

Partners for Educational Leadership High School Learning Collective

High schools [are being asked] to accomplish something they have never been required to do—ensure that substantially all students achieve at a relatively high level. Meeting that challenge will require high schools to improve the effectiveness of their core technology—instruction.

~Tom Corcoran and Megan Silander

What's the Problem We are Trying to Solve?: High School Learning (and Instruction)

Researchers and practitioners universally recognize that the high school is a complex organization. In addition, improvement in high school classrooms does not typically follow the same paths that often work in elementary schools. As a result, instructional shifts in high school tend to be more challenging to realize.

Yet, some high schools are making important strides in shifting instructional practice. And we know there are administrators, teachers, and students committed to realizing even more progress. In our work across Connecticut and beyond, Partners has met, visited, and talked with folks passionate about improving, transforming, and even revolutionizing the student learning experience to improve equity and achievement.

What Are We Doing to Help Solve the Problem?: The High School Learning Collective

We are convening a small number of districts in a new Partners for Educational Leadership community of practice focused on learning our way toward a richer, more equitable, and more challenging experience for high school students.

What Participating in this Community of Practice Would Demand: A Commitment to Action, Reflection, and Learning

We are looking for districts that can commit to the following:

1. Participating in a network of districts, all of which are looking to...
2. Improve the quality of instruction experienced by ALL high school students, specifically by reducing variation in the quality of instructional practice across classrooms, by...
3. Engaging in small, rapid cycles of continuous improvement focused specifically on instructional practice, and
4. Developing and testing strategies to support system-wide continuous improvement through changes to leadership practices, use of collaborative time, and other conditions for testing innovations.

The Ideal District Team: A Slice of Critical Perspectives

Each district will send an approximately 8-person team of educators comprising a senior leader (superintendent or assistant superintendent), principals, coaches, teachers, and students. Teams should be made up of educators and students from one or two schools at most rather than distributed across several

schools to enable deeper and more direct support for the improvement processes each team will undertake.

The Time Commitment: Quarterly Cross-District Meetings And In-Between District Action

The collective will meet in person 4 times a year, rotating among member districts. (Usually, we start with breakfast at 8:30, agenda start at 9, and close by 3:30). Each convening will include new learning about equity-focused continuous improvement and time for teams to plan their next steps. Each team will be asked to undertake disciplined continuous improvement between the in-person meetings. We will also schedule between-meeting “tune-ups” and district-specific meetings with the facilitation team to provide customized support two or three times a year, either in person or over Zoom.

Teams will also receive reading material in preparation for each convening. When possible, participating districts will also be offered some complimentary seats at PEL workshops.

What Will Districts Gain From Membership?: Fellowship, Expertise, and Learning

- A committed network of educators sharing practice and new learning with a specific focus: dramatically shifting students' learning experiences.
- Introduction to expertise in instruction and organizational change at the high school level.
- New tools, skills, and disciplines drawn from improvement science and continuous improvement.

What Will This Cost?

\$15,000 per district, plus the cost of food when serving as district host. Costs are being reduced thanks to the generous donation from an anonymous donor.

Contact Us

If you want to learn more, please contact Jerry Belair, Director of District Partnerships, at jbelair@partnersforel.org.

About Partners for Educational Leadership

We partner with educational leaders to reimagine teaching and learning, dismantle instructional inequities, and support systemic improvement so that all students can flourish.

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