

Physical Learning Environments

What does success look like and how do you get there?

The goal

In order to transform schools and redefine the school-community dynamic for the 21st century, the whole community is required to collectively embrace innovation in all its guises and creative capacities. This requires using digital technologies as a collective community resource. However, the goal of Adaptive Anytime Anywhere Learning Communities (ALCs) is to go further by creating learning environments that represent a 'community for innovation'.¹

Creating connected learning

Today, digital technology provides ubiquitous and instantaneous access to unlimited information resources, completely transforming schools and the educative process.

However, access to an infinite repository of information is only as valuable as one's capacity to assess, analyze, decipher, disaggregate, and apply knowledge in practical, real-world situations.² Learning is about making connections and the 21st century student needs to be supported to do this in both physical and virtual learning environments.

How do we get there?

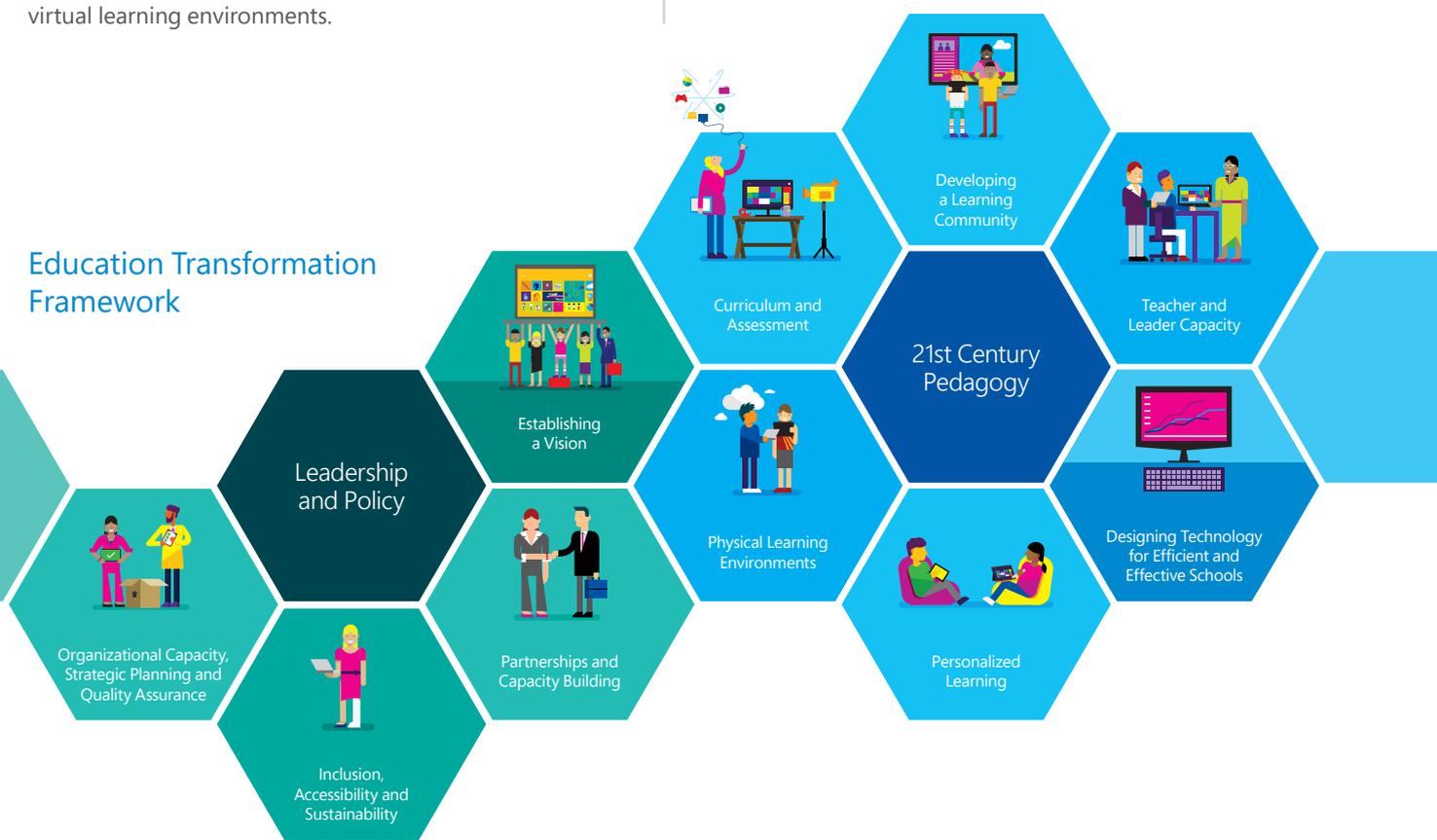
By thinking differently about thinking, teaching, and learning, we can explore innovative new learning environments – smart learning spaces that are increasingly mobile and cloud based.

ALCs look at digital learning through a broader lens than personal or digital learning environments. They explore how students and teachers adapt to innovation, how geographic communities play an integral role in the deployment of innovations, and how 'flipped communities' may serve as a catalyst to create optimum educational, social and cultural impacts for community development.

By employing technology to meet individual student learning needs, their experiences, services and products can be aligned with individual learning preferences.³

In addition, applying the 7Es of ALCs – engage, experience, empower, effect, emote, evolve, and efficacy – ensures we can develop roadmaps for smart learning spaces that are transformative across the community landscape.

Education Transformation Framework



Guiding questions

How will spaces be redesigned to enable 21st century learning?

What does a smart classroom look and “feel” like?

How do devices prepare students for their next steps in learning and life?

What technologies do teachers require in the classroom, the school grounds, at home?

What are the implications of curriculum design to make effective use of 1-to-1 learning and new learning spaces?

What learning is needed for teachers?

How can technology be used to support evolving learning environments?

Here are some ways schools use technology to enable anywhere, anytime learning:

- Using Microsoft Advanced Analytics and Business Intelligence to analyze student data for development of new learning tools and applications
- Supporting student collaboration, competition, and innovation, for example through Microsoft Dreamspark, YouthSpark and Imagine Cup
- Skype in the Classroom for connecting to experts, experiences and peers worldwide
- Mobile learning supported by Office on Mobile Devices.

Resources

Whitepaper: Transforming Learning Environments for Anytime, Anywhere Learning for All

Authored by Dr. Don Olcott, Jr., FRSA Professor of Educational Leadership and Open and Distance Learning, this paper explores how students and teachers adapt to new technologies for anytime, anywhere learning. It discusses how student-centered learning environments may serve as a catalyst for schools to create the best possible educational, social and cultural impacts for community development.

The complete version is available at microsoft.com/education/leaders

Workshops and Additional Support Materials

To organize a workshop or for resource materials, contact your Microsoft Education Specialist.

References

1. Olcott, D.J. (2014). (In-Press). Building digital bridges to the future: A primer for ministry leaders for school transformation via public & private educational partnerships. Microsoft.
2. Cavanaugh, C., McCarthy, A., & East, M. (2014). An innovation framework for holistic school transformation: Ten critical conversations for the 21st century. Seattle, WA: Microsoft.
3. Boyd, D. (2014). It's complicated. Princeton, NJ: Yale University Press.

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