Since its founding in 1995, Big Picture Learning (BPL) has been helping educators and education leaders create highly successful schools that provide non-traditional learning opportunities and learning environments to students throughout the world. Big Picture Learning collaborates with local stakeholders to design innovative learning environments, researches and replicates new models for learning, and trains educators to serve as leaders in their schools and communities. In addition, each BPL school serves as a hub for innovation with a wide variety of best practice development and technological innovation. We share our experience and knowledge widely with all who are similarly interested in the transformation and improvement of our education system.

Big Picture Learning designs and supports a network of over 60 schools across the USA, and has helped to launch over 100 more around the world, whose core focus is that personalized, real-world situated learning should be driven by student interests and internships. We have also helped many school teams that do not wish to adopt the whole BPL design, but do wish to incorporate some features and components of that design into their own. In both types of work, BPL has given considerable attention to helping the school build its capacity for ongoing redesign and improvement even as BPL assists the school staff to implement specific programs and practices. We work both improvement strands simultaneously because we understand that even exemplary and validated programs and practices cannot take root and be sustained in poorly functioning schools.

BPL has over 20 years of experience in designing, developing, and supporting the implementation of new and repurposed schools based in whole or in part on its BPL design. BPL is a school developer, but does not govern and operate schools. Instead, BPL works in collaboration with school districts to establish new schools that together form the BPL School Network. BPL schools consistently achieve significant gains in attendance and performance on state and district academic assessments in essential skill areas, as well as dramatically reducing dropout and suspension/expulsion rates, increasing graduation rates, and increasing college acceptance, matriculation, and persistence. At BPL-established schools, over 95% of students are accepted into college.

BPL has had many remarkable successes over the past 20 years and we have gained clarity about our core competencies. We work with some of the most disenfranchised populations and disaffected students and have demonstrated success insuring that every student is given an equitable opportunity to explore their interests, pursue their passions, and realize their dreams. We do not seek to achieve equity through “sameness” and replication, but rather through close collaboration with families and communities to produce learning environments that match each individual context. We are committed to equity of opportunity, which requires a truly student-centered approach that goes beyond differentiation and customization, and values personal growth over time.

And so...

We invite your school to consider adopting components of the BPL design, or the design in whole. Our mechanism for helping educators achieve this is the Big Picture Learning School Success Study.
The Big Picture Learning School Success Study is a one or two day on-site study of your school and community. Big Picture Learning staff will spend time interviewing your students, parents, staff and community partners/stakeholders; analyzing your data; and reviewing your current goals and past school successes/gaps. At the conclusion of the study, you will receive customized report with suggested next steps for better serving students in a way that puts them at the center of their own learning.

This study can be a great first step in launching an improvement process for all schools, and is a required first step for schools wishing to become part of Big Picture Learning’s established school network.

Each study is led by a Big Picture Learning Director and/or School Design Coach. The agenda for the study is created by the school itself, following the recommendations of BPL staff. After the study, BPL will create a written report of our findings and recommendations for you to share with your school and district.

**FORMAT**

The purpose of the School Success Study is to identify ways in which a school is successfully serving students, while also identifying gaps that may be improved through professional development.

**PRIOR TO THE STUDY**

Big Picture Learning will need:

+ Copies of district data reports (Annual Yearly Progress, student assessment data, attendance and retention information, graduation rates, student demographics, etc.).

+ A brief written history of the school. When was it established? How have current staff been a part of the school environment? What is staff retention like? What are some of your known successes and barriers?

+ A copy of your school’s student handbook and discipline policy.

+ A copy of your parent handbook and/or examples of regular parent communications.
DURING THE STUDY

We will interview current students, at all grade levels. These interviews will include students that are thriving in your school, as well as those that are struggling.

We will interview many members of your current staff, including: administrators, teachers at every grade level, para-educators and classroom assistants, non-teaching staff, and others.

We will conduct interviews with parents, observe classrooms and overall building climate, and review student work across grade levels.

PROCESS

Your identified local site contact will create an agenda for the day(s) to be sent off to Big Picture Learning. This agenda should accompany the documents we’ve requested as part of the pre-study process.

REPORTING

Following the study, BPL will create a report of our findings, along with recommendations for next steps. The report will include observations and recommendations in various areas, including school culture, academic programming, instruction, relationships, etc.

Recommendations will be made for strategic advancement of specific program goals based on the interests and needs shared by stakeholders. Particular attention will be paid to recommendations of resources and expertise that Big Picture Learning could provide as a part of an ongoing intensive support process.

SAMPLE FIRST DAY AGENDA

9:00  Meet with school team and administrators (Superintendent, principal, assistant principal(s), instructional leader(s), Director of special services, PTA President)

10:30 Classroom observation - Math 10.

11:15 Meet with individual students.

12:00 Lunch with parents and board

12:45 Meet with English teacher.

1:15 Classroom observation - Computers & Technology

2:30 Attend and observe all staff meeting.

3:30 Meeting with Assistant Principal and front office staff.

4:00 First day concludes.

CONTACT US

If your school is interested in moving forward with a School Success Study (or would simply like more information), please reach out to us!

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EMAIL  mrbrezler@bigpicturelearning.org
ONE STUDENT AT A TIME