Empowering youth to create, innovate, and lead

We believe that every young person should...

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—Amy Rex, Milton Town School District superintendent

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I had many opportunities to listen to youth; they reflected such a high level of introspection and passion. My takeaway was simple: No longer can change occur in education without youth and adults partnering together.

—CSR principal and team member

“M3 changes the culture at our school. Assignments become opportunities, not obligation; challenges are embraced, not avoided; and mistakes are viewed as steps to growth, not signs of failure.”

—M3 teacher advisor

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—CSR principal and team member

“I now know that education is a collaborative process between students and adults working together... I know that meaningful action can be taken by anyone and that it is an important part of democracy.”

—CSR youth participant

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—Dr. Dana Mitra, Pennsylvania State University

THE CHALLENGE: Vermont is losing the potential of too many of our young people. A widening opportunity gap is limiting their options.

HOW DO WE KNOW THIS?

2 out of 5 VT youth report that

THEY ARE NOT VALUED by their community.

(Students of color and LGBT students are significantly less likely to feel that they matter to their community.)

Only 61% of students believe that

THEY HAVE A VOICE in their learning and their lives upon entering middle school.

This drops to 37% by twelfth grade.

Less than half of youth (44%) report a sense of PERSONAL POWER.

RESULT:

- DISENGAGEMENT from learning
- Sense of HOPELESSNESS
- Decrease in CRITICAL LIFE SKILL development
- Decrease in high school completion and POST-SECONDARY OPTIONS
- Decrease in CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

SOLUTION:

Ensure that every young person:

• Is KNOWN AND VALUED in their community
• Has a SENSE OF PURPOSE
• Has the ability to SHAPE THEIR OWN LIVES, and the LIVES OF OTHERS

up Programs

Communicating School Redesign
Youth-adult teams build support for school redesign.

Getting to ‘Y’
Young people become leaders in improving the health and wellness of their communities.

Personal Power & Purpose through Partnership
Youth build self-awareness, effective communication, and self-advocacy skills over the course of a school year.

M3: Mindset, Metacognition & Motivation
Youth master the ways brain-based strategies can drive their learning and share this knowledge with their peers and teachers. Concurrently, M3 teachers engage in professional development to hone their practice.

Youth & Adults Transforming Schools Together
Students and teachers join together to ensure that learning is engaging and effective for all students, and youth are agents of change.

Transforming School Culture through Restorative Practices
Youth and adults weave restorative principles and practices into the fabric of their school culture.

Cultivating Pathways to Sustainability
A partnership with Shelburne Farms
Youth and adults create year-long projects focused on pathways to building a socially, economically, and ecologically just society.

Customized Programs & Support
Schools partners with UP for Learning to create a wide variety of opportunities to position youth as change agents in partnership with adults.

When people ask me for an example of high quality work on student voice and youth-adult partnerships, I always send them to UP for Learning. It is the premier nonprofit in the nation that draws upon evidence-based practice and research to carefully design projects aimed at improving schools and empowering young people.

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OPENING DOORS TO YOUTH AS INNOVATIVE LEADERS
OUR MISSION is to shift the youth-adult relationship at the heart of education to partnership and to increase youth agency. This ensures that all young people have opportunities, support, knowledge, and skills to pursue active roles in their learning, their lives, and their community.

WE ENVISION a time when all youth will take responsibility for their own learning by collaborating with adults in the educational system to reach their own goals.

VALUES & GUIDING PRINCIPLES
- Share Responsibility
- Start from Strengths
- Assume Positive Intentions
- Seek Equity & Justice
- Create Open Dialogue
- Employ Data to Drive Change

SUPPORTERS & COLLABORATORS
In collaboration with the following foundations and organizations, we are proud to ensure that all young people have opportunities, support, knowledge, and skills needed to pursue active roles in their learning, their lives, and their community.

WE ARE GRATEFUL to the individuals, foundations, and organizations who have made our work possible over the past 11 years!