



The Learning Acceleration Partnership

TEACHER AND SCHOOL LEADER INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Executive Summary

"School systems have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to interrogate and disrupt their historical approaches to teaching and learning in the pursuit of learning acceleration for all students, especially those who have been systematically denied access to high-quality academic experiences."

- TNTP

INTRODUCTION

The Learning Acceleration Partnership (LAP) has been awarded a 3-year U.S. Department of Education Teacher and School Leader Incentive Program grant to boldly improve learning conditions by accelerating learning for underserved students and stabilizing the educator workforce across sixteen (16) high-need schools in four school districts (Liberty ESD, Nadaburg USD, Phoenix ESD, and Tolleson ESD).

The LAP will meet this audacious goal by enhancing their Human Capital Management Systems to ensure students have equitable access to effective teachers and quality, Tier 1 instruction to meet the needs exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

It is well established that teacher effectiveness contributes greatly to student academic outcomes, and with the learning setbacks students have experienced nationwide due to the pandemic, there is even more urgency to ensure that students have equitable access to effective teachers, particularly for underserved students who have experienced substantial learning loss. To address the current need, the Learning Acceleration Partnership will take an approach to classroom instruction that *accelerates* learning. Rather than looking back at all the material that students potentially missed when school was disrupted, Learning Acceleration employs scaffolding at just the right time to help students successfully access grade-level material.

This requires a focus on supporting strong Tier 1 instructional practices through building the capacity of teachers and leaders with professional learning in alignment with each LEAs performance-based evaluation system. To ensure success, LEAs will: (1) build instructional coherence so that every component of the student academic experience is designed and tightly aligned to work together to advance core grade-level instruction, and (2) support educators with the *tools, tactics, and mindsets* to implement Learning Acceleration. TNTP (The New Teacher Project) and Basis Policy Research will also support implementation of the Learning Acceleration Partnership, providing necessary tools, support, and infrastructure necessary to reimagine teaching and leading.



GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

The Learning Acceleration Partnership is focused on a two-part goal:

Boldly improve learning conditions by: (1) accelerating learning for underserved students, and (2) supporting and stabilizing the educator workforce. Project outcomes and activities are aligned to the following objectives.

LEARNING ACCELERATION PARTNERSHIP OBJECTIVES

Objective 1: Learning Acceleration Partnership high-need schools will promote equity in student access to educational resources and opportunities via Learning Acceleration

Objective 2: The Learning Acceleration Partnership high-need schools will implement career advancement opportunities for educators

Objective 3: The Learning Acceleration Partnership will hire and retain diverse educators in high-need schools

Objective 4: The Learning Acceleration Partnership LEAs and high-need schools will strengthen the educator workforce by improving or expanding a Human Capital Management System with increased human resource alignment

PROJECT DESIGN

The Learning Acceleration Partnership will create the conditions to disrupt educator turnover and ensure underserved students receive comprehensive and rigorous Tier 1 instruction. The project is informed by research findings in the areas of Learning Acceleration, instructional coherence, educator retention, and human resource alignment and is visually represented in the Learning Acceleration Logic Model on the next page.



THE LEARNING ACCELERATION PARTNERSHIP

Boldly improving learning conditions for all students.

THE LEARNING ACCELERATION PARTNERSHIP LOGIC MODEL

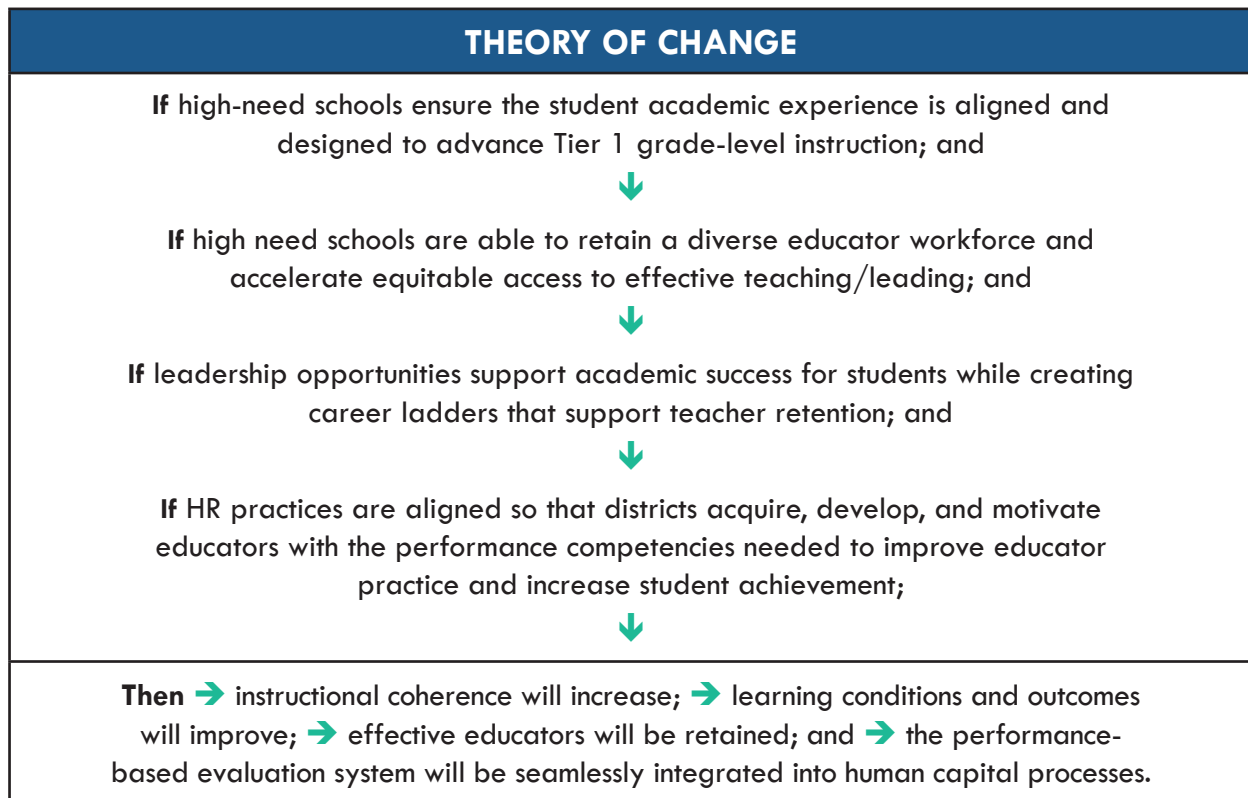
PROBLEM STATEMENT: School systems are faced with the daunting challenge of recovering from pandemic-related school closures and there is a need to deviate from traditional methods of addressing gaps in learning for underserved students. A new career advancement opportunity is needed to disrupt teacher turnover, retain a diverse workforce, and empower teacher leadership in a way that advances equity of student access to high-quality teaching that promotes Learning Acceleration.

THE LEARNING ACCELERATION PARTNERSHIP IS FOCUSED ON A TWO-PART GOAL: Boldly improve learning conditions by: (1) accelerating learning for underserved students, and (2) supporting and stabilizing the educator workforce. Project outcomes and activities are aligned to the following objectives.

RESOURCES	CORE COMPONENTS	EVIDENCE OF IMPLEMENTATION AND PARTICIPATION	EVIDENCE OF CHANGE		
INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES		
<p>FOR TEACHERS & TEACHER LEADERS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning Acceleration Specialists at high-need schools. Classroom-embedded Student-Centered Coaching. Tools, tactics, and mindsets to implement Learning Acceleration. PD to maximize time and resources in addressing gaps during core instruction through Learning Acceleration and inclusive teaching practices. <p>FOR SCHOOL LEADERS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for year-long PD plan. Support to equip teachers to make instructional decisions to increase student access to grade-level content. <p>FOR SYSTEMS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HCMS Self-Assessment Tool. Observation and feedback tools aligned to Learning Acceleration practices. Instructional coherence training series for all educator groups. Bias-free HR practices that promote and support development of educator diversity. 	<p>FOR TEACHERS & TEACHER LEADERS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-planning and co-teaching to accelerate learning and address the needs of subgroups. Student-Centered Coaching cycle based on student evidence. Implementation of inclusive teaching practices. Teacher leader opportunities to influence school-wide Learning Acceleration. <p>FOR SCHOOL LEADERS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support to communicate LAP vision and goals. Support to analyze data and assess teacher readiness. Support to implement year-long PD. Support to implement a system of accountability and adjustment of support for teachers. <p>FOR SYSTEMS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support to complete HCMS Self-Assessment. Guidance on employing crosswalk observation tools to Learning Acceleration techniques to develop "look fors". Support to prioritize and design systems for instructional coherence. 	<p>FOR TEACHERS & TEACHER LEADERS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of Learning Acceleration practices. Participation in coaching cycles. Real-time formative assessment, feedback, and scaffolding that address gaps during core instruction. Teacher leaders taking an active role in the success of Learning Acceleration implementation. <p>FOR SCHOOL LEADERS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A shared vision with the staff on the role and intended outcomes of Learning Acceleration. Execution of a management system to ensure implementation of Learning Acceleration. Review of evidence that gaps are closing, and students are reaching mastery of grade-level content. <p>FOR SYSTEMS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implemented strategies based on goals derived from HCMS Self-Assessment. Alignment of talent and resources to execute an action plan for instructional coherence. Implemented enhanced performance-based evaluation processes. 	<p>SHORT-TERM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Underserved students provided grade-level instruction. Students experiencing success with grade-level content during core instruction. Students supported via inclusive teaching practices. Increased teacher capacity. Teachers identifying opportunities for instructional scaffolding. Teachers addressing gaps in critical skills and content in real-time. Leaders execute a plan to monitor Learning Acceleration. Teachers recognize the assets and cultural characteristics of their students. Teacher leadership roles are defined and compensated. Human Resource Alignment is increased. 	<p>MEDIUM-TERM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student mastery of grade-level content. Increased emphasis on effective core instruction. Increased collaboration among teachers and with teacher leaders. Teachers report an improved sense of efficacy (confidence in ability to guide students to success.) Less disconnect between the written, taught, and assessed curriculum. Teachers affirm and leverage the cultures and life experiences that students possess. Students supported to recognize the unique assets that they bring to the classroom. Greater instructional coherence. Greater HR alignment. Educator competencies are acquired and supported. 	<p>IMPACT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Common vision for instructional improvement. Equitable academic outcomes for underserved students. Internalized approaches for addressing student needs to successfully master essential grade-level content. Greater collective efficacy as teacher groups leverage collaborative plan time and PLCs. Seamless integration of performance-based evaluation into human capital processes. Educators are awarded financially for attaining performance competencies aligned to common vision. Diverse educator workforce trained. Effective educators are identified in alignment with performance competencies and placed in leadership roles in the highest-need schools.



To see system improvement as articulated in the Learning Acceleration Logic Model, a Theory of Change was developed that includes a set of *if-then* statements that inform the objectives, outcomes, performance measures, and necessary resources to ensure the “*then*” statement is realized (see below).



KEY PROJECT COMPONENTS

Learning Acceleration and Learning Acceleration Specialists:

Students will experience more access to grade-level Tier 1 content and struggle less with grade-level material, regaining their pre-pandemic success despite learning interruptions. Learning Acceleration techniques and practices will provide teachers with a high-leverage process to help students recover from missed learning during COVID-19 school closures by using *tools, tactics, and mindsets* to assist students in accessing grade-level content quickly and to ensure all students master essential grade-level standards.

A specialized teacher leader position called a Learning Acceleration Specialist (LAS) has been created to partner with teachers in high-need schools to engage in student-centered coaching cycles which include co-planning and co-teaching to build the capacity of teachers to support strong Tier 1 instructional practices.



INTEGRATING UNFINISHED LEARNING INTO NEW LEARNING		
TOOLS	TACTICS	MINDSETS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Real-Time Assessments to assess essential pre-requisite skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fill in the most critical gaps at the moment it's needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize access to grade-level content without delay.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scaffolds Anchor Charts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide just-in-time support to get students on the fast track to grade-level learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Believe that ALL students are ready to engage with grade-level work. Address inequity head on by focusing on closing learning gaps for ALL students.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Success Starters and Jump Start Lessons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spark student interest and curiosity in the new learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abandon the notion that students need to go backward to fill in learning gaps.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adapted materials Realia and Manipulatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build Background for greater understanding of new learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand that there are proven strategies to accelerate learning. They may not be new, but they require a new level of focus.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards Walls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Close the Vocabulary Gap. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "My students could be successful on this upcoming unit if they only knew _____."

Student-Centered Coaching:

Teachers in high-need schools will partner with Learning Acceleration Specialists via student-centered coaching cycles that put the needs of students front and center. Coaching cycles are focused on goals for student learning to directly impact instructional practice and student achievement. On average, it is expected that students will increase their proficiency 68% in a 4-6-week coaching cycle. Teachers also increase in their effectiveness in the implementation of effective research-based teaching practices including the use of formative assessments, planning instruction, differentiating instruction, direct modeling, delivery of focused lessons, and conferring with students. Using this coaching model will ensure teachers are successful with implementation of Learning Acceleration strategies resulting in high levels of student mastery of essential grade-level content.

Instructional Coherence:

The Learning Acceleration Partnership will support school leaders and staff to ensure that every element of the instructional program and its strategies - from core instruction to interventions to extended time - work together to advance the same set of grade-level student experiences. The project will partner with TNTP (The New Teacher Project) to implement a professional learning series in Year 1 of the project. The series: **Instructional Coherence: Unlocking Opportunity and Acceleration** will focus on supporting educators to develop their understanding of the



THE LEARNING ACCELERATION PARTNERSHIP *Boldly improving learning conditions for all students.*

concepts of Instructional Coherence and Learning Acceleration, the connections between the two, and how to support them from their seat in the system. As a result, every component of the student academic experience will be tightly aligned and designed to advance core grade-level instruction.

Collective Efficacy:

Learning Acceleration Specialists (LASs) will partner with teachers, teacher leaders, and teacher teams. Their work co-planning and co-teaching lessons to implement Learning Acceleration should result in improved student outcomes which will result in optimism about their ability to create student success. When teacher teams have evidence that their collaboration is impacting student achievement, they begin to believe that together they can achieve more because of their collective ability to positively affect students.

Human Resource Alignment:

LEAs and high-need schools will assess current HCMS practices and implement strategies to improve the alignment of HR practices. As an example, to move toward less subjective hiring processes, districts should identify performance competencies that capture effective teaching, assess candidates on those competencies, standardize processes, and use multiple forms of data in the selection process to hire those most likely to enact effective teaching practices. By identifying performance competencies and skills that align with effective teaching and learning in a district, career advancement pathways can identify educators with the needed skills to support academic success for all students and further support educators in building these skills. Rewarding teacher leaders who have these performance competencies and demonstrate excellent student achievement will lead to better retention and extend their reach to ensure more students and teachers have access to effective educators.

Performance-Based Evaluation System:

LEAs will lean into a common vision of instructional improvement to ensure critical components are aligned to Learning Acceleration practices. LEAs and high-need schools will check for alignment between current observation tools and Learning Acceleration so that adjustments can be made to the feedback educators received. Collaboratively developed “look fors” will also be established at the school level to increase clarity, bridging the gap between learning and implementation to help teachers understand the target.

Principal Support from the Leadership Administrator:

Support for individual principals in implementation of Learning Acceleration plans including: the creation of a shared vision, supervision of instruction, the monitoring of Learning Acceleration techniques, and interpretation of impact on student progress; support for principals in identification of leaders among the teachers and coaches to provide mentor opportunities that build their leadership capacity and a stronger school-wide focus.



GETTING STARTED

Year 1

During Year 1, the LAP will collaborate with The New Teacher Project (TNTP) to pursue instructional coherence through a professional learning series: *Instructional Coherence: Unlocking Opportunity and Acceleration*. This training series will focus on supporting teams of educators to develop their understanding of Instructional Coherence and Learning Acceleration, the connections between the two, and how to support them from their seat in the system. LEAs will engage with the HCMS Self-Assessment Tool to establish priorities to enhance their current systems. LEAs will utilize the *Learning and Leading Coherence Tools* to check alignment of evaluation tools to Learning Acceleration implementation which will inform the collaborative establishment of “look-fors” at the school-level. The Learning Acceleration Specialist Cadre will be hired and placed in high-need schools. Basis Policy Research will launch a program evaluation plan to provide performance feedback that permits periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

Years 2 and 3

Years 2 and 3 will see a continued implementation of student-centered coaching cycles and ongoing training for the Learning Acceleration Specialists. Teachers will receive ongoing professional learning aligned to implementation of Learning Acceleration practices. Districts and schools will continue to enhance their Human Capital Management Systems in order to strengthen and retain an effective and diverse workforce.