



2022

NIET | NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR
EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING

ANNUAL REPORT





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NIET partners,

2022 is a year of advancing opportunities for all students by focusing on the key needs in our schools. With a foundation of 20 years of experience, NIET's initiatives stood ready to meet the needs of students and educators returning to school in a post-pandemic world. As we travel the nation, we see a common factor: **The most successful learning gains are evident in states, districts, and schools that invested in teacher leaders in their systems.**

Systems with a specific focus on creating formal leadership roles with sufficient responsibility, accountability, and authority to drive improvements

in teaching and learning mitigated challenges and maximized learning recovery. These systems also were most effective at attracting, retaining, and rewarding educators as instructional leaders and supporting the effective leaders around them at the school, district, and state levels. We know the quality of an educational system cannot exceed the quality of its educators.

To this end and to empower educators, NIET focused on supporting our partners through innovative approaches to meet the immediate and long-term needs of students, including **learning acceleration** and **maximizing the use of high-quality instructional materials.**

We also recognized a need to support educators in transitioning into and succeeding in the profession as more individuals were teaching in



classrooms through myriad certification routes. To support this, NIET released nearly **400 new resources** on our platform, EE PASS. We also expanded our work with university partners to provide **more support to pre-service teachers** through the national release of the ***Aspiring Teacher Rubric***. Our effort to support educators continued to be recognized across the nation, as we created 92 new school partnerships, including reaching into three new states: Illinois, Missouri, and Wisconsin.

Our support has also produced significant results with our partners achieving results substantially different than those around them, including being recognized as **Blue Ribbon Schools**, best-in-state performance, and best-in-district performance. In Louisiana, where NIET supports 66 of the 69 districts, these results were clear, as the state

ranked **first in the nation in reading growth** on 2022 NAEP results for fourth graders. We also saw NIET partners have **higher retention rates** compared to schools around them.

These results were directly due to our partners' focus on cultivating highly talented teachers and establishing an environment in which those teachers can work and flourish through the support of highly effective leaders. We are deeply proud of the work we are doing across the country and the results we are achieving. We look forward to expanding on this foundation of success to create opportunities for all students together.

Louise Miller Joshua H. Barnett

Louisiana Department of Education Brings Scale to School Improvement

While the strengths and challenges of every school are unique, supporting district and school leaders who identify and adapt proven best practices to meet their needs can yield meaningful impact and change for their school communities.

The Louisiana Best Practices initiative is an innovative state strategy

to identify best practices and support improvements in classroom instruction at scale. The state is supporting districts to build these best practices through training, on-site coaching, and access to an online library with extensive video and other resources. “We know our students do best when teachers are supported to continually improve their practice,” said Louisiana

State Superintendent of Education Dr. Cade Brumley. “Our goal with the best practices training is to scale that support statewide.”

The best practices identified by the state are based on successful practices implemented in NIET partner districts over more than a decade. The five best practices include instructional leadership teams, teacher collaboration, teacher standards support, principal standards support, and career pipeline support.

In the 2021-22 school year, with a vision for raising student outcomes, the Louisiana Department of Education provided schools across the state the opportunity to participate in best practice training and coaching to strengthen their leadership teams and create teacher collaborative learning opportunities.

“We know our students do best when teachers are supported to continually improve their practice. Our goal with the best practices training is to scale that support statewide.”

DR. CADE BRUMLEY | Louisiana State Superintendent of Education





NIET designed and delivered training and on-site support for each school, and provided educators with access to an extensive video library of classroom lessons and coaching sessions to extend their learning.

- Over **3,000** educators received certificates for participating in the first two best practice trainings: instructional leadership team and teacher collaboration training.
- Support was provided through **220** full-day in-person training sessions and **76** virtual training sessions, followed by **144** site visits.
- Participants in the best practices training reported **significant improvements** in teacher practice and school leader practice.

Participants in best practices training

Increased Equitable Access to Effective Educators Through LA BOLD

NIET's work with Louisiana school systems across the state through our Building on Leadership Development in Louisiana (LA BOLD) partnership yielded impressive results over the multi-year partnership period. From the 2017-18 school year to the 2021-22 school year, the percentage of teachers rated as effective or above increased from 75% to 90%. In addition, retention of teachers who were rated as effective or above increased from 80% to 96% from 2017-18 to 2021-22. For the 2021-22 school year, 93% of schools saw improvement in ELA, math, social studies, and/or science.

report it is impacting classroom teaching and improving school climate. By identifying evidence-based best practices, providing statewide training in those practices, and following up with

coaching on site, this initiative is helping school leaders to support improvements in instruction across the state. This innovative state-level strategy provides a powerful model for other states.



ROOSEVELT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Identify Great Teachers and Give Them a Leadership Role

The Roosevelt Elementary School District (RSD) in Phoenix, Arizona, is creating powerful teacher leadership roles and a more effective system for supporting and growing teacher practice and student learning.

Before the pandemic, students in Roosevelt scored, on average, 24% lower in math and 23% lower in English language arts than students across the state, and these gaps widened during the pandemic. Roosevelt had pockets of excellence in schools and classrooms, but needed a system of support that raised the effectiveness and consistency of teaching in every school. To meet this challenge, RSD decided to invest in teacher leaders. Each school has five to eight teachers who take on leadership roles, working

“I believe it begins with making intentional space at the table for teacher leaders. When teachers are honored and included, they naturally become more comfortable and confident in sharing their knowledge and talents.”

MEGAN GESTSON | Roosevelt’s Executive Director of Leadership and Learning

with principals to build a system of professional learning and coaching at the school level. “I believe it begins with making intentional space at the table for teacher leaders,” said Megan Gestson, Roosevelt’s Executive Director of Leadership and Learning. “When teachers are honored and

included, they naturally become more comfortable and confident in sharing their knowledge and talents.”

RSD worked to formalize teacher leadership roles through the establishment of a “learning cabinet” in each school. Creating a role for teacher leaders in the learning cabinet



brings the classroom teacher voice and perspective into the decision-making process. “Teacher leaders have direct experience ‘living’ campus initiatives in the classroom,” said Gestson. “They are able to provide some of the most valuable feedback on the effectiveness of initiatives.”

Use teacher leaders to create an effective, coherent professional learning and coaching system

Learning cabinets provide opportunities for members to engage in professional, peer-to-peer learning while working with school leaders to elevate effective teacher practices and contribute to student success.

“One example that comes to mind is at J.R. Davis School,” said Gestson. “After school leaders presented achievement and observational data to the learning cabinet, the team made some very intentional decisions to move ELA learning forward. This included all staff engaging in a full day of district-adopted ELA curriculum training in order to use the program consistently, with fidelity. They also learned how to use data to predict outcomes and plan accordingly. The result was Davis having the highest



“By elevating teacher leaders, RSD is doing tremendous work to support great classroom teaching and impact students.”

DR. RUHI KHAN | NIET Senior Specialist

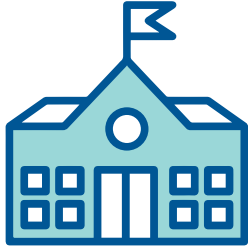
scores in the district for ELA on this past spring’s Arizona’s Academic Standards Assessment.”

RSD has made a commitment to school improvement initiatives by establishing learning cabinets on each of their 20 campuses to provide

teachers with opportunities to take on formal leadership roles. Although the work at individual schools looks and sounds different, teacher leadership roles support steady improvement in classroom instruction and student learning across the district.

By the Numbers

9,000



School partners*

twenty-five

States supported**



387

New resources added to EE PASS

300K

Teachers impacted*



11,000

Days of on-site support



18

New team members

1,200+

Educators at our national conference



ninety-two

New school partners added this year

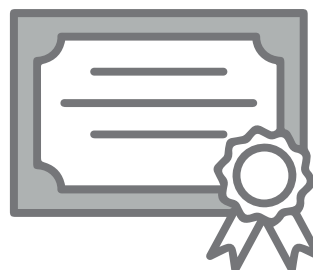


3,000,000

Students impacted*

1,394,139

Page views in EE PASS



3,000+

Certificates earned for Louisiana best practice trainings

Recognizing and Celebrating Excellence

Each year, we recognize great teachers and leaders at our national conference through the NIET District Award of Excellence for Educator Effectiveness and the NIET Founder's Award. These surprise awards celebrate success in strengthening classroom teaching and student outcomes.

2022 NIET District Award of Excellence for Educator Effectiveness Winner

Ascension Public Schools

Louisiana

Ascension Public Schools' focus on educator excellence and student progress was celebrated with the awarding of the NIET District Award of Excellence for Educator Effectiveness and \$50,000. Ascension, which is located southeast of Baton Rouge, serves 24,000 students, 48% of whom are minority and 55% are categorized as economically disadvantaged. Ascension Parish expanded its partnership with NIET in 2011 to start a turnaround zone with eight schools. These schools fully implemented the TAP System, and because of the significant gains in student growth, the district expanded their partnership with NIET to all 31 schools in the district. Ascension has intentionally integrated NIET structures that accelerate educator impact, and scaled those systems across the district to elevate every school to ensure every child is taught by a highly effective teacher. In addition to continued student growth, Ascension has also grown more than



35 of their educators to become assistant principals and principals by implementing a career teacher pipeline with support from NIET structures and best practices.

In 2021, students in Ascension scored among the best in state assessment tests, with the highest percentage of students scoring at the levels of mastery and advanced in all grades and subjects. The district also consistently outperformed the state in grades 3 through 8 ELA, math, and social studies in 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2021. Additionally, the graduation rate

for Ascension grew from 88.7% in 2019 to 91.1% in 2020, far surpassing the state graduation rate of 84%.

By implementing TAP structures and processes, Superintendent David Alexander says Ascension has created a supportive environment where educators want to work. "Teachers want to come to Ascension Public Schools because they believe they can grow as teachers," said Alexander. "They know that they're going to be in a collaborative environment and that they're going to get the support they need."

2022 Founder's Award
Grand Prize Winner

Cross County High School

Cross County School District
Arkansas

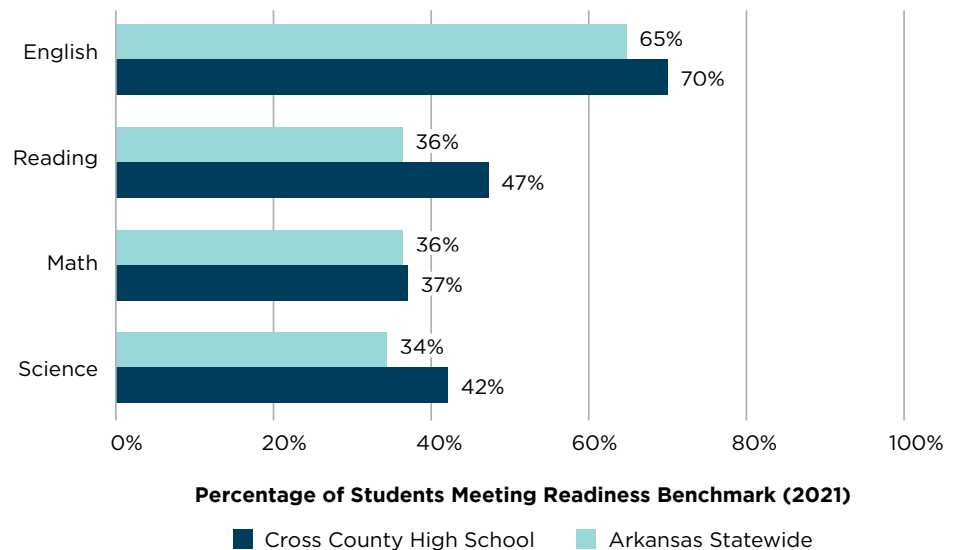
Cross County High School exemplifies NIET's work with schools to develop teacher leaders, collaborate on successful instructional practices, and provide feedback and support to address teacher and student needs. As recognition of their commitment to these best practices, Cross County High School was awarded the 2022 NIET Founder's Award and its \$50,000 grand prize.

Cross County High School serves 300 students, all of whom receive free or reduced-price lunch benefits. The school is one of only two schools in the Cross County School District, a small, rural community located about an hour south of Jonesboro, Arkansas. Principal Stephen Prince and his leadership team have delved deeply into NIET's TAP System for Teacher and Student Advancement to develop a collaboration structure that builds teachers' skill sets and addresses the educational inequities and challenges of serving a rural community.

Implementing the TAP System has established consistent structures and processes that are yielding results. Regular meetings with educators, called cluster meetings, have provided a dedicated collaboration time for teachers to focus on students and their school-wide improvement goals. School leaders are using the *NIET Teaching and Learning Standards Rubric* to create ongoing feedback for teachers, highlighting areas that need refinement while also reinforcing teachers' strengths. This ongoing coaching is leading to a significant improvement in instructional practices for the school. Like many schools across the country, recruiting and retaining effective teachers is a challenge for Cross County High; however, these



Cross County High School students outperformed students statewide on the 2021 state assessments



strategies and levels of support have helped the school increase its retention of effective teachers from 75% to 96% in only four years.

The implementation of these effective strategies improved Cross County High School's graduation rate from 77% to 95% in only seven years. Despite the challenges of the pandemic, Cross County School District is one of only a few districts in Arkansas to increase student

performance from 2019 to 2021, and in 2021, Cross County High School students outperformed students statewide in all subjects. "For our small school and our small community, [NIET] has been a game changer for us," said Prince. "The partnership came around at the best moment because we were looking to reform our school, support our teachers more, make them even more effective, grow our students, and help them achieve more."

Founder's Award Finalists

Despite the challenges created by the pandemic, NIET's partner schools have shown success in outperforming similar schools and increasing retention of effective teachers. The 2022 Founder's Award finalists continued to advance during the pandemic, using NIET's tools and resources to support instructional excellence and learning acceleration, provide coaching from expert leaders and trainers, and engage a large network of educators united around shared learning. NIET is proud to partner with each of these schools, and it was an exciting moment this year to recognize their achievements.

2022 Founder's Award Finalist

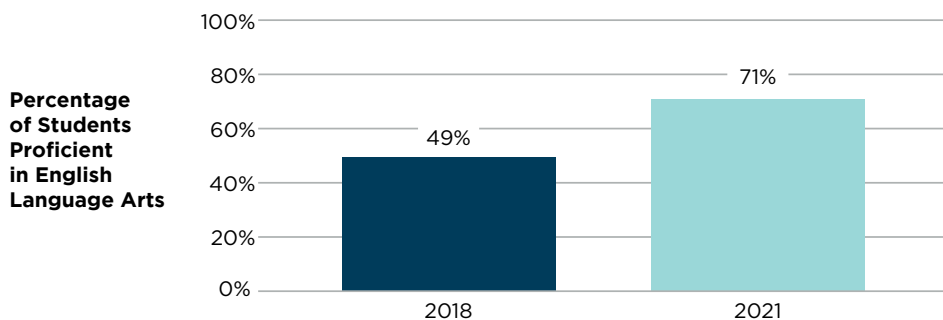
Brown County High School

Brown County Schools, Indiana

Brown County High, located south of Indianapolis, is among Brown County's six schools and serves 549 students, 40% of whom are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. Only three years into their partnership with NIET, Brown County High is already seeing success using the TAP System to increase the effectiveness of their teachers and improve student achievement. Principal Trent Austin and his leadership team are revamping their school culture by using NIET structures to build capacity and foster growth for teachers through dedicated collaboration time, increased instructional support, and professional learning opportunities. From 2018 to 2021, Brown County High made significant gains in its ELA scores, increasing from 49% to 71% in only three years. The school also earned a state letter grade of B, which evaluates the school's performance, improvement, graduation rate, and college and career readiness.



Brown County High School saw a 22-point increase in ELA proficiency rates between 2018 and 2021



2022 Founder's Award Finalist

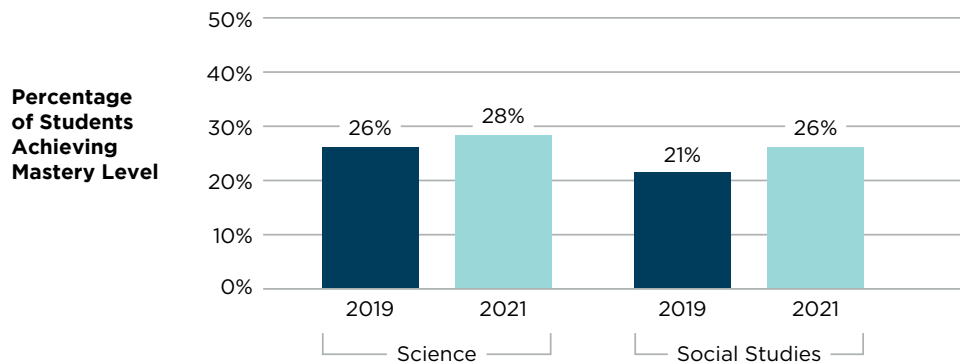
Logansport High School

DeSoto Parish Schools, Louisiana

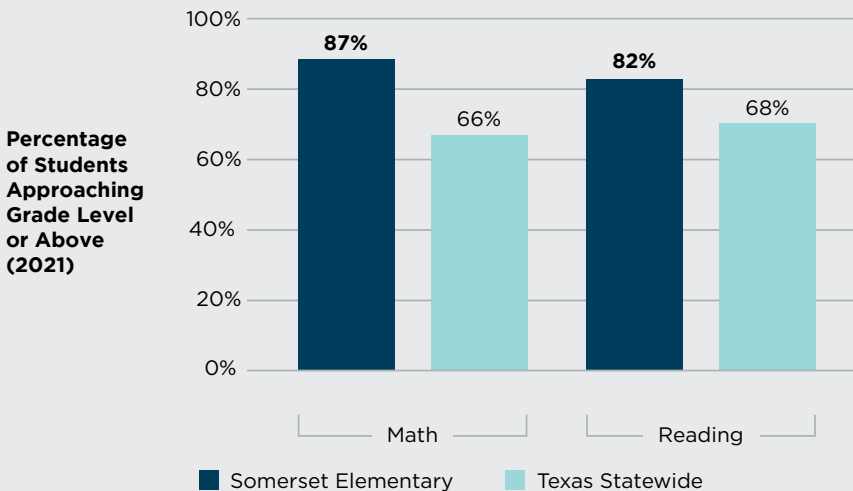
Logansport High School, located in DeSoto Parish, serves 590 students from preschool through 12th grade. Of the enrolled students, 68% receive free or reduced-price lunch benefits. Through the TAP System, Principal Diana Curtis and her team have been able to use common language and consistent structures to create a unified vision and set of goals for all of Logansport's teachers and students. While many schools have declined academically during the pandemic, Logansport increased its School Performance Score, which is based on student achievement data, by five points from 2019 to 2021. Logansport also maintained its percentage of students scoring at mastery and above across all subjects in 2019 and 2021, and increased its percentage scoring mastery and above in math by three percentage points from 2018 to 2021.



Logansport High School improved the percentage of students achieving mastery in 2021 compared to 2019



Somerset Elementary students outperformed similar students statewide in math and reading on the 2021 state assessment



2022 Founder's Award Finalist

Somerset Elementary School

Somerset Independent School District, Texas

Somerset Elementary, located southwest of San Antonio, serves 590 students representing a majority-minority population, with Hispanic students making up 93% of the student population. Of the total percentage of enrolled students, 86% are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. Serving all students is at the cornerstone of Somerset's work, and Principal Nieves Carrales and her team have



2022 Founder's Award Finalist

Southport 6th Grade Academy

Perry Township Schools, Indiana

Southport 6th Grade Academy, located in Indianapolis, serves 660 students, with Asian students making up more than a quarter of the student population. Of the total of enrolled students, 77% are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. Principal Jason Wiesmann and his team have fostered an environment where students are engaged and educators are accessible by dividing the school's students into six academic teams. This team structure provides a smaller learning community for students and the foundation for strong family relationships through frequent and meaningful communication and planning. From 2017 to 2020, Southport 6th Grade Academy maintained a state letter grade of A, which evaluates school performance and improvement, growth, and participation.

**From 2017 to 2020,
Southport 6th Grade
Academy maintained
an A letter grade**



utilized the TAP System's distributed leadership model to ensure every student has access to an excellent educator. Despite the challenges presented by the pandemic in recent years, Somerset Elementary has continued to sustain academic progress, outperforming the state score in all subjects (ELA/reading, math, and writing) in 2019 and 2021. Somerset also increased performance over the state average in all categories from 2019 to 2021. In 2021, the school increased the percentage of students who are considered approaching grade level or above in ELA/reading to 82% and maintained the percentage of students approaching grade level or above in math at 87%. In 2022, Somerset Elementary was nominated by the Texas Education Agency as a National Blue Ribbon School.





Accelerating Learning Through Prioritizing Teacher Support

The impact of the pandemic on student learning was significant, as it widened pre-existing achievement gaps for historically disadvantaged students. Yet some districts serving large numbers of high-need students were more able to achieve notable learning gains, or substantially lower learning losses, than comparable districts.

This requires significant skill on the part of the classroom teacher, along with high-quality instructional materials that engage all students in grade-level learning. Interventions such as high-dosage tutoring, extending the school year, and

summer sessions are important supplements for students with the greatest learning needs; however, we must increase our focus on ensuring that all classroom teachers are equipped to support learning acceleration strategies during core classroom instruction. This requires a systemic approach to improving classroom teaching and learning.

Building systems and structures that strengthen core instruction to accelerate learning and close equity gaps has been the center of our work with district partners for over two decades. Three core strategies drive their success.

STRATEGY #1

Strengthen professional learning and instructional leadership teams by engaging teacher leaders.

Expanding the school leadership team to include teacher leaders builds instructional leadership capacity and creates opportunities to strengthen collaborative professional learning. Weekly professional learning and classroom coaching follow cycles of improvement that address specific student learning needs.

STRATEGY #2

Prioritize the use of high-quality instructional materials and a plan for training teachers to use those materials effectively.

A high-quality curriculum is a key foundation for teachers as they engage students in grade-level work, and it provides resources to help teachers address learning gaps. District and school leaders play an important role in creating opportunities for teachers to learn how to maximize their high-quality curriculum and instructional materials to meet individual student learning needs.

STRATEGY #3

Focus interventions on students most in need and minimize the amount of time students are out of the classroom.

Supporting teachers to utilize interventions within the classroom setting increases student access to

“Investing in stronger classroom teaching and learning — where students spend the majority of their time — must be the primary focus of our efforts to accelerate learning if we want to close equity gaps.”

DR. JOSHUA BARNETT | NIET Chief Executive Officer

grade-level learning. Using data to inform additional interventions targets those students most in need and makes connections to classroom learning.

Investing in stronger classroom teaching and learning — where students spend the majority of their time — must be the primary focus of our efforts to accelerate learning if we want to close equity gaps. Districts with systems in place to support classroom teachers to deliver

effective instruction when disruptions or challenges are thrown in their path are more successful in maintaining and accelerating student learning. By keeping their focus on effective classroom teaching and learning, training teachers to use high-quality instructional materials to support all students with grade-level learning, and aligning intervention for students with the greatest needs to classroom data and learning goals, districts are accelerating student learning growth.

Learning Acceleration in San Felipe Del Rio Consolidated Independent School District

All too often, we hear that students who missed critical learning will catch up in summer school, Saturday camp, or after-school tutoring. San Felipe Del Rio Consolidated Independent School District, located about three hours west of San Antonio near the border of Texas and Mexico, is finding new ways to accelerate learning in the classroom. Two years ago, San Felipe Del Rio renewed its focus on high-quality instruction to strengthen the quality of daily classroom teaching.

To start, the district completely revamped its schedule to include concentrated three-hour learning blocks for teachers each week and adopted a 10-day cycle for instructional improvement. During the learning blocks, teachers meet in small groups that are led by a trained administrator or teacher leader. The groups follow a protocol to diagnose where students are on the path to grade-level learning, identify content and skills that each student needs to master, plan lessons that anticipate where students might struggle, deliver

instruction with support to address those needs, and monitor student progress to identify next steps.

San Felipe Del Rio is prioritizing the use of high-quality instructional materials and providing training for teachers to use those materials effectively. “We started with an intensive focus on in-classroom change and supplemented that with outside-the-classroom support for students with the greatest needs,” said Superintendent Dr. Carlos Rios. “Our belief was that if teachers learn the curriculum, they can implement it at a deeper level and plan for the supports or strategies they will need to support lower-performing students to access the lesson the first time.”

By creating extended time for teacher collaborative learning, establishing teacher leadership roles, providing professional learning for school leaders, and supporting principals through district coaching, San Felipe Del Rio has created systems and structures that build capacity in teachers to grow students.

Although these changes were made in response to learning disruption caused by the pandemic, San Felipe Del Rio plans to sustain these systems and structures moving forward. These changes will strengthen educator effectiveness and improve student outcomes for years to come.



Transforming the Teaching Profession via Teacher Leadership

A Conversation with Dr. Joshua Barnett and Dr. Carole Basile

Arizona State University's Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College is building the Next Education Workforce, which starts with the conviction that if we're not getting the workforce or the learning outcomes we want, we need to redesign the profession, the workplace, and how we prepare people for both. NIET is a partner in this work, focusing on how teacher leadership can drive this transformation. To discuss the impact of this partnership, NIET CEO Dr. Joshua Barnett interviewed Dr. Carole Basile, Dean of ASU's Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College.

Dr. Barnett: What are the most important challenges you see new teachers face when they enter the classroom?

Dr. Basile: All teachers start school facing 20, 30, or more students, who are all different, from different backgrounds and experiences. The challenge is how to teach all of them and each of them everything. Teachers

are expected to be all things to all people at all times. For too long, our education approach has left teachers with very little flexibility and very isolated. It is a difficult job made even more difficult by insecurities around pay, safety, status, and respect. However, we contend that the fundamental challenge is the default one-teacher, one-classroom model. That model prevents schools from serving all students equitably and effectively. And it prevents educators from enjoying the kinds of collaborative

work experiences that professionals in other fields enjoy and expect. Redesigning staffing models could help us make schools work better for both learners and educators.

Dr. Barnett: How can supporting teacher leadership help to address these challenges?

Dr. Basile: First, teachers need opportunities to advance. Day 2,000 should not look like Day 1, but it often does. Schools are flat organizations without much room for upward mobility. Second, moving from the one-teacher, one-classroom model of schooling provides opportunities for teacher leadership. If we build staffing models that are team-based and play to different strengths, then we can also create opportunities for teacher leadership in a variety of ways, such as team leads, cross-team leads, leaders with specializations. We build more robust organizational structures, providing more room for educators to grow and advance.

Dr. Barnett: Research has shown that deeper, personalized learning requires opportunities for collaboration, engaging in authentic tasks, and creative problem-solving. How do you see our partnership advancing this vision for more effective teaching and learning in classrooms?

Dr. Basile: Access to student-centered learning is critical for all students, but it takes a team of adults with different perspectives, backgrounds and expertise to lead this type of instruction well. By building new kinds

“Teaching is complex. We shouldn’t expect that every educator will master all the elements of that complexity on their own at exactly the same time. They will need to be part of self-improving teams that allow them to hone their craft, acquire new skills, and deepen other skills.”

DR. CAROLE BASILE | Dean of ASU's Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College

of staffing models and by understanding how teams can distribute expertise to personalize and deepen learning, we should be able to make more schools work better for both students and educators. Teaching is complex. We shouldn’t expect that every educator will master all the elements of that complexity on their own at exactly the same time. They will need to be part of self-improving teams that allow them to hone their craft, acquire new skills, and deepen other skills. Among the benefits of this approach — and one not to be underestimated — is that educators can model lifelong learning for their students.





Supporting South Carolina Leaders to Meet the Needs of All Students

At the heart of every great school is a great leader. In the context of school improvement, the role of the principal becomes even more important. Thus, increasing access to great leadership has to be central to any turnaround effort. Yet principals and assistant principals, particularly those in underserved communities, often face barriers to providing effective leadership and would benefit from support.

To address this challenge, NIET has formed the South Carolina Principal Leadership Network (SCPLN) to build the leadership capacity of more than 150 school leaders from districts across the state. Through this initiative, school leaders participate in a two-year cohort-based program of high-quality virtual professional development focused on improving their leadership skills, as well as their efforts in STEM and social-emotional learning. This support is coupled with quarterly on-site coaching and networking opportunities through virtual communities of practice. The training is rooted in evidence-based practices that accelerate student achievement growth and is tailored to the needs of participating schools and school leaders.

"This networking and learning opportunity has shown me how to support my teachers and staff from within," said Robert Hemby, former principal participant and now Coordinator of Career and Technical Education (CTE) and K-12 School Improvement in Orangeburg County Schools. "We are utilizing learning walks and building a shared



leadership approach to instruction and are now seeing the results in the classroom in teacher instruction, student growth, and student ownership. Being able to collaborate with other administrators from across the state has been beneficial as I continue to build my leadership skills and the instructional capacity of our teachers." School leaders report that SCPLN provides opportunities for much-needed collaboration, reflection, and learning.

JEFFERSON PARISH, LOUISIANA

Implementing High-Quality Instructional Materials

In our work with partners, we have identified common cycles and strategies that school and teacher leaders can take to strengthen professional learning for teachers and make a deeper connection across instructional practices and curriculum — ultimately making the learning richer for students. Two frameworks support instructional leaders as they coach teachers in this process.

First, it is crucial for school leaders and coaches to gauge where individual teachers are in the progression of learning a new, more rigorous curriculum. NIET's *Teacher Learning Progression on Curriculum* outlines connections between curriculum and instructional skills at various levels of expertise, tied specifically to indicators on the *NIET Teaching and Learning Standards Rubric*. For example, more demanding curricula require teachers to support students to take ownership of their own learning and to engage in thinking and problem-solving with their peers, described in the curriculum progression as “student-led learning.” Courtney Kesterman, a first-grade teacher at Bissonet Plaza Elementary School in Jefferson Parish, Louisiana, is working on strengthening her students' engagement in part by helping them understand what they need to know and be able to do. “If I don't know the why behind my lesson,” she said, “I can't express it to my students.”

Once leaders assess where teachers are, NIET's *Steps for Effective Learning* protocol provides instructional leaders with a systematic process to ensure that the valuable time teachers spend in collaborative team meetings is focused, productive, and useful. As schools adopt new materials, the *Steps for Effective Learning* can be used by leadership teams to identify and address challenges teachers are facing in curriculum implementation. “What teachers find valuable is timely, detailed feedback on their lesson and where they can strengthen it,” said Laura Roussel, Chief Academic Officer for Jefferson Parish Schools. “High-quality feedback is motivating and actionable, helping teachers to build on their strengths and identify where they



“If I don't know the why behind my lesson, I can't express it to my students.”

COURTNEY KESTERMAN | First-grade teacher at Bissonet Plaza Elementary School

can step in with more student support.” These frameworks enable teacher and school leaders to coach teachers to more effectively use high-quality instructional materials to support each student in their classroom. For more, read our report, *High-Quality Curriculum Implementation: Connecting What to Teach with How to Teach It*.

“High-quality feedback is motivating and actionable, helping teachers to build on their strengths and identify where they can step in with more student support.”

LAURA ROUSSEL | Chief Academic Officer for Jefferson Parish Schools

University Partnerships Increase New Teacher Recruitment and Retention

This fall, we announced a partnership with Southeastern Louisiana University as part of a five-year competitive grant from the federal Teacher Quality Partnership program. The partnership will support Tangipahoa Parish School System and St. Charles Parish Public Schools with the recruitment and preparation of new teachers, including increasing the number of teachers from underrepresented populations.

The Building Rigorous Induction and Development for Growing all Educators (BRIDGE) partnership will prepare new teachers in a yearlong residency and support them through high-quality induction in their first two years of teaching.

Teacher Leadership Impact

Teacher leadership is a proven strategy for supporting new teachers by providing timely, relevant, and actionable guidance for continued growth and improvement. The partnership will increase the instructional leadership skills and knowledge of 150 mentor teachers who will support the preparation of 375 more effectively trained, highly supported, and diverse new teachers over five years. Training for mentor teachers will increase the number of teachers prepared for leadership roles in their schools, expanding their impact to more students and teachers over the long term. School leaders will also participate in grant activities, strengthening their ability to implement an effective induction program and support new teachers to be successful.



Partnerships to Grow Educators

BRIDGE will prepare teachers in shortage areas identified by districts. “By partnering with school districts, the BRIDGE project will support beginning teachers beyond graduation,” said Dr. Paula S. Calderon, Dean of the College of Education at Southeastern Louisiana University. “In doing so, we will help districts to retain qualified teachers beyond the three- to five-year lifespan of a new teacher.”

“The ability of our district to hire effective teachers and school leaders is highly dependent on the skills of teacher and school leader candidates,” said Melissa M. Stanley, Superintendent of Tangipahoa Parish School System. “We are excited to partner with Southeastern and NIET to support our new teachers in continuing to improve

their classroom practices and better support student success.”

“This partnership will create high expectations for new teachers and supports for teacher candidates in a yearlong residency,” said Dr. Ken Oertling, Superintendent of St. Charles Parish Public Schools. “This will be followed by induction support in their first years of teaching.” These strategies will provide high-quality support for aspiring teachers that bridges their preparation program and their first two years in the classroom.

The BRIDGE project will address the challenges new teachers face by enhancing Southeastern’s teacher preparation program, recruiting a more diverse cadre of new teachers, and creating induction programs in partner districts to support novice teachers to be more effective earlier in their careers.

A Focus on Strong Instruction Drives Improvement

Since partnering with NIET in fall 2018, Sarah Moore Greene Magnet Technology Academy in Knox County, Tennessee, has improved student achievement and growth by focusing on job-embedded coaching and instructional excellence. The hard work of students and staff was recognized this year in a visit from U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona and First Lady Jill Biden.

Sarah Moore Greene is an elementary magnet school with a focus on global leadership. Students learn leadership skills, and culturally enriched studies help them embrace all cultures, including learning the Spanish language. The school offers opportunities that include STEM

programming and arts education, and has over 500 students, 79% of whom are African American and 80% of whom are economically disadvantaged.

Years of consecutive low student-growth ratings motivated Sarah Moore Greene to start a culture shift. NIET staff partnered with the school to help leaders diagnose barriers teachers faced in delivering effective instruction, and specialists work with teachers and leaders to coach them over the course of the school year.

The school has used coaching conversations and schoolwide instructional strategies to create a strong school culture around a common language and goals. Over 50 teachers at Sarah Moore Greene have

worked together under the leadership of Principal Robin Curry to strengthen their instruction and to ultimately support student growth. “My role has been focused on being a lead learner to ensure that we have a reflective culture and that all of our work supports the vision of our school,” said Principal Curry. “I have been honored to be a part of a culture that embraces lifelong learning.”

Sarah Moore Greene has proven their idea that “teachers, principals and support staff are the driving force behind our educational mission.” By prioritizing teacher and student needs, they have shown that strong growth is possible when educators are united around a common vision and goals.



Our Mission

Building educator excellence to give all students the opportunity for success.

Our Vision Our vision is that every student in America is taught by an excellent teacher and supported by effective leaders every year. We believe intentional, sustained, and high-quality investments in educators directly result in success for all students and are essential to eliminating equity gaps. As a result, NIET is committed to raising achievement levels for all students by focusing on the most powerful lever for change — teachers and the leadership that supports them.

Board Members

NIET's work is advised by a board of education leaders.

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Founder and Chairman

Dr. Gary Stark
Vice Chairman

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Dr. James W. Guthrie
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Dr. Candice McQueen
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Dr. Ted Sanders
Board Member

Ray Simon
Board Member



NIET Team Members

Over the past year, as NIET's work expanded, we added new team members to support our growing partnerships. NIET's team includes a diverse set of educators and other professionals who bring deep expertise and a variety of strengths.

Britney Allen
Shelia Banks
Joshua Barnett
Melissa Blossom
Jennifer Board
Nicole Bolen
Robbin Boudreaux
Jennifer Oliver Brady
Monica Brewton
Bobbie Jo Bright
Julee Broscoff
Teddy Broussard
Angelina Burrows
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Amy Campbell
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Kristina Carsow
Danielle Chretien
Vicky Condalary
Matt Connor
Robin Cornet
Bobby Cox
Jill Crain
Jill Crossley
Patti Cruz
Angela Davis

Kathleen Deleon
Scott Duncan
Sherrie Fairchild-Keyes
LaDazha Ford
Trey Forrester
Erin Foster
Amy Gayle
Nicole Gonzalez
Angela Griffis
Venitia Guerrieri
Kate Hall
Theresa Hamilton
Kimberly Herring
Pilar Holtrop
Tanee Hudgens
Christina Hulin
Theresa Hussey
Meredith Jenkins
Sarah Jolly-Swift
Tiffaney Kelly
Angie Kendall
Ruhi Khan
Stacy Knoop
Kyle Kovach
Davita Lancelin
Jodi Leckbee

Trevor Leutscher
Handrea Logis
Janice Mann
Caroline Martin
Quinn McInnis
Abigail McKamey
Kim Melancon
Elizabeth (Liz) Miller
Kelly Minick
Stephanie Mosqueda
Emma Muriel
Chrissy Murphy
Larry Murphy
Claire Murray
Rossette Osamba
Lindsey Parker
Keely Potter
Patrice Pujol
Carrie Pullins
Courtney Rayburn
Megan Rischard
Elizabeth Rose
Paulette Rowell
Bekki Sarradet
Tad Savage
Molly Sears

Marina Serdiouk
Amber Simpson
Kimberlyn Slagle
Courtney Smith
Hank Staggs
Lydia Stevenson
Christa Stewart
Natalie Szakacs
Laura Tew
Nicole McNeil Teyechea
Christina Valdes
Kristan Van Hook
Robin Variest
Lauren Waldow
Sandra Walker-Parker
Amanda Warwick
Tiwanaha Washington
Devon Willis-Jones
Chastity Wilson
Kevin Winters
Michelle Wolfenbarger
Jennifer Woods
April Woolard
Amy Wooten
Brooke Yarbrough

Our Core Values

NIET is guided by core values that are central to upholding our mission and vision, and describe how we work with one another and our partners. The core values characterize the way NIET works both internally and externally as we advance our mission. In addition, **integrity** and **equity** are fundamental qualities that undergird all of our core values and are present at the highest level in all employees of NIET every day.



Excellence

We hold ourselves and our colleagues to the highest standards that exemplify excellence in our daily work and in achieving our goals. We actively reflect, seek, and give feedback in an effort to advance outcomes for ourselves and the educators we serve. We believe in the importance of continuous improvement, and we constantly strive for a higher level of performance in all of our work.



Teamwork

We believe that teams, composed of high-performing team members, can have an enormous impact on teacher performance and student achievement. We value the diverse experiences and commitment to service that each team member brings. We strive to communicate effectively within teams and across teams, ensuring that we are successful in helping all educators reach their potential.



Enthusiasm

We believe in the potential of all students to reach high levels of academic achievement. Thus, we believe that, in collaboration with our colleagues, we can and will build a system of support that helps all students meet their potential. To this end, we operate with a strong sense of possibility, energy, and passion that results in excitement in how we work with our partners and in all that we do.



Student-Outcomes Focused

We are unwaveringly student-centered in our decision-making, prioritizing the needs of students as we work in states, universities, districts, schools, and classrooms. We align our words and our actions to the core belief that all students can achieve at a high level when we provide the opportunities that they deserve.



Agility

We know that it is important to be responsive to what is going on around us, from our partner needs to the priorities of the states in which we serve. This means we must listen, learn, flex, and customize to these needs as much as possible. As we respond, we must be able to think and move quickly and easily while ensuring we respond with evidence-based practices, with depth in professional learning, and in user-friendly modalities.



SAVE THE DATE

NIET 2023 National Conference

MARCH 23-24, 2023

JW Marriott | Indianapolis, IN

Learn more and register at NIET.org

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