

# CONNECT LEARNERS TO THEIR INTERESTS THROUGH THE



# DIGITAL ATELIER

An inviting, technology-rich space that encourages students and teachers to explore, invent, and interact with tools and one another through hands-on instruction and informal learning.

## HOW TO BUILD A DA AT YOUR SCHOOL:

### STEP 1 - BUILD KEY PARTNERSHIPS

- Identify a design partner such as [Archeworks](#) or [Bretford](#)
- Work with [Convergence Design Lab](#) on providing PD for teachers to feel comfortable and creative in the space
- Reach out to [Generation All](#) for assistance in locating funders, program providers and researchers
- Find an after-school program partner through the [Chicago Hive Network](#)



### STEP 2 - COLLABORATIVELY PLAN

- Let students lead the way to create, plan and run the space, using the [Digital Atelier Toolkit](#) as a guide for a co-design process
- Using the [HOMAGO Guidebook](#) and [YouMedia](#) as an example, structure the space for students to Hang Out Mess Around And Geek Out
- Adopt a [Connected Mentorship](#) model
- Develop a Data and Documentation Plan

### STEP 3 - COLLECT AND SHARE DATA

- Use scanning system to track student attendance in space
- Have students document and share their learning online
- Conduct student focus groups and interviews
- Share results and impact on student learning with parents and teachers

## WHAT IS THE IMPACT ON LEARNING?

- Strengthens students' technology skills, digital literacies, and applied STEM knowledge
- Connects students to mentors, artists, and community resources
- The Digital Atelier has helped reluctant learners at Tilden High School develop a sense of belonging in school, resulting in improved attendance, social/emotional learning and academic performance
- Students with frequent participation rates in the Digital Atelier afterschool had higher attendance and higher GPAs compared to control group.
- Students who frequently visited the DA at Tilden received over 100 hours of additional informal learning time beyond their classes.

[Check out the Digital Atelier Research Summary & Videos for complete results](#)

## TIPS FOR MAKING THE SPACE STUDENT-CENTERED:

- Collaboratively create then post community rules
- Make space comfortable and inviting with colorful lighting, paint and furniture
- Build creation stations for diverse digital making
- Incorporate online challenges from LRNG.org and Chicago City of Learning (CCOL)
- Celebrate student accomplishments by displaying work in space and on leaderboards

