

Network Overview & Vision

Big Picture Learning (BPL) is a nonprofit organization founded over 30 years ago to redesign high schools around personalized, student-driven, real-world learning. Its mission is to help all students pursue meaningful, sustainable lives of their own design—supported by learner-centered communities, caring mentors, and equitable opportunities to grow and thrive. BPL operates in 35 states and 12 countries, with over 200 BPL design schools and 100 partner schools.



Participating Districts & Demonstration Sites



Primary Demonstration Site

- San Diego Met High School (San Diego USD)



Additional Network and Affiliate Sites

- The Met Sacramento (Sacramento City USD)
- New Village Girls Academy (Los Angeles USD)
- 11 full BPL community schools and 26 partner schools statewide adopting core design elements (Advisory, LTIs, Authentic Assessment/IBPLC)

Key Partners & Collaborators

American Student Assistance (ASA)

Convened monthly statewide policy meetings with a wide range of stakeholders.

University of California Board of Regents

Partner in development of the Big Picture A–G Course Matrix, aligning LTIs and interest-driven learning with UC admissions expectations.

IBPLC (International Big Picture Learning Credential)

An initiative to develop a Big Picture Learning (BPL) aligned recognition that sits alongside the state. CRESST at UCLA performed an external evaluation of the IBPLC's alignment to CCSS and deeper learning competencies. Partnerships continue between Big Picture Education Australia, University of Melbourne, UC San Diego, and Northeastern University with the focus on the IBPLC.

Redesigned Learning Examples

Redesign Element	Current Strengths
Every Student is Known & Supported	Every student is part of a small, multi-year Advisory community with the same advisor for two to four years. Advisors build trust through home visits, daily check-ins, and Personal Learning Plans co-developed with students and families. This structure ensures that each student is known deeply and supported holistically, creating a strong sense of belonging and connection.
Redesign Learning for Deeper Knowledge & Skills	Students participate weekly in Learning Through Interests/Internships (LTIs)—authentic, interest-based experiences where they work alongside mentors in real-world settings. Projects and internships connect directly to California standards and the BPL Learning Goals (communication, empirical reasoning, quantitative reasoning, social reasoning, personal qualities, and knowing how to learn). At the San Diego Met, students demonstrate mastery through exhibitions, portfolios, and the International Big Picture Learning Credential (IBPLC).
Equitable Student-Centered Learning & Supports	Equity in BPL schools means personalization within a supportive learning community. During Internships and dual enrollment, students earn college credit and build real-world experience. The International Big Picture Learning Credential (IBPLC) captures growth through authentic evidence—projects, feedback, and reflection—recognizing multiple ways to demonstrate success and ensuring every learner is known, supported, and prepared for a future of their own design.
Promote Measurable Growth in Student Engagement & Learning	Students lead exhibitions that bring together families, peers, and mentors to showcase progress and receive authentic feedback. Real-world learning through internships and community college coursework has increased motivation, confidence, and persistence.
Design Sustainable Structures to Maintain Impact Over Time	BPL schools sustain redesign through structural and cultural systems: multi-year advisories, dedicated internship coordinators, and credentialed teachers who serve as advisors and mentors. Tools like ImBlaze and the IBPLC provide durable systems for authentic learning and assessment. Over two decades in California, BPL has aligned its model with UC A–G requirements ensuring long-term viability.

Pilot Activity Highlights

- ✓ **Quarterly Regional Convenings:** Four two-day events annually (San Diego ×2, Sacramento, Los Angeles) focused on Advisory, Internships, Authentic Assessment, and Equity Leadership.
- ✓ **Guided Demonstration Visits:** Four immersive, student-led visits per year (2 at San Diego Met, 1 at Met Sacramento, 1 at New Village Girls Academy). Workshops on Advisory, LTIs, student portfolios, IBPLC moderation, and internship systems.
- ✓ **Elevate Student and Family Voice:** BPL will continue to center students and families as co-designers of the learning experience through Student Leadership Fellows who co-facilitate sessions, host visitors, and share their stories, and a Family Advisory Group that provides feedback and shapes engagement strategies. These structures ensure redesign stays grounded in lived experience.