



# 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.