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Digital Learning Now! Releases Report on Funding Students, Options, and Achievement

The sixth installment of the DLN Smart Series offers design principles for creating a student-centered school finance system

Seattle, Wash., April 16, 2013 - [Digital Learning Now!](#) (DLN) today released its sixth white paper in the DLN Smart Series, "Funding Students, Options, and Achievement." The authors assert that shifts in the nature of teaching and learning, as well as the growing trend toward online and blended learning options, necessitate shifts in the way education is funded to create a more student-centered system.

"Student-centered systems recognize diverse student needs, allow dollars to follow students to the best learning options, create mechanisms to ensure quality, and foster innovation," said John Bailey, executive director of DLN.

The extent to which each student will be able to access innovations like digital learning will depend largely on the manner in which public resources are allocated to schools and students," said Marguerite Roza, school funding expert and technical advisor on the paper. "As state leaders re-examine their finance systems, the current moment provides a key opportunity to look forward and design a system that's suitable for our students over the next two decades."

"Funding Students, Options, and Achievement" addresses today's broken school finance system and provides practical design principles that have been tested in policy and in practice on both the state and district level. The four principles state that funding should be weighted (to reflect individual student needs), flexible (to keep funds free from restrictions and program designations), portable (to ensure that dollars follow students), and performance-based (to create incentives for performance and completion).

Authors Bailey, Carri Schneider, director of policy and research at Getting Smart; and Tom Vander Ark, partner at Getting Smart, contend that policymakers can build upon these design principles to create a student-centered finance system that is better suited to the realities of today's K-12 education system.

"Today's finance system lacks the flexibility needed to support the flood of educational innovation" said Vander Ark. "Reorienting the system around students will extend equitable student access to high-quality options that have the potential to personalize and customize learning."

Schneider stated, "The implementation of college- and career-ready standards and the shift to personal digital learning have created an unprecedented opportunity to redesign the school finance system to set students free to explore a growing slate of learning options."





In addition to outlining the problems with the current system and explaining the student-centered design principles, the paper offers examples of existing state and local policies as well as a set of policy recommendations building upon previous work by leading experts in school finance.

Download the full paper and learn more at digitallearningnow.com/dln-smart-series. Join the conversation on Twitter with the hashtags #SmartSeries and #DigLN. DLN is also active on Facebook at facebook.com/DigitalLearningNow and Twitter at [@DigLearningNow](https://twitter.com/DigLearningNow).

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ABOUT DIGITAL LEARNING NOW!

[Digital Learning Now!](http://DigitalLearningNow!) is a national campaign under ExcelinEd with the goal of advancing state policies that will create a high-quality digital learning environment to better equip all students with the knowledge and skills to succeed in this 21st-century economy. The policy framework stems from the belief that access to high-quality, customized learning experiences should be available to all students, unbounded by geography or artificial policy constraints.

ABOUT GETTING SMART

[Getting Smart®](http://GettingSmart®) is an advocacy firm passionate about innovations in learning. We help education organizations construct cohesive and forward-thinking strategies for branding, awareness, advancement and communication, and public and media relations. We are advocates for better K-12 education as well as early, post-secondary and informal learning opportunities for all students. We attempt to accelerate and improve the shift to digital learning. On GettingSmart.com we cover important events, trends, products, books, and reports.

