on research into the kinds of experiences that sustain and deepen youth learning. Engagement matters because it is the key sign of a person’s own motivation to learn. Connected learning stresses the importance of meeting youth where they are, connecting them to opportunity, and providing supportive relationships. It has been demonstrated to engage young people in learning regardless of their social or economic backgrounds.⁴

Research has shown the importance of igniting the interest-driven motivations of young people to learn. In a five-year study, connected learning was a pronounced factor in improvements in student educational attitudes, attitudes towards persistence, and openness to iteration.¹ See this [review of literature](#) to learn more. Among the many benefits of this approach is its potential to help narrow *learning equity gaps* in awareness, access, attendance, engagement, learning pathways, opportunity. These gaps represent barriers in the learning ecosystem rather than deficits of learners themselves. Working together, we can reduce these learning equity gaps.



Purpose and Audience for This Guide

Because connected learning is focused on the learner and the conditions that lead to youth engagement, it does not necessarily instruct educators on how to create those connected learning experiences themselves. This guide is intended to provide in-school and out-of-school practitioners with guidelines and examples for how to design, implement, and reflect on the connected learning experiences they create. Organized around the three spheres of the connected learning—interests, relationships, and opportunities—the guide will be useful for those new to connected learning as well as those who wish to delve deeper. For each of the three connected learning spheres the guide provides:

- **Design guidelines** for planning connected learning experiences;
- **Implementation guidelines** for executing the programs you have designed; and
- **Reflection guidelines** for evaluation and professional growth as you continually improve your programs.

I. Interests

Learner interests are the source of their motivation to learn and can be discovered, explored, and extended.

DESIGN		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Interests are what youth care about and want to get better at. Consider them to be the spark that can ignite a young person’s own goal-oriented motivation to learn.^{3 (p 10-11)} As you plan, note that interests are also those things that are <i>in the interest</i> of youth and their community, like positive social causes. In this sense, learners’ interests can be tapped to align a learner’s passions with their purpose. ❖ Start with “Why?” as you design your learning experiences. Be clear in your planning about why learners should care and what the “hooks” and engaging questions are that connect to an existing passion they have or awaken a new interest. See Understanding By Design. ❖ User-centered design helps you focus on the learner. Consider IDEO’s https://designthinkingforeducators.com/ or Stanford’s K12 Lab. ❖ Whenever possible, co-develop learning goals with youth participants or engage them in peer assessments. Host youth focus groups to invite early input into the planning and design phases of program development. 		
IMPLEMENT		
Connected Learning Approach	What This Might Look Like	Resources
→ Encourage Curiosity and Exploration of New Interests ^{4 (p 82)}		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Stay curious about what your students are interested in and be willing to learn with them.² ❖ Connect learners to experiences to deepen current interests and to discover new ones.³ Also see “<i>Broker Opportunities</i>” under <i>Opportunities below</i>. ❖ Provide challenges to enable youth to “level up” to greater complexity.^{4 (p 81)} 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Take active initiative to learn about and support diverse student interests to better understand youth priorities, values, and interests without pandering to trends in youth popular culture. ❖ Make a conscious effort to connect youth to other organizations that might help youth go deeper into an interest they have. Consider your own social networks. How can you activate your networks in service of your youth? ❖ Within an organization or school, progressive complexity can be supported by creating a learning pathway or “course sequence” or offering internships, peer mentoring, or stipended youth council positions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Project-based, learning (PBL) is one way to support learner interests. Ensure that PBL isn’t a prescribed, recipe-style approach with predetermined outputs. See Buck Institute’s resources or Edutopia’s 5 Keys to Rigorous Project-Based Learning. ❖ See several of the Brokering Youth Pathways practice briefs, including the brief on “Finding ‘Fit’ When Connecting Youth to Future Learning Opportunities.” ❖ More than merely “gamifying” your offerings, leveled challenges can clarify pathways to greater competency, especially when learners can progress at their own pace. See for example FUSE Studios challenges.

→ **Be Led By Learners** ^{4 (p 81)}

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Maintain flexible processes and be willing to change direction if you see that participants are becoming disengaged.⁶❖ Demonstrate respect for youth perspectives about what's important.² | <ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Employ activities that genuinely have no right answer. Activities in making (e.g. a story, a photo, or lyric inspired by the topic) can allow youth to express themselves in the creation of an artifact.❖ Establishing a youth council and incorporating their input in programmatic and strategic decisions shows a commitment to youth input. Actively look for places to compromise and explain the decisions you make when they differ from youth input. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Challenges like those on DiscoverDesign.org—like redesigning your locker—are helpful examples of tasks that have no right answer.❖ See LEAP Innovation's Learner-Led framework, particularly for those implementing personalized learning approaches in formal education spaces. |
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→ **Use Technology for Creative Production and Expression** ^{4 (p 81-82)}

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Maintain a mix of high-tech and low-tech approaches, selecting the appropriate tool for the desired practice and for the skill level of the learners.^{3 (p 70)}❖ Encourage and guide exploration of interests via online collaboration, sharing, and showcasing.^{3 See below in Relationships for positive norms.}❖ Leverage technology to help amplify and disseminate youth voice.^{3 (p 11)} | <ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ To avoid digital tools becoming barriers to entry, architecture interns who have never used 3D modeling software can start with pencil and paper sketches to invite creativity. Then, with a solid concept in mind, they can learn the tool to bring their concept to life.❖ Use digital technologies to create projects that can be worked on in person and online simultaneously.❖ Youth value authentic audiences for their creative production. Online tools can enable low-barrier ways to produce and share original outputs, such as graphic designs, audio tracks, written words, multimedia art, or live-streamed performances. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Free, open-source tools from Mozilla enable production of web content in experimental and active ways. Read CLX's landscape report on how organizations and educators are using digital media tools and technology in out-of-school youth programs.❖ Mozilla's Web Literacy Map contains guidelines and activities for online participation❖ To ensure higher-level uses of technology for creative production, not just consumption, consider the SAMR model. Learn from organizations like the Chicago Youth Voices Network (http://www.chiyouthvoices.net/) who are expert at using digital media as way to encourage the unique voices of youth. |
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REFLECT

- ❖ Promote youth voice by enabling feedback and self-reflection. Be willing to redesign programs based on youth feedback. Learn about what other interests youth participants have and consider how to redesign programs to engage those interests in order to create more entry points for future learners.
- ❖ Encouraging youth reflection can support development of growth mindsets. Students often associate “dislike” with things that are challenging. Through reflection, you can associate challenges with opportunities to learn from rather than be defined by challenges. It can be useful to restate that learning means you don't already know how to do something. Trying and failing means you're learning.
- ❖ These statements are good indicators that youth are having a connected learning experience.¹ Ideally, youth in the programs you hold would agree with the following statements:
 - I am going to explore a new interest based on things I learned.
 - I learned things that will help me go deeper into an interest I already have.
 - I learned things that made me more interested in continuing my education past high school than I was before.
 - At this programs it is cool to be excited about your interests.

II. Relationships

Build supportive relationships with peers and adults.

DESIGN		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Create community or program guidelines that set expectations for your space. These might include ways to be kind, inclusive, constructive, and welcoming. See below for how to evolve these guidelines in order to develop shared purpose. ❖ Be prepared to connect youth to the appropriate social service professionals for issues where their mental or physical safety is at risk, and provide confidential ways to reach out to support from caring adults. Among the many channels for teens to receive confidential support are SMS-based hotlines like https://www.crisistextline.org/ (text HOME to 741741 in the US). See NowPow and NAMI for mental health. ❖ When planning to use social media for building collaborative working relationships, consider Clay Shirky's simple <i>Promise, Tool, Bargain</i> framework described in chapter 11 of Here Comes Everybody. See this post's description of that framework. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Promise: what promise is offered by the kind of engagement you're asking the group to have? ➤ Tool: what tools will be used to realize the promise of that kind of engagement? ➤ Bargain: what mutual expectations and agreements support the use of those tools to achieve that promise? 		
IMPLEMENT		
Connected Learning Approach	What This Might Look Like	Resources
→ Cultivate Peer Relationships ⁴ (p 12)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Support peer-to-peer sharing of expertise.² ❖ Nurture ongoing, fluid partnering and collaboration in person and online.² ❖ Affirm the role of adult mentors to help youth value learning together,³ (p 26) and support these adults with their own peer professional learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Encourage collaboration based on shared interests and skills instead of established social circles. When receiving a participant's request for help, give their peers a chance to volunteer their own knowledge and expertise. ❖ When assigning group projects or friendly competitions, provide support for online collaboration where youth can share code, art, music, or writing. ❖ Talking openly about the things that you geek out over is one way to cultivate trust and build a relationship. Dedicating time to learn from your adult colleagues can model the importance of peer-to-peer learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Social media has become a powerful tool for supporting social connection. Google's Be Internet Awesome / Sé genial en Internet is a multilingual campaign for establishing positive norms for online interactions. ❖ Openly networked platforms support collaborative goals and outputs. Consider tools that allow real-time collaboration, such as Google's G Suite for Education. ❖ Peer professional learning communities can support connected learning adoption. CLX's learning community in Chicago and the National Writing Project's online professional journal, The Current, are examples.
→ Create Safe Space Supported by Caring Adults ⁵		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Model empathy and listening with respect as well as candid but age-appropriate discussions with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Treating youth with respect, giving them space to express their emotions without judgment, and really listening to them are 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Use the Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPOA) to assess the safety and supportiveness

<p>youth about their life experiences.^{5 (p 25-27)}</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Set the inclusive expectation that everyone is welcome to participate, especially marginalized youth.^{3 (p 37)} ❖ Create clear pathways and roles for participation while maintaining flexibility.^{4 (p 81)} 	<p>the practices identified in research as most likely to help them feel safe and supported.⁵</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Ask youth what they need from you to feel more comfortable and be willing to make those changes. It’s easier to broker an entry point for them if you know what they like and how they learn best. ❖ Enable multiple ways to contribute, yet be willing to let youth observe while they get more comfortable. Balancing the tension between wanting a young person to participate and wanting to give them space to join in is challenging but can build trust. 	<p>of your program environment (see sample assessment items here).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Effective mentoring creates a strong foundation for inclusive practices that demonstrate the value that each participant brings to your program. See this video of a legendary mentor, the late Brother Mike Hawkins. ❖ Additional educator resources for building these skills are the Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring™ from The National Mentoring Partnership, as well as The Chronicle of Evidence-Based Mentoring.
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→ **Work Openly and with Shared Purpose** ^{4 (p 12), 2}

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Cultivate inclusive networks of youth and adults who love what they do and enable them to learn from and share with others.^{3 (p 71)} ❖ Create opportunities for youth to see how their passions relate to shared issues, enabling meaningful contribution to real communities.³ ❖ Allow shared purpose to develop over time rather than assuming it from the outset. Support it by revisiting and upholding clearly articulated values.^{3 (p 102)} 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Online communities are important parts of openly networked infrastructures, even if accessible only to the participants in your program. Allow select external sharing (e.g. the posting of digital badges to LinkedIn). ❖ An end-of-program showcase can be held for an authentic audience of friends, family, policy makers, and the community, inspiring lifelong civic engagement. ❖ When cultivating shared purpose it can be helpful to have a collaborative project or event-like in producing a zine-to encourage learners to work toward a shared goal, allowing them to set and revise group norms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The internet is a powerful tool for working in the open. Knowing how to read, write, and participate online – web literacy – is an important part of digital literacy. See Mozilla’s Web Literacy Map, aligned to 21st C skills. ❖ See the Brokering Youth Pathways practice brief: “Capstone as Stepping Stone: Leveraging End-of-Program Events for Pathway-Building” ❖ See this Inpoints video on developing shared purpose through art at the National Veterans Art Museum, or see chapter 6 of <i>Teaching in the Connected Learning Classroom</i>.³
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REFLECT

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Create time for learners to reflect on their experiences, especially around collaborative activities. Model self-reflection and how to identify what you would do differently next time as an educator and as a learner. ❖ Acknowledge and reflect on the power that adults have for dictating what’s right and wrong. Provide a supportive space for adults to reflect on their encounters with youth. ❖ These statements are good indicators that youth are having a connected learning experience.¹ Ideally, youth in the programs you hold would agree with the following statements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ I know how to accept meaningful critique from others. ➤ I know how to meaningfully critique other people’s work. ➤ I learned a lot from the adults at this program. ➤ I learned a lot from other youth. ➤ Adults at this program made sure everyone had a chance to participate and contribute. ➤ I worked with other youth to create something. ➤ I feel safe in this space.

III. Opportunity

Connect to future opportunities with academic, civic, or career payoffs.

DESIGN		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Connecting youth to future <i>learning experiences</i> is important because it can deepen expand existing interests (see Interests above). In addition, connecting them to actual <i>opportunities</i> goes a step further by intentionally planning how your program can lead to a <i>payoff of tangible value</i> in academics, civic life, or careers. ❖ While planning your program, do some legwork to discover other community resources, including organizations who offer similar but perhaps more advanced learning experiences, local colleges who award credit for out-of-school learning, or employers who offer youth internship opportunities. 		
IMPLEMENT		
Connected Learning Approach	What This Might Look Like	Resources
→ <i>Translate Learned Skills</i> ²		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Visibly name the skills youth are learning, taking time to make the skills being learned completely transparent to learners.² ❖ Help youth discover which of their skills and interests might connect to related academic or career paths.² ❖ Enable young people to learn from your unique skills, interests, and professional path.⁵ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Often youth don't have the language they need to translate what they have learned into other settings. Give them the language they could use on a resume or when talking about their skills with others. ❖ If a young person is particularly taken by a topic or skill, invite in professionals or plan job shadow days to illuminate how their interest might translate into a potential academic and/or career pathway. ❖ Be transparent about your own career journey, struggles, and successes. Be sure to unpack the ways in which your privilege might have reduced barriers for you. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Help learners reflect on what they've learned with skill-related words like this list of action verbs from Michigan State University. MHA Labs' Power Skills and Attitudes list and Skill Building Blocks are great for this, found on their website. ❖ See the Brokering Youth Pathways practice brief: "Linking Youth to Professional Worlds through Informal Digital Learning Programs" ❖ Blogging about your experiences and inviting youth to do the same can illuminate the process of skill development. https://medium.com/ is one site to write and read blogs on a wide range of topics.
→ <i>Broaden Contexts for Learning</i> ²		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Illuminate learning pathways that connect current activities to the next learning experience, whether 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Within your organization, digital badges can enable recognition of individual skills. They 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ See the Brokering Youth Pathways practice brief: "Internal Pathways: "Leveling Up"

<p>within your organization or beyond.^{4 (p12)}</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Foster civic awareness, dialogue, and participation as a context for learning.^{4, 2} ❖ Coordinate learning experiences across settings, dedicating time to partnership development.² 	<p>can also be used to communicate a connected pathway of learning experiences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Support youth civic engagement through online communities and digital activism, helping youth use their voices to effect issues they care about. ❖ Service learning or independent study projects are ways to allow youth to earn in-school credit for self-directed learning happening out of school or in the workplace. 	<p>Youth within an Informal Learning Organization”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ These LRNG playlists provide learning pathways specific to civic engagement: Engaging Communities Playlist; From Protest to Proposal; Turn Passion into Poetry ❖ Here are resources for professional networking / collaboration (http://partnerships.hivechicago.org/).
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→ **Broker Opportunities for Civic, Academic, and Career Payoffs** ^{4 (p12), 2}

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Equip youth to make their progress and achievements visible across settings.² ❖ Equip educators and mentors to broker connections to new opportunities.^{3 (p10)} ❖ Be intentional in connecting teens to these opportunities and encouraging them to pursue them.^{3 (p10)} 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Schools and colleges can award academic credit for out-of-school program participation and learning portfolio. Digital badges can support this kind of cross-sector recognition of skills. ❖ Foster collaboration among educators, organizations and parents/guardians to better connect youth to existing opportunities. ❖ Cultivate relationships and warm handoffs to other youth-serving professionals in interest areas beyond your program or expertise. Invite an educator from the other organization to co-lead a session with you or come to meet your participants as a way to help them make a new connection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Digital badges are micro-credentials that contain data about the specific skills gained when earning the badge. Explore this growing list of badge issuers. ❖ See the framework, briefs, and reports at the Hive Research Lab’s Brokering Youth Pathways toolkit. CLX’s innovation grants and other incentives provide tangible resources for developing cross-org learning pathways. ❖ In Chicago, the Chicago City of Learning provides access to a variety of youth programs at https://chicagocityoflearning.org/. CLX’s Remake Learning Days Chi make visible the city’s abundant learning resources while making them more accessible. See https://remakelearningdays.org/chi/
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Successfully connecting to opportunities often involves challenges for learners and educators alike. We encourage including those struggles in the reflection process for youth and adults. ❖ Pre- and post- surveys can help you assess whether youth can identify the skills developed in your program or course. Feedback and self-reflection can be supported with free online tools like mentimeter.com for real-time, anonymous feedback. ❖ These statements are good indicators that youth are having a connected learning experience.¹ Ideally, youth in the programs you hold would agree with the following statements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ I learned things that I could use in a job one day. ➢ I learned things that will help me with school. ➢ I learned things that I could use in college one day, if I go. ➢ I understand how the activities we did here can be used in other parts of my life. ➢ I learned things that made me more interested in continuing my education past high school than I was before. ➢ I discovered a new potential self or career pathway through this experience. ➢ Adults at this program helped me understand how the activities we did here can be used in other parts of my life.
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Select Connected Learning Publications

In addition to the [review of literature](#) referenced in the introduction, this is a brief collection of research publications referenced in the creation of this guide.

1. Arum, Richard and Kiley Larson. Forthcoming. *Connected Learning: A Study of Educational Technology and Progressive Pedagogy*. Anticipated 2020, NYU Press.
2. Connected Learning Research Network. Anticipated 2019. *The Connected Learning Research Network: Reflections on a Decade of Engaged Scholarship*. Irvine, CA: Digital Media and Learning Research Hub.
3. Garcia, Antero, ed., 2014. *Teaching in the Connected Learning Classroom*. Irvine, CA: Digital Media and Learning Research Hub. <https://clalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/teaching-in-the-CL-classroom.pdf>
4. Ito, Mizuko, Kris Gutiérrez, Sonia Livingstone, Bill Penuel, Jean Rhodes, Katie Salen, Juliet Schor, Julian Sefton-Green, S. Craig Watkins. 2013. *Connected Learning: An Agenda for Research and Design*. Irvine, CA: Digital Media and Learning Research Hub. https://dmlhub.net/wp-content/uploads/files/Connected_Learning_report.pdf
5. Larson, Kiley, Mizuko Ito, Eric Brown, Mike Hawkins, Nichole Pinkard, Penny Sebring. 2013. *Safe Space and Shared Interests: YOUmedia Chicago as a Laboratory for Connected Learning*. Irvine, CA: Digital Media and Learning Research Hub. <https://dmlhub.net/wp-content/uploads/files/SAFE-SPACE-final-with-addenda.pdf>
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10. Shrestova, Sangita and Henry Jenkins. 2016. "From Voice to Influence: An Introduction." An article in *Journal in Digital and Media Literacy*. Accessed March 1, 2019. <https://ypp.dmlcentral.net/sites/default/files/publications/From%20Voice%20to%20Influence%3A%20An%20Introduction%20%7C%20Journal%20of%20Digital%20and%20Media%20Literacy.pdf>

Acknowledgements

This guide is being developed as a resource for practitioners locally and nationally by the [Chicago Learning Exchange](#) (CLX), whose mission is to inspire and support innovation that equips digital-age learners and leaders to close Chicago’s opportunity gap. The ongoing development of the guide has been informed by many contributors, and has been co-written by CLX consultant and co-cofounder, Sam Dyson, and connected learning researcher, Dr. Kiley Larson.

This *Public Comment DRAFT* is being distributed to the CLX community and our national partners for comment and feedback. To join the CLX community, visit <https://chicagolx.org/community>. To offer your feedback on this guide, join one of our [upcoming events](#) in person, or join our working group online here: <https://clx.fyi/ConnectedLearningGuide>.

For more information about CLX, contact info@chicagolx.org.

Contributors

We wish to thank the many talented professionals whose input continues to inform the ongoing development of this public resource.

CLX Staff

Jessica Besser-Rosenberg

Gina Grant

Maria Hibbs

Sana Jafri

Vanessa Johnson

Jia Lok Pratt

CLX Advisory Committee

Darius Ballinger,
Chasing 23

Margaret Conway,
Convergence
Academies

Lisa Kim, Mikva
Challenge

Rosalia Lugo, Adler
Planetarium

Nathan Phillips, UIC
College of
Education

Steven Willis,
Chicago Youth
Centers

CLX Community Members and National Partners

Kira J. Baker-Doyle, Arcadia
University School of Education

Leslie Beller, MHA Labs

Wade Berger, Northwestern
University Learning Sciences

David Bild, Chicago Academy of
Sciences /Peggy Notebaert
Nature Museum

Kenneth Boyd, Carole Robertson
Center for Learning

Christina Cantrill, National
Writing Project

Jaelyn Carmichael, Lake View
High School

Jane Castro, Intuit: The Center for
Intuitive and Outsider Art

Ala' Diab, Mumkin Studios

Joe Dillon, Denver Writing Project

Andrea Ellis, Kansas City Public
Library

Mindy Faber, Convergence
Academies

Vince Gomez, Chicago Botanic
Garden

Mimi Ito, University of California
Irvine

Remi Kalir, UC Denver School of
Education and Human
Development

Julie Koslowsky, Chicago Public
Library

Sue Magdziarz, John G. Shedd
Aquarium

Henry Mann, Northwestern
University

Emma Martell, Lincoln Park Zoo

Matsuo Marti, Chicago
International Charter Schools

Edge Quintanilla, Chicago
Architecture Center

Kenny Riley, Carole Robertson
Center for Learning

Katie Salen, University of
California Irvine

Jen Steele, Chicago Public Library
Teen Services

Eve Tulbert, Mumkin Studios

Kara Victorsen, Communities In
Schools of Chicago

Robin Willard, Chicago Public
Library Teen Services