

CASE STUDY BRIEF

Since 2013, the Partnership for 21st Century Learning (P21) has annually designated 21st Century Learning Exemplars based upon exceptional implementation of the [Framework for 21st Century Learning](#).

Each year, P21 has highlighted a cohort of early learning centers, K–12 schools, school districts, and beyond school programs in the U.S. as 21st Century Learning Exemplars. Now that P21 is a network of Battelle for Kids, we are leading together in celebrating the current year of 21st Century Learning Exemplars.

As part of celebrating these awardees, Battelle for Kids and its P21 network provide ways for their stories and impactful practices to be shared with others. This case study brief and those for the other awardees provide powerful insights to guide other school districts, schools, and programs so that every child can experience the best of 21st century learning experiences.



Elon Elementary School Elon, NC

With an unwavering commitment to cultivate global ambassadors, Elon Elementary School keeps college and career readiness at the forefront as they prepare students for an ever-changing and interconnected world.

Grades Served: K–5

Enrollment: 730 Students

Founded in 1956

[Website](#)

Designated a North Carolina Global Ready School through the N.C. Department of Public Instruction

Elon Elementary School

Elon, NC

College and Career Readiness

Located near the campus of Elon University, Elon Elementary has established a mutually beneficial relationship with its higher education neighbor. Not only does Elon Elementary expose its students to the collegiate culture through field trips and tours, it also partners with various professors and departments on campus to provide behind-the-scenes looks at various career and technical fields that might spark interest in future career paths.

As part of the school's global passport program, students have visited the university's Lakeside Dining Hall to learn about the science and nutrition behind various dishes and sample fare from different countries. The university focuses on a different country's cuisine for each of its weeks of regular operation, and students are exposed to the different preparations and spices that are involved in the creation of the week's dishes.

While on campus, students gather at focal points where several crosswalks converge, a metaphorical example of the culmination of their high-school years. Teachers ask the students to envision that when they reach that crossroads, they will make an important choice: two- or four-year college, trade school, military service, or entry into the workforce.

Elon Elementary reinforces this focus on career readiness with regular programming that culminates in an annual career week, during which parents and local businesses are invited into the school to expose students to the various pathways and fields that await them upon graduation from the secondary school system.

Local is Global

Premised on the belief that a high-quality global education should be available to all students, Elon Elementary has spent the last decade refining and enhancing its global education programming. From its earliest days with Spanish immersion for a small subset of the student population, Elon now supports a K-5 language immersion pathway and provides a school-wide global competence program to every student.

With intentional district alignment, students at Elon receive region-focused global lessons each year with corresponding regional project-based learning opportunities. Each grade level is currently working on a different sustainable development goal, such as water purity or zero hunger, through a global lens.



Ultimately, the school intends to foster in their students a sense of empathy and compassion; an understanding that their values, traditions, and habits might differ from other communities; and that through intercultural understanding and awareness, appreciation, and respect for others leads to a better and kinder world.

A core focus of the school, high-quality educator professional development is provided through a global micro-badging and training program. Through this program, almost 20 of Elon Elementary's educators and two of its administrators have received the Global Educator Digital Badge through the North Carolina Department of Education, making the school a statewide leader in this area. The certification requirements are rigorous, including at least 100 hours of global professional development and a topical capstone project.

Embedded Technology Practices

Elon Elementary believes that technology is only as adept as its users, and that its utilization is an aid and enhancement to the learning process, not a solution. By using technology in appropriate ways to connect and collaborate, both for students as well as staff, Elon has enhanced global learning opportunities through Skype and Google Hangout sessions with other classrooms or businesses from around the globe.

The school has also been the recipient of multiple technology assistance grants, notably the Impact Alamance Teacher Leadership Academy Grant, which helped provide the funds for virtual reality viewers and cameras as well as seed resources for coding enrichment.

Elon prides itself on its distributive leadership model. Many additional teachers have identified, researched, and written winning grants to procure technology-related aids that challenge and enlarge the scope of learning for their students.

With exposure and interwoven technology opportunities at every turn, Elon Elementary is ensuring that their students are not only equipped for middle and high school, but also prepared for the world beyond as nimble and articulate digital natives.



2019 21ST CENTURY LEARNING EXEMPLARS

Each of the following earned this year's award for its outstanding practices in equipping students with the necessary skills and knowledge for success in college, career, and life:

Early Learning

The Goddard School Located in Broadview Heights
(Broadview, OH)
The Goddard School Located in Simpsonville
(Simpsonville, SC)

K-12 Schools


Canyon Crest Elementary School (Fontana, CA)
Elon Elementary School (Elon, NC)
EVSC New Tech Institute (Evansville, IN)
Henry Ford Academy: Alameda School for Art + Design
(San Antonio, TX)
Kairos Public School Vacaville Academy (Vacaville, CA)
Kensington Elementary School (Waxhaw, NC)
Moreno Valley High School (Moreno Valley, CA)
Saint Ambrose School (Brunswick, OH)
Santiago Charter Middle School (Orange, CA)
Valley View High School (Moreno Valley, CA)
Vineyard STEM Magnet (Ontario, CA)
Vista Heights Middle School (Moreno Valley, CA)
Wolf Springs Elementary School (Overland Park, KS)

Districts

Lennox School District (Lennox, CA)
Vicksburg Warren School District (Vicksburg, MS)

Beyond School Programs

Camp Champions (Marble Falls, TX)



[Learn more](#) about the 21st Century Learning Exemplars at: bfk.me/p21_ExemplarProgram