

Marymount Medellin

A School Preparing Students For An Increasingly Complex World

**The NYC Department of Education's
Students in Temporary Housing team
(STH) provides support for these
students.**

The future for today's students is complex. As task-oriented jobs disappear, the skills needed for success have been drastically altered.

Because of this, schools need to adapt and equip students with the proper academic and social skills critical for success.

Colegio Marymount Medellin saw the writing on the wall. They needed to transform their school to prepare students for this complex world.

The Much-Needed Wakeup Call

Since the 1950's, Marymount Medellin used traditional models of teaching. One where the teacher disseminated knowledge and students were passive recipients.

But during a 2018 accreditation review, the school received a wakeup call. The review resulted in feedback noting it needed to be more 21st century focused and forward-thinking.

This set school leadership on a journey. And the school quickly realized they needed to provide professional learning to their teachers.

Re-imagining Learning With LINC

For change to take place, turning to an outside source was the best choice.

School leadership connected with LINC's Latin America team and were impressed by [LINC's research-based approach and expertise.](#)

LINC's work is built around the Model of Generative Change, the product of over 15 years of research from Stanford University's Dr. Arnetha Ball.

The model recognizes teachers as agents, not objects, of classroom transformation. LINC's school transformation work is grounded in engaging and preparing teachers and leaders for the dramatic shifts happening in the world that impact student readiness for life.



Putting Plans Into Action

Together, the school's leadership team and LINC began planning a rollout of teacher professional development.

This would push the school into a more student-centered approach. An approach where students would have independence, choice, and voice in their learning.

The leadership team formulated a plan using LINC's Generativity Roadmap and supporting rubrics. It provided a clear pathway from traditional teaching to innovative, student-centered classrooms.

They designed a sustainable transformation strategy. A strategy that would successfully move Marymount Medellin toward generativity in four quadrants: culture, teacher capacity, learning environment, and technology.

LINC employed consultations, in-person workshops, coaching, and the use of LINCspring, LINC's easy-to-use, online coaching, and professional learning platform.

“Everything has changed. Before all of our content was separated, now we integrate as much as we can. I like to use the analogy of a tree. Before we looked at the parts separately, like studying the leaf, without the trunk. Now we study the tree as a whole to more deeply understand content and interconnections. This is much more fulfilling (and challenging) to us as teachers as it opens broader horizons for students and teachers.”



“Once teachers transformed into pedagogical problem solvers, they could use strategies for what they were actually facing in their classroom. Once they made that mindset switch, they could start determining what they needed to learn and engage with cycles on those topics. Our teachers are really using LINC-spring and having fun with it!”

From Stagnation To Educational Innovation

The school's leadership set a goal of building a culture of continuous growth among teachers. It was set to become a benchmark for educational innovation. A far cry from where the school had been since the 1950's.

Catalina Caicedo, Marymount's high school principal, describes the process:

“From the very beginning, we worked together with the LINC team, deciding on the best ways to get our people involved and centered. It was like constructing something together step-by-step, by looking at the diagnosis of needs at each moment. It was a

highly motivating process. We used the research approach, followed by trying new ideas in our classrooms to see if they work, each time working to make it better and learning all the time.”

The whole approach to instruction shifted. As Julia Velez, a transitional kindergarten teacher explains:

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A School Community Engaged in Growth

In the summer of 2019, after the LINC team provided in-person workshops, Marymount's leadership invited teachers to complete project-based learning cycles in LINCspring.

Each cycle follows the Reflect, Tinker, Grow model. A model which encourages teachers to try new strategies, reflect on how they went, and tinker with them to improve.



The entire school community engaged in this opportunity. The LINCspring cycles were instrumental in supporting teachers in employing new project-based learning instructional models.

Teachers received online coaching through the virtual platform and felt their questions were answered quickly and completely, in particular by their LINC Transformation Agent Maribel Vazquez.

Julia Velez commented, "Maribel is always there for us. The coaching has been wonderful. Maribel will help with everything we need to support students."



"We have learned that this work in innovative learning is not about tools or models or even technology. It's about shifting mindset and culture, empowering educators to facilitate innovation by re-imagining learning."



Experiencing A Truly Personalized Approach

After the school-wide engagement, teachers have completed cycles in a more personalized way. They meet with supervisors and receive input from their LINC coaches to determine areas of growth. They then select LINCspring cycles they plan to complete. This personalized approach is well-liked by the teachers and has resulted in over 1000 hours of completed professional learning on LINCspring.

Velez exclaimed, "I really enjoy it [LINCspring] and it pushes you to become a better teacher every day and to explore different tools and how to incorporate them into your class."

Alejandra Jaramillo, a middle school English teacher added, "It is very important for teachers to have a say in what they want to learn and LINCspring offers this approach."

Marymount Medellin Students Are Now More Ready Than Ever

Initially, the shift was a big change for students. But by doing more of the learning on their own with more autonomy, they quickly began to thrive.

According to 4th-grade teacher Jeremy Montes:

"Students really learned to become problem solvers in the classroom and to work effectively in teams, key skills for today's global economy."

Even in a preschool environment, students loved the independence. Velez said:

"We started using playlists with the girls and it was a big success. Students could not get enough of them. They loved the flexibility in choice and engaging in independent learning, following the 21st-century learning protocols."

Conclusion

LINC has allowed Marymount Medellin students to be more independent, autonomous, and has opened up different possibilities for how to work. English teacher Alejandra Jaramillo sums up LINC's impact perfectly, "It gives my students the option to be who they are and not who I want them to be."

Learning Innovation Catalyst, Inc.



For more information about LINC solutions, visit us at linclearning.com

+1-833354-6263
info@linclearning.com

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