NEW CLASSROOMS

# Federal R&D Investment for Innovative Learning Models

## The Traditional School Model: A Barrier to Educational Equity

For more than a century, a singular operating model has governed mainstream schooling in America. A failure to evolve and modernize this factory model, one that is oriented around teaching 25-30 same-aged students learning the same material at the same time, represents perhaps the most significant barrier to educational equity. This model makes it nearly impossible to meet the unique strengths and needs of each student — especially those in our most marginalized communities.

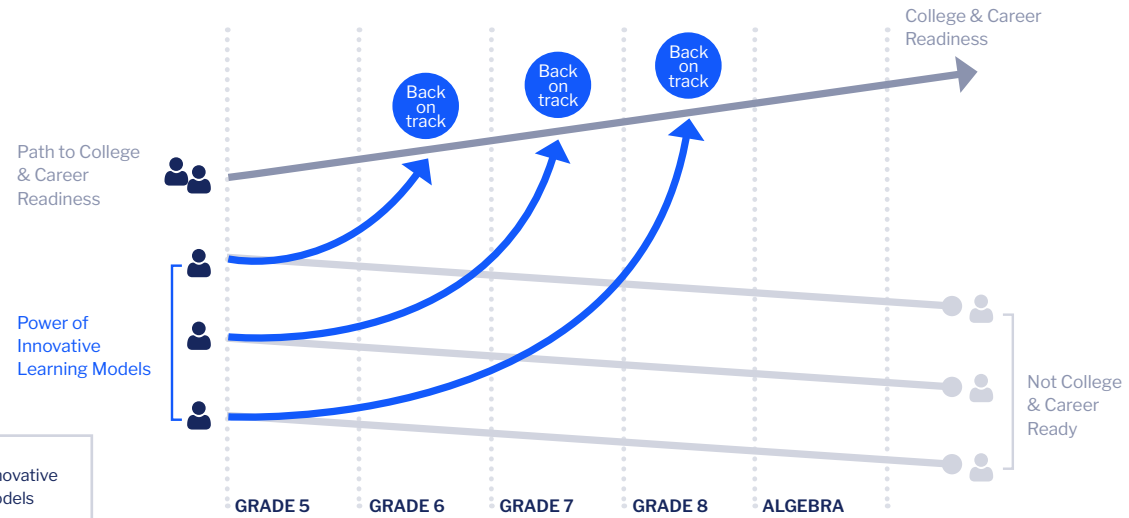
**Innovative Learning Models are designed to help move us to learning that is equitable and responsive to the needs of the 21st century.**

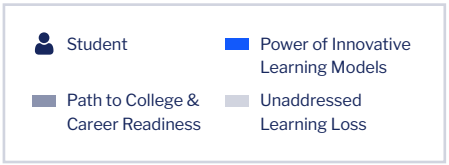
> "Addressing the needs of all students is not easy but that is the goal of equity in education. The true meaning of equity [is] acknowledging students' differences and giving them what they need to be successful."
>
> — Dr. Pedro Noguera, Founder, UCLA Center for the Transformation of Schools

| Current Classroom | → | Future Classroom |
|---|---|---|
| Low Expectations with Surface-Level Learning | → | High Expectations with Rigorous Learning |
| Narrow Focus | → | Whole-Child Focus |
| Irrelevance | → | Relevance |
| Isolation & Conformity | → | Connection & Community |
| One-Size-Fits-All-Approac | → | Customization |
| Passive Compliance | → | Agency |

*Adapted from Transcend's " Leaps Toward Extraordinary Learning for All"*

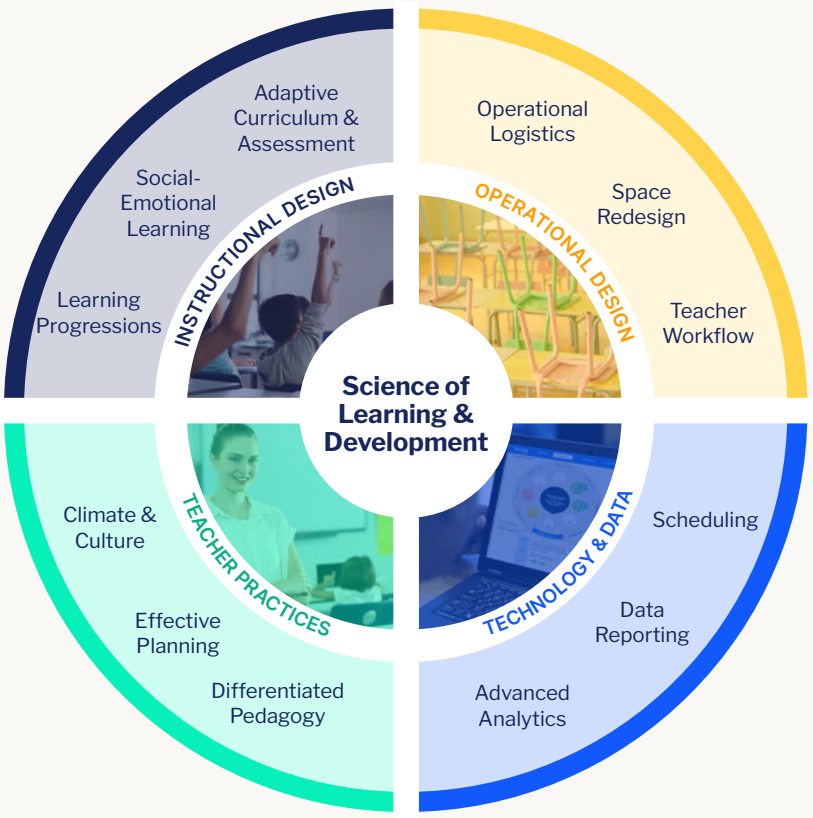
**Two out of five students will graduate college-and-career-ready under the current instructional model. Innovative Learning Models can help students who are behind get back on track.**



## What are Innovative Learning Models?

Innovative Learning Models are bundles of integrated tools, resources, systems, and pedagogical practices. Through adoption of these models, schools can reliably shape individual student learning experiences towards an explicit set of objectives. These models are not simply technological platforms or point solutions for teachers to use. Rather, they reflect an approach to schooling that is fundamentally different from the standardized operating model that has characterized American education for more than a century. Most essentially, **they enable schools to provide individual students with an educational program that's right for them given where they are, and where they need to be.**




## An Opportunity for Federal Government to Reimagine Schools

Innovative Learning Models simply cannot emerge without a sustained public investment in educational research and development (R&D). That's because the K-12 sector is too fragmented and not built to organically shift towards student-centered learning. Federal ecosystem building and investment in early-stage R&D has led to breakthrough innovations in defense, health care, and energy. Now is the time to bring the same approach to education.

**Federal R&D Funding**
(budget authority, dollar amounts in millions)

| DEPARTMENT | FY2022 ACTUAL | FY2023 ACTUAL | FY2024 ACTUAL | FY2025 REQUESTED |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Defense | $78,642 | $95,541 | $90,632 | $92,757 |
| Health & Human Services | $45,318 | $48,393 | $47,591 | $51,364 |
| Energy | $22,562 | $20,790 | $22,237 | $23,440 |
| Education | $390 | $389 | $446 | $441 |

Source: Congressional Research Service

Over the next decade, **an annual investment in education R&D** would provide funding to inform how best to harness emerging technology, individualize student learning, and support the development of **new Innovative Learning Models**. These student-centered models, implemented and rigorously evaluated, can achieve transformative impact and meet the needs of the 21st century workforce.

To further advance a movement to more Innovative Learning Models, the federal government can promote systemic policy change through two priorities:

1. Development and testing of Innovative Learning Models, and in particular those that support the individual strengths and needs of all students, including those facing systemic barriers to high-school completion.
2. Long-term grants focused on bringing implementation of Innovative Learning Models to scale in states and school districts.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