



SPOTLIGHT ON QUALITY

IN CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT



2018

OUR MISSION:

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching aims to build a field around the use of improvement science and networked improvement communities to solve long-standing inequities in educational outcomes.

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THE SPOTLIGHT STORY

In pursuit of its mission, the Carnegie Foundation launched the Spotlight on Quality in Continuous Improvement program in 2017 to elevate clear and compelling examples of how the rigorous application of improvement principles, methods, processes, and tools solve educational problems. The Spotlight program provides educational organizations and improvement networks with the opportunity to learn about excellence in continuous improvement, assess their own progress, gain access to resources and education that support improvement, and be recognized for their proven quality practices within the field of education.

The six spotlight honorees for 2018 were selected from a large and diverse group of applicants who have been implementing a wide range of improvement work in varying contexts and stages of development. Each honoree has demonstrated quality in the enactment of improvement principles, methods, and tools applied to significant problems in education or to transform their educational systems or organizations. On the following pages, you will learn more about the exemplary work of the honorees, as well as Carnegie Foundation's vision for high-quality continuous improvement in education. Their work will be presented at the Spotlight on Quality Symposium on November 15, 2018, and at Carnegie's Summit on Improvement in Education on April 16–18, 2019.

KEY ELEMENTS OF THE SPOTLIGHT ON QUALITY PROGRAM

Standards for early stage to more mature efforts: These standards provide an organization's leadership with the tools to assess their progress and areas of potential growth.

Self-study guides, tools, resources, and educative cases: Providing best practices along with rich, descriptive accounts and educative cases, these materials send consistent signals to the field about what high quality looks like in practice.

Spotlight on Quality Symposium: This annual event showcases exemplary work and celebrates quality in the enactment of improvement principles.

Professional network of Spotlight on Quality leaders: This work cultivates and supports a professional network of honorees to further deeper engagement and shared learning.

OUR VISION FOR THE FIELD OF IMPROVEMENT SCIENCE



By **Anthony S. Bryk**, President,
Carnegie Foundation for the
Advancement of Teaching

The history of school reform reveals a disturbing pattern. Over and over, change efforts spread rapidly across the education landscape, despite an absence of knowledge as to how (or even whether it is possible) to effect improvements envisioned by reform advocates. At its base is a common story of *going fast and learning slow*. We consistently fail to appreciate what it actually takes to make some promising idea work reliably in practice. We become disappointed when positive results do not readily emerge, and then we just move on to the next new reform idea.

Today we confront a growing chasm between rising aspiration as to what we want from our schools and what they can routinely accomplish. We need to recognize that we have no realistic strategy to actually achieve our rising aspirations, whether it be all children reading by grade 3, all children career and college ready by the end of high school, or all new teachers succeeding in educating their students.

Comprehending this dynamic requires a fundamental shift in how we think and act, a shift toward *learning fast to implement well*. It calls out for very different organizational arrangements, something we call Networked Improvement Communities. NICs unite the conceptual and analytic discipline of improvement science with the social power of networked science so that the fields may be used together to innovate and learn.

Much practical learning occurs every day as people engage in their work. Numerous fields have become much more productive by acknowledging this natural inclination to learn by doing and then building on the learning in deliberate, systematic ways. This is the essence of improvement science, bringing scientific discipline to bear on how plausible change ideas are detailed, tested, and further refined against evidence.

In addition, carrying out this activity through networked communities makes it possible to accelerate improvements. The problems we now seek to solve are too complex to lend themselves to widespread solution by individuals or institutions working in isolation. Networked science aims to exploit how the social intelligence of a group can speed not just individual learning, but a whole profession's capacity to learn and improve.

This perspective guides us toward an explicit focus on practical problem solving informed by an expanded set of methods. *Analytically*, conducting improvement research entails getting down

into the micro details of how systems actually work and how any proposed changes may lead to improved outcomes. *Empirically*, improvement science embraces a design orientation deploying rapid tests of change. It uses evidence to guide the development, revision, and continued fine-tuning of how tools, processes, work roles, and relationships might better interact with one another to produce the outcomes being sought.

The overall R&D goal also changes. It is important, but not sufficient, to know that something *can* work (i.e., what we now call “evidence based” and store in the What Works Clearinghouse). We also need to build the practical *necessary know-how* to generate quality outcomes reliably under diverse and different conditions. This means giving explicit attention to variability in performance and questioning what works for whom and under what set of conditions.

We also must look to new *social* arrangements. In the past, we have relied on a select group to design interventions and establish policies, and then have required those who actually do the work—teachers, principals, and education leaders—to follow these directives. In contrast, effective organizations across many different sectors actively engage those involved in the work as central to its improvement, with networks forming around a collegueship of expertise—academic, technical, and clinical—deliberately assembled to address specific problems. All involved are now *improvers* seeking to generate strong evidence about how to achieve better outcomes more reliably at scale.

All of these ideas led us to launch the Spotlight program in 2017. We believe now is the time to honor exemplary efforts in this fast-developing reform movement and share out into the field the practical lessons from authentic implementation cases.

THE SIX IMPROVEMENT PRINCIPLES

1. Make the work problem-specific and user-centered.

Quality improvement starts with a single question: “What specifically is the problem we are trying to solve?”

2. Focus on variation in performance.

Identifying and addressing the sources of variability in outcomes is essential. Rather than documenting simply “what works,” as in estimating an on-average effect, aim to learn “what works, for whom, and under what set of conditions.”

3. See the system that produces the current outcomes.

Seek to understand better how local conditions shape work processes and resulting outcomes. Use this analysis to explicate a working theory of improvement that can be tested against evidence and further developed from what is learned as you go.

4. We cannot improve at scale what we cannot measure.

Measure outcomes, key drivers, and change ideas so you can continuously test the working theory and learn whether specific changes actually represent an improvement.

5. Use disciplined inquiry to drive improvement.

Common inquiry protocols and evidentiary standards guide the diverse efforts of NICs. Engage in systematic tests of change to learn fast, fail fast, and improve fast.

6. Accelerate learning through networked communities.

NICs aim to break down silos of practice and research. A shared working theory, common measures, and communication mechanisms anchor collective problem solving. Organize as a NIC to innovate, test, and spread effective practices sooner and faster.



CENTER FOR URBAN EDUCATION LEADERSHIP, UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO

Improving Through Leadership: A Program in Urban Education

NETWORK DEMOGRAPHICS*

- 207 leaders
- Gender:
 - 60% female
 - 40% male
- 56% people of color:
 - 38% African American
 - 15% Latinx
- 44% White
- 155 urban school principals
 - 112 in Chicago

The quality of school leadership, along with that of teachers, matters for student outcomes, especially for students in under-resourced schools. The University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) Center for Urban Education Leadership (CUEL) sits at the center of a long-standing effort to improve principal quality in the Chicago Public Schools through a process of continuous improvement. CUEL's work demonstrates how commitment to disciplined learning can yield extraordinary results in helping school leaders to improve schools.

CUEL provides support for continuous improvement to the EdD Program in Urban Education Leadership at UIC, which produces principals and other leaders for urban schools. Since the partnership began in 2002, CUEL has trained 15 cohorts of students, with 94% of program completers entering administration, primarily as principals, and 78% of completers remaining in school leadership or policy positions. These numbers are in contrast to most leadership programs, in which the principal placement averages approximately 15%.

Without strong leadership, schools have difficulty ensuring that each and every student experiences quality teaching and learning every day. The EdD program focuses on advancing equity by preparing principals to be improvement leaders and to conduct focused inquiry in the nation's most challenging and under-resourced schools. With 110 leaders trained by UIC, the program has dramatically expanded Chicago's overall capacity for school improvement.

UIC faculty and CUEL staff sought ways to improve every aspect of the program, from the recruitment and selection of candidates, to integrating academic content and school-based leadership coaching, to the culminating research project that candidates complete. By looking at what highly effective principals do, UIC and CUEL learned what it would take to advance those practices at scale.

* As reported by the Spotlight recipient.

Recognizing that candidate selection matters, the network studied the markers of highly effective principals so that it may better select for those qualities during the admission process and only advance those who provide sufficient evidence of those markers. In addition, CUEL candidates complete a full-year residency under the mentorship of a principal, as well as three years of coursework to support disciplined inquiry, culminating in a capstone project that demonstrates their impact on school outcomes. In addition, they receive three years of structured leadership coaching—one year prior to licensure and at least two years after—by former Chicago Public Schools principals who dramatically improved achievement in their schools.

WITHOUT STRONG LEADERSHIP,
SCHOOLS HAVE DIFFICULTY
ENSURING THAT EACH AND
EVERY STUDENT EXPERIENCES
QUALITY TEACHING AND
LEARNING EVERY DAY.

UIC is forming a networked improvement community of principals who lead schools disadvantaged by student conditions such as high rates of homelessness, foster care placement, and turnover, in order to collect and analyze data on the principal capacities that lead to success in such schools.

Over the past 16 years, UIC has built a deep partnership with the Chicago Public Schools to prepare leaders specifically for Chicago. While UIC does not take credit for the progress the city schools are making—they are among the most rapidly improving schools in the nation—schools headed up by UIC leaders on average outperform comparable Chicago schools led by non-UIC-prepared principals on a range of metrics. In the context of a large, improving urban school system, UIC-led schools are helping to accelerate that improvement.

UIC's documentation of what is needed to prepare effective leaders also has helped shape what Illinois expects to see in the leaders it certifies. UIC leads the legislative task force that changed the state's principal certification law. Other districts and states are now looking to CUEL as a thought partner to help revitalize their preparation of principals.

The UIC story spotlights an innovative principal development program that has used disciplined continuous improvement strategies over an extended period of time to reshape how a university and its local school district can partner to fundamentally transform principal preparation in America's third-largest city.





CENTRAL VALLEY NETWORKED IMPROVEMENT COMMUNITY, TULARE COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION

Improving Middle-Grade Mathematics

NETWORK DEMOGRAPHICS*

- *Districts: 7*
- *Students: 1,167*
- *Teachers: 43*
- *School sites: 12*
- *Gender:*
 - 48% male
 - 52% female
- *Ethnicity:*
 - 59% White
 - 33% Latinx
 - 1% African American
 - 1% Asian
 - 2% two or more races
- *81% socioeconomically disadvantaged*
- *19% English language learners*

The Central Valley Networked Improvement Community (CVNIC) is working to improve mathematics outcomes for 5th graders in seven very rural, agricultural districts in the Central Valley of California. As a whole, the Tulare County Office of Education, which operates the network, supports 43 districts and serves nearly 112,000 students, 78% of whom are from low-income families; 77% are Latinx, and 26% are English language learners.

CVNIC currently works with 12 schools serving more than 1,000 5th graders across Tulare County, which spans a geographic area the size of Connecticut, with 64% of the overall population socioeconomically disadvantaged. When CVNIC began two years ago, only 17% of 5th graders in those schools met state expectations for mathematics performance, which was below the overall performance of the county. Since then, that figure has increased to 25%, with performance in non-network county schools remaining stagnant at 21% and the state as a whole holding steady at 33%. Network classrooms have moved from below the countywide average for mathematics performance to outperforming the rest of the region.

With the aim of increasing 5th grade mathematics proficiency to 51% within the network by 2019, a multidisciplinary team of content experts, improvement experts, change experts, and practitioners worked together to identify the root causes for low mathematics achievement. This process included conducting teacher, student, parent, and administrator interviews; dissecting local and state achievement data; tapping into scholarly research about mathematics learning generally; and mapping out the system that contributes to poor performance. CVNIC then supported teams

* As reported by the Spotlight recipient.

of teachers at individual schools to test improvement strategies through efforts such as creating a positive classroom culture, developing students' beliefs that their abilities and competence can grow through hard work and effort, and engaging students in productive struggle around mathematical ideas and concepts.

CVNIC used common protocols to test innovative change ideas and consolidate what they were learning at each site with the support of individual coaches. Those learnings were then shared across the network through hub facilitators, an online platform for collaborative improvement work, and district showcases at network meetings. To further build connections across isolated rural schools and districts, the county office set up a network Facebook group and supported cross-district collaboration focused on plan-do-study-act improvement cycles. CVNIC further supported this work by designing a strong measurement system that included leading and lagging indicators related to mathematics achievement; process and outcome measures relevant to the innovations being tested; and measures of the health and productivity of the network itself.

Tulare's example is particularly important because most states have some form of intermediary entity—county offices of education, boards of cooperative educational services, intermediate units, or regional service centers—that provides services to geographically dispersed, often isolated rural schools and districts that may lack access to intellectual as well as material resources. CVNIC's work in Tulare County shows that such intermediary entities can play an effective role in organizing and supporting a networked improvement community and in building the human and organizational capacities to effectively engage in improvement work and make improvement happen at scale.

NETWORK CLASSROOMS HAVE
MOVED FROM BELOW THE
COUNTYWIDE AVERAGE FOR
MATHEMATICS PERFORMANCE
TO OUTPERFORMING THE
REST OF THE REGION.



Tulare County
Office of Education

Jim Vidak, County Superintendent of Schools



MEMPHIS KIPP WHEATLEY LEARNING COLLABORATIVE, KIPP FOUNDATION

Improving Middle-Grade Literacy

NETWORK DEMOGRAPHICS*

- *Schools:*
 - 11 in 2017–18
 - 17 in 2018–19
- *Students:*
 - ~2,500 in 2017–18
 - 5,500 in 2018–19
- *Ethnicity:*
 - 90% African American
 - 7% Latinx
- *Free or reduced-price lunch eligible:* 85%

A network of charter management organizations in Memphis, Tennessee, is using improvement science to improve literacy instruction and achievement. In 2012, KIPP (Knowledge Is Power Program)—a national network of charter schools—partnered with Great Minds to create a K–8 literacy curriculum for its schools that emphasizes rigorous reading and rich writing assignments in alignment with the Common Core. The KIPP Wheatley curriculum is shared with other charter networks, including three other networks in Memphis—Aspire Public Schools, Freedom Preparatory Academy, and Memphis Business Academy.

These four networks of 17 schools looked to raise persistently low literacy achievement scores on the Tennessee state test by coming together in a networked improvement community, known as the Learning Collaborative, in the 2017–18 and 2018–19 school years. Combined, the schools serve more than 5,500 students, with 90% African American, 7% Latinx, and 85% qualified for free or reduced-price lunch. Members of the Collaborative identified teacher and leader literacy content knowledge as a primary driver for increasing student learning. KIPP brought together diverse teams from each individual charter school network, including district leaders, principals, assistant principals, and teachers, for in-person and virtual learning sessions. It also instituted monthly on-site coaching sessions from literacy content experts.

The Collaborative sought to create change by using a series of teacher and leader practices designed to develop content and instructional knowledge over time. For example, it developed a

* As reported by the Spotlight recipient.

tool to help guide coaches in leading teams of content teachers to internalize the standards and outcomes associated with each lesson within the curriculum. Teams of teachers and coaches started with small tests using the tool and gradually expanded its use across grade levels and schools, making adjustments as needed for each unique system. Using student achievement data along with teacher and leader data on the frequency of key practices, members of the Collaborative applied cycles of learning to reflect and act on progress that was informed by each other's work.

Accomplishments in the first six months of the Collaborative included, for example, a 31% increase in the number of teachers preparing for lessons by doing the student work themselves and an 18% increase in the number of teachers reporting that they rehearsed lessons in a collaborative team prior to teaching them. The Collaborative also began to see gains in achievement of students performing at the advanced or proficient level on the state English Language Arts test in some schools and networks, though overall results varied. The Collaborative is looking to move to “growth for everyone” by analyzing the causes for variation in results across schools and teachers, and by adjusting its structures and content in year two of the Collaborative. To do so, the Collaborative will be increasing the involvement of principals and network leaders, measuring the quality of the enabling systems, and codifying excellent close reading instruction in a revised rubric. Together, these charter management organizations are demonstrating the power of marrying content-based professional learning for teachers to improvement science to produce gains in teaching and learning.

THE COLLABORATIVE IS
LOOKING TO MOVE FROM
“AVERAGE” GROWTH TO
“GROWTH FOR EVERYONE.”

KIPP:
WHEATLEY
RIGOROUS READING. RICH WRITING.

KIPP:



NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION RESEARCH NETWORK AND KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Improving by Bringing Together Improvement and Implementation Sciences

NETWORK DEMOGRAPHICS*

- *Districts: 5*
- *Schools: 7*
- *Teachers: 69*
- *Students: 6,728*
- *Ethnicity:*
 - *65% White*
 - *21% African American*
 - *8% Latinx*
 - *2% Asian*
 - *4% two or more races*
- *Free or reduced-price lunch eligible: ~66%*

The National Implementation Research Network (NIRN), in partnership with the Kentucky Department of Education, is working with educators at the school, district, regional, and state levels to marry implementation and improvement science.

In Kentucky, approximately 20% of elementary and middle school students with disabilities were proficient in mathematics. Kentucky's goal is to support teachers in dramatically improving mathematics proficiency by focusing on evidence-based mathematics practices and seven effective teacher practices highly correlated with student learning outcomes. The goal is to have 80% of districts using innovative, evidence-based mathematics practices in their Learning Laboratories within six years.

To support this work, NIRN has designed a statewide capacity-building infrastructure of implementation teams at the school, district, regional, and state levels to help teachers continuously improve their practice. Through monthly intensive training and coaching, teams learn to use data and plan-do-study-act improvement cycles with explicit communication routines and common data protocols shared across all levels of the system. The goal is for each level of the system to provide the supports and resources needed to ensure success at the next level, with learning constantly communicated back and forth to inform the next round of improvement cycles. Thus, practice informs policy, and policy enhances sustainable practice.

Kentucky, with the intensive support of NIRN, began working with two regional educational agencies, five districts, and seven schools in Kentucky's first Learning Laboratory, which aims to capture the diversity of learning contexts in the state, from urban to rural. By going slow while learning, the project could go fast once the implementation infrastructure is developed and tested for

* As reported by the Spotlight recipient.

effectiveness. The Learning Laboratory is now being expanded to three new regions in Kentucky. It allows for learning by doing and aims to accomplish three things simultaneously:

1. Learning how to move from ideas (general statements about evidence-based practices) to effective implementation (defined as putting the systems in place to reliably produce the intended outcomes)
2. Developing an initial base of human capabilities statewide to support systems change and improvement learning
3. Creating a leadership cohort at each level that will bring others into the work over time by capitalizing on the collective efficacy of teachers who improve student outcomes.

By focusing on the regular use of capacity, fidelity, implementation, and outcomes data, NIRN is creating a coherent system for developing an implementation infrastructure. At each organizational level, improvement cycles focus on identifying barriers that must be resolved. Teams then implement a planned series of tests designed to study and improve both measures and processes, and they then use those findings to inform policy changes that will support effective practice. At the center of both the implementation and improvement work are the following core questions: Given the diversity of contexts in the state, what works for whom and under what set of circumstances? And how can we get more of the desired outcomes reliably at scale?

NIRN's learning loop—which ensures feedback at each level of the system—is designed to continuously improve the system of supports for educators. NIRN identifies weaknesses in the implementation system; periodically re-examines and, if needed, changes the quality of its measures; and subjects all practices, even those that are evidence-based, to further specification and refinement. The focus is on evaluating the system of supports provided to teachers, rather than teachers themselves, so that teachers can implement new practices with a high degree of fidelity, improve outcomes, and close persistent education gaps.

THE GOAL IS TO HAVE 80%
OF DISTRICTS USING
INNOVATIVE, EVIDENCE-
BASED MATHEMATICS
PRACTICES IN THEIR
LEARNING LABORATORIES
WITHIN SIX YEARS.





STRIVETOGETHER AND UNITED WAY OF SALT LAKE

Improving to Achieve Collective Impact

NETWORK DEMOGRAPHICS*

- 154,484 students
- 41% economically disadvantaged
- 34% students of color
- 12% English language learners
- 11% students requiring special education

Using improvement science across a community poses a unique challenge: It shifts the focus from an individual organization to multiple organizations working together on systems-level problems. The payoff is enabling communities to build a common language and approach to using data for improvement, which builds trust and enables community-level impact.

In Salt Lake City, Utah, United Way of Salt Lake and StriveTogether are using the discipline of improvement science to improve outcomes for children and families. StriveTogether is a network of 70 communities across the U.S. that is working to improve educational outcomes for young people from cradle to career by bringing together diverse stakeholders around a common set of challenges, thereby having a collective impact. United Way of Salt Lake—backbone organization for network member Promise Partnership of Salt Lake—joined with StriveTogether to convene an impact and improvement network to tackle chronic absenteeism in grades K–3, the numbers of which had grown steadily in the Salt Lake City region between 2011 and 2016. In addition to improving attendance, the Partnership hoped to improve the ability of its staff and partners to use improvement science in all facets of their work.

Between January and November 2017, United Way of Salt Lake and StriveTogether held seven learning sessions with a networked improvement community in Salt Lake City that included six teams from eight schools in three districts. Teams were composed of school staff, United Way staff, parents, and AmeriCorps volunteers. During the sessions, teams learned the tools and techniques for continuous improvement and shared what was and was not working. In between, they applied what they had learned in real time.

To develop their strategies for reducing chronic absenteeism, improvement teams reviewed nationally recognized best practices.

* As reported by the Spotlight recipient.

However, they put most of their emphasis on local quantitative and qualitative data, and on the knowledge of school staff and others who understood the specific needs of their students. This approach entailed talking with parents, students, teachers, guidance counselors, and others who were dealing with the problem on a daily basis.

The improvement teams took these learnings and developed a mix of interventions. Some targeted every student in a grade or school with, for example, attendance campaigns and competitions. Other interventions, such as mentoring or connecting with a caring adult at school, were aimed directly at specific student populations, including refugees and children receiving special education services, who were more often chronically absent than their peers. As a result of those efforts, chronic absenteeism among students with disabilities decreased significantly between 2015–16 and 2016–17 compared to the average for other students, and the proportion meeting or exceeding the benchmark for reading proficiency in grade 3 increased from 8% to 17%. Because multiple teams were testing different strategies with K–3 students, they could share information, ask questions, and learn at a quicker pace than if they had been implementing this work in isolation. As the network focused on school and district processes, it also uncovered limitations in district policy and state truancy laws that have sparked a new focus on case management rather than on punitive responses to poor attendance.

The efforts to reduce chronic absence have built an improvement culture among Promise Partnership staff and community partners. The work of the network has since extended to an ongoing, regional network focused on addressing chronic absence in six school districts. The culture of improvement has also spread to address different problems in the Salt Lake City community, such as kindergarten readiness, food insecurity, and inter-agency social service challenges.

AS A RESULT OF THOSE EFFORTS, CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM AMONG STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES DECREASED SIGNIFICANTLY ... AND THE PROPORTION MEETING OR EXCEEDING THE BENCHMARK FOR READING PROFICIENCY IN GRADE 3 INCREASED FROM 8% TO 17%.

StriveTogether
Every child. Cradle to career.



United Way of Salt Lake



UN BUEN COMIENZO IMPROVEMENT NETWORK, FUNDACIÓN EDUCACIONAL OPORTUNIDAD

Improving Educational Outcomes in Under-Resourced and Isolated Areas

NETWORK DEMOGRAPHICS*

- 20 schools
- 24 preschool teachers
- 21 teachers' aides
- 20 school principals
- 20 school pedagogical leaders

In Chile, the nonprofit organization Fundación Educacional Oportunidad is partnering with the Ministry of Education, Harvard University, and 60 very under-resourced majority rural schools to improve the language skills of economically disadvantaged preschoolers. Its work builds on over a decade of using improvement science to tackle some of Chile's most vexing social problems. While the work is just under two years old, it's noteworthy for blending insights from scholarship, quality improvement, and on-the-ground expertise in support of children's learning.

Based on research, Fundación understood that for young children to achieve necessary levels of language and literacy development, schools had to maximize instructional time, improve student attendance, and promote effective early literacy instruction. A multidisciplinary team of coaches and experts on improvement and early education worked with 15 districts, 118 school leaders, and 148 teachers and teachers' aides and determined that these primary drivers for improving language development resonated with practitioners in the field. Of the participating schools, 60% are located in rural areas.

Together, the team identified a set of drivers aimed at having 80% of children in pre-kindergarten and 90% of children in kindergarten reach the advanced category on a Spanish language evaluation by the end of 2017. The schools then worked with Fundación to implement strategies that included providing teachers with help on time management in the classroom and integrated lesson planning,

* As reported by the Spotlight recipient.

to maximize instructional time; coaching and video feedback to promote effective literacy instruction; and attendance committees to provide one-on-one support for improving student attendance.

Fundación also brought together parents, school leaders, teachers, teachers' aides, and local education agencies three times a year to teach them how to use quality improvement tools, such as identifying the root causes of problems and using plan-do-study-act cycles to test whether their approaches to improvement were helping schools make progress in the target areas. During these meetings, the members of the networked improvement community also shared what was working and identified new challenges to be collectively addressed.

Fundación also supported teams of teachers and school leaders in visiting each other's schools to observe innovations and share data. At the classroom level, teachers proposed innovations and used rapid iterative cycles of experimentation to test whether the innovations were producing improvements and then adjust accordingly.

By engaging parents, teachers, and school leaders to become active agents for improving in their own context, Fundación Educacional Oportunidad is showing results and making progress along each of the core programs. Children's language scores are improving—although they have not yet reached the 2017 targets. And the schools have seen progress in the amount of time spent on instruction. This work demonstrates that the science of improvement can be used and adapted to spur positive change in the most under-resourced and isolated settings and can be applied internationally.

BY ENGAGING PARENTS, TEACHERS, AND SCHOOL LEADERS TO BECOME ACTIVE AGENTS FOR IMPROVING IN THEIR OWN CONTEXT, FUNDACIÓN EDUCACIONAL OPORTUNIDAD IS SHOWING RESULTS AND MAKING PROGRESS ALONG EACH OF THE CORE PROGRAMS.



SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

CENTER FOR URBAN EDUCATION LEADERSHIP, UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO

Samuel P. Whalen, Research Director, UIC Center for Urban Education Leadership

Prior to joining UIC in 2003, Samuel Whalen was a Senior Researcher at Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago and Research Director at the Center for Talent Development at Northwestern University's School of Education and Social Policy. His areas of expertise include school leadership preparation, professional learning, school-community partnerships, and program evaluation. Whalen received his PhD in Education from the University of Chicago.

Lisa Walker, Senior Researcher, UIC Center for Urban Education Leadership

Lisa Walker contributes knowledge to the field of leadership development for dissemination nationwide. She collaborates with the UIC EdD program leadership coaches and faculty to bring research knowledge and skills to the program's continuous improvement work. In addition, Walker has led the redesign of candidate selection for the EdD program to support equity, and she collaborates with coaches to improve their leadership development structures, routines, and tools. She currently co-leads an initiative focused on strengthening leadership development for schools with high student population churn. Walker received her PhD in Learning Sciences from the University of Chicago.

CENTRAL VALLEY NETWORKED IMPROVEMENT COMMUNITY, TULARE COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION

Shelah Feldstein, Central Valley Networked Improvement Community Director, Tulare County Office of Education

Shelah Feldstein is an Administrator for Leadership Support Services at the Tulare County Office of Education and serves as Director of the Central Valley Networked Improvement Community. She leads an Improvement Leaders network in which district leadership teams are supported in learning to build improvement infrastructure in their schools. In addition, she led the design team for California's new accountability system trainings; facilitates statewide trainings; and offers support across the state for county offices and state entities. Feldstein received an MA in Education from Fresno Pacific University.

Christine Roberts, Mathematics Staff Development and Curriculum Specialist, Tulare County Office of Education

Christine Roberts is a Mathematics Staff Development and Curriculum Specialist for the Tulare County Office of Education and serves as an Improvement Specialist for the Central Valley Networked Improvement Community. As a CVNIC Hub Leader, she is integrally involved in network planning, supporting participating districts throughout action periods, providing on-site support for teachers and leaders, and facilitating cross-district collaborations. Through ongoing partnerships with districts, Roberts provides support in designing and implementing a high-quality mathematics program for all students. She also facilitates professional learning opportunities to support the growth of mathematics content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and knowledge of student thinking. Roberts received an MA in Curriculum and Instruction from California State University, Fresno.

MEMPHIS KIPP WHEATLEY LEARNING COLLABORATIVE, KIPP FOUNDATION

Heidi Fisher, Senior Manager, KIPP Wheatley Learning Collaborative, KIPP Foundation

Heidi Fisher's work for the Collaborative, which is now entering its second year, involved bringing together 11 schools across four different charter districts to address the problem of persistently low student achievement in English Language Arts. Previously, Fisher spent 16 years teaching, coaching, and leading literacy at KIPP New Jersey, a charter school region she helped found after several years of teaching in the Teach for America program. Fisher received an MA in Teaching Social Studies from Teachers College, Columbia University.

Daniel Sonnier, ELA Achievement Director, KIPP Foundation

Daniel Sonnier leads the work of increasing literacy achievement by supporting multiple KIPP regions and 18 non-KIPP Charter Management Organizations. Prior to his role at the Foundation, he was a teacher and literacy leader for Newark (NJ) Public Schools, Teach for America, and KIPP New Jersey. Sonnier received an MA in Education Leadership and Policy from Seton Hall University.

NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION RESEARCH NETWORK AND KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Kathleen Ryan Jackson, Implementation Specialist, National Implementation Research Network

Kathleen Ryan Jackson provides implementation-informed support to state and local education agencies as part of her work on the Center on School Turnaround Leadership team. Previously, she worked in PreK–12 education as a Response to Intervention Coordinator, school administrator, and teacher. She is focused on using implementation science research to engage in complex system change and generate a collective commitment to accountability so educators, students, and their families have access to equitable systems of support. Jackson received an EdD in Educational Methodology, Policy, and Leadership from the University of Oregon.

Amanda Waldroup, State Transformation Specialist, Kentucky Department of Education

Amanda Waldroup is a State Transformation Specialist at the Kentucky Department of Education. Prior to her current role, she taught high school mathematics, served as a Math Department Chair, and coordinated a local international exchange program. Currently, she provides implementation-informed support to state, regional, district, and school implementation teams with the goal of strengthening teacher practice that leads to improved student outcomes. Amanda is dedicated in her belief that developing an implementation infrastructure will lead to sustainable systems of support and give students the tools and knowledge they need to achieve their life goals. Waldroup received an MEd from Eastern Kentucky University.

STRIVETOGETHER AND UNITED WAY OF SALT LAKE

Heidi Black, Director of Collaborative Improvement, StriveTogether

Heidi Black's work focuses on building the capability of local leaders and practitioners across the country to improve outcomes for children and youth through data-driven decision making. She has supported more than 30 communities in applying StriveTogether's improvement strategies toward key outcomes that include kindergarten readiness, high school graduation rates, and postsecondary enrollment. Black developed a unique improvement science approach that combines tools and techniques from continuous improvement, design thinking, and Results Counts™. Her most recent work has been with six communities that are working to improve prenatal–age 3 developmental milestones. Black received an MA in Curriculum and Instruction from Lesley University's School of Education.

Tyler Asman, Senior Director of Learning and Improvement, United Way of Salt Lake

As the Senior Director of Learning and Improvement at United Way of Salt Lake, Tyler Asman supports collective impact partnerships and UWSL staff in developing the capabilities needed to drive social change. She has used her background in social sciences to maximize team performance in healthcare, nonprofit, and corporate settings. Asman's specialties include leadership coaching and training, employee engagement, talent management, and team dynamics. She is a certified coach, mediator, Birkman consultant, and Crucial Conversations facilitator. Asman received an MSW with an emphasis in Policy and Advocacy from the University of Houston.

UN BUEN COMIENZO IMPROVEMENT NETWORK, FUNDACIÓN EDUCACIONAL OPORTUNIDAD

Marcela Marzolo, Executive Director, Fundación Educacional Oportunidad

Marcela Marzolo leads strategic planning for the Fundación and is responsible for ensuring the resources and structure necessary for the achievement of the strategic objectives in programs across all areas. Since her entry into the field, her work has focused on creating equal education opportunities. While at Hogar de Cristo, for example, she contributed to creating innovative methodologies and quality in kindergarten education and training women to serve as educators and leaders in their communities. Marzolo is a graduate in Preschool and Special Education from Universidad Católica.

MaryCatherine Arbour, Quality Improvement Advisor, Fundación Educacional Oportunidad

MaryCatherine Arbour is a Senior Research Associate at the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University and an Instructor in Medicine at Harvard Medical School. Her expertise includes adapting continuous quality improvement methods to a diversity of disciplines and contexts, and evaluating their impact on clinical, public health, and education outcomes. Her work with Fundación Educacional Oportunidad involves leading the integration and evaluation of quality improvement methods in school-based interventions to improve children's health and learning in public preschools. She also conducts quality improvement capacity-building efforts with public health and education practitioners and students. Arbour earned a BA in Biological Anthropology at Swarthmore College, an MD from Harvard Medical School, and an MPH from the Harvard School of Public Health.



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