



***Elmhurst Academy named a
21st Century Learning Exemplar School,
a national recognition of educational excellence.***

Elmhurst IL, Nov. 7, 2017 - P21 has designated Elmhurst Academy as a 21st Century Learning Exemplar School for the 2017-2018 School Year; one of only 16 schools across the United States. Elmhurst Academy earned this award for its outstanding practices in equipping students with the necessary skills and knowledge for future education and lifelong success.

The P21 Exemplar evaluation process is thorough and designed to lift up nationwide examples of successful nationwide practices and structures that yield 21st century learning outcomes. P21 uses a rubric to evaluate each application. Applicants that successfully demonstrate they have embedded advanced and exemplary 21st century learning practices that improve student learning in classrooms and communities are selected for an evaluation visit by the P21 team. The evaluation is based on the following criteria; evidence of commitment to future educational success; educational support systems and sustainable design, engaged learning approaches, equitable student access to 21st century learning, evidence of student acquisition of 21st century knowledge and skills, and partnerships for sustainable success. An evaluation team of three members visited Elmhurst Academy in October 2017. The team met and interviewed various faculty members, parent ambassadors and community partners, as well as observed in classrooms and toured the school campus. The evaluation team used a rubric to make a final recommendation for a P21 Exemplar designation.

As a coalition uniting education, business, community, and government leaders, P21 uplifts Exemplars' best practices to the national stage. Elmhurst Academy administrators will be honored in Washington DC in February 2018 at the Patterns of Innovations Conference. Additionally, P21 will develop a case study on Elmhurst Academy and release it to the public for free download at p21.org/exemplars in the Spring of 2018.

Colleen Odegaard, Executive Director at Elmhurst Academy, stated, "The Partnership for 21st Century Learning is an organization that advocates for a revamped educational system, promoting the idea that for our young students to be successful in competing in a future global economy, they need more than the "3 Rs" in their education; that a new "4 Cs" are also required: critical thinking and problem

solving, communication, collaboration, creativity and innovation. Elmhurst Academy uses a project-based curriculum that engages students in real-world topics. As a Reggio Emilia inspired school, the P21 exemplar learning collaborates well within our program; as our approach to education not only teaches content skills, but is open ended, instills curiosity, helps students build theories, analyze and interpret; while allowing them freedom and responsibility that comes from being partners in their learning. Teachers act as co-researchers and co learners; promoting problem solving, teamwork, creativity and critical thinking. It is my belief that true 21st Century schools not only prepare students for the next level of education, but prepares students for lifelong learning. We are honored to be distinguished as part of the P21 Exemplar School community."

David Ross, CEO at P21 stated, "P21's Exemplar Program works to identify innovative education paradigms across the country. When policymakers say 'show me what you mean,' we turn to our P21 Exemplars for hard evidence."

P21 recognizes that all learners need educational experiences in school and beyond, from cradle to career, to build knowledge and skills for success in a globally and digitally interconnected world. Representing over 5 million members of the global workforce, P21 is a catalyst organization uniting business, government and education leaders from the U.S. and abroad to advance evidence-based education policy and practice and to make innovative teaching and learning a reality for all.

Learn more at www.p21.org and [@P21Learning](https://twitter.com/P21Learning).