The Framework Your District Is Actually Looking For

Why deep learning requires more than a great project, and what to do about it

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Districts across the country are looking for something.

- Students are disengaged from learning that doesn't feel real
- AI is rewriting what knowledge even means
- The worksheet-homework-test cycle isn't building the thinkers we need
- Critical thinking, curiosity, and meaning-making have never mattered more

> *The instinct to reach for Project-Based Learning is right.*
> *But PBL alone is not the whole answer.*

PROJECT-BASED LEARNING

PBL is a good reach.

Project-Based Learning creates authentic experiences, organizes work around real questions, and gives students voice and choice. It's a meaningful shift from the traditional classroom cycle — and that matters.

That's exactly what it's designed to do.

Authentic Context | Driving Question | Student Voice & Choice | Public Product | Sustained Inquiry | Reflection

But PBL organizes the experience. It doesn't structure the learning inside it.

THE LEARNING FOUNDATION — PHASES 1–3

Open, Immerse, and Explore build the curiosity, background knowledge, and readiness to question that make all inquiry meaningful. Most PBL implementations skip or rush these phases — moving straight to "What's your driving question?" In the project launch before students are ready to ask or answer it.

> *"Learning doesn't start when the project starts."*

GID is the Learning Journey. PBL Organizes Milestones Within It.

GUIDED INQUIRY DESIGN® — Complete Learning Arc

THE LEARNING FOUNDATION

Curiosity & readiness — phases PBL most often skips

WHERE PBL MILESTONES LIVE

GID designs the learning inside each phase

PROJECT-BASED LEARNING — Milestone Map

Entry Event + Driving Question	Research Milestones	Product Build	Presentation	Reflect

PBL creates the experience. GID fosters the learning inside it.

WHAT GID DOES DIFFERENTLY

GID is designed for the learner, not just the project.

COGNITIVE

Thoughts

GID maps the cognitive process — from confusion to clarity — and designs for each stage of understanding

AFFECTIVE

Feelings

Learning is emotional. GID honors uncertainty, frustration, and the spark of genuine curiosity as part of the process

BEHAVIORAL

Actions

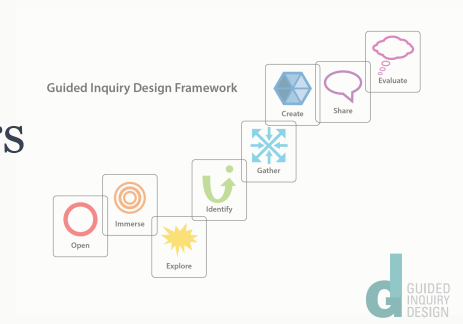
Each GID phase has design cues that tell educators what to do — and when — to meet the learner's where they are in the learning process

> *When educators know GID deeply, they stop managing a project and start nurturing a learner. That's what prepares students for everything AI cannot replace.*

THE BOTTOM LINE

Any district serious about preparing students
for an AI-shaped future doesn't just need a better project.

Educators need a framework that honors
the human doing the learning.



That framework is Guided Inquiry Design®.

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