

PROJECT 24



Calling All School District Leaders!

**Project 24 Offers Free Resources to
Help Districts Plan for Progress in Digital Learning**



The Alliance for Excellent Education (the Alliance) is pleased to provide public school district leaders with free resources to help plan for the effective use of technology as they strive for achieving higher student outcomes through the new college- and career-ready standards.

The Alliance is a well-respected nonprofit national policy organization that hosts Digital Learning Day—a national celebration of K–12 educators that shines a spotlight on successful instructional technology practice in public schools across the country.



Undertaken in collaboration with many national education organizations, Project 24 will extend Digital Learning Day to a year-round opportunity to highlight success, make progress, and collaborate with district-level leaders across the nation.

After conferring with many district leaders from the largest to the smallest school districts, the Alliance has developed a rich set of resources and team of experts in a campaign to provide ***comprehensive district-level planning tools for integrating digital learning to achieve the goal of college and career readiness for all students.***

There is no specific time commitment on behalf of the district leaders. Three easy steps include (1) signing up; (2) assembling a team; and (3) taking the self assessment. The Alliance advisory team will prepare a confidential report. It is then up to district leaders how to make the most of the resources that are available through Project 24 web content and a team of experts.

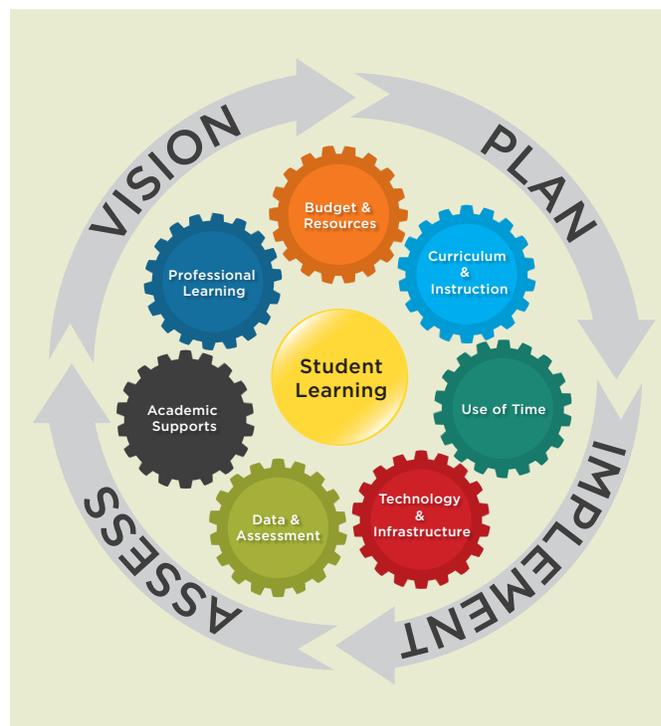
The “24” in Project 24 represents the next twenty-four months—beginning February 6, 2013—during which the nation’s education landscape will change greatly as states and school districts implement college- and career-ready standards for all students; utilize online assessments to gauge comprehension and learning; deal with constrained school budgets; and contend with demands of states’ waivers from key provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act.

The twenty-four-month clock will officially start ticking on Digital Learning Day, and district leaders are encouraged to join any time during the coming twenty-four months, regardless of where they are in the process of implementing digital learning. Resources will be archived and categorized by topic.

Project 24 Framework

The Project 24 framework helps district leaders address the seven major topics listed below as they engage in their Planning for Progress process. Connections between each of the topics highlight the power of systemic planning to address college- and career-ready standards. Implementation of these learning outcomes will be supported by appropriate technology applications and aligned with the new, higher expectations for learning. The Project 24 framework will provide assistance for implementing

- ✓ **academic supports;**
- ✓ **budget and resources;**
- ✓ **curriculum and instruction;**
- ✓ **data and assessments;**
- ✓ **professional learning;**
- ✓ **technology and infrastructure; and**
- ✓ **use of time.**



What Is Project 24 and Why Is It So Important for Digital Learning Day?

Much more than a call to action, Project 24 provides tangible assistance to school districts for systemic planning around the effective use of technology and digital learning to achieve the goal of “college and career readiness” for all students. It is a one-stop shop of comprehensive district-level planning tools, expert advice, creative ideas, and tangible suggestions from experienced education experts and nonprofit education membership organizations.

Why the Urgency: The *Stepping Up* Report

The Nation’s Schools Are Stepping Up to Higher Standards Infographic (<http://www.all4ed.org/criticalchallenges>). This clickable infographic identifies four major challenges facing school district leaders and the essential elements necessary for developing a comprehensive digital strategy.

The Nation’s Schools Are Stepping Up to Higher Standards (<http://www.all4ed.org/files/SteppingUp.pdf>) (November 2012). This report identifies four major challenges that public school district leaders must systemically address in the next two years: (1) graduating all students college and career ready; (2) managing shrinking budgets; (3) training and supporting teachers; and (4) the growing technology needs of students and society. The report outlines the essential elements for developing a comprehensive digital strategy to help school district leaders make smart, far-reaching decisions to support teachers in K–12 public schools.

Project 24 Program Components



Free Self Assessment for District Leaders

As an initial step, district leaders will create a leadership team that will participate in a digital learning self assessment. Requiring no more than two hours to complete, this self assessment includes a series of questions helping each district frame its vision for student learning, begin to recognize various aspects of the system to be addressed, and specify how technology can help align these efforts to achieve higher college- and career-ready standards.

District-Level Report

Upon completing the survey, each school district will be provided with a confidential PDF report that analyzes where it is in each topic of the self assessment as well as offering recommendations about best ways to use the Project 24 tools and content to review and develop its digital learning strategy. Regardless of when district leaders learn about Project 24 during the next two years, they will have an opportunity to take the self assessment, get the report, and retrieve the webinars, digital tools, blogs, and chats in each topic area. The survey data will be aggregated to provide the Alliance with important data detailing the overall status of digital learning and identifying common problems as well as successful practices. The individual district data collected will never be sold or shared without specific permission by the district official on record.

Team of District Level Experts

The Alliance has identified a team of nationally recognized leaders who have a demonstrated record of success effectively using technology to help advance the goals of college and career readiness, including development of the core competencies of creative and critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and self-reflection (deeper learning/twenty-first-century skills). This team of experts consists of teachers, principals, librarians, media specialists, chief technology officers/chief information officers, and superintendents from school districts of all sizes across the country representing various demographic groups and perspectives. The team of experts will help district leaders develop strategies and address the seven interrelated topics within the framework mentioned above.

Interactive Tools to Support the Digital Learning Transition

The Alliance is “practicing what it preaches” by developing an aggressive two-year schedule of virtual activities where district leaders can collaborate, ask questions, and share information while getting guidance from the team of experts mentioned above. The schedule will include webinars, instructional videos, profiles of successful districts, interactive chats, blogs, and other information all categorized within the topic areas mentioned in the framework above.

Communities of Practice

The Alliance is partnering with the Friday Institute for Educational Innovation affiliated with North Carolina State University. The Friday Institute is administering the federally supported epic-ed, an online community designed to empower educators, such as administrators, principals, teachers, instructional technology facilitators, and chief technology officers as they make the digital transition in their schools and districts. The epic-ed content will align with Project 24 for easy cross-promotion and cadre development through the existing community of practice.

Online Course: MOOC-Ed for Digital Transition Initiative Leaders

For the first component of the support model, the Alliance will use a Massive Online Open Course for Educators (MOOC–Ed) currently being developed by the Friday Institute to implement and evaluate an innovative, cost-effective, and scalable approach to providing professional development for K–12 digital transition planning teams, as well as individual teacher leaders and administrators. While most MOOCs provide accessible and cost-effective learning for large groups of participants, the Alliance/Friday Institute approach expands the application by incorporating a professional learning community structure and building upon authentic problems of professional practices and alignment with other principles of effective professional development.

Project 24 Partners

The Alliance is pleased to be working with the following national organizations to develop content and resources for Project 24.

- American Association of School Administrators
- Council of Chief State School Officers
- Consortia of School Networking
- Digital Promise
- Education Commission of the States
- International Society for Technology in Education
- Learning First Alliance
- National Association of State Boards of Education
- National Association of Secondary School Principals
- National Board of Professional Teaching Standards
- Rural School and Community Trust
- Software and Information Industry Association

This is a vast undertaking—and one that grows every day! The Alliance’s goal is to provide all public school districts with the ability, tools, and room to innovate during their digital transition. No matter the district’s size or location, no matter where the district is in the digital learning transition continuum, sign up TODAY and learn more at <http://www.all4ed.org/project24>.

For more information, contact Sara Hall at shall@all4ed.org or 410-279-3368.

