



Moving from Unequal Expectations & Opportunities to

High Expectations with Unlimited Opportunities for All

In many contexts the expectations and opportunities learners experience in school are determined at a young age and are modest for most, high for some, and disproportionately low for others. This is often based on factors connected to a learner’s identity and background like race, income, and gender. Bias when sharing information about advanced courses to learners, less optimism about some students’ chances of obtaining a four-year degree, and using a less rigorous instructional approach with some students based on beliefs about their ability to learn are just some of the ways low expectations and limited opportunities show up at school. However, to truly achieve outcomes that are not determined by birth or class, all learners must experience high expectations and have access to all the opportunities that could enable them to progress toward their aspirations, regardless of the time and support needed.

This Leap Means...

- ▶ Learners experiencing teachers, leaders, and other adults who hold high expectations for all students without bias.
- ▶ Learners persisting when work gets hard and using the support available (e.g., resources, peers, mentors) to help them keep trying.
- ▶ Learners having access to all of the opportunities their school offers.
- ▶ Learners having opportunities to try again when they have not yet been successful.

The expectations schools hold for young people, and the opportunities schools provide, can influence motivation and learning outcomes and help address long-standing inequalities. Experiencing high expectations can boost students’ confidence in their ability to succeed. It can also help to mediate against identity threats young people may feel due to stereotypes and bias. In addition, having a broad range of learning opportunities helps students build a deeper understanding of themselves and their purpose and passion. When all young people are held to high expectations and are given rigorous, unlimited opportunities to learn, they are able to make more progress and succeed. This, in turn, helps ensure that all learners are prepared for college, career, and beyond.



Inequitable, Industrial-Era Learning

Unequal Expectations & Opportunities

The expectations and opportunities learners experience are determined at a young age and are modest for most, high for some, and disproportionately low for others, too often based on factors connected to a learner’s identity and background.

Equitable, 21st-Century Learning

High Expectations with Unlimited Opportunities for All

All learners experience high expectations and have equitable access to many opportunities, enabling them to progress toward their aspirations for themselves, their families, and the community—regardless of the time and support needed.



Transcend’s Leaps for Equitable, 21st Century Learning are informed by the [science of learning and development](#); equity in education; and [contemporary societal, political, economic, and scientific trends](#).

High Expectations with Unlimited Opportunities for All at DaVinci RISE High School

DaVinci RISE seeks to meet the unique needs of youth navigating foster care, housing instability, probation, and/or other circumstances that have caused disruptions in their academic journeys. In order to ensure that students can attain an excellent education while also attending to the additional responsibilities they have in their lives, RISE provides various flexibilities and supports:

- ▶ **Multiple-Learning Sites with Social Services Nearby** – In-person learning occurs across three “learning sites,” allowing RISE students to master RISE’s curriculum in the places that work best for them. Each site is located within, or near, social services providers. These partnerships give students access to counseling, case management, tutoring, job readiness training, career pathways, internships, extracurricular opportunities, leadership development, and more.
- ▶ **DreamSeeDo Online Learning Platform** – RISE has developed an online platform called DreamSeeDo. Through it, students can digitally access coursework that supports the in-person instruction and project work time they receive on campus. This provides students with additional flexibility in terms of when and where they learn as well as 24/7 access to learning materials in case they need to spend more time with them, or would like to accelerate their learning.
- ▶ **Quarters and Intersession** – RISE operates on a quarter system. Each quarter is approximately 9 weeks, followed by either a 1–2 week break or intersession. During intersessions students can engage in optional programming for academic recovery or acceleration; explore potential career pathways via field experiences, internships, or service learning; or pursue creative expression via extracurricular courses.
- ▶ **Flexible Schedule** – Students are able to customize their schedule to meet their unique life circumstances. It is mandatory that students attend in-person courses at least two days per week. However, students have a variety of different ways to mix and match course schedules to meet this requirement. In the event of extenuating circumstances that prevent students from attending in-person courses, there are added layers of flexibility to complete coursework virtually.
- ▶ **World of Work Career-Readiness Course** – Through this course students receive support in creating their resumes, applying for jobs, and participating in mock interviews. When students complete the course, they have the option of interviewing for paid internships with a variety of RISE partners.

Additional School Examples to Explore

Community Roots – Part of Community Roots’ approach to anti-bias education entails staff members addressing and reflecting upon their own biases as well as the biases they feel toward others, both inside and outside the classroom. This helps the staff identify how biases may be influencing their expectation of and interactions with students so they can make changes.

Bard Early College High School – Through a partnership between Bard College and the New York City Department of Education, Bard Early College High School is able to help students earn both a high school Regents Diploma *and* an Associate’s Degree in four years. There is no cost to students or families and it prepares students to go on to a four-year college degree, or enter directly into a career.

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