

Lessons with industry experts

An elementary instructional blueprint



This instructional blueprint enriches student learning by providing structured guidance from industry experts (i.e., community educators) and is appropriate for implementation mid-way through a project-based learning unit. Prior to this lesson, students should have developed questions they would like to pose to industry experts who possess expertise or experience relevant to the real-world problems students are trying to solve. Here, students have the opportunity to pose their questions and learn from the experts' responses as well as rotate through "progress checks" intended to tailor support as they progress toward completion of their projects.

What does this look like in action?

Students begin the lesson in three learning spaces, grouped roughly by project-based learning focus, in order to minimize time spent on transitions. The lead teacher and two experienced teachers facilitate the lesson opening and provide expectations for students' work with industry experts while other team members provide support (e.g., reinforcing expectations, circulating to respond to questions).

Then the lead teacher and experienced teachers transition students to small groups to work with industry experts. During this time, every educator supports industry experts by reinforcing expectations and circulating to respond to student questions.

After students begin their work with industry experts, one small group of students at a time transitions to the fourth learning space. During this time, they reflect on their progress toward their project goals and set next steps with the guidance of the lead teacher. This

structure should recur over the course of the unit to ensure all students have regular opportunities for personalized support toward their project goals. When the lead teacher is not checking in with students, they can provide support as needed in the other three learning spaces.

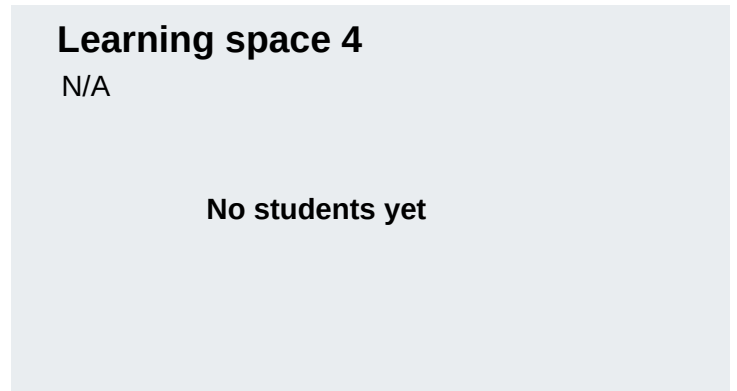
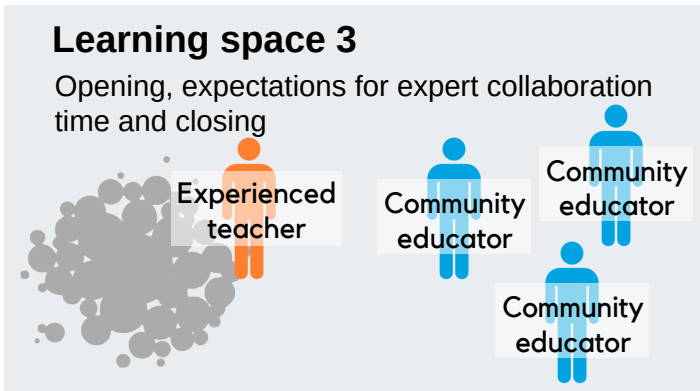
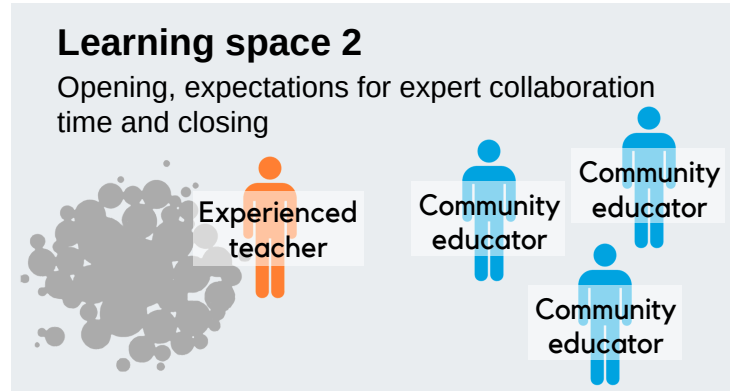
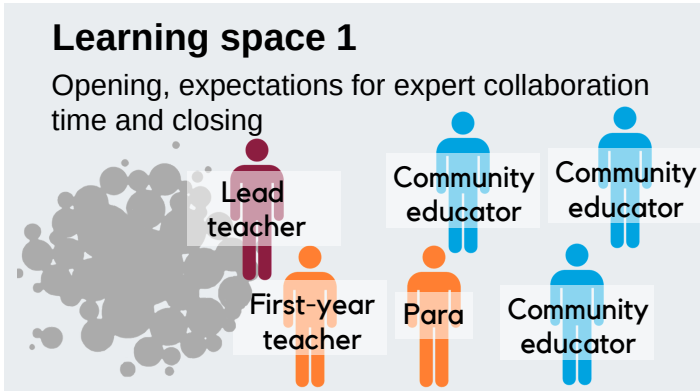
At the close of the lesson, the lead teacher and experienced teachers gather students together to facilitate reflection and sharing.

What guidance and considerations might maximize student learning?

Teams must plan, in advance, to match industry experts' areas of expertise to students' project-based learning topics. Ideally, the same small group of experts might partner with the team over a longer period of time to allow for students to deepen relationships with them, build trust and grow social capital.

Start and close of the lesson

Four learning spaces with 100 total students, five full-time educators and nine community educators.



Expert collaboration

