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**Type of Non-profit or Community Based Organization**

501(c)3

**A. Executive Summary (1-page limit)**

Learning Forward's vision is that the RemotEDx Networked Learning Community become a learning engine for ongoing improvement in the state of Ohio, particularly in the period of recovery and innovation following the pandemic. Educators' pandemic experience with remote, hybrid or blended education settings has highlighted both significant challenges and great opportunities and has fore fronted inequities at both educator and student levels. With the myriad challenges embedded in rapid adaptation to the "what" and "how" of implementing these new models came a promising but diffuse set of practices that deserve greater study, adaptation or replication in a post-pandemic environment.

The Learning Forward design closely follows the RFA. The three major service areas – the Community of Practice (CoP), the Networked Improvement Community (NIC), and the Professional Learning Academy (PLA) – will work in concert, supported by a Learning Forward working group that will manage the overall process as well as the interaction between the components and provide bridges to existing Ohio structures and processes. Cycles of inquiry based on improvement research, arcs of professional learning focused on RemotEDx content, and targeted tools and resources support the learning engine in each of the three areas.

Learning Forward envisions a model that pursues ODE's five outcomes and drives toward longer-term outcomes of greater coherence and relevance, improved measurement and effectiveness, and increased participation in professional learning, all with a view to increasing equity throughout the system. Learning Forward believes in networks as an effective approach

to drive change and has accumulated significant wisdom by facilitating major network initiatives over the last decade, including in partnership with Ohio through the What Matters Now Network. With Learning Forward's knowledge and experience, the organization is uniquely qualified to begin this work immediately, provide needed expertise, and be a wise steward of the project.

## B. Approaches for Addressing RemotEDx Networked Learning Community

Learning Forward, a national nonprofit organization based in Ohio, proposes a 17-month project to co-design, coordinate and facilitate Ohio's *RemotEDx Networked Learning Community* that networks education partners and identifies and shares high-quality professional learning opportunities. Learning Forward has a demonstrated record of effectiveness in providing professional development activities and supporting educators through technical assistance engagements across the country. Learning Forward developed the Standards for Professional Learning that have been adapted or implemented by more than 30 states, including Ohio, and contributed to the new definition of professional learning in ESSA. Among its many vital education improvement efforts supporting districts, schools, educators and students nationwide, Learning Forward facilitated the *Ohio What Matters Now* coalition. Since 2018, the coalition built and tested a professional learning model designed to improve teaching and learning in partnership with local districts.

### a. Theory of Action

Learning Forward's vision is that the RemotEDx Networked Learning Community become a learning engine for ongoing improvement in the state of Ohio, particularly in the period of recovery and innovation following the COVID-19 pandemic. Learning Forward believes networks are an effective approach to drive change and has facilitated many major network initiatives over the last decade. (See Appendix D). This proposal harnesses this knowledge, focuses on the first year of a long-term commitment by the Ohio Department of Education, and proposes a model that can grow beyond the initial scope outlined in this

response. The intent is to leverage existing Ohio Department of Education (ODE) structures and protocols, which will also augment the potential for future scalability.

*What problem is RemotEDx solving?* Educators' pandemic experience with remote, hybrid or blended education settings has highlighted both significant challenges and great opportunities. With the myriad challenges embedded in rapid adaptation to the "what" and "how" of implementing varied models came a promising but diffuse set of practices that deserve greater study, adaptation or replication in a post-pandemic environment. The research-to-practice model outlined in this proposal includes continuous improvement and network protocols comparable to those promoted in the healthcare and education sectors by the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

In traditional format and aligned to the logic model in section B.b. below, the Theory of Action can be written as follows:

If...

- Learning Forward, ODE, and the RemotEDx partners manage three core components (professional learning academy, networked improvement communities and state-wide community of practice) using continuous improvement models to create, measure, refine and distribute professional learning offerings

And...

- Build on Ohio and Learning Forward's foundational standards for professional development;
- Create, test, and refine new protocols for assessing professional learning quality and effectiveness;
- Use established continuing improvement process expertise including either PDSA or Ohio Improvement Process protocols;
- Leverage existing statewide structures and roles and responsibilities (including ESCs, SSTs, TBT, BLT, DLT, among others); and

- Communicate regularly with families/caregivers, communities, and key audiences about RemotEDx resources and professional learning opportunities,

*Then...*

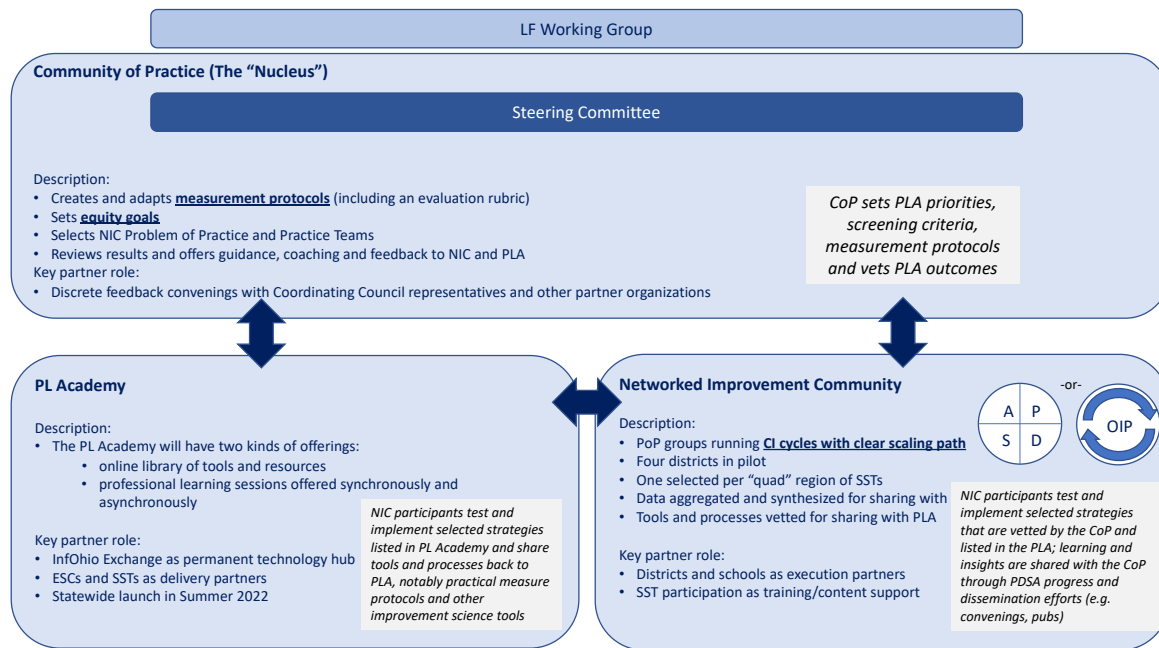
- RemotEDx offerings will improve the relevance, quality, and coherence of professional development across multiple sources and providers;
- RemotEDx offerings will improve educator effectiveness, as measured by educator and student level outcomes which will also serve as a measure for increasing equity;
- RemotEDx offerings will be utilized by a significantly increased percentage of Ohio educators, families and communities which will also serve as a measure for increasing equity.

**b. Design Approach**

Learning Forward's design approach closely follows the overarching design suggestion from the RFA. The three major components – the Community of Practice (CoP), the Networked Improvement Community (NIC), and the Professional Learning Academy (PLA) – will work in concert, supported by a Learning Forward working group that will manage the overall process as well as the interaction between key components and the bridges to existing Ohio structures and processes. Further detail about the working group is described in Section D: Management Plan, and Section E: Organizational Oversight. A visual representation of our model is included below.

Learning Forward has unparalleled experience with all three structures. As noted in Appendix D, Learning Forward is national leader in facilitating communities of practice and networked improvement communities with design elements adapted to maximize results.

## RemotEDx Insight Engine



## What is the Implementation Theory?

The Networked Learning Community model is guided by a step-by-step implementation process. The plan includes three professional learning components:

- Component 1 – Cycles of Inquiry based on Improvement Science:** The RemotEDx Networked Learning Community will include regular, intensive, face-to-face convenings for collaborative learning, planning and professional development; practice team cycles of inquiry; virtual team coaching sessions; and opportunities for facilitated peer-to-peer learning between practice teams and across the larger group and with the networked improvement community.
- Component 2 – Cycles of Professional Learning Focused on RemotEDx Content:** Learning Forward will leverage the current and to-be-developed resources of RemotEDx to offer strategies, resources and professional learning. Lessons learned, tools and resources and professional learning sessions from the PDSA cycles will be shared in the PLA.
- Component 3: Tools and Resources:** The PLA will make the tools and resources tested in the networked learning community available to educators, communities and families

across Ohio. These tools and resources will be posted in the library of resources as well as being integrated into specific professional learning sessions offered through the platform.

### **What is the Structure?**

Perspectives on each component and their supervisory structures are offered below, and detail on team composition is included in sections B.f. Partnerships and B.g. Stakeholders:

*The Community of Practice (CoP):* The CoP will serve as the “nucleus” for insight generation that will bridge SEA and LEA policy innovation and practitioner support. The CoP plays a critical role in creating, vetting, and distributing tools and processes that help bridge the other two main service components, as well as making them available to existing Ohio service providers. The CoP will become well versed in continuous improvement and will learn from the data that is collected by the practice teams. The CoP has several priority functions within RemotEDx *including the following: creating and adapting measurement protocols, setting equity goals, selecting a shared problem of practice and participant teams, reviewing results and offering guidance, coaching and feedback to the NIC and PLA. Further, the CoP sets PLA priorities, screening criteria, measurement protocols and vets PLA outcomes.* The CoP will include all members of the Coordinating Council, leaders from the Ohio Department of Education, representatives from the RemotEDx partners, dissemination partners, Community Design Partners, and NIC participants.

*Steering Committee:* A steering committee will be comprised of a subset of members from the Community of Practice. The purpose of engaging a steering committee is twofold: 1) increased efficiency, and 2) timely feedback. The steering committee will meet regularly to discuss community business and prioritization (e.g., vet feedback from CoP, provide input to convening agendas, determine practice teams), disseminate tools, and provide general feedback on community functioning. The steering committee will help to set priorities for the full Community of Practice by providing input to convening agendas. Diverse membership on the steering committee will help ensure quality perspectives, but the reduced numbers allow for a

nimbler body of representation. The CoP will meet three times in the pilot year (twice in-person and once virtually) with a number of asynchronous communications and learning opportunities including webinars, newsletters and the sharing of tools and resources in between. The steering committee will meet prior to the full CoP meetings.

*The Networked Improvement Community (NIC):* The NIC is designed around specific problems of practice and practice teams that pursue new solutions to problems, or “change ideas” using a continuous improvement process. One shared problem of practice will be selected for the pilot year. Practice teams test and implement selected strategies that are vetted by the CoP and either listed in or considered for the PLA over time. For example, a team that experiences and documents success using a particular strategy may see its insights used to undergird a new offering in the PLA. Conversely, a team may select a strategy from the PLA and use continuous improvement processes to adapt and integrate that practice into their own district context.

*We note that while the RFA specifically used Plan-Do-Study-Act in its narrative, and our response follows that lead, we believe that this design could be pursued similarly through use of the Ohio Improvement Process (OIP) and existing tools. We see advantages to the connections within the OIP process to existing Ohio structures, such as the TBT, BLT, DLT scaffold, and familiarity with existing OIP the tools. We stand ready to use either paradigm for this work.*

Key design elements of the NIC for learning and mutual accountability include virtual convenings and dedicated coaching, synchronous and asynchronous virtual content to support the testing cycles, data aggregated and synthesized for sharing with CoP, and tools and processes vetted for sharing with PLA. Further, key representatives from ODE, the SSTs and ESCs will be included in training, coaching, and convening opportunities as onboarding in preparation for handover at the end of the grant cycle.

*The Professional Learning Academy (PLA):* The PLA is an overarching learning academy with multiple tracks of professional learning opportunities for varied audiences. PLA

offerings will be offered in two formats: (1) online library of tools and resources; and (2) professional learning sessions offered synchronously and asynchronously. At the end of the pilot year, the PLA will launch with offerings from multiple sources harvested from innovations created during the pandemic and selected based on the vetting protocol or work elevated by the NIC practice teams. As depicted in the graphic above, the NIC plays a dual role with regard to the PLA content over time: NIC practice teams test and implement selected strategies listed in the PLA and in return share tools and processes back to the PLA, notably practical measure protocols and other improvement research tools.

### **What is the Process?**

The Learning Forward vision uses multiple, reinforcing layers of connectivity across the three service areas. These elements are described in greater detail in the Appendix A Timeline and follow five major phases within the grant lifecycle: 1) Kick-off, 2) Design, 3) Pilot, 4) Scale, 5) Transfer. The project rollout includes continuous improvement components in each of the three core service areas that reinforce each component over time.

**Three network convenings** will drive engagement and commitment to RemotEDx outcomes by (1) facilitating professional development related to equity-minded instruction, remote, hybrid or blended education strategies, personalizing instruction, applying MTSS for academic achievement, engaging family/caregivers and community, and other root causes as evidenced through data analysis and improvement facilitation sessions; (2) Identifying and engaging external experts as needed to support professional learning around equity and root cause issues; (3) within the NIC, facilitating cross-team collaboration and connections to foster network relationships and accelerate team learning, and ensuring dedicated team planning time with improvement facilitator support; (4) hosting topic-specific breakout sessions to discuss school system data and potential actions to address gaps and role-alike sessions for leadership and regional Support Squad representatives to promote sustainability and scaling; and (5) engaging teachers and campus leaders to provide direct



feedback on network supports, convenings, and professional learning sessions before and after convenings.

**Coordinating data and evaluation** to understand student progress and reflect on the network design will include the following activities for CoP and NIC participants: (1) summarizing data reports on PDSA level data from Practice Teams, and disseminating findings from PDSA- and strategy-level data analysis; (2) conducting surveys for reflection and learning; (3) sharing learnings on network health; and (4) creating NIC facilitator exit tickets to understand the impact of improvement facilitation on improvement teams.

**Ensuring that diversity, equity and inclusion are central** to the work will include the following: (1) expanding Steering Committee capability to lead conversations about systemic inequity in schools with a particular focus on the stunted sense of possibility that many school-based staff might express when discussing student ability and dedication; (2) translating outcomes from learning sessions with DEI consultants into protocols and tools for use with and by the network; (3) engaging in open dialogue and facilitating reflection with district and school leaders and teachers about race and equity while deepening the connections and shared work of network teachers; and (4) utilizing a DEI assessment, co-created with a DEI consultant, to identify and plan for network, campus, and individual teacher learning aligned to local change ideas.

**Growing leadership capacity** and additional professional learning will be central to this work and will be accomplished by: (1) establishing a regular cadence of communication with NIC district leaders to ensure they stay aware of and are supporting teams in achieving their local aim; (2) sharing and responding asynchronously to resources within the pilot online platform, including promotion of tools and frameworks above, as well as artifacts from participating districts and schools, chosen by the CoP and Steering Committee; and (3) leveraging the network's online learning platform.

*NIC Practice Team Protocol:* In the pilot phase, Learning Forward, the Ohio Department of Education and the Steering Committee will identify four districts with two school-based practice teams to begin to build a scaling pathway and a model for learning by including regional partners from the ESCs. Each practice team will complete two PDSA cycles in the 2021-2022 school year. The practice teams will follow multiple steps designed to enhance the adoption, implementation and sustainability of a program or practice:

**Step 1: CONVENE Practice Teams within Networked Improvement Community:** The proposed practice teams would be based in districts and one district from each of the four SST quads should be represented. Within each district, two schools would be identified where the iterative testing cycles (“practice”) would happen. The practice teams would be typically comprised of an SST representative, 1-2 district administrators and then representatives from each of the schools including the principal or assistant principal, up to two instructional coaches and four teachers. District practice teams vary based on teacher leadership contexts, culture of the school, and scope of administrators’ responsibilities. Learning Forward staff would coach the teams on an ongoing basis.

**Step 2: IDENTIFY the Problem:** The Steering Committee and the Community of Practice will select a problem of practice, change ideas and structured goals for the practice teams based on an identified needs analysis. After the pilot year, practice teams will engage in an intensive process using improvement research tools to analyze data, identify root causes of chronic challenges in remote, hybrid and in-person teaching and learning and map out a sequence of Plan-Do-Study-Act improvement model cycle focus areas.

**Step 3: UNDERSTAND Current Barriers and Assets to Implementation:** No district has perfect allocations of time, human capital, or money. Creating an implementation and PDSA testing strategy needs to account for district context. Practice teams will identify potential barriers to

success and develop improvement plans / leverage available assets for mitigating barriers impeding programmatic success.

**Step 4: NORM on Language, Process:** The concept of improvement science and the PDSA cycle may be new to districts and school leaders and to teachers. Practice teams decide early on how they are going to talk about this work to their full schools and staff and to what extent and then seek commitment to the process of PDSA and the data collection necessary, and the constant push toward iteration and improvement.

**Step 5: GOAL-SET:** Practice teams work from a structured long-term goal determined by the Community of Practice as well as a short-term goal, bound by a current change idea that they are testing.

**Step 6: PLAN the first PDSA Cycle:** The first step in creating a strong PDSA cycle is garnering buy in for the “change idea” that is within the sphere of influence of the team and, if changed, can improve efforts or structures. Practice teams work to clearly define the scope of the change as well as expected (predicted) results. Once the change idea has been accepted, the team agrees to the metrics to measure whether the change had the intended impact. All teams across the network will use a common template to plan the work and identify data to be collected.

**Step 7: REFLECT:** Practice teams run the PDSA cycles and collect data.

**Step 8: ANALYZE Data and Findings:** As part of the improvement process, practice teams collaboratively look at data and embed data collection processes into daily practice. Practice teams will convene at the end of each PDSA cycle to review data and make refinements for the next PDSA cycle. Data will help inform future PDSA cycles and inform what changes create results for potential scaling to other areas.

**Step 9: SHARE Findings:** Practice teams share details and learnings from the PDSA cycles and data analyses with the Community of Practice. This experience builds community,

spotlights local results and encourages scale, and inspires confidence. In addition, collaboration across practice teams leads to vetting, sharing and refining of tools and strategies.

Similar to the Ohio Improvement Process, this is the foundation for an insight engine to power continuous improvement for Ohio and provides the scaffolding for a scalable approach beyond the timeframe of the grant. The involvement of the 51 Education Service Centers will be strengthened and coordinated with the Support Squad and 16 School Support Teams.

Content for both the PLA online library and the PLA professional learning sessions will be populated over time and from several sources with a goal of highlighting innovations and resources developed for remote and hybrid learning during the pandemic; strategies, tools and processes created by NIC participants; and available resources developed by local and national associations with deep expertise in professional learning, including Learning Forward. The development of the PLA will be informed by the Community of Practice and will highlight innovations, strategies and resources tested and refined by the practice teams.

When the Networked Learning Community kicks off in May, a multi-pronged procurement and needs analysis process will ensue as well. With support from our content and dissemination partners, we will begin to identify potential professional learning content for the PLA. The first effort will be done in conjunction with our dissemination partners to survey their members and stakeholders both to identify existing content and also to assess gaps and needs. Learning Forward Ohio and Learning Forward consultants will also engage in district outreach to capture those innovations that were developed by schools and districts during the pandemic in an effort to make them widely available to Ohio educators. Learning Forward Ohio and Learning Forward consultants will also do an analysis of professional development content currently on the Ohio Department of Education's Learning Management System to identify content that could also be made available through the PLA. Based on the needs analysis, Learning Forward will also identify potential tools and resources from its own professional learning library that could be accessed. The content procurement process will occur between June – December.

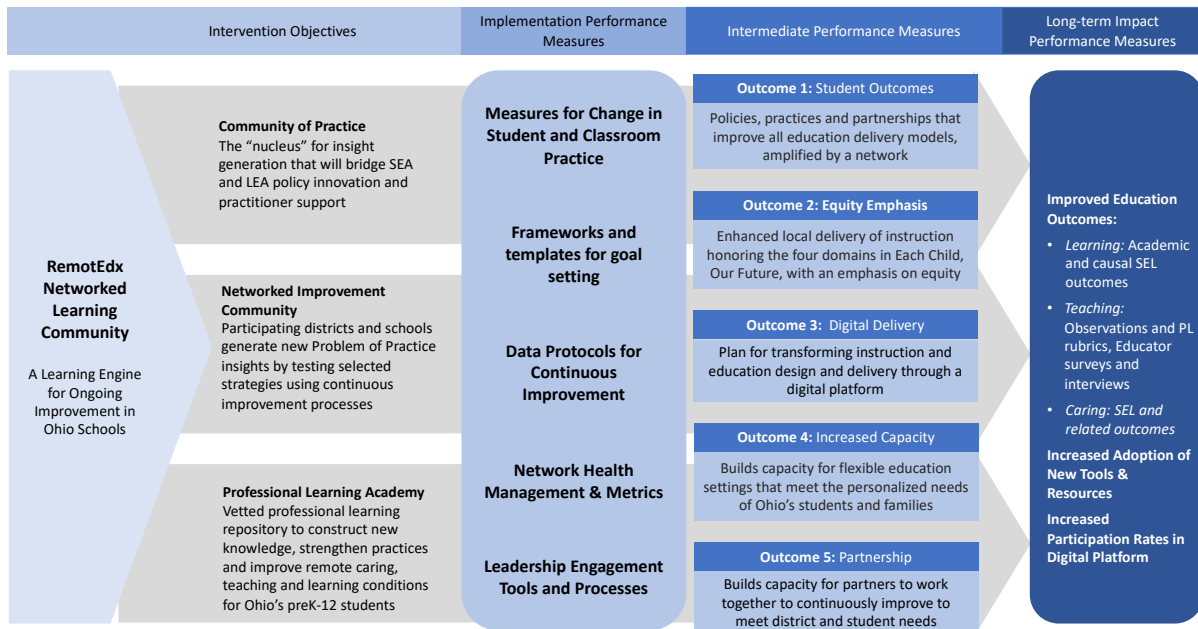
At the same time, Learning Forward in conjunction with the steering committee and CoP will develop a rubric that will allow procured content to be vetted against the Ohio Standards for Professional Development and against effective and evidence-based professional learning practices. A first draft of the rubric will be developed in time for the Steering Committee's first meeting in June and a second draft will be shared with the Community of Practice (CoP) at their meeting in September. Based on feedback from the CoP, the rubric will be refined and finalized to be shared and adopted at the January CoP meeting. In this way, the CoP is also engaging in a continuous improvement cycle for the development of this rubric tool and the ensuing process and content for the PLA.

Throughout the fall of 2021, Learning Forward will work with a technical firm to design and develop the platform for the PLA. Wire frames will be shared with the steering committee at their virtual monthly meetings for review and feedback. As part of the design, Learning Forward will include the ability to transfer content to the Ohio Department of Education at the conclusion of the RemotEDx Networked Learning Community project in September 2022.

**c. *Logic Model***

Learning Forward envisions a clear causal pathway toward Ohio's desired outcomes, depicted visually below. RemotEDx requires a set of universal inputs that will bind together the intellectual rigor of the three primary service components. These inputs will appear differently in

**RemotEDx Logic Model**



the work of the Community of Practice, the learning exchanges in the Networked Improvement Community, and the processes and content of the Professional Learning Academy but will influence and undergird how each of these components work together. First, Learning Forward's Standards for Professional Development, which are the basis for the current Ohio Standards for Professional Development, are undergoing a revision (with representation from Ohio leaders) and provide a foundation for RemotEDx and the ongoing modernization effort. Notably, the new Equity standards provide a lens for assessing and designing high quality professional learning that aligns with the RemotEDx vision. Further, as the nation's leading organization devoted to professional learning, Learning Forward's design expertise and research foundations will similarly serve as an important foundational input in all three service areas. In particular, Learning Forward anticipates the possibility to include content sourced from a national representation of effective practice in the PL Academy. Third, Learning Forward has

unparalleled national expertise in designing and facilitating network models anchored in continuous improvement models. This improvement research expertise will be a critical input in the Networked Improvement Community and will also serve to inform the design of the interaction between the three major components and their evolution toward the long-term goals of improving student and caregiver outcomes. A final universal input, which will form some of the earliest phases of work, is agreement on discrete process goals within each service area, as well as a template for roles and responsibilities with partner organizations. Other inputs that may vary by core service area include ODE leadership and expertise, partner leadership and expertise, SST/ESC collaboration and commitment, and LEA/school collaboration and commitment.

In a traditional logic model, process goals and outputs serve as connective pathways between the inputs and the performance outcomes that serve as the ultimate objective of the initiative. Sample output metrics may include:

- Quality/coherence rubric for RemotEDx (“PL Quality Rubric”)
- Measurement system/metrics hierarchy
- Data collection protocols and analysis
- Shorter-term goal setting/milestones
- Convening structures/cadence
- Tool and template creation/adaptation
- Coaching processes that delineate expected changes in knowledge, attitudes, skills, aspirations and behaviors (KASAB; Killion, 2008).
- Practice Team outputs
- Other outputs to be determined by the CoP and Steering Committee

These outputs should in turn lie in a causal pathway toward the performance outcomes that the initiative is ultimately designed to produce. In our facilitation protocols and data structures, Learning Forward always keeps the *performance outcome* at the root of the work. Learning Forward seeks measurable outcomes whenever possible, and we believe the five outcomes

areas specified in the request have common long-term measures to track and promote for managing each of the three service areas. They are:

- Outcome measures for **increased coherence & relevance** (within and across LEAs) including: (1) PL Quality Rubric use and application; (2) teacher perceptual survey as pre-post; and (3) Learning Forward-modified “Guskey” 5 levels of measurement (Guskey 2000).
- Outcome measures for **increased participation/utilization** by teachers and staff including: (1) total # of teachers, repeat users, within and across districts; (2) additional staff categories (e.g. substitutes); and (3) increase in time committed for professional learning.
- Outcome measures for **increased PL effectiveness** including Learning Forward-modified “Guskey” 5 levels of measurement (TBD by initiative, Guskey 2000).

Finally, we recommend statewide administration of Learning Forward’s Standards Assessment Inventory (SAI), a psychometrically valid instrument that serves as a longitudinal measure for performance against the Standards for Professional Learning. In this pilot year, we will administer the SAI in the four districts participating in the networked improvement communities. The SAI can serve as a high-level longitudinal measure of progress and may offer an opportunity to have a pre-post measure for standards alignment.

**d. Data Sources, Uses and Access**

Learning Forward has extensive experience managing data protocols in network environments. We propose that RemotEDx collect and analyze data and metrics at two fundamental levels: 1) the strategy level, which test progress toward the longer-term goals of the initiative, and 2) the testing level, which tracks shorter-term impact. Within the NIC, the testing level data will be focused on practical measures that track the work of a given change idea within each learning cycle (OIP/PDSA). In aggregate, these will form the foundation of what the Community of Practice uses to advise, vet results, prioritize, and make decisions regarding the interaction with the NIC and PLA. The chosen measures will reflect the causal



pathways identified in the logic model and refined with the goals developed in the design phases of the initiative. Access to these data sources is typically granted by district-level participants, who are learning to use new data collection protocols and tools through the process implementation. Additional data sources may be supplemented by ODE, including test-based summative academic outcomes and other statewide measurement vehicles.

Within the NIC, the structured continuous improvement process requires consistent data gathering and analysis to test the outcomes of chosen change ideas. Depending on the selected problems of practice and structure selected by the steering committee, each district may choose unique metrics that align most closely with the context and local measurement protocols that are already in place (e.g. formative assessment practices.) As demonstrated in the What Matters Now network in which Ohio participated, data collection tools may vary and may be created specifically for the purposes of the OIP/PDSA testing cycles.

Regarding the PLA, data will largely be used to gauge demand, engagement, and participation over time. As noted in section B.c. above, a key indicator of platform success will ultimately be to see what uptake levels look like with educators around the state. Although they are unlikely to generate significant insights within the pilot year, these usage patterns offer a mechanism to evaluate, prioritize and adjust PLA offerings over time.

#### e. *Design Assumptions and Ramifications*

Our major design assumptions are addressed above in sections B.a. through B.d. However, additional risks exist that will need to be mitigated throughout the initiative, including:

*Sustained Leadership Commitment:* Sustained leadership commitment has two embedded risks: turnover at the campus/district leadership level, resulting in a new leader without a commitment to the network aim; or sustained commitment of existing leadership to the network aim. In each Learning Forward network, relationships are established at many levels to

enhance the collective learning of all participants. Learning Forward will build on its recruitment expertise to ensure alignment of any new participant. Additionally, we will tailor onboarding material and learning to efficiently integrate new members. As noted in the Appendix A: Timeline, Learning Forward and its RemotEDx partners will hold information sessions for district leaders and principals to ensure buy-in to the NICs, the shared problem of practice and the proposed change ideas to be tested. Funding is also included to defray the cost of substitutes so that NIC teachers are able to attend the convenings.

*Expansion of Focus:* In the initial year, the CoP, NIC, and PLA will focus on a shorter, prioritized list of problems of practice. The entry point will be determined during the design phase by the Steering Committee and CoP, but considerations will be necessary for the breadth of expansion. Quick expansion of the focus creates the risk of “zig-zagging” and possibly resulting in less of an impact on any single root cause. This will require ongoing leadership from ODE and the Partner group.

*Working Group and Partnership Team:* Within the initial year, the full team will come to rely heavily on the expertise of each partner organization. While not expected, the loss of a team member’s expertise from any participating organization is a perennial risk. Roles will be scoped to clearly define each job description, mitigating the time it would take to replace key people within the network. By maintaining tight project management procedures, the working group will ensure that all supports are thoughtfully coordinated and aligned, preventing any confusion across the service areas.

*Digital Platform Adoption:* The new PLA platform will likely have an s-curve shaped adoption with innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards, and expectations should be set appropriately regarding early adoption and usage rates. Learning Forward’s experience with digital platforms suggests that steeper adoption trajectories can take

time, and sustained awareness building is necessary to drive usage. Continued investment and guidance will be necessary from the Steering Committee and Coordinating Council partners.

**f. Key Partnerships** - Identify key partners and their roles.

Partners play an important role in each of the three core service areas and Learning Forward is excited for the partnership opportunities. We look forward to working with the Ohio Department of Education, the RemotEDx Coordinating Council and current partners in RemotEDx: Coordinating Council, including Philanthropy Ohio, the Support Squad, Connectivity Champions and the Exchange. The specific make-up of each service area's organizational body is described in turn below:

*Community of Practice Make-Up:* As described above in section B.b., a successful community of practice includes a decision-making mechanism and a robust system of governance that promotes mutual accountability within the community. The RemotEDx Community of Practice will include all members of the Coordinating Council, 3-5 leaders from the Ohio Department of Education, representatives from RemotEDx partners (Philanthropy Ohio, the Support Squad, Connectivity Champions, the Exchange), dissemination partners (Learning Forward Ohio, Ohio PTA, Ohio School Counselors Association), Community Design Partners, networked learning community participants and Learning Forward members.

*Steering Committee Make-Up:* As described above in section B.b., we propose a steering committee comprised of a subset of members from the Community of Practice. The steering committee will include 3-5 representatives from the Ohio Department of Education, two representatives from the Support Squad, 1 representative from Philanthropy Ohio, 1 representative from the Connectivity Champions, 1 representative from Exchange/InfOhio, 1 representative from Learning Forward Ohio and three members of the Coordinating Council representing urban, rural, and charter districts and three Learning Forward project leads.

In addition to the existing Ohio partners, Learning Forward will partner with Learning Forward Ohio, our longstanding state affiliate. Learning Forward Ohio has more than 200 educator members. Its advisory board includes representation from the teachers' association and ODE with diverse representation from Ohio's regions and school districts. Learning Forward Ohio will serve as an on-the-ground resource able to work with Ohio schools and districts to collect and document the professional learning innovations and structures created during the pandemic.

Also, Learning Forward proposes to engage additional dissemination partners including the Ohio School Counselors Association and the Ohio PTA. Dissemination partners will help to communicate regularly about RemotEDx opportunities and resources to key audiences. Second, they will help to collect information from these same communities about specific resource or professional learning needs. Finally, they will also help to garner feedback on the existing resources and opportunities in RemotEDx to adjust for diverse needs.

Learning Forward will also partner with Community Design Partners (CDP), a team of facilitators, coaches, and advisors that partners with organizations and schools dedicated to a wide range of social justice issues. CDP is a current partner with Learning Forward in the Texas Network for School Improvement (TX NSI). CDP will contribute expertise to the central equity agenda for this work as well as providing content and resources that can be accessed by the networked learning community practice teams to inform their work and tools. One of CDP's Principals is based in Cincinnati and will serve as the initiative's primary contact.

**g. *Identify Key Stakeholder Groups* - Identify key stakeholders and their roles.**

Stakeholders are critical to the success of the RemotEDx Networked Learning Community as they are the individuals to be served. First and foremost are Ohio educators at every level of the system. One mechanism for reaching educators, sharing resources and garnering feedback will be through the use of existing professional learning communities

including Teacher-based Teams (TBTs), Building-leader Teams (BLTs) and DLTs (District-leader teams). There needs to be an explicit mechanism put in place to bridge the structures of the RemotEDx Networked Learning Community and the existing structures in Ohio's schools and districts. In these years following the pandemic's peak, we recognize that an emphasis will need to be placed on providing support for substitute teachers – both long-term and short-term, and new teachers who will be coming into the district systems.

Students and families, especially those in underserved and at-risk communities and those that face learning challenges, are another critical set of stakeholders. The pandemic has left many families searching for resources and ways to connect and to ensure that their students are able to progress and excel. We look forward to utilizing dissemination partners to make the resources available through RemotEDx more widely known and accessible. The Coordinating Council is made up of individuals and entities with broad reach to students, families and communities. We look forward to engaging them as dissemination partners in this effort. We will also rely on two key dissemination partners, Ohio PTA and Ohio School Counselors Association, to help us regularly disseminate information out about the RemotEDx opportunities and to help us garner information about their needs and feedback on the offerings included.

We look forward to strengthening the involvement of the 51 Education Service Centers and through coordination with the Support Squad and 16 School Support Teams. We will communicate broadly to district leadership about all tools, resources and strategies included in RemotEDx so that the reach will be broadened to share with all schools.

#### **h. Alignment to [Ohio Standards for Professional Development](#)**

Alignment to the Ohio Standards for Professional Development is critical to the success of the RemotEDx Networked Learning Community. As the author and steward of the national *Standards for Professional Learning*, there is no more qualified entity than Learning Forward to ensure that this happens. The Ohio Standards for Professional Development adapt and

integrate Learning Forward's *Standards for Professional Learning* ("Standards") into Ohio's benchmarks, enabling Ohio to benefit from the deep research, vetting and expertise that led to the development of the *Standards*. As noted above in Section B.a., Learning Forward is currently revising the *Standards* (with a team that includes ODE representation through Michelle Elia, Ohio Literacy Lead), and the RemotEDx initiative will benefit from this ongoing effort directly. Notably, new Equity standards are being added, which will help anchor equity goals and will provide a relevant tool for each of the three major service areas.

### C. Expected Outcomes

- a. *Plan reflects a commitment to helping state and local partners improve student outcomes through policies, practices and partnerships that improve in-person, remote, hybrid or blended education models and amplified by a network.*

As detailed by the logic model and narrative above, the design directly addresses an approach for state and local partners to improve student outcomes through policies, practices and partnerships that improve in-person, remote, hybrid or blended education models and amplified by a network. Professional learning is the primary vehicle available to schools and school systems to strengthen the performance of educators and students. For all students to attend great schools, we need school districts that are authentic *learning systems*. In learning systems, educators at all levels have the mindset for and share responsibility for student and adult learning in a culture that fosters learning for all. They develop and sustain cultures of continuous improvement, use data to drive decisions, and monitor and adjust their practices based on feedback. They understand their roles in and responsibilities for helping the district achieve its vision, mission, goals, and objectives. In learning systems, all educators commit to continuous learning, and apply that learning to their own and others' performance. Learning Forward has been intentional in its design to ensure that state and local partners are able to bring together a robust set of offerings for Ohio's educators, students, families and communities.

- b. *Plan addresses enhanced local delivery of instruction (in-person, remote, hybrid and blended) while honoring the four equal learning domains in Each Child, Our Future, with a specific emphasis equity.*

The implicit mission is similar to Learning Forward's own, and the content areas and underlying expertise necessary to execute are addressed in the plan and described in the logic model. Learning Forward believes that every system must plan, implement, and measure high-quality professional learning and to do so requires building the capacity of leaders throughout the system. Socio economic conditions, race, gender, ethnic background, and other factors should not be predictors for educational attainment. Learning Forward believes school systems and other learning environments have to be relentless in addressing the issue of expanding learning opportunities for each and every student while building on the strengths all children bring to the classroom. These beliefs are fundamental to its approaches to achieving equity. Learning Forward defines equity as the outcome of educator practices that respect and nurture all aspects of student identity, rather than treat them as barriers to learning. Professional learning is a critical lever to achieve equity. As a result, in early 2019 the board of trustees made the decision to explicitly include equity in Learning Forward's vision statement: Equity and excellence in teaching and learning.

**c. *Outlines a plan for transforming instruction and education design and delivery through a digital platform(s).***

The plan for the Networked Learning Community offers high-quality professional learning, strategies, protocols, tools and resources in a virtual learning environment, as well as a process for improvement research aligned to the Ohio OIP. Combined, these features of the Networked Learning Community will help teacher leaders, coaches, mentors, and school leaders lead and facilitate in-person, hybrid, and fully virtual professional learning to advance an ambitious vision for learning for every student and meet the needs of families. The Standards for Professional Learning are foundational to all services, supporting educators and school systems in planning, organizing, and implementing comprehensive systems of professional learning.

- d. *Plan speaks to building school and district capacity for flexible education settings that best meet personalized and individual needs of Ohio’s students and families.*

Learning Forward builds the capacity of leaders to establish and sustain highly effective professional learning through direct services to districts, communities of practice, learning experiences, and research-based, practical tools for educators. Just as teachers are designing new models of learning to achieve success with students, schools and systems need to provide professional learning support to meet today’s teaching and learning challenges head-on. A primary objective of the Networked Learning Community is to build capacity for school and district leaders to develop resources, tools, strategies and protocols that are specific to their own unique context and that meet the needs of students and families.

- e. *Plan seeks to increase the benefits of delivering and building the capacity for partners to collaborate, coordinate, problem solve and prioritize equity to continuously improve and meet district and student needs.*

As detailed by the logic model and narrative above, the model design directly seeks to increase the benefits of delivering and building the capacity for partners to collaborate, coordinate, problem solve and prioritize equity to continuously improve and meet district and student needs. There are many opportunities included throughout the Networked Learning Community as described in the Design Approach in section B.b. for collaboration and capacity building for educators and partners in using a continuous learning model to iterate and refine strategies that encourage problem solving and prioritizing equity to meet district and student needs.

#### D. Management Plan

##### a. Implementation Stages

Learning Forward has developed a management plan that meets the ambitious timetable outlined in this RFA to deliver tangible outcomes in all three required components. A careful analysis of the work to be done and the expertise needed to complete the work in a high-quality manner comes from the Learning Forward staff, senior consultants and partners that will be engaged in the work. (see Appendix B – Budget Narrative) The management plan comprises six



distinct phases: Kick-off, Design, Pilot, Scale, Launch and Transfer. (see Appendix A – Project Timeline). Each phase integrates work across the three components, as well as adding in time for planning, governance and for the steering committee to come together to collaborate. The kick-off phase will focus on meeting with partners, identifying and inviting Community of Practice and Steering Committee members, establishing clear roles and surfacing early challenges, identifying the district practice teams and developing a survey for the dissemination partners to use in outreach to their stakeholder communities. Initial work will also begin on the development of a rubric for content vetting. The design and pilot phases include the first meetings of the CoP, the Steering Committee and the NICs and the work on the shared problem of practice will begin. At the same time, the process of identifying and procuring content for the PLA will ramp up, the content rubric will be finalized and the technical firm will begin work on the design for the platform development. The scale phase is designed to review the outcomes of the CoP, the NICs and the PLA design with an eye toward a September transfer to the Ohio Department of Education. Launch and transfer phases will include reflections on the work completed in the previous phases, training and planning for the work in year two, and will also ensure that all of the components are ready for transfer back to the ODE and its partners.

**b. *Partnerships Coordination***

Effective management results from frequent, open, and clear communication. Learning Forward will coordinate the Ohio Department of Education, RemotEDx partners, dissemination partners and content partners (See section B.f. for list of partners) to develop and deliver comprehensive project work plans and timelines to ensure strong development of the three components of the Networked Learning Community. These work plans will define steps, responsibilities, and timelines across the six phases of the management plan. Learning Forward will meet with all partners in a series of “listening tour” meetings in the Kick-off phase to ensure buy-in and clarity. Preliminarily, Learning Forward recommends bi-weekly virtual program management meetings among itself, ODE, and selected project partners. Additional meetings

will be held throughout the course of the project and in conjunction with several in person meetings scheduled for governance, the Steering Committee and the Community of Practice.

**c. *Component Alignment***

As shown in Appendix A: Timeline, there are many dependencies between the different components of the Networked Learning Community and Learning Forward has incorporated milestones to garner feedback, buy-in and refinements along the way. The result is a system of checks and balances. For example, early in the Design Phase, the Steering Committee will meet to provide an initial round of feedback on the NIC problem of practice, the CoP priorities and the draft content vetting rubric for the PLA. All of these elements will be revised based on the input of the Steering Committee and then will be presented to the full Community of Practice at their first meeting in September. This cycle of review, feedback and refinement occurs throughout the project and across the development of all three components. Another intentional design element is the make-up of the Community of Practice. This critical body includes partners and participants from across the three components and representing all of the desired outcomes. In bringing everyone together and creating that space for co-development, the three components of the project remain aligned, and all of the participants are informed on the latest developments. This also will improve communications and sharing of the resources back to the key stakeholders.

**d. *Leadership and Key Personnel***

As mentioned in section D.a. above and as detailed in Appendix B: Budget Narrative and bios included in Appendix D: Evidence of Prior Effectiveness, Learning Forward is proposing a team of staff and senior consultants that bring critical expertise to bear. The project will be led by Melinda George, Learning Forward's Chief Policy Officer and Nick Morgan, a senior consultant for Learning Forward. Both George and Morgan have been integrally involved in Learning Forward's networks, including leading the What Matters Now Network that included

Ohio. In addition, a Vice President for Content will be assigned to this project fulltime to ensure that there is consistent, senior expertise in professional learning available for all three components of the project. Included in the staffing are additional members of the networks team to help with Community of Practice agenda development, facilitation of network convenings, conference and meeting planning, and professional learning and communications expertise.

**e. *Issue Management and Addressing Known Barriers***

Higher-level risks to overall project success are addressed in section B.e. above, and include common human capital, scope, and operational risk as well as mitigation approaches. Specific ongoing process management issues will be resolved using project management plans and in conjunction with ODE and Steering Committee representatives. The project management plans will highlight key operational dependencies as well as partnership dependencies and will allow for both proactive and reactive managerial intervention to address issues as they arise.

**f. *Stakeholder Communication***

In section B.a., Learning Forward details its theory of action. One of the central tenets is that communication and dissemination to a wide selection of audiences and potential users including educators, families and communities is critical to the success of this Networked Learning Community. Learning Forward has developed a multi-pronged communications plan that includes outreach through RemotEDx existing partners as well as the addition of dissemination partners (Learning Forward Ohio, Ohio School Counselors Association and Ohio PTA) in order to increase reach beyond educators to families and communities. As seen in section B.f., dissemination partners will serve several key functions. They will help us to communicate regularly about RemotEDx opportunities and resources to key audiences; collect information from these same communities about specific resource or professional learning needs; and help us to garner feedback on the existing resources and opportunities in RemotEDx so that we can adapt to meet their needs. Learning Forward will produce a quarterly

Networked Learning Community newsletter that dissemination and other RemotEDx partners can share with their stakeholders. Also, as part of our communications plan, Learning Forward will produce webinars, a blog, resources and tools that can be shared as the work progresses.

#### E. Organizational Oversight

Organizational oversight is provided by the Learning Forward working group, with roles and responsibilities split as described in the Management Plan in section D. above and detailed in the Appendix A Timeline below. The primary responsibility of the working group is to manage the overall project & relationships by coordinating work among partners and districts in order to leverage organizational strengths and progress towards the five desired outcomes. Learning Forward will engage in the following primary activities related to project and relationship management: (1) Developing a comprehensive scope, project plan and responsibility map for hub partners; (2) coordinating a NIC district selection process; (3) overseeing district and partner subgrants; (4) sharing annual network timeline and establishing a consistent coaching cadence; (5) setting clear network participant expectations through collateral, network communication and improvement facilitator reinforcement; (6) creating and disseminating consistent network-wide communications; (7) coordinating project management meetings; (8) engaging in a facilitated kick off and reflection processes for all network convenings and at the end of the grant period; and (9) planning, coordinating, and attending ODE calls and events.

In addition, given the responsibility and accountability of the Steering Committee for guiding the work and for ongoing sustainability, Learning Forward places significant importance on facilitating at least three steering committee meetings per year to guide the evolution of the network, address cross-district concerns, serve as accountability partners, and enhance the capacity of the Partnership group to lead a cohesive school improvement network. Learning Forward will engage in the following primary activities related to the Steering Committee: (1) hosting virtual and in-person network Steering Committee meetings to inform network needs, co-design network experiences and check in on progress towards shared goals; (2) expanding

the steering committee if necessary, to include additional Partner and district personnel who are working closely with district and campus improvement teams and (3) holding one-on-one Steering Committee check-in meetings between working group and Steering Committee members to discuss progress and alignment.

#### F. Progress Monitoring

*Describe a plan for monitoring progress of the three interconnected elements.*

Progress monitoring is built into the design of each of the three interconnected elements. Using the logic model structure as a guide for monitoring the causal pathway from process outputs and outcomes to more performance-oriented outcomes, data will guide the progress in each area. Detail about the timing of specific data vehicles, such as perceptual surveys, is included in the Appendix A Timeline below. Part of the design phase of work will include the creation of work plans in Gantt chart format or equivalent for the CoP, the NIC and the PLA to manage detailed timelines and dependencies. The Learning Forward working group will take primary responsibility for managing these and will communicate closely and manage dependencies with ODE and Steering Committee partners on a regular basis. The improvement cycles in the NIC will have a distinct process as they rely on the cycles themselves for adaptation or even abandonment of the change idea being tested. The NIC Practice Team steps in section B.b. above provide the foundation and sequence for progress monitoring. Notable is Step 9, where the NIC results will be aggregated and shared to the CoP as a critical progress monitoring and reflection milestone in the overall function of the network.

#### G. RemoteEDx Integration and Coordination

There are several layers of coordination included in the project execution to ensure integration and coordination of the State Infrastructure for Professional Learning and Connectedness as well as existing RemoteEDx activities. At the governance and administration level, the Learning Forward working group will be meeting with the Ohio Department of Education staff on an at least monthly basis. Clear roles and responsibilities, as well as key

individuals to be consulted, will be identified and agreed upon. In addition, beginning in the summer of 2021, Learning Forward Ohio consultants will conduct an analysis of professional development content currently on the Ohio Department of Education's Learning Management System to identify content that could also be made available through the PLA. Learning Forward will also convene regular meetings of the Steering Committee and the Community of Practice (make-up includes current RemotEDx partners). At these meetings, progress on the procurement of content for the Professional Learning Academy will be shared. Finally, Learning Forward is proposing that the initial platform for the PLA be developed on a compatible platform with the current content in the State Infrastructure for Professional Learning and Connectedness. We anticipate that this will ensure a smooth transfer of the content at the end of the grant period.

#### H. Capacity Building and Sustainability

The model described in Sections B through G is designed to build capacity within the ODE and Partner teams for a successful transfer of responsibility by September 2022. Each of the three main service areas contains a structure for successful leadership development and transfer. The CoP function and the purposeful design of the Steering Committee are designed to involve and develop the necessary roles and skills to manage long-term organizational oversight. Key leaders will learn by doing and will develop requisite skills in continuous improvement and network design to sustain the model beyond the initial 17-month period. The focus on continuous improvement cycles and adaptive integration in scaling pathways in the NIC is similarly designed to include and develop key individuals and organizations with the requisite skills. Specifically, the model uses the regional Support Squad structure with its lead ESCs as primary points for future scaling and sustainability of the service model. Finally, the PLA pilot will be built on D2L technology, which Learning Forward already uses to support other network efforts and which RemotEDx already uses, allowing for easy transfer.



## I. Competitive Preference Priorities (Optional)

### *Competitive Preference Priority 1*

- **Increasing family and community supports and collaboration**

### *Competitive Preference Priority 2*

- **Addressing a Multi-Tiered System of Supports**

Learning Forward is pleased that this proposal responds to both of the competitive priorities listed in the RFA. We recognize that a critical audience to be served by the RemotEDx Networked Learning Community is parents, families and communities. To ensure these needs are met, Learning Forward will engage the Ohio PTA as a dissemination partner. Dissemination partners will help Learning Forward to regularly communicate about RemotEDx opportunities and resources to key audiences. Second, they will help Learning Forward collect information from these same communities about specific resource or professional learning needs. Finally, they will help Learning Forward garner feedback on the existing resources and opportunities in RemotEDx so that we can make adjustments and additions to meet their needs.

Learning Forward will also focus on addressing a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) through this work. We will do this in two ways. First, in this pilot year, we will develop a problem of practice and change idea for the practice teams that advances MTSS for academic achievement. This will allow us to learn through iterative cycles about the professional learning and tools that can best support MTSS and to ensure that those resources are included in the Professional Learning Academy and shared with the Community of Practice. In addition, Learning Forward has invited the Ohio School Counselors Association to also join the work as a dissemination partner. This will again ensure that we are both gathering and sharing information with this important audience and also using their feedback to make critical adjustments to the work.

## RemotEDx Networked Learning Community Application

### Appendix A

#### Project Timeline

*Identify specific activities and milestones for successfully addressing the competitive priority or priorities and meeting proposed program objectives.*

Time Period	Event or Activity
<b>Kick-Off (May 15-June 30, 2021)</b>	<u>Governance and Admin</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Virtual listening tour with RemotEDx Partners</li> <li>Learning Forward (LF) Core Team meets with Ohio Department of Education for planning meeting</li> </ul> <u>Steering Committee</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify Steering Committee membership and extend invitations for participation</li> <li>Plan agenda for June in-person meeting</li> </ul> <u>Community of Practice</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify CoP membership and extend invitations for participation</li> <li>Develop priorities for the CoP</li> </ul> <u>Networked Learning Community/Practice Teams</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with Ohio Department of Education and SSTs to identify districts and practice teams</li> </ul> <u>Professional Learning Academy</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop dissemination partner survey for membership/stakeholders</li> <li>Develop draft rubric for content vetting</li> <li>Kick off of multi-pronged professional learning content procurement process and needs analysis</li> <li>Initial meetings with dissemination and content partners to review procurement process</li> </ul>
<b>Design (June 1 – September 30, 2021)</b>	<u>Governance and Admin</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning Forward (LF) Core Team meets with Ohio Department of Education for planning meeting</li> </ul> <u>Steering Committee</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2-day kick off meeting in Columbus (June) (Develop draft shared problem of practice for networked learning community, CoP priorities, timeline and process)</li> <li>Monthly virtual meetings (July, August)</li> </ul> <u>Community of Practice</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2-day kick off meeting in Columbus (September)</li> <li>Share best practices, create knowledge and link to the Department's remote education initiatives</li> <li>Center equity through activities such as National Equity Project's Liberatory Design</li> <li>Finalize networked learning community shared problem of practice</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide feedback to rubric for content vetting</li> <li>• Training in improvement research/OIP process</li> </ul> <p><u>Networked Learning Community/Practice Teams</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify districts and practice teams in each of four SST quads and extend invitations for participation</li> <li>• Administer Standards Assessment Inventory (SAI) in each district</li> <li>• Hold information sessions for district leaders and principals to ensure buy-in</li> <li>• Develop shared problem of practice and change idea for networked learning community</li> <li>• Develop data collection tools for networked learning community</li> </ul> <p><u>Professional Learning Academy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dissemination partners survey membership to identify existing content and to assess gaps and needs</li> <li>• LF Ohio and LF consultants engage in district outreach to capture innovations developed by schools and districts during the pandemic</li> <li>• LF Ohio and LF consultants conduct analysis of professional development content currently on the Ohio Department of Education's Learning Management System to identify content that could also be made available through the PLA</li> </ul>
<b>Pilot (October 1, 2021 – March 31, 2022)</b>	<p><u>Governance and Admin</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning Forward (LF) Core Team meets with Ohio Department of Education for planning meeting</li> <li>• Develop draft agenda for January CoP meeting</li> <li>• Monthly communications – newsletter, blog or webinar</li> </ul> <p><u>Steering Committee</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1-day in person meeting in Columbus (December)</li> <li>• Review draft agenda for January CoP meeting</li> <li>• Review PLA wire frames</li> <li>• Monthly virtual meetings (October, November, February, March)</li> </ul> <p><u>Community of Practice</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2-day meeting in Columbus (January)</li> <li>• Finalize rubric for vetting content for PLA</li> <li>• Improvement research/OIP training</li> <li>• Review PLA wire frames</li> </ul> <p><u>Networked Learning Community/Practice Teams</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch first PDSA Cycle to run between October – December 2021</li> <li>• 1-day, in person meetings with district networked learning community practice teams for launch (October)</li> <li>• Introduce data collection tools</li> <li>• Launch second PDSA Cycle to run between January – March 2022</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1-day, in person meetings with district networked learning community practice teams (March)</li> <li>• Virtual coaching of practice teams</li> <li>• Identify strategies, resources, protocols and tools for PLA as well as gaps in knowledge that should be addressed in PLA</li> </ul> <p><u>Professional Learning Academy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content procurement continues (see Design phase)</li> <li>• Rubric for vetting content finalized by CoP</li> <li>• Begin vetting procured content for the PLA</li> <li>• Identify and hire technical firm for platform development</li> <li>• Initial wire frames shared with steering committee</li> <li>• Begin development of PLA platform</li> <li>• Dissemination partners send quarterly newsletter to members</li> </ul>
<b>Scale (April 1 – June 30, 2022)</b>	<p><u>Governance and Admin</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning Forward (LF) Core Team meets with Ohio Department of Education for planning meeting</li> <li>• Monthly communications – newsletter, blog or webinar</li> </ul> <p><u>Steering Committee</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1-day in person meeting in Columbus (April)</li> <li>• Refine shared problem of practice for year 2</li> <li>• Review content in PLA</li> </ul> <p><u>Community of Practice</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Virtual meeting of CoP</li> <li>• Review practice teams’ data for lessons learned and replication</li> <li>• Finalize shared problem of practice for year 2</li> <li>• Review PLA</li> </ul> <p><u>Networked Learning Community/Practice Teams</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-administer Standards Assessment Inventory in participating districts</li> <li>• Share SAI outcomes with district leaders</li> <li>• Identify district/school highlights to share with CoP</li> </ul> <p><u>Professional Learning Academy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build PLA online library and begin populating with vetted content</li> <li>• Develop professional learning sessions in new platform</li> <li>• Dissemination partners send quarterly newsletter to members (October/February)</li> <li>• Conduct information sessions open to educators, community members and families/attend partner conferences</li> </ul>
<b>Launch (July 1- August 31, 2022)</b>	<p><u>Governance and Admin</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning Forward (LF) Core Team meets with Ohio Department of Education for planning meeting</li> <li>• Prepare draft agenda for July CoP meeting</li> </ul> <p><u>Steering Committee</u></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1-day in person meeting in Columbus (June)</li> <li>• Review draft agenda for July CoP meeting</li> </ul> <p><u>Community of Practice</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1-day meeting in Columbus (July)</li> <li>• Reflections on Networked Learning Community growth and future trajectory</li> <li>• What does the data show us?</li> <li>• What do we need to know for next year?</li> </ul> <p><u>Networked Learning Community/Practice Teams</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify districts for year 2 participation in networked learning community and extend invitations for participation</li> <li>• Hold information sessions for district leaders and principals to ensure buy-in</li> </ul> <p><u>Professional Learning Academy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dissemination partners send quarterly newsletter to members (July)</li> <li>• Conduct information sessions open to educators, community members and families</li> <li>• Continuing building functionality and populating with content</li> </ul>
<b>Transfer (September 1-30, 2022)</b>	<p><u>Governance and Admin</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning Forward (LF) Core Team meets with Ohio Department of Education for planning meeting</li> </ul> <p><u>Steering Committee</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly virtual meeting (September)</li> </ul> <p><u>Networked Learning Community/Practice Teams</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training in continuous improvement for Ohio Department of Education staff and RemotEDx partners to prepare for year 2 transfer</li> </ul> <p><u>Professional Learning Academy</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transfer of PLA to RemotEDx</li> </ul>

## RemotEDx Networked Learning Community Application

### Appendix B

#### Budget Narrative

*Provide an itemized list of expenditures that the project expects to incur throughout the duration of the funding period. Provide information on the services that will be provided in support of the program objectives. For each budget category, identify the object code in the budget worksheet where the expenditure falls.*

Budget Category	Explain how the requested funds will be used to meet the objectives identified in the co-designed plan.
Learning Management Platform	<p>The expenditures in this category cover expenses related to the design and development of the Professional Learning Academy (PLA), one of the three major objectives of the RFA.</p> <p>Salaries (100): \$205,029 Retirement, Fringe Benefits (200): \$29,006</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning Forward staff and senior consultants who will develop and refine drafts of the content vetting rubric based on partner and stakeholder input and provide project management including overseeing the content procurement process, overseeing the technical development of wireframes for the digital platform and communicating findings to the Networked Learning Community.</li> </ul> <p>Purchased Services (400): \$7,900</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Content procurement to capture innovations across Ohio and to mine appropriate content from Learning Forward library.</li> <li>Technical consulting to design digital platform and build wireframes for the review, consideration and co-design.</li> <li>Brightspace access to design possible professional learning sessions.</li> <li>While many of the technical review meetings will be virtual, costs are included for one in-person meeting with four key staff and the technical consultants to review and provide feedback to development.</li> </ul>
Support Services	There are no expenses included in this budget category.
Governance/Admin	<p>The expenses in this category are related to project management and grant stewardship for all of the components of the Networked Learning Community.</p> <p>Salaries (100): \$61,039 Retirement, Fringe Benefits (200): \$12,208</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning Forward staff and senior consultants who are responsible for project management and grant stewardship.</li> </ul> <p>Purchased Services (400): \$12,585</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Travel for 4 in-person meetings with ODE to ensure project is meeting goals, expectations and sustainability plans.</li> </ul>
Professional Development	<p>The expenditures in this category support the Community of Practice, the Networked Improvement Communities and the Steering Committee.</p> <p>Salaries (100): \$210,392 Retirement, Fringe Benefits (200): \$42,078</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning Forward staff and senior consultants to create agendas, coordinate logistics, prepare meeting materials, provide professional learning and facilitate both in-person and virtual convenings of the CoP, Steering Committee, NICs and partner meetings.</li> </ul> <p>Purchased Services (400): \$245,681</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Travel and meeting expenses to include 2 in-person meetings of the Community of Practice (86 participants), 1 in-person meeting of the Steering Committee, and 2 in-person meetings for each of the NICs. (Additional meetings will be held virtually.)</li> <li>Support for substitute teacher coverage to allow teachers to fully participate in NIC meetings.</li> <li>Content procurement and input through content partners (Community Design Partners and Learning Forward Ohio) for Community of Practice and NICs.</li> <li>Pre and post administration of the Standards Assessment Inventory (SAI) in the four NIC districts.</li> </ul>
Progress Monitoring	<p>The expenses in this category cover staffing for monitoring progress of the three interconnected elements.</p> <p>Salaries (100): \$16,430 Retirement, Fringe Benefits (200): \$3,286</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning Forward staff and senior consultants to oversee progress monitoring including creation of work plans in Gantt chart format or equivalent for the CoP, the NIC and the PLA to manage detailed timelines and dependencies. Staff and senior consultants will manage the plans and communicate closely and manage dependencies with ODE and Steering Committee partners on a regular basis.</li> </ul>
Key Partnerships	<p>The expenses in this category cover partner development and growth among RemotEDx and CoP partners.</p>

	<p>Salaries (100): \$11,283</p> <p>Retirement, Fringe Benefits (200): \$2,257</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning Forward staff and senior consultants to oversee partner relationships as outlined in D.b.</li> </ul> <p>Purchased Services (400): \$6,900</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel expenses for 3 in-person meetings with partners.</li> </ul>
Family/Community	<p>The expenses in this category cover staff expenses for communicating with and providing information to dissemination partners as well as a stipend to cover the work of the three dissemination partners.</p> <p>Salaries (100): \$4,378</p> <p>Retirement, Fringe Benefits (200): \$876</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning Forward staff and senior consultants to manage dissemination partnerships as outlined in D.b.</li> </ul> <p>Purchased Services (400): \$55,000</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dissemination partners (OSCA, Ohio PTA, LF Ohio) costs for administering stakeholder survey, gathering input about resources available and needed and sharing information about RemotEDx.</li> <li>• Design services for outreach and newsletter communications.</li> </ul>

## Budget Worksheet:

Provide an itemized budget breakdown and justification that break down salaries, benefits, purchased services, supplies, capital outlay and other expenditures.

Applicant Name: Learning Forward

*Applicants must submit the Budget Worksheet into the Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan that includes the total sum requested for the qualifying program that provides an itemized list of expenditures, with cost, that the program plans to incur using grant funds.*

Proposed Budget (submitted with grant application)	Salaries 100	Retirement Fringe Benefits 200	Purchased Services 400	Supplies 500	Capital Outlay 600	Other 800	Total
Learning Management System	\$205,029	\$29,006	\$7,900	-	-	-	\$241,935
Support Services	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Governance/ Administration	\$61,039	\$12,208	\$12,585	-	-	-	\$85,832
Professional Development	\$210,392	\$42,078	\$245,681	-	-	-	\$498,151
Progress Monitoring	\$16,430	\$3,286	-	-	-	-	\$19,716
Key Partnerships	\$11,283	\$2,257	\$6,900	-	-	-	\$20,440
Family/ Community	\$4,378	\$876	\$55,000	-	-	-	\$60,254
Indirect Costs	-	-	-	-	-	\$73,672	\$73,672
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$508,551</b>	<b>\$89,711</b>	<b>\$328,066</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$73,672</b>	<b>\$1,000,000</b>

## RemotEDx Networked Learning Community Application Appendix C

### Letters of Support

*Include letters of support for partnerships to implement proposal activities. Letters from the RemotEDx partners are not required.*

The following letters of support are attached:

- Center for Public Research and Leadership (CPRL), Columbia University
- Community Design Partners
- Louisiana Department of Education
- Learning Forward Ohio
- Ohio School Counselors Association





Letter of Support for Ohio RemotEDx Networked Learning Community

April 22, 2021

Denise Glyn Borders  
Executive Director  
Learning Forward  
800 E. Campbell Road, Suite 224  
Richardson, TX 75081

Dear Dr. Borders:

On behalf of the Center for Public Research and Leadership (CPRL) at Columbia University, I am writing to express my support for Learning Forward's application to co-design and launch a RemotEDx Networked Learning Community for the Ohio Department of Education. Learning Forward is well positioned to lead this work because of its expertise in planning and facilitating high quality professional learning, its considerable experience in building and implementing networked improvement communities, and its knowledge and understanding of continuous improvement.

For several years, CPRL closely partnered with Learning Forward to build capacity in continuous improvement and improvement science to ensure the success of the What Matters Now Network. Learning Forward's leadership of this project included not only bolstering its own expertise in improvement science but also building the capacity of network teams from three states, including Ohio. The teams identified their aims, developed aligned and comprehensive driver diagrams, and led iterative testing cycles for two years based on the principles and structures of improvement science. Throughout the network experience, Learning Forward led the effort by leveraging the principles and tools of improvement science and as a result the teams saw significant outcomes at the school, district, and state levels. Learning Forward and CPRL also developed an extensive online improvement science toolkit that will be a great asset to Ohio's RemotEDx Networked Learning Community.

I am pleased to recommend Learning Forward for this role. To it, they bring a unique combination of expertise in professional learning and improvement science, effective convening power, and an understanding of the power of a network to accelerate change. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this letter of support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Elizabeth Chu", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Elizabeth Chu, Ph.D.  
Executive Director  
Center for Public Research and Leadership, Columbia University

## Letter of Support for Ohio RemotEDx Networked Learning Community

Denise Glyn Borders  
Executive Director  
Learning Forward  
800 E. Campbell Road, Suite 224  
Richardson, TX 75081

Dear Dr. Borders:

On behalf of Community and Design Partners, I am writing to express my support for Learning Forward's application to co-design and launch a RemotEDx Networked Learning Community for the Ohio Department of Education. Equity must be a top priority in this work and should guide how we design and implement professional learning and networked learning communities.

Learning Forward and Community and Design Partners have a strong history of working together. Most recently, we partnered in the Texas Network for School Improvement (TXNSI) Collaborative, funded through the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The TXNSI is a networked improvement community designed to realize an aim of increasing the percentage of Black, Latino/a and students experiencing poverty who are on track to college and career success by the end of 8th grade. Our work together in Texas focuses on foregrounding equity and inclusive practices in improvement work with school teams. We support TXNSI to ensure that equity is infused in their continuous improvement practices and that their coaches are comfortable engaging in equity-minded conversations and activities with school teams, including principals and district leaders. We also help TXNSI identify and share alternative metrics aligned with existing or new change packages that center racial equity.

The proposed RemoteEDx work would be a great opportunity to extend this work in Ohio and Community and Design Partners would look forward to work both in an advisory capacity and as a content partner.

Learning Forward is a leader in building and sustaining networks while centering equity as a key priority. Learning Forward's expertise and intentional focus on equity would accelerate Ohio's efforts to improve student outcomes and to connect with communities and families to do so. I know that they would bring powerful connections and learning to this work. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this letter of support.

Sincerely,

*Julie Smith* Co-Founder/ Improvement Specialist

*Daniel Ramirez, PhD.* Improvement Specialist

Denise Glyn Borders  
Executive Director  
Learning Forward  
800 E. Campbell Road, Suite 224  
Richardson, TX 75081

Dear Dr. Borders:

On behalf of the Louisiana Department of Education, I am writing to express my support for Learning Forward's application to co-design and launch a RemotEDx Networked Learning Community for the Ohio Department of Education. Learning Forward has a proven track record of forefronting proven and highly effective professional learning and they are leaders in ensuring that professional learning aligns to the *Standards for Professional Learning*.

From 2017-2020, Learning Forward supported more than 1,800 mentor teachers across the state of Louisiana to prepare them to build relationships with their residents and new teachers; identify and address the needs of their mentees; deliver resources to help their mentees improve; and track their progress. Learning Forward designed and facilitated nine mentor modules incorporating a mentoring cycle (Diagnose-Coach-Measure Progress) as well as a content-area focus for each elementary, secondary ELA, and secondary mathematics cohort. Each day of mentor teacher training included a specific content focus, followed by activities to observe and coach around that content. This led to a deeper understanding of prioritized content and pedagogy, as well as extensive practice executing the coaching cycle. Learning Forward was an excellent partner in designing and facilitating a mentor program that developed the skills of experienced teachers to support new and beginning teachers in the state and achieve certification as mentor teachers through the Department of Education.

I am pleased to endorse Learning Forward for this work. They bring a unique combination of expertise in professional learning, continuous improvement, understanding of the needs of teachers at all levels and an ability to partner well with multiple stakeholders in a statewide project. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this letter of support.

Sincerely,

*Nicole Bono*

Nicole Bono  
Chief of Staff, Educator Development  
Louisiana Department of Education



OHIO

Letter of Support for Ohio RemotEDx Networked Learning Community

Denise Glyn Borders  
Executive Director  
Learning Forward  
800 E. Campbell Road, Suite 224  
Richardson, TX 75081

Dear Dr. Borders:

On behalf of Learning Forward Ohio, I am writing to express my support for Learning Forward's application to co-design and launch a RemotEDx Networked Learning Community for the Ohio Department of Education. As the Learning Forward affiliate in Ohio, we are excited to be a partner in this work and know that we can contribute significantly to the quality of the professional learning and alignment to the *Ohio Standards for Professional Learning*.

Learning Forward and Learning Forward Ohio are likeminded organizations committed to high quality professional learning for all educators as a lever to achieve equity for all students. In Ohio, we bring together a community of more than 200 educators who work collectively to achieve this mission. The proposed RemoteEDx work would be a logical and strategic extension of our efforts, particularly as we look to reinvent and innovate as we recover from the pandemic. Learning Forward Ohio has members and partnerships across the state and we would value the opportunity to build on these relationships in support of RemotEDx.

Learning Forward's valuable work in building and sustaining networks makes them the right choice to lead the work in building a networked learning community for RemotEDx. They have expertise in professional learning, improvement science and partnership building – all of which are critical to this effort. I know that they would bring powerful connections and learning to this work. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this letter of support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susan Drake". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Susan Drake  
Executive Director  
Learning Forward Ohio



# Ohio School Counselor Association

---

## Letter of Support for Ohio RemotEDx Networked Learning Community

Denise Glyn Borders  
Executive Director  
Learning Forward  
800 E. Campbell Road, Suite 224  
Richardson, TX 75081

Dear Dr. Borders:

On behalf of the Ohio School Counselor Association, I am writing to express my support for Learning Forward's application to co-design and launch a RemotEDx Networked Learning Community for the Ohio Department of Education. We appreciate that the school counselors' critical role is recognized and we are happy to partner in this work.

As the Networked Learning Community for RemotEDx is developed, caring and health of students and families must be a critical area of focus. Our association represents more than 1500 school counselors, counselor educators and graduate students in Ohio and we look forward to bring that expertise and experience to the table. The proposed RemoteEDx work would be a logical and strategic extension of our efforts, particularly as we look to reinvent and innovate as we recover from the pandemic. The Ohio School Counselor Association is excited to serve as a dissemination partner in this effort. As such, we will work to both gather information from our stakeholder community and also share information about RemotEDx to ensure that it is a well-known and well-used resource.

Learning Forward's valuable work in building and sustaining networks makes them the right choice to lead the work in building a networked learning community for RemotEDx and the Ohio School Counselor Association is the right organization with which to partner to ensure social and emotional needs of students, families and educators are attended to. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this letter of support.

Sincerely,

Mr. Shawn Grime, LSC  
Executive Director  
Ohio School Counselor Association  
shawngrime@ohioschoolcounselor.org

## RemotEDx Networked Learning Community Application Appendix D

### Evidence of Prior Effectiveness

*Include a letter(s) from education partner or other partners that have participated in a community of practice the applicant has facilitated.*

The attached letters are from partners that have participated in a Learning Forward Community of Practice:

- Alaska Department of Education
- Lancaster City Schools, Ohio
- Maryland State Department of Education

Attached is the What Matters Now Evaluation Report (West Ed, 2019).

As referenced in section B.a., below is a chart detailing eight major network initiatives led by Learning Forward over the last decade.

<i>Past Learning Forward Networks &amp; Communities of Practice</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>
<b><i>Learning School Network:</i></b> <i>Implement continuous improvement cycle to improve educator and student performance</i>	<i>2010-2016</i>
<b><i>Redesign PD Community of Practice (RPDC):</i></b> <i>Establish professional learning systems that provide coherent and aligned support to teachers; Establish professional learning systems that consistently measure the impact of educator learning according to Guskey 5 levels</i>	<i>2014-2017</i>
<b><i>Galveston County Learning Leaders:</i></b> <i>Establish professional learning systems that support principal and teacher leadership for improving educator performance</i>	<i>2015-2018</i>
<b><i>Arizona Learning Leaders</i></b> <i>Increase principals' capacities to lead professional learning in their schools</i>	<i>2017-2019</i>
<b><i>Student Success Learning Network (SSLN):</i></b> <i>Establish professional learning systems that improve educator performance in targeted content areas</i>	<i>2017 – 2018</i>
<b><i>What Matters Now Network (WMN):</i></b> <i>Increase the number of educators who experience job-embedded, team-based professional learning focused on high-quality instructional materials</i>	<i>2018 –</i>
<b><i>Redesign PD Community of Practice 2.0 (RPDC2):</i></b>	<i>2018 – 2019</i>

<i>Establish coherent and aligned systems that provide effective professional learning anchored in high quality instructional materials.</i>	
<b><i>Texas Network for School Improvement (TX NSI)</i></b> <i>A Gates Foundation NSI serving North Texas to improve College-Ready On Track indicators in middle schools for Black, Latinx, and low-income students using a structured continuous improvement process</i>	2018 –
<b><i>Redesign PD Community of Practice: Designing Professional Learning for a Virtual World (DPLV):</i></b> <i>A Redesign Professional Development Community of Practice to help educators adjust to and thrive in online, remote, or hybrid learning.</i>	2020 –

Attached are the resumes for Learning Forward leadership and key personnel:

- Melinda George, Chief Policy Officer
- Nicholas Morgan, Senior Consultant
- Michelle Bowman, Vice President, Networks & Content Design
- Tracy Crow, Chief Strategy Officer
- Paul Fleming, Senior Vice President, Standards, States & Equity
- Elizabeth Foster, Vice President, Research & Standards



THE STATE  
of **ALASKA**  
GOVERNOR MIKE DUNLEAVY

**Department of Education  
& Early Development**

DIVISION OF INNOVATION &  
EDUCATION EXCELLENCE

801 West 10<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 200  
P.O. Box 110500  
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0500  
Main: 907.465.2800  
Fax: 907.465.4156

4/21/21

Letter of Support for Ohio RemotEDx Networked Learning Community

Denise Glyn Borders  
Executive Director  
Learning Forward  
800 E. Campbell Road, Suite 224  
Richardson, TX 75081

Dear Dr. Borders:

On behalf of the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development, I am writing to express my support for Learning Forward's application to co-design and launch a RemotEDx Networked Learning Community for the Ohio Department of Education. Learning Forward has taken a strong leadership position on behalf of professional learning planning and implementation, especially in response to the pandemic.

For the past year, the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development has been a member of Learning Forward's Design Professional Learning in a Virtual World (DPLV) network. Our state team includes colleagues from the Department of Education, our Regional Service Centers and our Learning Forward Alaska affiliate. Learning Forward has helped us to come together as a team to plan for professional learning to support educators across Alaska through the pandemic as well as to plan for those elements that we want to continue as we enter a phase of reinvention and recovery. The tools and resources, the convenings and the customized coaching provided by Learning Forward have been so valuable.

I believe that Learning Forward would play a critical role in bringing the RemotEDx Networked Learning Community together and accelerating the impact that it will make in Ohio. They understand the power of networking combined with the importance of effective professional learning and I know that they would bring those qualities to your important work. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this letter of support.

Sincerely,

*Cecilia Miller*

Cecilia Miller  
Title IIA Coordinator





THE PLACE TO BE

## LANCASTER CITY SCHOOLS

Denise Glyn Borders  
Executive Director  
Learning Forward  
800 E. Campbell Road, Suite 224  
Richardson, TX 75081

Dear Dr. Borders:

On behalf of Lancaster City Schools, I am writing to express my support for Learning Forward's application to co-design and launch a RemotEDx Networked Learning Community for the Ohio Department of Education. As an Ohio school district that would benefit from a successful implementation of RemotEDx, I feel confident that Learning Forward would be an effective partner.

For the past two years, Lancaster City Schools has participated in Learning Forward's What Matters Now Network. Learning Forward has led Ohio's statewide coalition focused on practice influencing policy and it is effecting significant change in how we approach literacy through our TBTs and BLTs in our district. We conduct our work through continuous improvement cycles, and our team has been very pleased with the tools, resources and outcomes.

Learning Forward has proven itself to be a strong partner in Ohio and I believe they would be very effective in designing and launching the the RemotEDx Networked Learning Community in conjunction with many partners and stakeholders. They know how to forward educator voice in support of growth and learning.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this letter of support.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jeromey Sheets  
Director of Elementary Education  
Lancaster City Schools



**Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.**  
State Superintendent of Schools

---

April 19, 2021

Dr. Denise Glyn Borders  
Executive Director  
Learning Forward  
800 E. Campbell Road, Suite 224  
Richardson, TX 75081

Dear Dr. Borders:

I am writing to express my support for Learning Forward's application to co-design and launch a RemotEDx Networked Learning Community for the Ohio Department of Education. Learning Forward is well positioned to lead this work because of their expertise in planning and facilitating high quality professional learning and their considerable experience in building and implementing networked improvement communities.

For the last three years, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) participated in Learning Forward's What Matters Now Network. Through this partnership, Maryland school systems benefitted from the Network's support of team-based professional learning experiences centered on the selection and implementation of high-quality curriculum and instructional materials aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards. Throughout our engagement with Learning Forward, I was impressed by the facilitators' level of expertise and the comprehensive resources and tools provided to practitioners at the State, district, and school levels. Additionally, the Learning Forward team facilitated cross-site convenings that bolstered understandings and applications of improvement science and cycles of continuous learning.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this letter of support. If additional information is needed, please contact me at [tiara.booker-dwyer@maryland.gov](mailto:tiara.booker-dwyer@maryland.gov) or 410-767-3676.

Sincerely,

Tiara Booker-Dwyer  
Assistant State Superintendent  
Division of Career and College Readiness &  
Office of Leadership Development and School Improvement

# Learning Forward

## What Matters Now Network (WMNN)

### Formative Evaluation Memo

Claire Morgan

Dan Mello

August 2019

WestEd — a nonpartisan, nonprofit research, development, and service agency — works with education and other communities throughout the United States and abroad to promote excellence, achieve equity, and improve learning for children, youth, and adults. WestEd has more than a dozen offices nationwide, from Massachusetts, Vermont and Georgia, to Illinois, Arizona and California, with headquarters in San Francisco. For more information about WestEd, visit [WestEd.org](https://www.wested.org); call [415.565.3000](tel:415.565.3000) or, toll-free, (877) 4-WestEd; or write: WestEd / 730 Harrison Street / San Francisco, CA 94107-1242.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The What Matters Now Network (WMNN), launched in 2017, is a networked improvement community (NIC) facilitated by Learning Forward and funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York. WMNN brings together three state coalitions (Maryland, Ohio, and Rhode Island) to utilize improvement science processes at the practitioner level to work toward a shared vision of promoting teacher access to high-quality job-embedded professional learning (JEPL) focused on identifying and implementing high-quality curriculum and instructional materials (HQCIM). WestEd is conducting a formative evaluation of the initial work of WMNN to examine Network mechanisms, processes, and progress toward Network and state coalition goals. The interview, focus group, survey, and artifact-review data examined for the first phase of the formative evaluation show that state coalitions are progressing toward their intermediate aims.

Results reported across state coalitions included:

- Increased focus, purpose, and impact of the collaborative process of teacher-based teams
- Increased educator efficacy in using student data to inform instructional strategies
- Increased educator efficacy in assessing the quality of instructional materials
- Collaborative development and successful use of tools to guide educators in assessing student data and curricular materials and formulating strategies to meet student needs
- Embedding improvement science practices, including peer-based reflection and iterative testing of protocols and practices, in school processes

Participant suggestions for further developing and enhancing the WMNN work included strategically working toward Network scale-up and sustainability, enhancing cross-state collaboration around common challenges, and exploring in more depth how improvement science processes can inform the identification and implementation of high-quality curriculum and instructional materials.

## Background

The What Matters Now Network (WMNN), launched in 2017, is a networked improvement community (NIC) facilitated by Learning Forward and funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York. WMNN brings together three state coalitions (Maryland, Ohio, and Rhode Island) made up of educators at the school, district, and state levels to use improvement science processes to work toward a shared vision of promoting teacher access to high-quality job-embedded professional learning (JEPL) focused on identifying and implementing high-quality curriculum and instructional materials (HQCIM).

The Network has developed a driver diagram with identified intermediate and long-term aims and associated primary and secondary drivers. Each state coalition has similarly developed a driver diagram articulating aims and drivers related to its state-specific HQCIM content area (See Appendix B). Specifically, Maryland is focusing on increasing teacher capacity to identify and implement NGSS-aligned professional learning and instructional resources; Ohio is focusing on using collaborative learning teams to strengthen teacher practices for PK-3 literacy outcomes; and Rhode Island is focusing on increasing teacher engagement in high-quality job-embedded professional learning grounded in the school context and the use of HQCIM. The Network aims to promote practitioner-driven local and state policy.

Following intensive initial professional development in improvement science processes, provided by the Center for Public Research and Leadership (CPRL), the state coalitions began implementation in their two participating districts of a series of school-level cycles of continuous learning related to their aims, with coaching and support provided by a university or government collaborative partner and by Learning Forward. The inquiry (Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA)) cycles are carried out by school-level educator teams, with guidance from the collaborative partner and the state department of education partners. Coalition leadership teams (constituting the Network “Hub”) meet virtually and in-person, both in their state teams and as a Network Hub, to discuss progress and address challenges. Opportunities for cross-state learning take place during Hub calls and at in-person cross-state multistakeholder convenings.

## Purpose

WestEd is conducting a formative evaluation of the initial work of the WMNN. The purposes of the evaluation include:

- To understand the role and importance of the leadership and facilitation of the Network in supporting the WMNN work
- To examine progress toward the Network’s aims and factors enabling or hindering progress
- To collect information around each state coalition’s progress toward its aims and factors enabling or hindering progress

## Evaluation questions and data sources

The evaluation is organized around three levels prioritized by Learning Forward: Network support, Network aim progress, and participant results. The evaluation is examining WMNN's progress in each of these areas as it moves toward meeting its Network and state-specific aims related to changes in professional learning and teacher practice. The following questions guide the evaluation.

### Network support

- To what extent and in what ways does the Network structure and operation facilitate the work of state coalitions?
  - To what extent and in what ways does Network leadership and operational structure foster shared purpose, collaboration, accountability, capacity building, professional knowledge creation and sharing, and common language and inquiry approaches?
  - To what extent and in what ways does Learning Forward support coalitions in using improvement science methods to strengthen the implementation of job-embedded PL grounded in the use of HQCIM?
  - What is the role of the coalition collaborative partners in supporting the coalitions' work?

### Network aim progress

- To what extent and in what ways is the Network progressing toward its intermediate aim of teachers in Network schools accessing and engaging in effective JEPL grounded in the use of HQCIM?

### Participant results

- To what extent and in what ways are state coalitions making progress toward achieving their intermediate aims?
  - To what extent and in what ways is the Maryland coalition:
    - Building teacher knowledge of NGSS and NGSS-aligned HQCIM?
    - Facilitating educator engagement in PL addressing HQCIM?
  - To what extent and in what ways is the Ohio coalition:
    - Using collaborative learning teams to strengthen teacher capacity to improve literacy outcomes for PK-3 children?
    - In teacher-based teams, analyzing progress-monitoring data to guide identification and implementation of evidence-based literacy practices?
  - To what extent and in what ways is the Rhode Island coalition:
    - Engaging teachers in high-quality JEPL grounded in the use of HQCIM?

- Effectively messaging the work of the coalition to stakeholders?
- To what extent and in what ways do the structures and operations of each state coalition facilitate progress toward its aims?
- What are the successes and challenges encountered by state coalitions in pursuing their aims?
- To what extent and in what ways does each state coalition learn about and use improvement science methods to iteratively test improvements for strengthening professional learning and teacher practices?

### **Evaluation methods**

The following methods were used to address the evaluation questions:

- In-person observation and data gathering at December 2018 and February 2019 WMNN cross-state convenings
- Virtual observation of biweekly WMNN Hub calls
- Review of state coalition Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) reports and other WMNN artifacts housed in the WMNN online community
- Interviews with 17 WMNN members, including collaborative partners, state department of education staff, and district and school administrators and teachers

### **Evaluation findings**

Information from the data sources listed above was synthesized and triangulated to produce findings in the three overarching evaluation areas of network support, network aim progress, and participant results.



## Network support

### *Support provided by Learning Forward*

Feedback from WMNN participants obtained in interviews and at cross-state convenings indicated a very high level of satisfaction with the support provided by Learning Forward in implementing the work of the state coalitions. This positive feedback was echoed nearly universally across stakeholder types (including collaborative partners, state department of education staff, and district and school administrators and teachers).<sup>1</sup> Specifically, participants noted the following ways that Learning Forward supports the work:

- Serving as “critical friends” and thought partners to challenge and push forward the thinking
- Convening stakeholders to learn from one another
- Sharing relevant research, best practices, and other resources
- Providing guidance as experts in the field
- Bringing in the Center for Public Research & Leadership (CPRL) to provide support
- Scaffolding the content around improvement science that is new to some participants
- Maintaining open lines of communication
- Supporting Network participants to advocate for themselves in areas such as funding and legislation
- Ensuring that all voices are heard
- Responding to feedback
- Keeping the work prioritized, on-task, and goal-focused

*“[Learning Forward staff person] is a good critical friend. When we are going off on something, he steps in and says, ‘Did you think about this? What about this? Can we consider . . .?’ in a way that doesn’t offend people.”*

*“The resources provided and format of the agendas are directly related to our initiative’s aim and reflective work.”*

*“It has happened so many times that if we need help with something, [Learning Forward staff] will say, ‘I know how to find that. I will get that to you.’ They are awesome.”*

<sup>1</sup> Diverging views were shared by two Network participants. One mentioned that expected deliverables were not provided or were provided late, and the other expressed frustration with a perceived role of “carrying out directives”, rather than helping to shape the work.

### *Additional support needed*

Needs for additional support shared by participants coalesced around the following key areas.

*Sustainability coaching.* Network participants expressed the need for prompt and ongoing support related to working toward sustaining and scaling the WMNN work. Specifically, participants requested thought partnership, coaching, resources, and other support around embedding structures and processes and obtaining ongoing funding, stakeholder buy-in, and resources to ensure the continuation of the WMNN work beyond current funding.

As a critical component of planning for sustainability and scale-up, participants emphasized the need for support with mediating conversations about the WMNN work with state agencies, regional entities, and other stakeholders. Participants agreed that potential for sustaining the work is strong because of the value demonstrated to decision-makers thus far, nascent influence on state policy, and the spread of elements of the work to other districts, and emphasized the need for strategically building on this momentum.

*Enhanced cross-state learning.* Network participants appreciated the opportunities for cross-state learning and collaboration afforded by the Network structure—particularly the cross-state convenings—and would like to engage in more deep and relevant discussions around common problems. Participants shared that since each state has different contexts and processes, such an approach would involve less “reporting out” of each state’s work, and instead would involve finding ways to uncover and address shared challenges, perhaps guided by a driver diagram focused on cross-state learning. For example, participants mentioned a need to uncover underlying assumptions in each state about what constitutes high-quality curricular materials and what that means for cross-state collaboration and the work of the Network.

*Stronger depth of content around HQCIM.* Related to the above need to address states’ shared and diverging assumptions and approaches related to HQCIM, some participants expressed a need for more professional guidance from Learning Forward around what constitutes HQCIM. In particular, participants mentioned that further support around JEPL linking improvement science processes to curriculum selection, implementation, and modification would be helpful.

### *Support of collaborative partner*

The work of each state coalition is supported by a university or government-based education advocate from that state recruited by Learning Forward. Collaborative partners work closely with the state department of education coalition members to facilitate the work of their coalition. In addition to providing leadership to keep the work on track and guide school stakeholders in deciding next steps, they also provide “behind the scenes” support—organizing and providing agendas and logistical support for calls and convenings. Further, collaborative partners offer professional expertise to support coalitions in examining current practices and determining how they can be strengthened.

District and school stakeholders shared that the collaborative partners, in partnership with the state department of education members, implement the PDSA templates and collect, analyze, and present the data, including completing the WMNN quarterly reports. Collaborative partners and other stakeholders also noted that the collaborative partners support state coalition work by:

- Acting as the hub of information and resources for carrying out the work
- Managing the work
- Delineating responsibilities
- Providing opportunities for cross-district collaboration and learning
- Providing timely feedback to questions
- Checking in and following up on action items to keep the process moving and to ensure accountability
- Bringing coalition members together and supporting community of practice
- Acting as a strategic thought partner with state department of education stakeholders

#### *Network structure and operation*

In interviews, WMNN participants demonstrated a solid understanding of the goals, structure, and operations of the Network. The structure of the Network was described as:

- Learning Forward propelling the work, ensuring involvement of partners, and asking challenging questions
- State department of education stakeholders providing oversight and input on the focus of the work and who is involved, and ensuring alignment with state efforts
- The collaborative partner organizing, facilitating, and communicating about the work<sup>2</sup>
- District stakeholders, as well as administrators and instructional leaders at the participating schools, overseeing the work at the local level
- Teachers carrying out the PDSA cycles in participating schools

*“They have been amazing. They have provided us some of the anchoring facilitation points, reminders, interjections that have been really helpful.”*

<sup>2</sup> At least one of the coalitions also has data support from an outside organization, facilitated by the collaborative partner.

Interview participants further described the Network operation as regular meetings to share successes and challenges, check PDSA cycle progress, and create common goals to move forward. Interview participants stressed the importance of external support from Learning Forward and the collaborative partners to keep the work on track and moving forward. At the same time, participants shared that district and school-based teams drive the PDSA cycles and that teacher voice and decision-making has been key to the work.

*"I learned so much at the dinner—conversations, discourse, challenges we all battle. Sometimes those conversations are as important and it is challenging to dig down during the meeting."*

### *Collaboration and shared learning*

The majority of WMNN participants whose voices are represented in the evaluation data shared that it has been helpful during convenings to learn from other states, districts, and schools about their similar successes and challenges; gain practical ideas and resources from other coalitions; and collaborate around strategies. Some stakeholders also mentioned participating in cross-state collaboration in the field, while others shared that collaboration did not take place outside of convenings, due to different structures and different problems of practice.

Some stakeholders shared that the cross-state convenings and Hub calls are useful in that they refocus attention on the work, but that cross-state learning is minimal because of different approaches and priorities across entities. A few stakeholders shared that the kickoff meeting and initiation of the Network were somewhat disorganized and overwhelming, but that subsequent cross-state convenings have been helpful.

*"I really like the meetings a lot; they are great. It is really refreshing to hear that we are not the only state with a similar problem. It has been really useful to share materials and ideas."*

Appendix A contains a summary of feedback from the most recent cross-state convening. The majority of survey respondents found the meeting relevant and useful. Some respondents shared that the meeting was too long and dense.

### Participant voice

All but one of the WMNN stakeholders interviewed agreed that they have voice and input in the Network and that their ideas and feedback are considered. They emphasized that one of the most positive aspects of the Network is that stakeholders from different levels of leadership and practice come together to share on equal footing and all voices are heard. Even when everyone doesn't agree, communication is strong and productive.

*"Teacher voice has been at the forefront of the process. I know my voice matters. Everyone values the input I bring. I look forward to going and engaging with state leaders. Everyone has valued the opinion and perspective of teachers."*

### Network aim progress

Stakeholder interviews and coalition reports revealed the following ways the Network is progressing toward its aim of teachers in Network schools accessing and engaging in effective JEPL grounded in the use of HQCIM:

- Embedding improvement science practices, including peer-based reflection and iterative testing of protocols and practices, in school processes
- Testing processes in order to provide recommended best practices from the state for districts
- Showing policymakers the deep connections among curriculum, professional learning, and continuous improvement
- Promoting use of data to improve instruction
- Showing states where school systems are regarding HQCIM
- Providing structure to practice in a safe space through PDSA cycles
- Introducing new strategies for JEPL that schools are implementing
- Developing tools to use in collaborative structure in teacher meetings
- Creating coherence around teachers' effective use of different instructional strategies
- Building teacher capacity to assess and implement HQCIM
- Progress in providing students with HQCIM
- Providing a coherent process for analyzing instructional data that is framed district-wide, rather than previous ad hoc efforts

While stakeholders generally felt it was too soon for the work of the Network to impact state policy changes, they mentioned the following areas of alignment with and implications for state policy.

### *Maryland*

- The WMNN project is well-aligned with long-term school improvement initiatives in the state.
- WMNN work is giving the state insight into obstacles and areas of strength to replicate and scale up.
- WMNN work has implications for the way professional development is delivered to science coordinators in the state.
- The improvement issues surfaced by WMNN work have informed the root cause analysis project conducted by the University of Maryland and the Maryland Department of Education.

### *Ohio*

- The Ohio improvement process (OIP) is built around collaborative learning teams but is used mostly for compliance. The WMNN work will inform this broader improvement work across the state—providing a better idea of how to embed collaborative structures, conversations, and support teams at district and school levels to more effectively implement OIP while improving content and instructional knowledge.
  - OIP will become more effective by incorporating the improvement science approach of WMNN to develop tools for teachers to use statewide.
  - The WMNN work has given validation and practicality to a process that was only being used for compliance. A recent reboot of OIP incorporated some WMNN work.
- The decision-making framework developed through WMNN work could become part of policy at the state level.
- WMNN work will bolster the state strategic plan for raising literacy achievement.

### Rhode Island

- The WMNN project is elevating the discourse around how policy in different areas, such as curriculum, professional learning, and continuous improvement impact one another.
- HQCIM is a big priority in the state and scaffolding provided through the Network initiative is what is needed for that effort.
- WMNN is well-aligned with the curriculum and instructional priorities of the state.
- RI has policy changes in mind for professional learning standards in the state and they are using WMNN to pilot these changes to iron out any rough spots before implementing the policy.
- PDSA cycles are helping to add structure to other state initiatives that are using Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to critically examine practice.
- The work aligns very well with new professional learning standards and requirements in the state regarding teachers collaborating around instruction and curriculum.

### Participant results

Overall, the interview, focus group, survey, and artifact review data show that participants are seeing results from the WMNN work and are progressing toward their intermediate coalition aims. Participants emphasized that it is too early to show definitive impact on students, but they are seeing shifts in leading indicators. Results reported across state coalitions include increased focus, purpose, and impact in the collaborative process of teacher-based teams; increased educator efficacy in using student data to inform instructional strategies and assess the quality of instructional materials; and the collaborative development and successful use of tools to guide educators in assessing student data and curricular materials and formulating strategies to meet student needs. Specific results reported by each state coalition are listed below.

### Maryland

- Teachers are thinking about their materials differently and redesigning and rethinking the way they conduct their own professional learning communities.
- Teachers are no longer taking the materials they have for granted and are becoming more sophisticated in their analysis of them.
- Teachers' comfort level and knowledge of NGSS and NGSS-aligned HQCIM have increased and they are asking for more opportunities to learn—such as peer observations.
- The pre/post-surveys show there has been improvement in teacher knowledge and perception.

*"We have definitely seen progress in building teacher awareness and confidence in NGSS."*

- Teachers are facilitating NGSS-aligned lessons and are infusing crosscutting concepts into lessons.
- Teachers are more engaged and invested in the PLC process now that they have a purpose driving their PLCs that were previously unfocused.
- Administrators are more invested in ensuring that educators have the professional development they need to be successful.

#### Ohio

- Tools teachers are using through WMNN work have improved their understanding of instructional strategies for literacy.
- Teacher-based teams are examining their data and determining next steps and needs for high-quality curricular materials.
- Teacher team meetings are happening all over the state, but they are unfocused and have not been effective. WMNN work has refocused these meetings so that they have a clear purpose, and teachers are bringing data and talking about strategies.
- Teachers have gotten much better at analyzing assessment data and can identify root causes and appropriate intervention strategies much more quickly.
- Great growth in teachers' collaborative practice has been observed that was not there before the WMNN initiative.
- The tools that have been developed through WMNN work have simplified the process for collaborative conversations.
- Teachers are held more accountable in teacher-based teams.
- Student phonics scores have improved.

*"Anecdotally, this is the first time teacher-based teams have felt effective because they have a tool that says, 'Here's your data, here is where you need to go next.' They are recognizing they have gaps in high-quality materials—they go to look for resources to address student needs and see they don't exist."*

#### Rhode Island

- Teachers are using student work protocol to make instructional decisions.
- Educators have significantly shifted their mindsets around the importance of looking at student data and the value of the collaborative process.
- Educators and district leaders exhibit ownership of WMNN work.

*"We have data in RI that show direct changes in teacher actions and teacher dispositions from this work."*



- The rate of next steps/actions taken by teachers as a result of examining student data has increased.
- A new type of JEPL across districts has been adopted in a large-scale and positive way.

#### Participant use of improvement science

Participants agreed that the improvement science processes they are using are valuable for testing change ideas and bringing stakeholders together to discuss results and next steps. WMNN participants shared that the PDSA work is at the nascent level, with small amounts of data being collected, but that there is potential for embedding and scaling the processes across schools. Participants shared the following reflections about the improvement science work.

- Support of Learning Forward is important for help in thinking through measurement issues.
- Coalition members appreciate the concept of improvement science and are willing to engage in PDSA cycles, but the process is driven by the collaborative partner and state department of education. A next step would be to ensure that improvement science processes are embedded in the work of educators.
- Teachers are learning and using the PDSA process; now it needs to be scaled across other teams and schools.
- Collaborative partners and state department of education partners are hands-on with helping formulate change ideas and PDSA cycle processes, which are then executed by local educators.
- The CPRL support helped participants understand each of the steps of the PDSA cycle.

*"While the teachers in our school are using PDSA cycles to make instructional next steps, as a coalition, we are using our PDSA cycle to explore what decisions we, as teacher leaders, can make to facilitate this process and foster mindsets and dispositions among staff."*

*"We have thought a lot about the core principles of a good improvement science community. We make sure that all voices are at the table in co-equal ways. We are using a deeper, disciplined inquiry process to address issues."*

#### Participant successes and challenges

WMNN participants shared successes and challenges they have encountered in the work so far. Common successes across state coalitions included stronger, more focused professional learning community and teacher-based team meetings and collaboration; district and state

*"It has been a real success to build this partnership with the group of folks working together—high officials and teachers working on shared problem with co-equal relationships."*

leadership seeking and listening to teacher voice; and increased teacher knowledge and skill around improvement science, data-informed instruction, and HQCIM.

Common challenges reported across state coalitions included time and logistics to get stakeholders to the table; addressing the priorities of diverse stakeholders; and getting buy-in from all teachers. Specific successes and challenges of each state coalition are presented below.

### *Maryland*

#### Successes

- Bringing together different stakeholders to work in partnership around a shared problem
- Very high level of buy-in by middle school teachers
- Collaborative development of tools that are meeting identified needs
- Collaboration and mutual respect among teachers; teachers placing higher priority on what it means to be a professional learning community
- Teachers having been given a voice; the Department of Education listening and addressing issues
- Increased teacher confidence in NGSS-aligned instruction; teachers acting as resident experts in their school community

#### Challenges

- Human capacity—goals and ambitions exceeding funding
- Time for all the players to commit to the work, including obtaining subs
- Getting buy-in from teachers that haven't attended the state coalition meetings
- Helping teachers understand that the work will improve practice and outcomes for students

### *Ohio*

#### Successes

- Integration of OIP structures with greater content knowledge of literacy instruction
- WMNN work making connections across literacy work and school improvement work; OH literacy lead using WMNN work with Striving Leaders districts
- WMNN work informing grants being written at the DOE
- Applicability of WMNN learnings to other areas, such as math and PBIS

#### Challenges

- Time, scheduling, and prioritizing, considering all that coalition members have on their plates
- Obtaining data from all participating teachers; changing the mindsets of teachers
- Developing a systematic approach that meets the diverse needs of urban, suburban, and rural schools
- Competing agendas of participants
- Collaborative partner not having a background in literacy/science of learning
- Ensuring that the model has a tight enough framework and flexibility for scale-up; knowing the best way to share the model with other districts
- Data-collection approach not always purposeful and practical for teachers

*"We have made amazing progress toward our goals, and even if the work stopped tomorrow, we would have a lot to show."*

*"OIP has been in place for underperforming schools for 15–20 years but has just been compliance for districts. Those districts that have used it as part of WMNN have said for the first time they see the connection between OIP and actual collaboration among teachers and improvement in student growth."*

### *Rhode Island*

#### Successes

- Functional collaboration among stakeholders that carry different weights of power, showing that this type of collaboration with different power dynamics can be very productive
- Coalition members feeling able to step up when their expertise is called upon and step back when they are relying upon others
- Increasingly stronger coalition meetings that are more focused and productive, with more open dialogue around professional learning
- Data-gathering and analysis skills and knowledge gained by coalition members
- Alignment of PDSA cycles with the assessment schedule to facilitate review of assessment data; teachers increasingly looking at student data

*"Instead of just meeting for updates, we have a goal in mind. Teachers aren't waiting for administrators but are keeping each other accountable."*

#### Challenges

- Follow-through and depth of engagement when everyone has so much on their plates
- Addressing the varying goals and priorities of coalition members

- Districts working on very different things and in very different places in terms of curriculum and instructional materials
- Confusion during the first few months of the initiative, with different organizations giving different messages and lack of clarity around focus

### Participant suggestions

WMNN participants shared the following suggestions for improving the Network operation and effectiveness:

- Develop a driver diagram around effective cross-state learning and collaboration.
- Allow flexibility around modifying PDSA timelines.
- Expand work to more schools and examine outcomes in different types of schools with different demographics.
- Use data more frequently in meetings; pull out more data to respond to; show comparisons among PDSA cycle outcomes; ensure that teachers see the data.
- Give more teachers the opportunity to attend the state coalition meetings in order to increase buy-in and excitement.
- Provide support to coalitions for thinking through sustainability and scale-up.
- Provide support to coalitions around thinking through how districts can become the leaders of the work.
- Ensure that the work is embedded in other efforts so that it is connected, continuous, and relevant, and is not such a big lift for local stakeholders.
- Ensure that the data collection is in service to school stakeholders rather than the priorities of Learning Forward, and that the data collection is directly relevant and useful to schools.
- Provide support around determining the most-needed data for each PDSA cycle, and how those data can be obtained in the least burdensome ways.
- Start to use measures that will look at whether the work is impacting student achievement.
- Provide guidance around issues of absence of variability, scale-up/sample size, measurement, and ongoing guidance around improvement science processes to ensure they are being followed correctly.

*“Teachers feel very supported. I can’t underscore that enough. Not just by the district, but by a professional organization that wants to get it right, and through the state (because sometimes people can have a negative view of a state agency), but this is about support, not accountability.”*

- Allow time in cross-state convenings to explore issues in more depth, rather than having such packed agendas.
- Create a shared warehouse of resources, such as research and articles, curriculum resources shared by Carnegie, Learning Forward resources, and the work of the state coalitions.
- Ensure that guidance from the collaborative partners and departments of education is less theoretical and more practical and relevant to local needs.
- Develop a common reflection tool to synthesize efforts across the states.

### **Reflections and considerations**

Overall, feedback on WMNN collected across states and stakeholders was highly positive. The WMNN participants whose voices are represented in the evaluation data are highly engaged in the work and see its value for their schools, districts, and states. Participants feel they are progressing well toward their state aims and see alignment of the WMNN work with existing state goals and initiatives, as well as potential implications for informing state policy. Stakeholders are very appreciative of the leadership and support of Learning Forward, the collaborative partners, and the state department of education participants.

Emerging evaluation findings indicate that participation in the WMN Network has led to more focused and purposeful use of collaborative professional learning time by educators, as well as increased efficacy in assessing student data and instructional strategies and materials. Network educators are using tools developed through WMNN work to structure professional learning and to inform instructional decisions. For example, the Student Work Protocol developed in Rhode Island is being used to examine the effectiveness of instructional strategies used with different subgroups. In Maryland, educators are using WMNN tools to assess the alignment of science curriculum with NGSS. Teacher-based teams in Ohio are using protocols developed through WMNN to identify, implement, and assess promising literacy strategies, curricula, and instructional materials, informed by student data. Further, evaluation findings indicate that WMNN work is promoting teacher voice and has implications for practitioner-driven policy.

Moving forward, WMNN leadership may wish to consider collecting feedback from additional teachers who are involved in the on-the-ground work of the PLCs and PDSA cycles to ensure that the voices of all stakeholders are heard and responded to. Drawing from the feedback and suggestions for improvement provided by stakeholders, WMNN leadership may wish to explore ways to enhance cross-state learning and collaboration. In addition, WMNN leadership might examine the balance between providing theoretical vs. practical, actionable information that is directly relevant to local needs, as well as take steps to ensure that data collection, management, and presentation is directly relevant to coalition members, including teachers. Finally, WMNN leadership should prioritize providing further guidance to coalition members around how best to scale up and sustain the work that has begun, including recommendations for increasing local ownership,

embedding and routinizing inquiry cycles, and messaging the work to other districts/schools and policymakers.

## APPENDIX A

### February 2019 Cross-State Convening Exit Ticket Results

#### Introduction

This report details results from the “exit ticket” questionnaire completed by WMNN participants at the February 2019 Cross-State Convening. Participants responded to questions about their satisfaction with various aspects of the meeting, as well as to questions regarding their perceptions of results from WMNN work, efficacy around improvement science, and the support of Learning Forward and collaborative partners.

#### Practical ideas gained in meeting

Participants were asked whether they were leaving the meeting with ideas that they would implement. Almost all participants responded that they strongly agreed or agreed (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Level of Respondent Agreement That They Gained Ideas to Implement

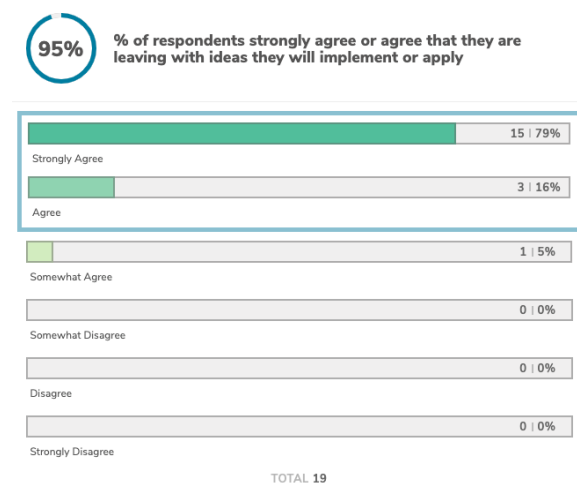


Figure 1.1 Maryland

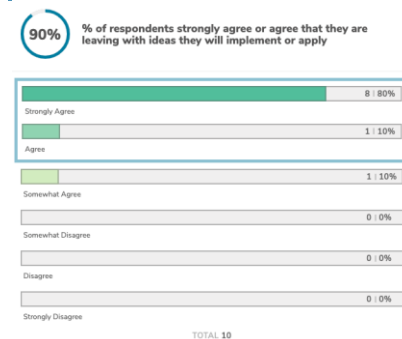


Figure 1.2 Ohio

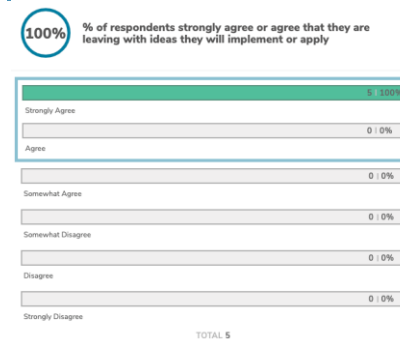
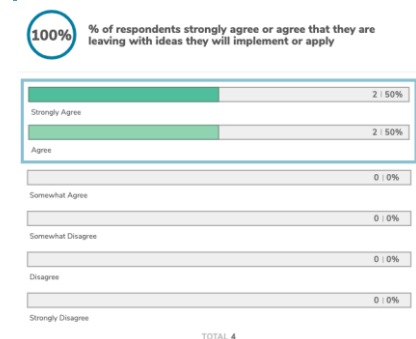


Figure 1.3 Rhode Island



## Utility of meeting for better engagement with curriculum

Participants were asked whether the meeting would help them better engage with and implement their curriculum. A majority of participants (84 percent) indicated that they strongly agreed or agreed (Figure 2). Figure 2.3 Rhode Island indicates that half of the four participants from Rhode Island agreed or strongly agreed. One participant from Rhode Island somewhat agreed and another disagreed.

Figure 2: Level of Respondent Agreement That the Coalition Meeting Will Help Them Better Engage With Curriculum

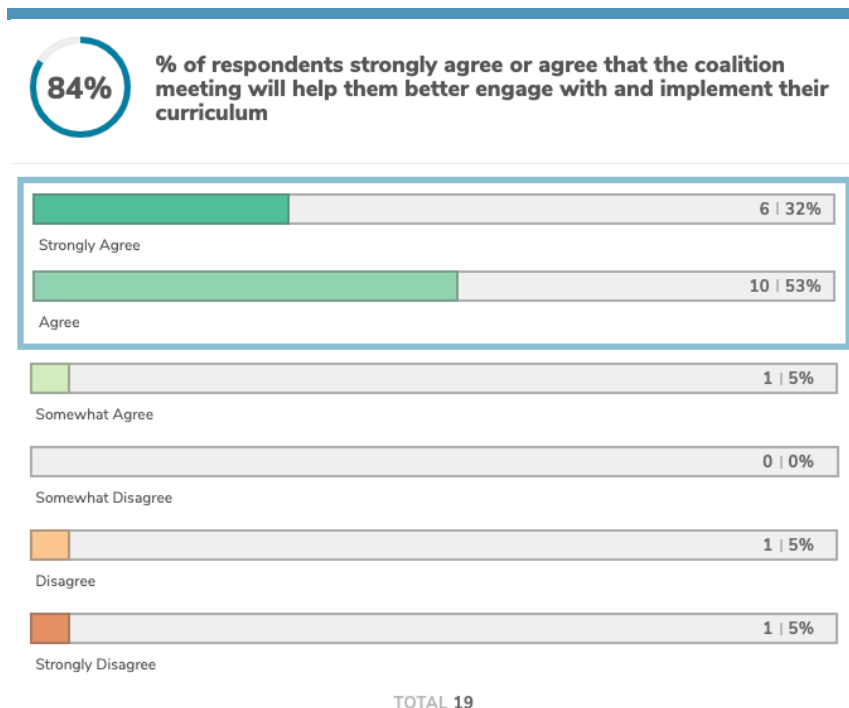


Figure 2.1 Maryland

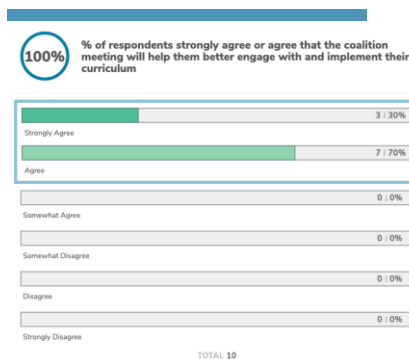


Figure 2.2 Ohio

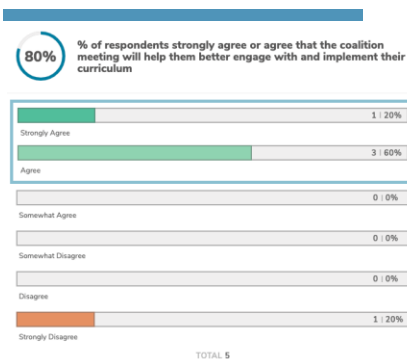
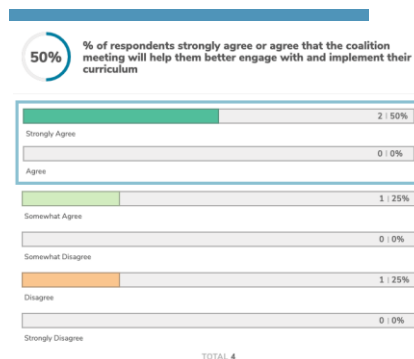


Figure 2.3 Rhode Island





## Relevance of meeting

Participants were asked to rate the relevance of the meeting (1 = not at all; 5 = extremely relevant). Overall, participants reported that they found the meeting very relevant to their day-to-day-practice, their curriculum, providing input to leadership, and to their content. In total, nine participants responded. Table 1 shows the average values of all responses by state to each of the prompts.

Table 1. Cross-State Meeting Relevance

	DATA COUNT	All	Rhode Island	Maryland	Ohio
<b>Cross-State Meeting Relevance</b>		9	4	4	1
		4.5	4.3	4.6	5.0
How relevant was the meeting to your day-to-day practice?		4.3	3.8	4.8	5.0
How relevant was the meeting to the curriculum you most frequently use?		4.4	4.5	4.3	5.0
How relevant was the meeting to your ability to provide input to state and district leaders?		4.6	4.5	4.5	5.0
How relevant was the meeting to the content that you work with?		4.7	4.5	4.8	5.0

## Impact on likelihood of better engaging with curriculum, seeking or implementing JEPL, and sharing with colleagues

Table 2 shows that participants generally agreed that the meeting would help them engage with their curriculum (5.10) and seek out or implement job-embedded professional learning (5.2), and that they were excited to share what they learned in the convening with their colleagues who aren't members of the coalition (5.7).

Table 2. Cross-State Meeting Reflection

	DATA COUNT	All	Rhode Island	Maryland	Ohio
<b>Cross-State Meeting Reflection</b>		9	4	4	1
		5.3	5.1	5.4	6.0
The coalition meeting will help me better engage with and implement my curriculum.		5.1	4.5	5.5	6.0
The coalition meeting will help me better seek out or implement job-embedded professional learning.		5.2	5.3	5.0	6.0
I am excited to share what we worked on today with my colleagues who are not members of the coalition.		5.7	5.5	5.8	6.0

## Meeting satisfaction

Participants were asked to rate their agreement on their satisfaction with various aspects of the meeting (1 = strongly disagree; 6 = strongly agree). Table 3 shows that participants agreed that they had ample opportunities for reflection and dialogue with their peers (5.6), that they experienced a sense of community at the conference (5.7), and that they are leaving with ideas that they will apply (5.8). In all, ratings for agreement were above 5 (agree).

Table 3. Cross-State Meeting Satisfaction

	DATA COUNT	All	Rhode Island	Maryland	Ohio
		9	4	4	1
<b>Cross-State Meeting Satisfaction</b> ⓘ		5.7	5.3	5.9	6.0
I had ample opportunities for reflection and dialogue with my peers.		5.6	5.3	5.8	6.0
I experienced a sense of community at the conference.		5.7	5.3	6.0	6.0
I am leaving with ideas I will implement or apply.		5.8	5.5	6.0	6.0

### Most effective aspects of the meeting

Participants were asked what they found most effective about the meeting. Open-ended responses are displayed in Table 4. A predominant theme in the responses was the opportunity to interact and collaborate with peers and other state teams. Regarding the content of the meeting, a few respondents indicated that they found the data discussion most effective.

Table 4. Most Effective Aspects of the Meeting, Open-Ended Responses

<b>What did you find most effective about this meeting?</b>	<i>The collaboration with other state teams.</i>
<i>I thought Nick Morgan's presentation on data was very well done and helpful in providing more context for the work. Having team time on day one was also very helpful.</i>	<i>The combination of concentrated team time AND really content-rich WG sessions. Nicely curated from start to end!</i>
<i>I really enjoyed the data analysis discussion and the work through the research articles. It was a refreshing twist &amp; addition to the State based coalition work we are doing. The work within those sessions gave me ideas to take back to my district and ideas for ways to enhance our collaborative work &amp; learning.</i>	<i>This was my first coalition meeting. I thought it was a great balance of getting to work together with my own coalition and meet/discuss with other coalition members. I appreciated receiving the text resources. I also enjoyed when we split into groups by teacher, district level, state level, etc to talk about the big and little "Ps". Connecting with other states to see where they are and that we all have struggles and strengths was powerful.</i>
<i>The collaboration and reflecting data on how to move forward in the next phase.</i>	<i>Time to talk and collaborate with colleagues</i>
<i>Cross-state exchanges</i>	<i>The chance to connect across states was helpful. The framing and digging deeper into the measurements was particularly helpful for the work we're doing in state.</i>
<i>The transition from theory to practice. Love it.</i>	<i>It was helpful to have time to talk with my coalition members about where this might land for 2020.</i>
<i>Great, scaffolded information</i>	<i>Planning and increasing our buildings focus</i>
<i>I found that the idea of having teachers learn and share in professional learning communities is one of the most powerful tools to transform a culture and academic achievement in a building.</i>	<i>The opportunity to dialogue as a local coalition both "before" and "after" the Cross State activities. Through these activities, I believe that stakeholders in Maryland gained better perspective which impacted the development of our next PLC format/activities.</i>
<i>Really liked the problem based discussion groups. Wish we would have done two rounds of it. The state work was very productive as well.</i>	<i>I am walking away knowing the value of embedded professional development.</i>

### Least effective aspects of the meeting

Participants were asked what they found least effective about the meeting. Open-ended responses are displayed in Table 5. Many respondents indicated that the days were “long”—too much content packed into long hours. They indicated that reducing the amount of content, including more time for interaction and movement, or lengthening the meeting while including breaks would have been helpful. Regarding the content of the meeting, two respondents indicated that it was a challenge to plan PDSA cycles so far in advance or that stronger guidance for planning would have been more effective.

Table 5. Least Effective Aspects of the Meeting, Open-Ended Responses

<b>What did you find least effective about this meeting?</b>	<i>The time for day one was not effective. Learning Forward represents the standard for professional learning experiences. A ten-hour day is not an effective professional learning practice for adult learners.</i>
<i>Honestly maybe would have like more time, not much like 5 more minutes, for each coalition to share out. Maybe because this was my first cross state coalition, felt like I was playing catch up with knowing what the other states have been doing.</i>	<i>The first day was too long and by the time we got to the final session on Aims and Measures, it was hard to stay engaged (and NOT because of the quality of Nick's facilitation)</i>
<i>It would have been helpful to have more time on day 2 to solidify plans as an Ohio coalition, rather than the additional cross-state activities focused on stakeholder engagement.</i>	<i>Alot of time was spent sitting and listening. More opportunities to move and interact would have made the time more manageable. This includes more/longer breaks. For a classroom teacher, the normal schedule is 7hrs. The 10hrs of meetings on day 1 were a little too much to fully engage with and internalize the content.</i>
<i>It was very difficult to try and map out our trajectory plan to June 2020. I can appreciate working toward a goal with the end in mind but there was some challenge planning out our next 5-6 PDA cycles based upon where we are today &amp; how much things have been tweaked over our conversations the past two days..</i>	<i>PDSA plans wander substantially from primer descriptions (which are clear and helpful)</i>
<i>It's always tricky: We packed a LOT into the couple days. Everyone seemed fried at the end. I wonder if a longer meeting with more breaks (or a less ambitious agenda) would have let us more deeply process and internalize the work we were doing together?</i>	<i>The role-alike conversation was not as helpful as I hoped it would be. Not much actionable conversation.</i>
<i>The start and end times of day one were too long. Should have ended no later than 5pm</i>	<i>The data session was informative, but too lengthy.  I know we need job embedded professional development. How do we get it?</i>

### Coalition impact, improvement science efficacy, support of Learning Forward and collaborative partner

Participants were asked to rate their agreement on various aspects of the WMNN initiative (1 = strongly disagree; 6 = strongly agree). Results are displayed in Table 6. Participants agreed that they had seen teacher/school changes as a result of the work in their state coalition so far (4.8), that they understood how to use improvement science methods (5.1), and that Learning Forward and their state coalition's collaborative partner provide the necessary support to their state coalition.

Table 6. Coalition Impact, Improvement Science Efficacy, and Coalition Support

	DATA COUNT	All	Rhode Island	Ohio	Maryland
		9	4	1	4
<b>Cross-State Meeting - Coalition Support and Impact</b>		<b>5.3</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>5.5</b>
I have seen teacher/school changes as a result of the work of my state coalition so far.		4.8	4.5	4.0	5.3
I understand how to use improvement science methods (driver diagrams, PDSA cycles, etc).		5.1	5.0	5.0	5.3
Learning Forward provides the necessary support to my state coalition.		5.6	5.3	6.0	5.8
My state coalition's collaborative partner provides the support needed to move forward the coalition work.		5.6	5.3	6.0	5.8

### Changes in state as a result of the coalition work

Participants were asked what changes they have seen as a result of the work with their state coalition so far. Open-ended responses are displayed in Table 7. Some respondents indicated that it was still too early to see measurable results. Others indicated that they have seen changes in collaboration and instruction. In particular, one respondent noted changes in the use of data and student work to drive instructional decisions and collaborative conversations.

Table 7. Changes in State as a Result of the Coalition Work, Open-ended Responses

<b>I have seen teachers/school changes as a result of the work of my state coalition so far.</b>
<i>Our data gathering process is still a bit rudimentary but it has been effective in seeing growth with our teachers.</i>
<i>The work has translated into school building collaboration &amp; instruction. Teachers have more interest in initiative activities &amp; the overall objective/ aim being addressed.</i>
<i>I have seen my teachers become leaders in the department and begin to take an active stance on working together in a Professional Learning Community.</i>
<i>Beginning to</i>
<i>Our student work protocol process is gaining momentum.</i>
<i>Haven't yet seen the impact we had hoped, but changes we have made should help.</i>
<i>We have seen a shift in the frequency of teachers using student work to make instructional decisions.</i>
<i>We have data in RI that show direct changes in teacher actions and teacher dispositions from this work.</i>
<i>Participant changes: of course. As to the rest, we are collecting data. The TBT context is unique across the coalition.</i>
<i>So far in my school, I feel the resistance of my colleagues and participated the reflections just for the sake of completion but now that our administrator is aware of the goals of this program, I am positive that my colleagues will change their perspective about it and with the school's support from top to bottom , collaboration will increase for a common goal.</i>
<i>I've been looking with a more critical work during my roles as an instructional leader. I've also been fostering collaborative relationships to build on work in my building with other buildings &amp; leaders. I've also moved to shorter term goal setting and personal analysis &amp; evaluation of the results/impact of our processes in lieu of only the data that comes out of it (supplying intervention services across my building).</i>
<i>The conversation on the part of our school partners suggests that their involvement in the WMN work is influencing their thinking and work. At a minimum, they're identifying gaps in the TBT meeting process as a result. It's hard to say whether teacher/school changes are a result of school involvement in the literacy pilot or in WMN specifically.</i>
<i>Teacher attitudes and commitment to the work is shown through their discussions.</i>
<i>My teacher's conversations are more centered around data and instructional strategies and they are staying more focused due to an accountability tool we created as part of our PDSA cycle measurement. They are seeking more high quality</i>
<i>Given our early predictions, that teacher knowledge of NGSS-aligned lessons would increase, we saw evidence through their input that coming together through their collaborative planning time to analyze their lessons is improving their grounding in NGSS. Providing our teachers with a NGSS Lesson Checklist and exemplar lesson were springboards for more accelerated teacher learning.</i>

### Improvement science efficacy

Participants were asked to provide details about their efficacy with improvement science methods. Open-ended responses are displayed in Table 8.

Table 8. Improvement Science Efficacy, Open-ended Responses

<b>I understand how to use improvement science methods (driver diagrams, PDSA cycles, etc.)</b>
<i>I definitely have a better understanding of the significance of each component and see its usefulness.</i>
<i>The methods clarified the PDSA cycles and driver diagrams to help me have a clearer picture of implementing NGSS aligned lessons and units.</i>
<i>In progress</i>
<i>Strongly agree</i>
<i>Once we put this into practice, it became clear.</i>
<i>I feel like I'm generally functional but also not an expert in any or all of these. I feel like I have the theory down but how it manifests in different situations, in practice, is still where I'd like more learning.</i>
<i>The fundamentals are clearing. The nuances are more art than science. Still learning.</i>
<i>It's a clear path for me of the process that guides me to achieve my aim or goals in 3 years.</i>
<i>I'm not as confident as I would like to be but I've been able to grasp the main concepts and continue to learn more every time we continue another PDSA cycle. I'm beginning to implement the initial phases into my school based leadership work.</i>
<i>We have more clarity in the use of the methods and tools this year.</i>
<i>i do.</i>
<i>The driver diagrams are helpful for keeping us with the big picture/end result in mind. I really enjoyed seeing the three states diagrams. The PDSA cycles helps narrow our focus so we can look at our actions to see if they are directly affecting the results we want. PDSA are quick and if we aren't getting the results we need we can tweak actions before the next cycle.</i>
<i>Segun and I are involved in other Improvement Science initiatives, including our own doctoral and graduate programs, which are contributing to our growing knowledge base in the tools of improvement science. The What Matters Now network has been the first PDSA cycles we have helped to lead in Maryland, from which we are learning much!</i>

### Support of collaborative partner

Participants were asked to provide details about the support of their state coalition's collaborative partner. Results are displayed in Table 9. Respondents responded enthusiastically about their collaborative partners. They indicated many factors that were positive, including their contributions to moving the projects forward by providing momentum, logistics such as scheduling meetings and finding accommodations, and enabling the respondents to engage in the work.

Table 9. Support of Collaborative Partner, Open-ended Responses

<b>My state coalition's collaborative partner provides the support needed to move forward the coalition work.</b>
<i>University of Maryland partners are phenomenal. Their choice to facilitate discussion, add valued input/perspective and engage all stakeholders in meaningful activities is awesome.</i>
<i>The support was provided for us to meet, engage and have several supports in linking school-based, district, university and state personnel.</i>
<i>Allows us to work provides data reflection</i>
<i>Provides a platform and process</i>
<i>We work as a team sharing ideas, collecting data, and planning next steps.</i>
<i>Maintains the momentum</i>
<i>Good. But also could do more to connect efforts across districts and streamline efforts for educators on the ground.</i>
<i>State partner is clear and well organized.</i>
<i>The coalition goal will just be a "big picture" and cannot be a reality without the support of the state coalition. The state collaborative partners were so engaged and so supportive by providing us teachers some specific professional trainings that we need in implementing the NGSS curriculum to attain our goals.</i>
<i>There is a great amount of structure, organization, coordination, and support through the process of getting our work done:</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>1. Scheduling meetings</i></li> <li><i>2. Site Selection &amp; accommodations</i></li> <li><i>3. Provision of resources, materials, and time</i></li> </ol>
<i>The school systems (teachers, admin, etc) are doing amazing work!</i>
<i>Our collaborative partner stays engaged in our conversations and seeks to understand what we want to accomplish and helps us bring that into realistic pieces as work through the PDSA cycles.</i>
<i>Our MSDE colleagues are enthusiastic and committed, and have jumped in to assist with data synthesis and tool development. Our two district partners are similarly committed.</i>



## Support of Learning Forward

Finally, participants were asked to provide details on the support of Learning Forward. Results are displayed in Table 10. Respondents were almost entirely positive about their enthusiasm for working with Learning Forward and the supports Learning Forward provides. In particular, respondents indicated that Learning Forward's perspective was a valuable contribution to discussions. Among other supports, respondents valued the research, professional development, and opportunity to convene with structures, protocols, and processes in place.

Table 10. Support of Learning Forward, Open-Ended Responses

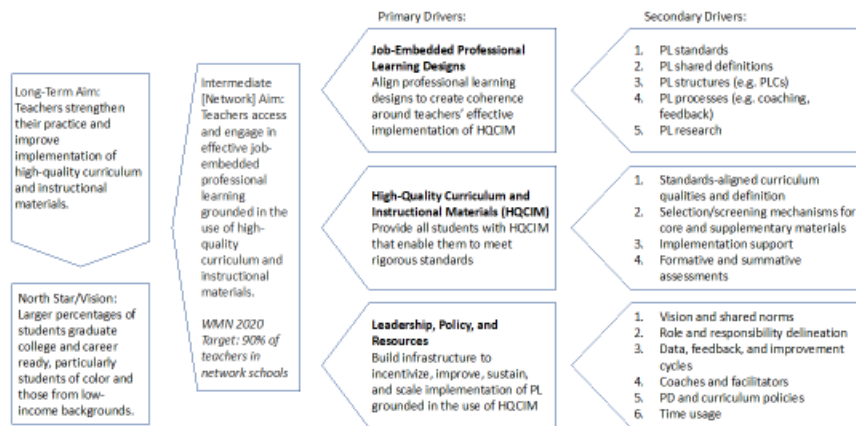
<b>Learning Forward provides the necessary support to my state coalition</b>
<i>You guys are great!!</i>
<i>Melinda's perspective is a valuable component of our discussion. The resources provided and format of the agenda(s) are directly related to our Initiative's AIM and reflective work.</i>
<i>Provided professional articles that aligned to our learning goals and provided specific strategies for implementation.</i>
<i>Research</i>
<i>Pd</i>
<i>Opportunity</i>
<i>I'm excited to talk more about the intersection of Learning Forward's professional learning model and the type of professional learning that I associate with high-quality curriculum implementation.</i>
<i>structures, protocols, processes, research</i>
<i>Good. As we move into the second phase of the work in RI, I imagine the supports we'll need from Learning Forward will change. But so far, we haven't felt like we've needed deep supports (unless we haven't been asking the right questions?).</i>
<i>late insertion of curriculum materials is a problem across the coalition--a reliable non-negotiable precedes participant agreement</i>
<i>The Learning Forward provides support my state coalition by offering professional development, some instructional support for teachers, and created reflection and measuring tools to asses us in achieving our goals.</i>
<i>1) In-person, virtual, and email support on our work through our current &amp; past PDSA cycles. From clarification to challenging our work I feel supported throughout our work.</i>
<i>LF does provide support but it would be nice to have more lead time with our liaison prior to meetings to ensure that we're on the same page.</i>
<i>LF provides expertise and resources</i>

## APPENDIX B

### WMNN Driver Diagrams

#### What Matters Now Network Driver Diagram

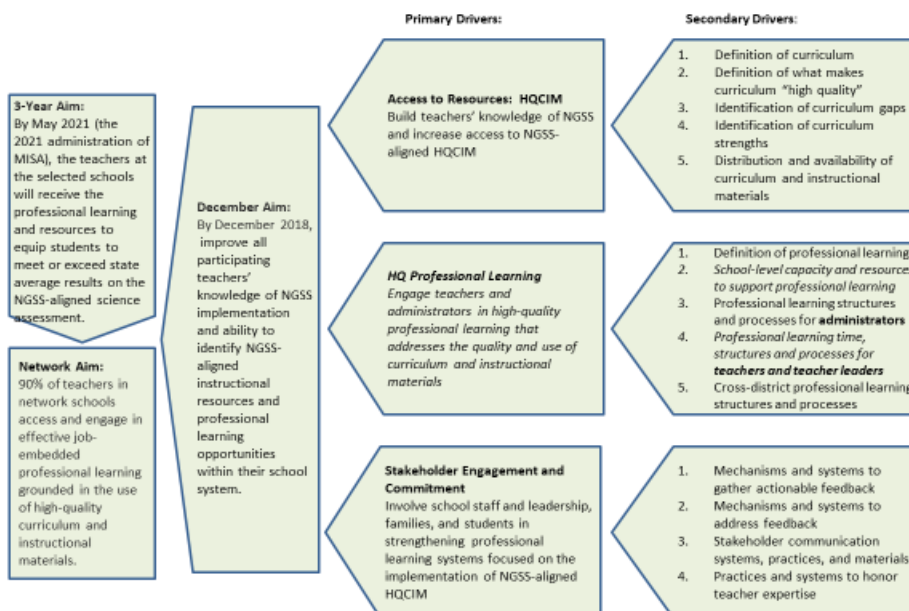
How do we put in place job-embedded professional learning (PL) grounded in the use of high-quality curriculum and instructional materials (HQCIM) to lead to improved and equitable student outcomes?



The driver diagram organizes the overall logic of the network's goals and drivers to test changes that drive scalable results.

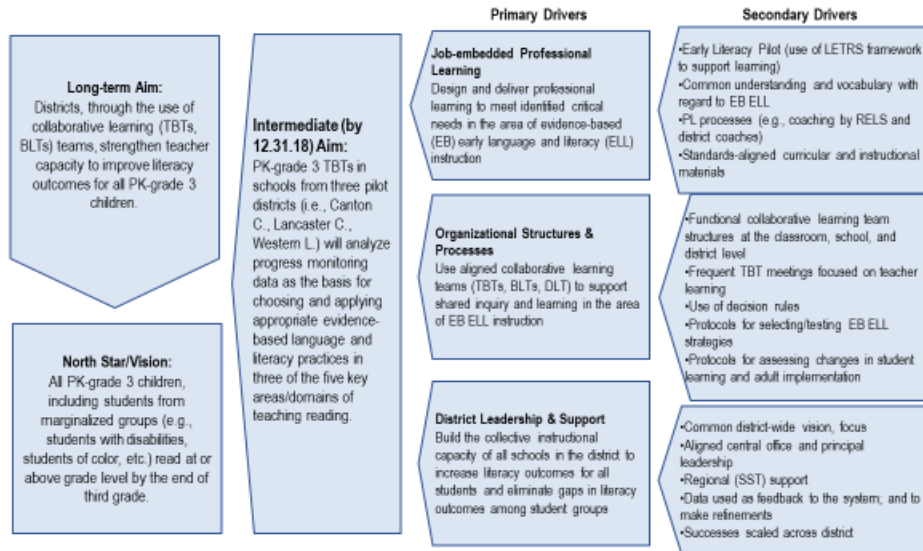
2

#### State Driver Diagram: Maryland

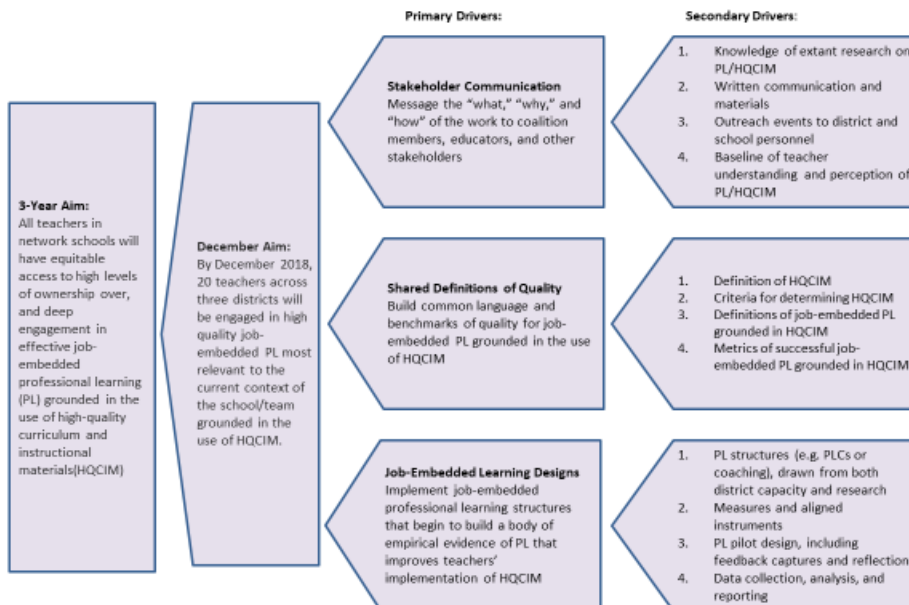


# State Driver Diagram: Ohio

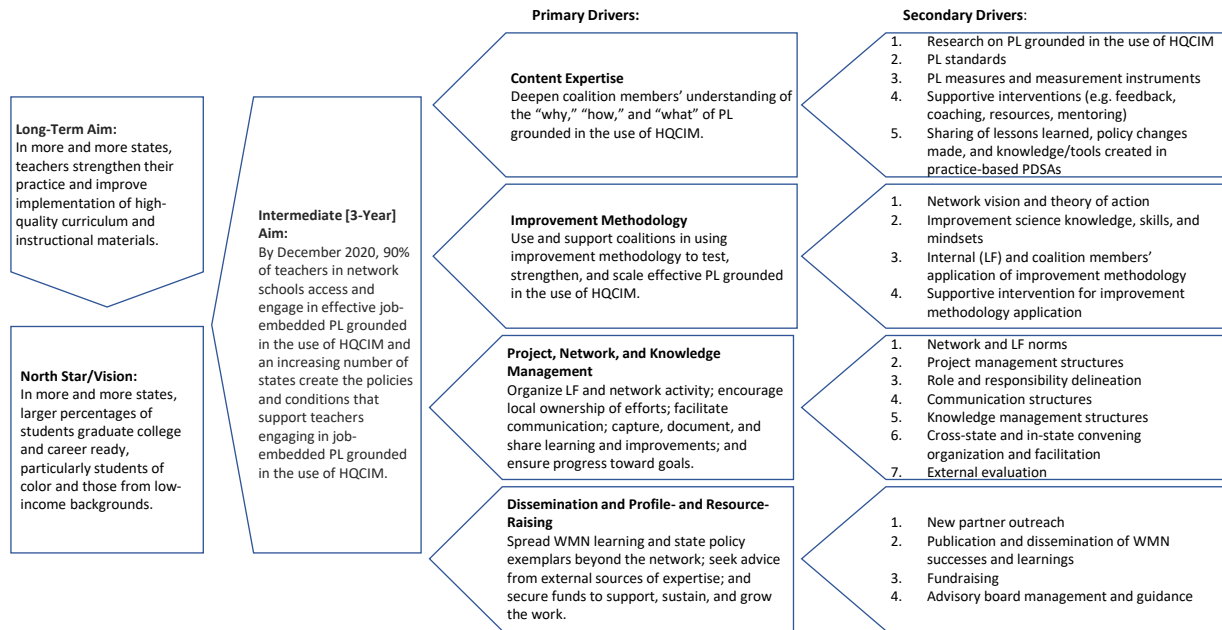
Educators have varied understanding and limited implementation of evidence-based language and literacy practices for PK-grade 3, based on use of their own data.



# State Driver Diagram: Rhode Island



**Learning Forward Driver Diagram:** How will Learning Forward support the WMN Network in strengthening and scaling the implementation of job-embedded PL grounded in the use of HQCIM?



# Melinda George

## EDUCATION POLICY LEADER

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### PROFILE

Nationally recognized leader in education with experience in the public sector and in association administration. Excels at creating visibility and winning support for programs and objectives by advocating at all levels of government, building strategic partnerships, communicating messages clearly and developing programs that produce measurable results.

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### AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Association Leadership  
Strategic Planning  
Strategic Partnering  
Innovative Program Development

National & State Advocacy  
Financial & Board Management  
Policy Development & Analysis  
Communications & Public Speaking

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### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

#### CHIEF POLICY OFFICER | LEARNING FORWARD | 2017 - PRESENT

Lead the development and implementation of Learning Forward's national policy agenda. Develop advocacy positions and engage stakeholder community. Manage Washington, DC office. Oversee partnership development to improve Learning Forward visibility and offerings, leverage current relationships, and cultivate new opportunities.

#### Key Achievements:

- Lead Learning Forward's *Every Educator Is An Advocate* campaign, supporting more than 1,500 advocacy team members, 32 state affiliates, and providing outreach to more than 40,000 Learning Forward stakeholders in the collection, compilation, and presentation of data.
- Advocate on behalf of federal funding for education, particularly Title IIA of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).
- Serve as the Learning Forward liaison to the US Department of Education, members of Congress, and with national advocacy coalitions.
- Oversee the development and implementation of Learning Forward's networks strategy, including growth targets, budgets, marketing, content development, and facilitation.
- Serve as the principal investigator for Learning Forward's *What Matters Now Network*, a tri-state network with leadership from state, district, and school levels.
- Create a new framework for prioritizing, elevating, and assessing partnerships that introduces quantifiable KPIs into the vetting process.

**PRESIDENT (2014-16) AND CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER (2011-14),  
NATIONAL COMMISSION ON TEACHING & AMERICA'S FUTURE (NCTAF)**

Led research, policy, and advocacy not-for-profit dedicated to equity by ensuring teaching quality and student achievement. Oversaw Commission of 18 education thought leaders, co-chaired by Secretary Richard Riley and former Education Commissioner of the States president Ted Sanders, as well as a staff of eight with an annual budget of \$1.7 million. Built partnerships to inform research and Commission agenda.

**Key Achievements:**

- Managed research partnerships and release of Commission report, *What Matters Now: A New Compact for Teaching and Learning*.
- Led advocacy efforts, including focused support for legislation targeted at improving teacher preparation and providing ongoing teacher support.
- Developed and maintained strategic partnerships.
- Oversaw finances, project management, development, accounting, HR, and administration.
- Oversaw acquisition of NCTAF by Learning Forward.

**SENIOR DIRECTOR, NATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS | PBS | 2006 - 2011**

Served as senior director for PBS TeacherLine, a pioneering online professional development program for educators. Oversaw federal Ready to Teach grant and directed all operations of approximately \$7.5 million annual budget. Provided leadership for a 22 person staff and managed relationships with 35 independent member stations. Built national partnerships to maximize public broadcasting's investment in education.

**Key Achievements:**

- Oversaw professional development services for PreK-12 teachers and administrators, including portfolio of more than 100 graduate-level, facilitated, and online courses and a professional learning community, PBS TeacherLine Peer Connection.
- Led formative and summative research on PBS TeacherLine professional development.
- Managed PBS TeacherLine relationship with US Department of Education.
- Identified strategic partnerships for PBS Education and served as point person for relational partnerships including CCSSO, ISTE, and NEA.
- Advised on public broadcasting's advocacy efforts around federal education legislative initiatives, including Ready to Teach, Ready to Learn, and Ready to Compete.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR | STATE EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION (SETDA) | 2002-2006**

Served as executive director for not-for-profit association with state leader members in all 50 states, DC, and American Samoa. Directed all operations of approximately \$1 million business. Provided leadership for a five person staff and reported to a nine member board of directors. Oversaw all finances, project management, business development, HR, and administrative affairs.

**Key Achievements:**

- Established company and built recognition as a leading association in education.
- Grew and diversified revenues from \$170,000 budget in Year 1 to approximately \$1 million budget in Year 4 by recruiting membership, securing grants, building partnerships, and expanding business development efforts.
- Recruited all 50 states, DC, and American Samoa as members.
- Oversaw member-driven projects and initiatives and hosted two national conferences annually.
- Advocated on behalf of education technology at the federal and state level.
- Served as national spokesperson for state educational trends and issues.

**DIRECTOR, EDUCATION DIVISION | SOFTWARE AND INFORMATION INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION (SIIA) | 1995 - 2002**

Served as director of state educational advocacy program. Built partnerships between technology companies and state education agencies. Served as a spokesperson for the education technology industry and a facilitator for public-private partnerships. Led education division with more than 225 member companies and more than 1,300 member contacts. Established division goals and objectives with board through strategic planning process. Created and published the *SIIA State Technology Initiatives Report*, providing detailed state-by-state information on current K-12 and postsecondary technology initiatives.

**CONTRACTOR | OFFICE OF TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT, US CONGRESS | 1993**

Developed and implemented a study assessing the attitudes and use of technology by teachers in a major metropolitan area for inclusion in 1994 Congressional study on *Teachers and Technology*.

**TEACHER | MURCH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL | 1990 - 1993**

Taught 4th and 5th grade students including English as a Second Language and Special Education learners. Served as grade level chairperson. Developed school strategic plan for technology implementation.

**PROFESSIONAL  
AFFILIATIONS**

- Board of Directors, Andrus Children's Center, Yonkers, NY, 1999-2004 and 2017-present.
  - Volunteer, Doorways for Women and Families, 2020
  - Board of Directors, National Coalition for Technology in Education and Training (NCTET), 2002-2018.
  - Board of Directors, Technology Transforming Education Compact-DC, 2009-2015
  - Advisory Council, International Technology in Education Association, 2008-2015
  - Outreach Team, U.S. Department of Education National Education Technology Plan, 2004-2005
  - Pi Alpha Alpha, Inducted 1995
  - New York State Early Childhood and Elementary Teaching Certification, 1990
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**EDUCATION**

Master of Public Administration, The American University, 1995

Bachelor of Arts in American Culture, Vassar College, 1990



## NICHOLAS P. MORGAN

36 Fairfield Street, Newton, MA 02460 • npmorgan99@gmail.com • 617.283.3035

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### EXPERIENCE

2015-Present	<b>LEARNING FORWARD</b> <i>Senior Consultant (2015-Present)</i>	<b>Dallas, TX</b>
	<p>Learning Forward is an international membership and service organization that builds the capacity of education leaders to establish and sustain highly effective professional learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Co-lead national networks to create groundbreaking solutions in the management of professional learning in PK-12 education; Examples include:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Texas Network for School Improvement (with partners EducateTexas and UT Austin Dana Center, serving school districts in North Texas to improve college readiness)</li><li>• What Matters Now Network (representing 3 state agencies and 8 districts focused on high-quality curriculum and instructional materials with professional learning)</li><li>• Redesign PD Community (serving multiple cohorts of local education agencies and intermediaries focused on addressing systemic management challenges)</li></ul></li><li>• Co-authored and led research for <i>Beyond barriers: Encouraging teacher use of feedback resources. A report from The Teacher Feedback Resources Project (2018)</i>, supported by the Bill &amp; Melinda Gates Foundation</li><li>• Collaborate with senior leadership team on strategic initiatives and serve as presenter and facilitator at annual national conferences.</li></ul>	
2015-Present	<b>NPMORGAN &amp; CO.</b> <i>Independent Strategy Consultant</i>	<b>Newton, MA</b>
	<p>Collaborate with social impact non-profits, entrepreneurs, and institutes of higher education to address critical strategic and operational challenges. Representative projects include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• For board of national non-profit, conducted pre-merger due diligence support; evaluated research strategy and evidence of target's operational effectiveness and instrument validity</li><li>• With university partner, co-lead national networks of school districts and social entrepreneurs in K12 education, aimed at demonstrating significant outcomes in equity-driven objectives through targeted support and mutual accountability</li><li>• For nationally recognized research center, led strategic planning effort resulting in a focused goal structure, streamlined organization, and revised operating plan</li><li>• For a leading technical assistance provider, restructured and co-led a professional learning network serving rural districts focused on improving middle-grade mathematics outcomes.</li></ul>	
2007-Present	<b>UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA</b> <i>Program Lecturer, Graduate School of Education</i>	<b>Philadelphia, PA</b>
	<p>Teach my own general management curriculum in Mid-Career Doctoral Program, translating private-sector and public policy management approaches to the world of education leadership.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Successful use of business school-style case method instruction and online components; noted as providing intentional "cognitive dissonance" within traditional doctoral program</li><li>• Serve annually as judge for Milken-Penn GSE Education Business Plan Competition.</li></ul>	

2013-2020	<b>HARVARD UNIVERSITY, CENTER FOR EDUCATION POLICY RESEARCH</b> <i>Consultant (2015-2020)</i> <i>Executive Director, Strategic Data Project (2013-2015)</i>	<b>Cambridge, MA</b>
	<p>The Strategic Data Project (SDP) partners with organizations to bring high-quality research methods and data analysis to bear on strategic management and policy decisions in education.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Led and oversaw all strategy and operations, including service development and delivery, P&amp;L management, business development, human capital, and funder relations</li> <li>• Restructured organization and operations, leading to breakeven financials through new organizational design and roles, pricing models, business development process, and marketing (including new collateral, website, social media, SEM/SEO)</li> <li>• Lectured and facilitated in SDP Fellowship program and Institute for Leadership in Analytics, regularly receiving the highest teaching ratings</li> <li>• Served as invited speaker in national conferences including AASA, NSBA, APPAM, SXSWedu, Tyton Partners Summit, Dartmouth ELP and others</li> <li>• As member of CEPR leadership team, contributed to overall strategy, research project development, human capital management, and partner and funder relations.</li> </ul>	
2004-2015	<b>THE DISTRICT MANAGEMENT COUNCIL</b> <i>Limited Partner (2013-2015)</i> <i>Partner &amp; Managing Director (2004-2013)</i>	<b>Boston, MA</b>
	<p>The District Management Council (now the District Management Group) provides strategic management advisory services to leaders of public school districts through research, consulting and technology solutions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As a member of the founding team, managed all aspects of the firm with other DMC partners including P&amp;L management, business development, operations, and communication with outside investors and advisory board</li> <li>• Oversaw DMC intellectual property development, leading research and network services for over 120 member districts in 38 states serving ~5MM children</li> <li>• Acted as lead facilitator and presenter of DMC content to conference audiences; Lectured as invited guest in a variety of leadership roundtables and academies, including Harvard, Ohio State, and Texas A&amp;M Universities</li> <li>• Served as founding Editorial Director for <i>The District Management Journal</i>, a magazine for topics in PK-12 management circulated to ~5000 executives nationwide.</li> </ul>	
1998-2004	<b>THE PARTHENON GROUP</b> <i>Senior Principal (2003-2004),</i> <i>Principal (Summer 1998, 1999-2003)</i>	<b>Boston, MA</b>
	<p>The Parthenon Group (now Parthenon-EY) is a leading international strategy consulting and principal investment firm. Representative casework includes:</p>	

- For \$11B diversified electronics manufacturer, led turnaround initiatives for \$2B division including organizational restructuring and business portfolio rationalization
- For \$6B information company's \$2.1B acquisition, managed integration teams for several divisions culminating in surpassed expectations of financial synergies and market share
- For startup software firm, led successful search for major strategic alliance and investment partner; created comprehensive business plan, financial models and presentation materials.

1994-1997	<b>ARTHUR D. LITTLE, INC.</b> <i>Research Analyst, Utilities &amp; Advanced Power Systems Consulting</i>	<b>Cambridge, MA</b>
	For utilities, energy majors, and technology companies, conducted strategic assessments of emerging power systems technologies and new, unregulated business opportunities.	
1993	<b>BAYERISCHE MOTOREN WERKE AG (BMW)</b> <i>Contract Employee, Distribution Planning</i>	<b>Munich, Germany</b>
	Provided analytical support for global strategy and restructuring of BMW parts distribution.	

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#### BOARD SERVICE & OUTSIDE ADVISORY

2012-2015	<b>NEWTON MONTESSORI SCHOOL (NOW WELLAN)</b> <i>Trustee; Chair, Finance Committee 2013-14</i>	<b>Newton, MA</b>
2005-2010	<b>BOSTON COLLEGIATE CHARTER SCHOOL</b> <i>Trustee; Chair, Governance Committee 2006-2010</i>	<b>Dorchester, MA</b>
2007-2009	<b>RAKUTEN USA</b> <i>Advisor, Strategic Initiatives</i>	<b>Boston, MA</b>
	Worked with Rakuten USA CEO to support US operations and portfolio companies (Rakuten is one of the world's largest internet companies: JASDAQ: 4755)	

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#### EDUCATION

	<b>MCCOURT SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY, GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY</b> <i>Certificate in Education Finance, 2020</i>	<b>Washington, DC</b>
	<b>THE AMOS TUCK SCHOOL AT DARTMOUTH COLLEGE</b> <i>Master of Business Administration, 1999</i>	<b>Hanover, NH</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-Captain Dartmouth Graduate Rugby; Member Alpine Ski Team</li> </ul>	
	<b>IESE BUSINESS SCHOOL, UNIVERSITY OF NAVARRA</b> <i>Selected for Fall 1998 Exchange Program</i>	<b>Barcelona, Spain</b>
	<b>MCGILL UNIVERSITY</b> <i>Bachelor of Arts in Economics with minor in Environmental Studies, 1993</i>	<b>Montreal, Canada</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• President of Sigma Chi Fraternity</li> <li>• Member of Championship-winning Alpine Skiing and Rugby teams</li> </ul>	

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#### PERSONAL

- Citizenships: Canada, UK, and USA
- Languages: Fluent German, Proficient French, Basic Spanish

**Michelle A. Bowman, M.Ed.**  
**michelle.bowman@learningforward.org**

**817.905.0336 (cell)**



*“I would like to be known as an intelligent woman, a courageous woman  
a loving woman, a woman who teaches by being.”*

**Michelle A. Bowman** is vice president of networks and content design at Learning Forward. She leads strategy for and manages the implementation of innovative networks and communities of practice, advancing and scaling knowledge and practices in the field and supporting districts and schools committed to professional development redesign. She also develops content and learning designs for Learning Forward’s major learning events and consulting services. With more than 25 years in public education, Michelle experiences include serving as an executive director of professional learning, a high associate principal and dean of instruction, a K-12 mathematics curriculum director and a middle school math teacher. Michelle graduated from the University of Iowa with a bachelor’s degree in Mathematics and earned her Master of Education from the University of North Texas. She is a doctoral candidate studying Learning and Organizational Change at Baylor University.

Bowman’s publications include 6 Key Features of a Successful Community of Practice (JSD, December 2016) and *Teacher Professional Development in the Digital Age: Design and Implementation of Learning without Limits*, a chapter co-authored with Learning Forward Executive Director (retired) Stephanie Hirsch in *Technology in the Classroom: Can It Improve Teaching and Student Learning in American Schools?* (Rowan & Littlefield, 2017).

#### Strength’s Finder’s Profile

Achiever	diligent & hard working	Relator	engages in authentic one-on-one interactions
Connector	values unity & being part of something bigger than self	Responsibility	dependable and respected by others
Belief	passionate & altruistic		

#### Education

<i>2018—present</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>1992</i>
Ed.D Candidate, Baylor University School of Education Learning and Organizational Change	M.Ed., University of North Texas Secondary Education	B.A., The University of Iowa, Mathematics Teacher Certification, K-12 Mathematics

#### Experience & Leadership

2015 – present

*Vice President, Networks & Content Design (previously Associate Director of Communities)*  
Learning Forward, Dallas, TX

- Strategize and manage the implementation of innovative networks and communities of practice, advancing and scaling knowledge and practices in the field and supporting districts and schools committed to professional development redesign.
- Integrate network membership and consulting services that advance the practice of network members and the field
- Create and refine content and learning designs for Learning Forward’s major learning events and consulting curricula.
- Provide leadership in conceptualizing, designing, and implementing the annual conference program; including keynote speakers, distinguished lecturers and approximately concurrent sessions

2009-2015

*Executive Director/Director of Professional Learning*

Lewisville Independent School District (TX), 2014-2015

Coppell Independent School District (TX), 2009-2014

- Design, plan for and facilitate the professional learning needs of school district professionals.
- Create, and facilitate leadership development, coaching and mentoring curriculum and programs

2008-2009

*Dean of Instruction*

Coppell High School, Coppell, Independent School District (TX)

- Assist school in strengthening instructional programs
- Identifying and develop long-range professional development plans

2004-2007

*Adjunct Instructor*

Texas Woman's University, Department of Mathematics

- Teach post-baccalaureate and undergraduate students seeking 4-8 Mathematics Teacher certification
- Develop and manage the class syllabus and ensuring that the syllabus meets department and college standards
- Assess grades for students based on participation, performance in class, assignments and examinations
- Collaborate with colleagues on course curriculum
- Advise students on how to be successful in class

2001-2009

*Curriculum and Staff Development Coordinator/Director*

Denton Independent School District (TX), 2001-2005

Coppell, Independent School District (TX), 2005-2009

- Provide leadership and vision in the ongoing planning, implementation, development, direction, review and evaluation of the district's PK-12 mathematics curriculum and instructional services
- Observe work of teaching staff, providing non-evaluative feedback on performance
- Recommend specific changes that could strengthen teaching skills
- Design and facilitate specific professional learning focused on mathematics content and pedagogical content knowledge and skills
- Build capacity of campus leaders (teachers and administrators) to improve mathematics instruction

1992-2001

*Classroom Teacher, 6-8*

J. Erik Jonsson Community School (now Momentous School), 1996-2001, powered Salesmanship Club of Dallas North Ridge Middle School and North Oaks Middle School, 1992-1996, Birdville Independent School District (TX)

- Present subject matter according to guidelines established by the Texas Education Agency, board policies, and administrative regulations.
- Design and implement learning experiences in alignment with the chosen curriculum program and show written evidence of preparation as required.
- Design clear, well-organized learning experiences within the broader scope of a unit to ensure success of all students
- Create learning spaces that are conducive to learning and appropriate for the physical, social, and emotional development of students.

## Other Highlights

### Cultural Proficiency Institute for Campus-based Facilitators

Consultant to Lewisville ISD (2015-2016)

### Conference Leadership

- Learning Forward Annual Conference, Dallas Host Committee Chair (2013),
- National Council for Teachers of Mathematics, Conference Planning (2010 and 2013)

### Boards of Directors

- Learning Forward Texas, Board of Directors (2011-2015)
- President (2013-2014)
- Government Relations Representative, Texas Association for Supervisors of Mathematics (2005–2008)

### Texas Education Agency

- Revision Committee, Elementary Mathematics Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (2004–2005)

## Publications

**Hirsh, S. & Bowman King, M. (2017).** Teacher Professional Development in the Digital Age: Design and Implementation of Learning Without Limits. In *Technology in Schools Classrooms*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Education.

**King, M. (2016, December).** 6 Key Features of a Successful Community of Practice. *Journal of Staff Development*, 37 (6) 12-14.

## **Tracy Crow**

674 Overbrook Dr.  
Columbus, OH 43214  
tracy.crow@learningforward.org

### **In Summary**

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I am a skilled team leader with expertise in K-12 professional learning, project management, content development, and communications strategy.

### **Job Positions and Responsibilities**

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#### **Chief Strategy Officer/Chief Communications Officer, Learning Forward, Dallas, TX (remote position) 2005-present**

I am responsible for contributing to, advancing, and communicating the organization's mission, and strategic direction. Priorities include leading the revision and implementation of Learning Forward's Standards for Professional Learning; maintaining a consistent brand and messaging across initiatives and for multiple audiences; creating compelling publications; and grounding strategy and communications in current research.

Responsibilities include:

- Oversee Learning Forward's development, use, and positioning of Standards for Professional Learning, the field's most widely adopted framework for designing and implementing K-12 professional learning.
- Oversee Learning Forward publications, including a bimonthly magazine, blog, and special reports and briefs.
- Lead strategic communications in collaboration with other staff, including establishing goals, monitoring targets, and adjusting tactics.
- Contribute to proposal development for grant funding.
- Supervise marketing, web content development, social media, and public relations.
- Manage books and products from planning and creation to dissemination and marketing.
- Lead internal teams and supervise full-time and contracted staff.

*Promoted through several positions with increasing authority and responsibility.*

#### **Publications Manager, Eisenhower National Clearinghouse for Mathematics and Science Education (ENC), OSU, Columbus, OH, 1994-2000; 2002-2005**

I oversaw the content development, project management, and national dissemination of all ENC products, including print publications, e-mail newsletters, web sites, and CD-ROMs. This position ended in 2005 when the federal contract concluded.

Responsibilities included:

- Worked with staff and external collaborators to plan, design, and create products, including a weekly online magazine, weekly e-mail newsletter, and CD-ROMs.
- Created promotional materials and participated in marketing of products and services.

- Led the editorial/graphics team; hired and supervised staff (9 full-time staff).
- Assisted in writing proposals to federal agencies and departments (including ENC's successful proposal for a second contract).

*Promoted through several positions with increasing authority and responsibility.*

### **Freelance Editor and Writer, Columbus, OH, January 2001 - 2005**

My projects and responsibilities included coordinating web site and CD-ROM development, writing and editing for different media types, and preparing grant proposals.

### **Other Positions**

- Technical Editor, Ohio State University, Columbus, OH, Summer 1994
- English Instructor, Ohio University-Lancaster, Lancaster, OH, 1991 - 1993
- Teaching Assistant, English Department, Ohio State University, Columbus, OH, 1989 - 1991

### **Education/Training**

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Stanford Professional Publishing Course, 1999

(Intensive two-week seminar for experienced publishing professionals; emphases include editorial, design, marketing, new media, and sales.)

Stanford University, Palo Alto, CA

Master of Arts in English, 1992

Ohio State University, Columbus, OH

Bachelor of Arts in Russian Studies, 1987

Northwestern University, Evanston, IL

### **Additional Information**

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I am a public election official in Franklin County, serving as the manager of a voting location; I am responsible for supervising a team of 9-12 officials for each election.

**References and writing samples available on request.**



## **EDUCATION:**

Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN      Ed.D., Educational Leadership

George Mason University, Fairfax, VA      M.Ed., Curriculum and Instruction

College of Wooster, Wooster, OH      B.A., History

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## **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

Senior Vice-President for Standards, States, and Equity, Learning Forward, 11/19-Present

- Responsible for the design, implementation, evaluation, support, and communication of the revised Standards for Professional Learning, including leading and facilitating the Standards Advisory Council with 25 leaders representing international organizations, universities, state departments of education, district leaders, principals, and teachers.
- Lead and manage professional services contracts with state departments of education and districts to increase educator and leader effectiveness through the development of equity-focused, high quality professional learning systems and corresponding implementation tools.
- Lead and collaborate with internal and external partners to advance equity-focused policies, programs, and frameworks, including webinars and resources that promote equity and antiracism.

Assistant Commissioner, Division of Teachers and Leaders, Tennessee Department of Education

Nashville, TN 1/15-6/19

- Responsible for the design, implementation, evaluation, support, and communication of impactful policies, practices, and programs related to teacher and leader preparation institutions, licensure, evaluation and development, and educator talent that advance teacher and leader effectiveness in Tennessee including;
  - Creator of the Tennessee Teacher Leader Network that has led 63 districts in the design, implementation, and monitoring of a comprehensive and sustainable teacher leader model aligned to district and state strategic goals.
  - Creator and leader of the Tennessee Transformational Leadership Alliance (TTLA) in 2016. The TTLA has awarded more than \$1 million in Principal Pipeline Partnership grants to support leadership models that develop or improve innovative and high-impact school leader programs. The nine principal pipeline models that have been approved for funding

will train a total of 160 aspiring school leaders using federal Title II, part A funds.

- Lead and manage an internal team in the implementation and monitoring of the comprehensive program approval process for the 40 teacher preparation and 19 leader preparation programs to increase program and educator effectiveness.
- Design, implement, and evaluate educator support strategic priorities for the *Tennessee Succeeds* strategic plan and the Tennessee ESSA plan.
- Lead and manage an internal team in the implementation and communication of all facets of the statewide educator evaluation model (TEAM) and process to all relevant stakeholders.
- Design, implement, and co-lead the Tennessee Rural Principal Network (TRPN) for 52 rural principals during the 2018-19 school year. The TRPN will add a new cohort of 50 rural principals for the 2019-20 school year.
- Design and implement professional learning content and tools for districts that personalizes learning at the teacher and leader levels, including a micro-credential pilot program for over 800 teachers since 2016.
- Lead and manage an internal team in the design, implementation, evaluation, and communication of human capital strategies including human capital reports and differentiated pay plans for districts to increase the quality of the educator lifecycle (preparation, recruitment, induction, development, evaluation and retention).
- Lead and manage an internal team in the design, implementation, evaluation, and communication of a 12 month statewide leader development program (The Governor's Leadership Fellows) in partnership with the Governor's office and Vanderbilt University.
- Lead the design, implementation, evaluation, and communication of voluntary evaluation rubrics for both instructional supervisors and superintendents in Tennessee.
- Lead and manage twenty nine employees and a \$6.1 million budget for the division of Teachers and Leaders.

Executive Director of Leader Effectiveness and Deputy Assistant Commissioner,  
Division of Teachers and Leaders, Tennessee Department of Education  
Nashville, TN 6/12-12/14

- Responsible for the design, implementation, evaluation, and support of impactful policies, practices, and programs related to teacher leader and leader preparation, evaluation, and development in Tennessee including:
  - Created, implemented, and monitored TNLEAD, a \$3.9 million US Department of Education funded grant for leader development in Tennessee. Eight unique, district/higher education/ non-profit partnerships carried out leader development programs between June, 2013 and December, 2014.

- Developed, implemented, and monitored the TEAM Teacher and Administrator Evaluation rubric and system components for 146 districts in Tennessee, including the training content and support tools for all evaluators.
- Collaborated with the Tennessee Board of Education and Superintendent Executive Council for successful passage of policies related to the Tennessee Instructional Leadership Standards, the Administrator Evaluation rubric, and program evaluation for the 20 higher education leader preparation programs in the state.
- Led and managed an internal team in the redesign of professional learning content for leaders in the Tennessee Academy of School Leaders (TASL).

Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Transformational Leaders International (TLI), Brentwood, TN, 2016-present

- Provide consulting services to educational organizations related to the design and implementation of innovative and cohesive teacher leader and leader development systems. Client include:
  - New Jersey Department of Education
  - American Institutes of Research (AIR)
  - South China Normal University
  - Leading Educators
  - Learning Forward
  - The Wallace Foundation
  - Council of Chief State School Officers

Adjunct Professor with the Teaching and Learning in Urban Schools (TLUS) Master's Degree Program, Vanderbilt University, Department of Teaching and Learning, 2011-2015.

- Teach and lead a monthly seminar for a graduate cohort of middle school teachers in high poverty schools in the Metro Nashville Public School system that focuses on areas of teacher leadership, elements of quantitative and qualitative research, and preparation for a culminating Capstone project.

Principal, Hume-Fogg Magnet High School  
Nashville, TN 7/06-6/12.

- Created, implemented, and monitored instructional and extracurricular programs,
- Engaged in strategic planning with faculty leadership teams and community partner organizations to reach academic and social/emotional goals,
- Led and evaluated faculty and staff on an annual basis,
- Worked with parents and organizations to assess and increase community participation related to teaching and learning in a nationally ranked magnet school setting.

Principal, Meigs Magnet Middle School  
Nashville, TN 7/05-5/06.

- Created, implemented, and monitored instructional and extracurricular programs,
- Led and evaluated faculty and staff,
- Administered student discipline,
- Worked with parents and organizations to assess and increase community participation related to teaching and learning.

Assistant Principal, Martin Luther King Magnet School  
Nashville, TN. 7/03-6/05.

- Developed instructional programs and created new courses, summer programs for incoming students, and a school-wide honor code,
- Led and evaluated faculty and staff,
- Administered student discipline,
- Worked with PTSA to increase student achievement in a nationally ranked magnet school setting,
- Worked with all athletic programs as athletic director.

Hume-Fogg Academic Magnet High School  
Nashville, TN. 8/94 - 5/03

- Social Studies Department Chairperson,
- Teacher of ninth grade Government, tenth grade World Studies and twelfth grade Humanities.

Shroder Paideia Middle School  
Cincinnati, OH. 8/91- 6/94

- Teacher of 7<sup>th</sup> and 8th grade American History.
- Conducted weekly Paideia seminars for students.

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## HONORS AND INITIATIVES

- Hume-Fogg selected as a national Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education, 2011.
- Increased number of Advanced Placement courses taken by 32% at Hume-Fogg since 2006, resulting in a national top 50 ranking by US News and World Report and Newsweek magazine from 2006 to 2012.
- Increased composite ACT score from 26.3 to 26.8 (the highest in the state of Tennessee) from 2010 to 2011.
- Recipient of the Arville V. Wheeler Prize for excellence in the Peabody doctoral program, 2010.
- Selected as an inaugural participant for the principal study trip with the Educational Leadership Learning Exchange (ELLE), a cooperative endeavor between two universities, Vanderbilt University of Nashville and South China Normal University of Guangzhou, China. Participated in seminars, panel discussions, and school visits with Chinese leaders and scholars, 2006-present.

- Selected as one of ten education policy makers from the southeast United States to travel to Brussels, Belgium to study the education policy in the European Union, sponsored by Vanderbilt University through a grant from the EU, 2009.
  - Selected as a design-team member of the Principal's Leadership Academy of Nashville (PLAN) at Vanderbilt University from 2005-2011.
  - Created a state-wide Holocaust Educator Fellows Program through the Tennessee Holocaust Commission, 2006.
  - Named a "Mandel Fellow" for the 1999-00 school year by the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum for excellence in Holocaust education.
  - Recipient of Belz-Lipman Award- Tennessee Holocaust Educator of the year award (1997).
  - Selected to participate in the Principal's Leadership Academy of Nashville, a year long program to develop quality school administrators, 2002-03.
  - Selected to be a Mentor teacher for beginning intern teachers for Vanderbilt University (1995-2003).
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## RECENT NATIONAL PRESENTATIONS

- Presenter at U.S. Senate briefings on the value and use of Title II funding for educator professional learning and leader pipeline development, 2018.
  - Presenter at the Wallace Foundation Equity Leadership conferences on leader pipeline initiatives, 2016-present.
  - Presenter at the Chief Council for State School Chiefs annual and regional conferences on teacher leadership and human capital strategies, 2015-present.
  - Presenter at the National Governor's Association regional conferences on school leadership and building cohesive educator effectiveness systems, 2016-17.
  - Presenter at the Carnegie Corporation Conference on Micro-Credentials, 2017.
  - Presenter at the University Council of Educational Administration (UCEA) National Conference on formative assessments and global professional learning communities at the K-12 level, 2010, 2011, and 2015.
  - Presenter at the US Department of Education Teach to Lead summits in Denver, Boston, and Tacoma, 2015.
  - Presenter for the Tennessee Holocaust Commission's annual workshop at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum (2003-2011).
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## ARTICLES/PUBLICATIONS

- Project Director and primary author, *The Tennessee Leaders for Equity Playbook*, 2018.
- Contributor, *State Teacher Leadership Toolkit*, Leading Educators, 2017.
- Project Director, author of teacher leader model framework, and contributor, *The Tennessee Teacher Leader Guidebook*, Tennessee Department of Education, 2014, 2015 and 2016.

- Project Director and primary author, *Teacher and Principal Evaluation in Tennessee*, 2015.
- Project Director and primary author, *The TEAM Administrator Evaluation Rubric*, Tennessee Department of Education, 2014.
- Project Director and primary author, *The Tennessee Instructional Leadership Standards* (TILS), Tennessee Department of Education, 2013.
- Doctoral Capstone Project: *Understanding and Using Formative Assessments: A Mixed Methods Study of Assessment for Learning Adoption in Jefferson County Public Schools*.
- Contributor to *The Holocaust and Other Genocides*, Vanderbilt Press, Tennessee. January, 2002.
- Author of the Teacher's Guide for *The Holocaust and Other Genocides*. 2002.
- Co-author of the K-12 Social Studies Standards for the state of Tennessee, 2001.
- "Small Steps: A Tolerance Program," Teaching Tolerance, Birmingham, AL. July, 2000.
- Co-editor of *Holocaust Studies for Students*, Macmillan Publishing, New York. January 2001.

# Elizabeth Foster

Elizabeth.Foster@LearningForward.org

## Summary of Qualifications

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25 years of experience in research, education policy, publishing, and nonprofit leadership with a focus on closing opportunity gaps in K12 education by addressing chronic challenges faced by public school teachers, leaders, and systems.

## Core Competencies

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Policy analysis	Research and evaluation	Nonprofit strategy
Program development	Grant proposal development	Project/team management
Writing and editing		

## Professional Experience

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*Vice President, Standards, Research and Strategy,*  
Learning Forward, Washington D.C.

2017 - Present

- Advancing the Learning Forward vision, mission, and strategic priorities by leading Learning Forward's standards and impact agenda.
- Leverages expertise in the Learning Forward Standards of Professional Learning and the resource materials to develop and implement strategy for elevating Standards adoptions.
- Co leads an emerging state network that will implement an agenda based on the NCTAF *What Matters Now: A New Compact for Teaching and Learning (2016)* report's evidence and recommendations.
- Oversees the affiliate (provincial, state, and country) vision, planning and strategy and contributes to the design and development of two annual meetings and ongoing affiliate support.
- Facilitates the development of a national research agenda to elevate and promote professional learning and better understand its impact.

*Vice President, Strategic Initiatives,*

National Commission on Teaching & America's Future (NCTAF), Washington D.C.

2008 - 2017

- Led national and regional programs that research and advocate for effective policy and practice related to teaching; includes work with single states and multi-state collaboratives to analyze and implement strategies to improve teaching quality.
- Managed and conducted research including a national study of the demographics of teaching and the impact of retirement policies, as well as a national survey of educators about professional collaboration.
- Managed relationships with board members, advisors, project partners, funders, and other stakeholders.
- Led the development of a Commission report on the teaching profession, coordinating the work of 18 Commissioners, TKTK contributors and independent advisors, and facilitating the input of TKTK partner organizations.
- Wrote a range of materials including: publications, online toolkits, blogs, articles, opinion pieces, policy briefs, and federal, private foundation, and corporate grant proposals and reports.
- Convened, coordinated, designed agendas, and facilitate events bringing together key stakeholders and policymakers around education topics each year.
- Regularly conducted webinars, attended national meetings, presented at conferences, and provided media interviews.

- Coordinating Editor, Cecil Textbook of Medicine, Boston, MA* 2004-2008
- Edited two editions of the *Cecil Textbook of Medicine* (Elsevier). Direct editing responsibilities ranged from structural to in-depth for approximately 200 chapters; managed submissions, editing, figure redraws, galleys, and finalizing all chapters.
  - Assessed extant manuscript submission systems; developed and managed a website to facilitate editing of all 430 chapters (later acquired by Elsevier for ten major textbooks).
  - Trained and enlisted support of authors, editors' staff, editors, and publisher's staff; responded to all technical assistance and manuscript preparation queries.
  - Developed all website content and user experience models.
- Policy and Research Associate, Recruiting New Teachers, Belmont, MA* 1999-2003
- Served as team lead for original published studies, including investigations of urban community college teacher preparation programs, urban teacher shortages, and teacher-parent-student alliances.
  - Conducted literature reviews, national surveys, focus groups, individual interviews with stakeholders, and site visits. Monitored policy and program developments in teacher recruitment and preparation.
  - Authored publications, grant reports, and marketing/web materials.
  - Presented at national conferences and report release events.
- Evaluator/Consultant, Harvard RALLY Project, Cambridge, MA* 1997-1998
- Collected and analyzed quantitative and qualitative data about middle school students and inclusion; this included administering student developmental tests, conducting focus groups with students, and interviewing practitioners and teachers.
  - Authored reports and recommendations, including co-writing a textbook chapter about the project with the principal investigator.
  - Wrote and coordinated grant proposals.
- Inclusion Practitioner, The Walker School - Pollard Partnership, Needham, MA* 1997-1998
- Worked with 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders with behavioral and emotional challenges, providing classroom help, one-on-one tutoring, and counseling.
  - Consulted on individualized education plans with teachers and parents.
- Inclusion Practitioner, Renaissance Charter School, Boston, MA* 1995-1997
- Worked with 5<sup>th</sup> graders with behavioral challenges or with English language learning needs.
- Senior Development Associate, Edwin Gould Foundation for Children, New York, NY* 1992-1996
- Researched and produced corporate, foundation and government grant proposals totaling approximately \$TKTK for three education nonprofit organizations. Designed and maintained database of funders; prospected for new funding support.
  - Researched the development of an innovative year-round public school; interviewed teachers and administrators and wrote an evaluation. Worked with colleagues to plan and direct a full-day conference about the unique features of the school for 150 researchers, funders, and practitioners.
  - Wrote year-end program/financial reports, the organization's five-year report, and a monthly newsletter. Spearheaded direct mail campaign to 5,600.

## Education

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*Harvard University Graduate School of Education, Cambridge, MA. 1997.*  
Masters in Education, Specializing in Adolescent Risk and Prevention.

*Trinity College, Hartford, CT. B.A., Political Science, International Relations. 1990.*



## Selected Publications and Presentations

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Foster, E. (2021, January). *Seeing teaching through a different lens*. Learning Forward: Dallas, TX 2020.

Foster, Elizabeth. (February 2021): *An extraordinary time for innovation*. (February 2020): *Professional learning as a system of nested supports*. *Research*, Regular column in The Learning Professional. The Learning Forward Journal. (Example: <https://learningforward.org/journal/looking-ahead/program-inspires-students-civic-engagement/>).

National Commission on Teaching & America's Future. *What Matters Now: A New Compact for Teaching and Learning*. A Call to Action and The Evidence Base. National Commission on Teaching & America's Future: Washington, DC. 2016. (Lead researcher and author.)

Foster, Elizabeth. *What Matters Now: Addressing the Nation's Equity Challenges*. Equity in Education: When Equal is Not Enough. AdvanceED's The Source: Fall 2016.

Martinez, Monica, McGrath, Dennis and Elizabeth Foster. [\*How Deeper Learning Can Create a New Vision for Teaching\*](#). National Commission on Teaching & America's Future: Washington, DC. 2016. Presented at the T&L Conference (NBPTS), March 19, 2016 and via a webinar at Alliance for Excellent Education.

Presentation at American Education Research Association (AERA) conference, panel discussion about 'What TALIS (OECD's Teaching and Learning International Survey) Tells Us"' with Linda Darling Hammond, Andy Hargreaves, Dion Burns and Julie Belanger, 2016.

Online [\*Learning Studios Toolkit\*](#) (content development and lead of design team). National Commission on Teaching & America's Future: Washington, DC. 2014.

Foster, Elizabeth. *A New Equation: How Encore Careers in Math and Science Education Equal More Success for Students*. And, *How Boomers Can Contribute to Student Success: Emerging Encore Career Opportunities in K-12 Education*. Civic Ventures: San Francisco, CA 2010.

Carroll, Thomas and Elizabeth Foster. *Who Will Teach? Experience Matters*. National Commission on Teaching & America's Future: Washington, DC. 2010.

Carroll, Thomas and Elizabeth Foster. *Learning Teams: Creating What's Next*. National Commission on Teaching & America's Future: Washington, DC. 2009.

Foster, Elizabeth and Anne Simmons. *Tapping Potential: Community College Students and America's Teacher Recruitment Challenge*. Recruiting New Teachers: Belmont, MA. 2002. Presented at the National Press Club.

Foster, Elizabeth and Anne Simmons. *Connect for Success: Building a Teacher, Parent, Teen Partnership. A Toolkit for Teachers*. Recruiting New Teachers: Belmont, MA. 2001.

Fideler, Elizabeth, Foster, Elizabeth, and Shirley Schwartz. *The Urban Teacher Challenge: Demand and Supply in the Great City Schools*. Recruiting New Teachers: Belmont, MA. 2000.

Noam, Gil G., Pucci, Kimberly and Elizabeth D. Foster. *Development, Resilience, and School Success in Youth: The Prevention Practitioner and The Harvard RALLY Program*. Cicchetti, D., & Toth, S. (Eds.) (1998). *Developmental psychopathology*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

## RemotEDx Networked Learning Community Application

### Appendix E

#### Grant Assurances

#### Statement of Grant Specific Assurances

*The grantee assures, if awarded a grant, that:*

Subgrantees must abide by all [requirements and assurances](#) specified in the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund Certification and Agreement for Funding, under the Education Stabilization Program. Subgrantees must attest to these assurances when entering their budget into the Department's e-grant applicant system, known as the CCIP.

These assurances include the following:

- The subgrantee shall, to the greatest extent practicable, continue to compensate its employees and contractors during the period of any disruptions or closures related to COVID-19 based on the unique financial circumstances of the entity.
- The subgrantee will ensure that every recipient and subrecipient of ESSER funds will cooperate with any examination of records with respect to such funds by making records available for inspection, production and examination, and authorized individuals available for interview and examination, upon the request of (i) the Department and/or its Inspector General; or (ii) any other federal agency, commission or department in the lawful exercise of its jurisdiction and authority.
- Any subgrantee receiving funding under this program will have on file with the Ohio Department Education a set of assurances that meets the requirements of section 442 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1232e).
- The subgrantee will ensure that it will comply with the requirements of section 427 of GEPA (20 U.S.C. 1228a). The subgrantee commits to maintaining and will produce upon request by the (i) the Department and/or its Inspector General; or (ii) any other federal agency, commission, or department in the lawful exercise of its jurisdiction and authority, a description of how the subgrantee complied with this requirement including putting in place steps to permit students, teachers and other program beneficiaries to overcome barriers (including barriers based on gender, race, color, national origin, disability and age) that might impede equal access to, or participation in, the program.

#### CERTIFICATION

**I HEREBY CERTIFY** that, to the best of my knowledge, the information in this application is correct.

The applicant designated below hereby applies for a RemotEDx Subgrant for the purpose of program from the RemotEDx Subgrant list and acknowledges to all Statement of Grant Specific Assurances.

Signature of Authorized Person:  Date: 4/28/2021

Printed Name of Authorized Person: Michael R Lanham, CFO | COO

## RemotEDx Networked Learning Community Application

### Appendix F

#### Application Checklist

Application Item	Completed
Does the application specify the grant coordinator contact name, title, phone number and email address? Each of these items is required for grant form submission and acceptance.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the applicant meet the eligibility requirements as spelled out in the “Eligible Applicants” section?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Application Narrative with the Following Sections:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Section A: Executive Summary	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Section B: Approaches for RemotEDx Networked Learning Community	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Section C: Expected Outcomes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Section D: Management Plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Section E: Oversight	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Section F: Progress Monitoring	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Section G: RemotEDx Integration and Coordination	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Section H: Capacity Building and Sustainability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Section I: Competitive Preference Priorities (optional)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Appendix A: Project Timeline	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Appendix B: Budget Narrative and Budget Worksheet	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Appendix C: Letters of Support	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Appendix D: Evidence of Effectiveness	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Appendix E: Grant Assurances	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<p>I HEREBY CERTIFY that, to the best of my knowledge, the information in this application is correct. I further certify that I have authority as a signatory and to apply on the subgrantee applicant's behalf. The applicant designated below hereby applies for a subgrant of federal funds with the purpose of designing, developing, managing, communicating and overseeing a statewide infrastructure for remote education for grades kindergarten through grade 12.</p> <p><b>Signature:</b> <u>Melinda J. George</u>      <b>Date:</b> <u>4/28/2021</u></p> <p><b>Printed Name:</b> <u>Melinda George, Chief Policy Officer</u></p> <p><b>Organization:</b> <u>Learning Forward</u></p>	