

PUBLIC IMPACT



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PUBLIC IMPACT SEEKS FIVE SITES TO EXTEND THE REACH OF EXCELLENT TEACHERS

Initiative gives top teachers career advancement opportunities without leaving the classroom

CHAPEL HILL, N.C.— Public Impact, a national education policy and management consulting organization, announces the launch of the implementation phase of its work to bring an excellent teacher to every child. In this next phase of work, the organization will identify five major sites to expand the impact of excellent teachers by “extending their reach.”

This work is made possible by \$1 million in funding from Carnegie Corporation of New York and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and builds on a two-year initiative funded primarily by The Joyce Foundation.

“American children need excellent teachers—those in the top 20 to 25 percent—not just once every few years, but consistently,” Bryan C. Hassel, co-director of Public Impact, said. “Even if we succeed with today’s boldest educational reforms, we will remain an achievement gap nation. To close our gaps, and help students leap ahead, we need to reach every child every year with teachers who produce well over a year of growth and higher-order learning.”

Extending the reach of excellent teachers, the key to what Public Impact calls an “Opportunity Culture,” involves redesigning teachers’ roles and using technology to help those top teachers reach more students, for more pay, but within existing budgets.

“We know that teachers are the key to closing the achievement gap, and that all students need great teachers every year. The question is how we do that,” said Talia Milgrom-Elcott, Carnegie Corporation program officer in urban education. “Extending the reach of great teachers is a critical piece of the puzzle and represents a cutting-edge—and still largely unexplored—way of attracting, supporting, and retaining the best teachers.”

Public Impact has posted more than 20 brief models that schools can use to tailor reach extension designs of their own on the initiative’s website, www.opportunityculture.org. For example, an excellent teacher with managerial skills could lead multiple classrooms, with other teachers following and learning from his methods. Or an excellent teacher could reach more children during the school day by allowing one class of students to learn basic concepts online, while she works with another class in more enriched, higher-order learning, then swapping classes.

In an Opportunity Culture, “an excellent teacher will always be accountable for every student’s learning,” Hassel said, “and teachers’ pay will be commensurate with the students they reach.” Extended reach gives teachers career advancement opportunities without leaving teaching, rather than forcing top teachers to move into administration or other careers.

The new funding supports development and dissemination of the models, engagement of teachers and other stakeholders, tracking of reach extension efforts, and recruitment of the five sites. The Colorado Legacy Foundation also contributed to initial model development.

Teachers and education experts contributed to the models’ creation, alongside the newly formed Opportunity Culture Advisory Team, whose initial members are Celine Coggins, Teach Plus; Karen Hawley Miles, Education Resource Strategies; Alex Hernandez, Charter School Growth Fund; Michael Horn, Innosight Institute; Sydney Morris, Educators 4 Excellence; Marguerite Roza, University of Washington; Ariela Rozman, The New Teacher Project; Jeff Wetzler, Teach For America; John Luczak, The Joyce Foundation; and Talia Milgrom-Elcott, Carnegie Corporation of New York.

“As evaluation systems are increasingly able to identify excellent teachers, this initiative offers a way for schools to leverage that talent to help more children,” said John Luczak, program manager for education at The Joyce Foundation.

In addition to posting the school models, Public Impact will also document the lessons learned by the sites on its website, www.opportunityculture.org. Schools, school districts, or states interested in being chosen as a formal site should see that website for application criteria.

Public Impact has already published a brief for state and federal policymakers called *Seizing Opportunity at the Top*, which outlines steps they can take to bring excellent teaching to every child and make K–12 education a talent magnet (available at www.opportunityculture.org). The organization will be offering online opportunities for teachers to improve the school models and hone related policies. Celine Coggins, founder and CEO of Teach Plus, noted, “It’s an exciting opportunity for great teachers to shape issues that affect them profoundly.”

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About Public Impact

Public Impact is a national education policy and management consulting firm based in Chapel Hill, N.C. Public Impact’s work is designed to contribute to dramatic improvements in the quality of K–12 education in the United States, focused on high points of leverage in the educational system. The firm employs several strategies to achieve its mission, including:

- Devising and advancing visionary but practical ideas about how to improve K–12 education;
- Scanning both education and cross-industry research to bring the most effective policy and management practices to education leaders;
- Creating user-friendly tools that help educators, policymakers, and parents; and
- Working with leading nonprofit and public agencies to implement cutting-edge ideas.

For more information: www.opportunityculture.org

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