

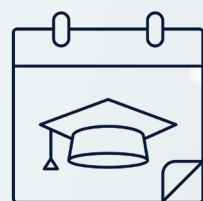


DYNAMIC LEARNING.
BOLD TEACHING.
VIBRANT COMMUNITY.
AN EDUCATION FOR THE FUTURE.

2019 SCHOOL AND STUDENT SUCCESS REPORT



New Tech Network



85,000
NTN STUDENTS



5,000
NTN TEACHERS

NTN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS HAD A 94% GRADUATION RATE
COMPARED TO THE NATIONAL AVERAGE OF 85%.²

For the 2018-2019 school year, New Tech Network includes 214 member schools. Of those schools, 160 are NTN schools while 54 are NTN affiliates. School-level information on student enrollment, demographics, and graduation rates is sourced from the schools and publicly available sources such as the U.S. Department of Education databases. College outcomes are sourced from National Student Clearinghouse (NSC).

NTN STUDENTS PERSIST IN COLLEGE AT A RATE OF 82%
COMPARED TO 74% NATIONALLY.¹



214
TOTAL NTN MEMBER SCHOOLS



160
NTN SCHOOLS



54
NTN AFFILIATES

25,000
NTN GRADUATES OVER THE PAST SIX YEARS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A NOTE FROM CEO LYDIA DOBYNS	05
THE NEW TECH NETWORK	06
IS THE WORLD READY?	08
ASSESSING SKILLS THAT MATTER: ST. CHARLES SATELLITE CENTER	10
LEARNING COLLABORATIVELY AND VIRTUALLY	11
BETTER TOGETHER: RESEARCH AND EVIDENCE	12
BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS WITH PBL: HART ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	14
MIND THE GAP: A Q&A WITH JIM MAY	16
TRANSFORMING TRADITION: PBL AND STUDENT CULTURE: CAROLINA HIGH ACADEMY	18
THE POWER OF THE NETWORK	20
7 STEPS TO GUIDE SCHOOL CHANGE: CASSOPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS	22
THE JOURNEY OF CONTINUOUS GROWTH	24
A NETWORK AT WORK: LOBO SCHOOL OF INNOVATION	26
ENDNOTES	27



Lydia Dobyns, President and CEO, New Tech Network

A NOTE FROM LYDIA DOBYNS

“When we are able to help align all levels of the school system around a common vision, grounded in creating equitable learning opportunities for all students, great things happen.”

Knowing what works - applying effective solutions to complex social challenges - is not, by itself, a path to change. All too often we lack adequate financial resources or the political will or both. When the challenge is closing the opportunity gap, the rhetoric is often divisive, the task daunting and yet... as I write this letter, I have never been more optimistic about what is possible in successfully transforming local public education.

New Tech Network’s mission is to co-create schools that ensure all students regularly engage in authentic, complex thinking and problem-solving and experience a learning environment that is safe, inclusive, and emotionally supportive. For nearly 20 years our school redesign efforts have been based on partnerships with more than a hundred school districts in 30 states. We believe the path to success must include:

- deep systemic work around beliefs and mindsets,
- intensive capacity building to design quality learning experiences, and
- explicit work to build empowering school cultures and effective leadership.

Philanthropic support enables us to invest in ongoing research and development. Recent efforts have helped us increase the innovation options for schools and reduce the cost for whole school implementation. From the start embarking on the New Tech Network path students are more engaged and there is a palpable sense of curiosity and joyful learning. As a learning organization committed to improvement, nothing is more important than supporting districts achieve their vision.

When we are able to help align all levels of the school system around a common vision, grounded in creating equitable learning opportunities for all students, great things happen. This is why, despite these contentious times, we are hopeful. We are better together. Don’t just take our word for it - let the compelling teaching and learning you can see for yourself ignite your curiosity. How might we support your vision for your community?

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lydia Dobyns', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

THE NEW TECH NETWORK

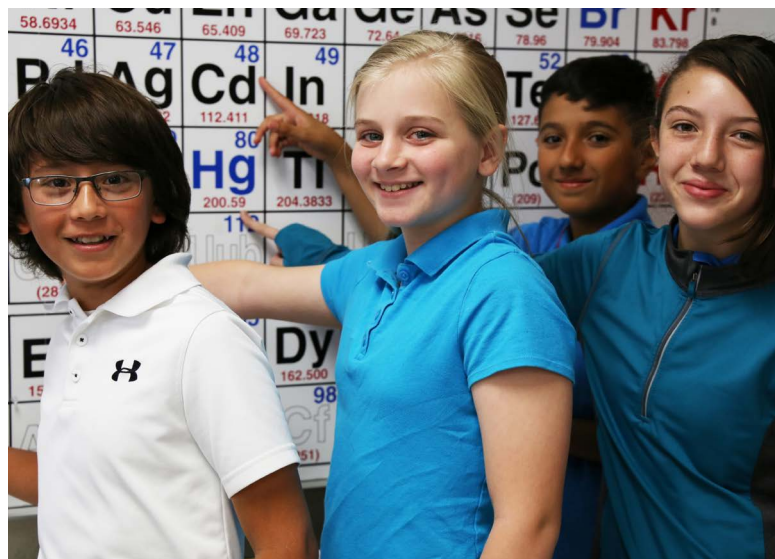
New Tech Network (NTN) pioneers whole school transformation through high-quality project-based learning (PBL). NTN coaches, staff, and partner schools challenge the status quo, confident they will improve outcomes for students. The NTN school model and tailored coaching and support cultivate a culture of empowerment, discovery, and innovation.

Most importantly, students graduate prepared for the demands of the future. Students need to develop problem-solving and critical thinking skills; they must learn

how to find and apply content knowledge—not just memorize it. When NTN partner schools experience shifts in culture and instruction as part of a comprehensive approach to education, those schools consistently experience positive outcomes for students – particularly students historically situated farthest from opportunity.

Educators have access to thousands of resources and develop relationships with other education professionals.

MEASURING THE OUTCOMES THAT MATTER



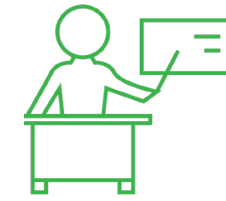
learning environment for students and teachers modeled to reflect the realities of the working world. This transparent weighted grading of skills pulls back the curtain on the strengths and challenges of each student, providing valuable insight to parents, teachers, and the students themselves.

The New Tech Network Learning Outcomes are five research-based outcomes designed to allow teachers to assess students based on a holistic picture of their skills while meeting state academic requirements. In collaboration with the Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, and Equity (SCALE), NTN developed a set of rubrics for each outcome aligned to college readiness standards. The NTN model creates a different

THE LEARNING OUTCOMES



KNOWLEDGE AND THINKING



ORAL COMMUNICATION



COLLABORATION



WRITTEN COMMUNICATION



AGENCY

Through NTN's learning management platform, Echo, teachers are able to more thoughtfully assess and collect data on student performance. Teachers provide feedback on both content knowledge and the skills needed for college and career readiness. New Tech Network students often highlight Agency, or the combination of academic mindsets and the ability to take ownership over one's learning, as a key differentiator when compared to peers

at non-NTN schools. Teachers and school leaders learn through valuable professional development, project resources, and personalized coaching to set their students up with the best possible chance to succeed. The Network ensures educators are prepared to lead cutting-edge project-based learning as they transform their school culture – because students deserve schools that take advantage of every opportunity for better learning.

THE NTN MISSION

New Tech Network's (NTN) mission is to partner with districts and communities to transform schools into innovative learning environments so that all students graduate ready for college and career. NTN believes that every student and adult has the capacity to learn and to improve and that authentic, meaningful learning is rooted in inquiry, reflection, and agency. Schools are the most powerful unit of change in providing each child with equal access to high-quality education.

IS THE WORLD READY?

In the 1860s, a typical classroom consisted of rows of desks that faced the front of a class where a teacher would stand and lecture. Student work, presentations, and lessons all revolved around memorizing content. At the time, teaching students this way adequately prepared them for a limited set of career opportunities. 150 years and two industrial revolutions later, many classrooms and curricula across the United States look the same.

The world is on the brink of a technological transformation known as the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Its impact

is expected to rival the significance of advancements such as steam power, electricity, cement, computers, and textiles – influential improvements that shape the quality of life today. NTN schools prepare students for an unknown future by emphasizing skills and scores in their everyday school life. Helping students learn how to think, create, communicate, and collaborate will help them in any postsecondary path they pursue. NTN students graduate with problem-solving and personal agency skills that make them highly desirable employees.

A TRYING TENSION: COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS AND STANDARDIZED ASSESSMENT

Educators face competing priorities in the classroom every day: trying to imbue students with skills relevant to their future while also teaching content mastery and finding success on state assessments. Despite good intentions, much of the education system remains isolated from the realities outside of the classroom. Too often, students still move from grade to grade, disengaged and unprepared for the next step in their educational or career journey.

FROM THE EDGE TO EVERYWHERE

NTN believes that the most effective way to develop workforce skills in students is to integrate the practice of each skill in every facet of learning. Incorporating bolt-on programs or offering project-based learning elements as electives is tempting since they're easily implemented, but these measures are not as beneficial to students compared to developing skills like agency, communication, and collaboration. NTN believes that students who use these skills in subjects like math, science, and language arts are significantly more engaged, and more successful both academically and developmentally.

AN EDUCATION FOR TOMORROW

NTN SCHOOLS ENDURE BECAUSE OF A WHOLE SCHOOL, SYSTEMIC APPROACH WHERE SKILLS ARE VALUED AS MUCH AS SCORES.

NTN believes every student deserves the opportunity to attend a school where they are part of a safe, inclusive, and emotionally supportive community. Students deserve to be challenged and engaged in authentic complex thinking and problem-solving that will prepare them for whatever path they choose after high school.



NTN graduates **demonstrate workforce skills.**³



NTN project-based learning created an instructional environment that **positively impacted student learning, relationships, and technology use.**⁴



NTN elementary school students **made significant gains in critical thinking.**⁵

ASSESSING THE SKILLS THAT MATTER

ST. CHARLES SATELLITE CENTER

Fourteen years ago, St. Charles Satellite Center in Luling, Louisiana, implemented the New Tech Network model. While dozens of alumni have visited to share their successes in various professional fields, a few have pursued teaching careers at their alma mater to give back to the model that made them.

"I have two former team members that graduated, went to college, established professions and have now been hired to my staff," said School Administrator Lasca Anderson. "They've gone full circle, sharing what they learned in the industry and how the skills they learned in school prepared them for the next level of their career."

One of these alumni, Hunter Robinson, now teaches Advanced Television and Broadcasting after having a successful career in broadcast news. Robinson shared that the skills he gained at St. Charles allowed him to advance far faster than his college peers.

"Once I finished at the Satellite Center, I created a demo reel of all the projects I had created while in my broadcasting course there. On my first day as a freshman, I went to the campus TV station, handed in my demo reel, and was hired on the spot. I was helping juniors and seniors learn about the trade, as my skills were more developed from my experience at the Satellite Center."

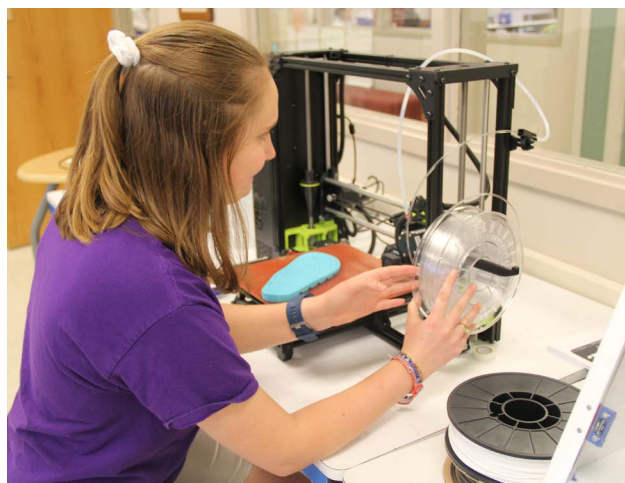
Anderson mentions that employers consistently cite work ethic, agency, and written and oral communication as skills they actively seek in candidates.

St. Charles staff members believe that Echo™, NTN's proprietary learning management system, is essential because Echo's digital gradebook assesses the skills that prepare their students

for their future. These skills are NTN's Learning Outcomes, and the Echo gradebook provides students with evidence of their growth across such skills over time.

Robinson's students use Echo as a tool for their own learning as it provides a platform to develop their agency skills.

"Echo makes it easy to design and organize projects and also for our students to take the initiative to find the answers they're looking for. We're at the point with my students where they'll start to ask a question, and stop themselves to say, 'I can probably find the answer in Echo, can't I?'"



Rhitt Growl, Digital Media Facilitator at the Satellite Center, shared how Echo helps students exercise agency over their learning.

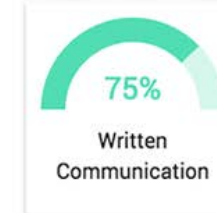
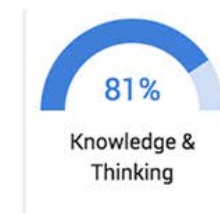
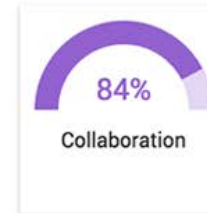
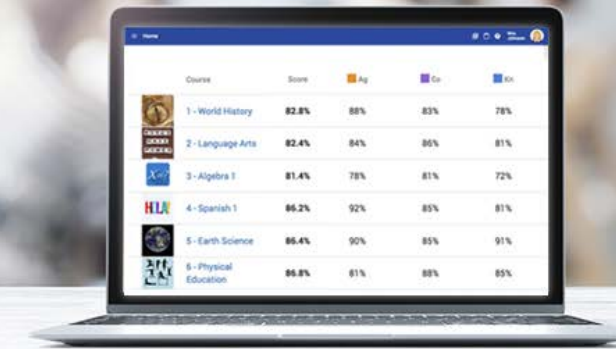
"Students can reference their grades at any time within Echo. It helps them take responsibility for the grades they earned when they have access to review them at any time," Growl states.

In addition to accessing career-ready skills, the staff at the Satellite Center use Echo to centralize documents, data and assessments house everything under one roof. Anderson said she particularly appreciates the connectivity of the Echo platform with Google apps.

"The greatest reward is seeing students succeed," says Anderson. "Our proudest moments are when students come back to us and share their success story. We have graduates that work for Facebook, Netflix and video game development. We have former students who are engineers and process operators and even business owners. It's so rewarding to hear how the skills they learned at the Satellite Center helped them get where they are today."



TOOLS + CONTENT + COMMUNITY



LEARNING COLLABORATIVELY AND VIRTUALLY

Echo® houses all digital life for New Tech Network partner schools. The learning management platform hosts resources for student projects and assessment, robust teacher communities, professional development, parent involvement, NTN-provided resources, and more. Echo's vast array of capabilities manifest in a user-friendly interface that parents, students, and teachers navigate daily - easily finding tools and resources customized for their needs. Echo is unique because it is the only learning management platform designed to assist and assess students based on multiple learning outcomes. Engaging teaching and robust feedback systems need a sophisticated but accessible platform to be effective.

TOOLS

The Echo learning management platform was specifically designed to address the unique needs of project-based learners, facilitators, and parents. The multi-dimensional gradebook, exclusively provided to NTN partner schools, is the **only gradebook of its kind organized around the assessment and reporting of multiple learning outcomes.**

CONTENT

NTN uses Echo to **house course resources, projects and project plans, assignments, and more.** Educators benefit from an extensive Resource Library where they can create their own class projects and share them back to the NTN community.

COMMUNITY

The Echo community is vibrant and growing. Comprised of all of the staff at NTN partner schools, teachers and school leaders exchange best practices, collaborate efficiently, share projects, and develop cross-school projects with ease.

EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS

ON STUDENT SUCCESS IN DEEPER LEARNING SCHOOLS...

Students who attended schools with a deeper learning focus reported **more developed critical thinking skills, greater competency in some deeper learning domains, had higher rates of graduating from high school, and were more likely to enroll in four-year colleges** than similar students who attended comparison schools.⁷

“As a rural community, being connected to the network is huge. **Anytime you're connected to a network, it strengthens your program.**”
- Angela Piazza, Superintendent
Cassopolis Public Schools

ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND SUCCESS FOR EVERY STUDENT...

Results suggest that the NTN school model in schools implementing with fidelity **significantly improved students' academic achievement, critical thinking skills, mathematical reasoning skills, and workforce problem-solving** techniques. These results suggest the potential of the **NTN school model to serve students of all income levels and backgrounds by positively impacting their academic achievement and workforce skills** development.⁶

“We have one class of high schoolers that have graduated and they've come back. They shared with the **teachers how much they feel that they're farther along than their peers who didn't go to LSI in being able to advocate for themselves.** They know how to create verbal contracts and delegate. They are definitely better prepared because of the learning outcomes for workplaces because they're going to have to work collaboratively.”

- Ryan Hansen-Vera, Site Director
Lobo School of Innovation

ON STANDARDIZED ASSESSMENT...

Significantly more NTN students compared to similar non-NTN students met the “approaches performance band” criteria for all subject areas (algebra, biology, English Language Arts).⁸

ON STUDENT PERFORMANCE...

NTN students consistently and significantly outperformed non-NTN students on biology and English Language Arts end of course exams in Texas.⁸

“Echo makes it easy to design and organize projects, and also for **students to take initiative to find the answer** they're looking for.”
- Rhitt Growl, Digital Media Facilitator
St. Charles Satellite Center

HART ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Hart Elementary School sits less than a mile from the U.S.-Mexico border in El Paso, Texas; almost half of Bianca Provencio's fourth-grade class crosses daily.

"The majority of our students are from families with lower socio-economic backgrounds," said Provencio. "The predominant language is Spanish." Many Hart Elementary students learn English as a second language.

Developing social skills in elementary school is challenging, and the language differences add an additional complication that can result in less outspoken, more insecure students.

New Tech Network's (NTN) model encourages strategic social interactions

in the classroom. Provencio facilitates such interactions called Community Circles each morning, which prepare students for collaboration with their classmates.

"One of the goals for our school was to implement Community Circles every morning. I've seen a big change," said Provencio. "I had one student that English was his second language, and I've seen how the project-based model has helped him grow since he has to communicate with his classmates so frequently. Group projects help students open up and not be shy."

One of the projects Provencio's students completed answered the driving question,

"What Contributes to the Pride Which Exists in the Community?" The project required students to identify local places and interview community members to evaluate what it was like to live in El Paso.

Provencio shared, "In the interviews, we emphasized that this is a process they'll

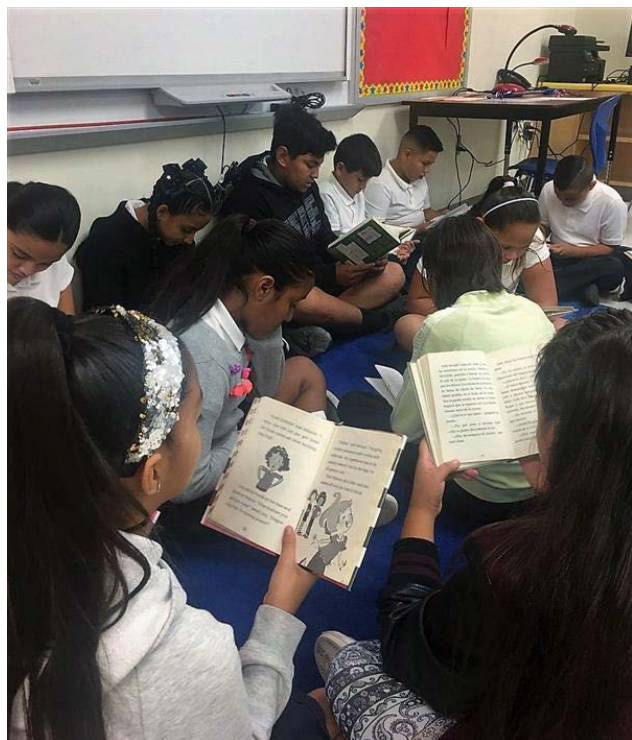
experience in the future, when interviewing for jobs or being the one conducting them, so it's important to be prepared."

The final project included presenting a website that the students created along with a booklet to share information about their local community. Provencio believes that familiarity with technology will help her students in middle school, high school and beyond, in addition to the skills developed in the creative process.

"The website was a collaborative effort, one website per group," said Provencio. "When we set it up, we implemented a group contract, where they assigned roles to each other and took responsibility for their part."

To Provencio's delight, the NTN model created a collaborative, inclusive classroom environment while fostering skills like writing and oral communication.

"I can say everyone is friends with everyone in my classroom. I can move around the seating arrangement, mix up the groups, and everyone feels comfortable working with each other—no matter their native language." Provencio said.



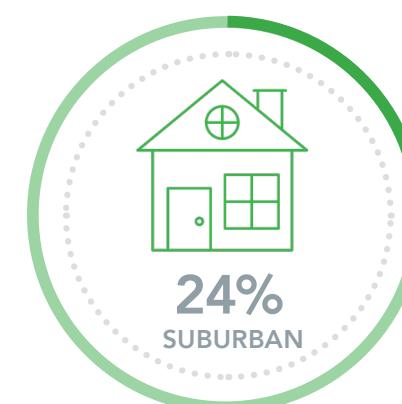
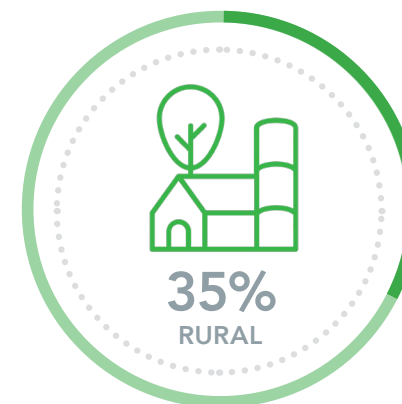
SUCCESS FOR EVERY STUDENT

The New Tech Network school model gives all students, regardless of their background or circumstances, an opportunity to succeed. The NTN model adapts to the needs of rural, suburban, and urban communities because its foundation is built on designing and sustaining a culture of equity for every student. Every student deserves the same opportunity to succeed.

	Total NTN Students	Total NTN Elem	Total NTN MS	Total NTN HS	NTN School Range	K-12 Students Across U.S. ¹¹
African American	20%	20%	14%	23%	0-99%	15.5%
American Indian	1%	1%	<1%	<1%	0-26%	1%
Asian/Pacific Isl. / Hawaiian	5%	6%	9%	3%	0-63%	5%
Hispanic	28%	36%	30%	25%	0-100%	26%
White	41%	30%	41%	45%	0-100%	49%
Multi-racial, Other, PNTS	5%	7%	6%	4%	0-24%	3.5%
Male	52%	50%	52%	52%	0-89%	51%
Female	48%	50%	48%	48%	11%-100%	49%
English Language Learners*	10%	19%	9%	6%	0-79%	10%
Special Education*	12%	11%	12%	12%	0-27%	12%
Free and Reduced Lunch*	57%	67%	55%	53%	0-100%	50%

*Weighted average percent in Network schools rather than total percent of NTN students.

NTN supports rural, urban, and suburban communities through whole school redesign, new schools, and academies within schools.



MIND THE GAP



A Q&A WITH JIM MAY, NTN'S CHIEF SCHOOLS OFFICER

Q. WHAT IS THE OPPORTUNITY GAP?

A. The opportunity gap refers to the way in which our system of public education distributes resources and opportunity differently, unequally, and predictably across lines of race and class. For example, a student in a public school with a high concentration of students living in poverty has a higher likelihood to have a teacher with less than five years of experience.

Q. WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE OPPORTUNITY GAP AND THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP?

A. The Achievement Gap refers to the gap in student performance on standardized tests between students of color and white students - a gap in student outputs. The Opportunity Gap refers to the gap between the resources and opportunities afforded to students of color and their white and more affluent peers - a gap in inputs.

Q. WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?

By focusing on a gap in student

outcomes, the Achievement Gap situates the problem to be solved with the student - a gap in the learning, knowledge, and skills of the student. If performance isn't adequate, the problem is a lack of skill development. Alternatively, the Opportunity Gap focuses on the ways in which our system of public education distributes resources and opportunities, and situates the problem to be solved with the system. As long as our system of public education distributes resources and opportunity inequitably along lines of race and class, racial achievement gaps are entirely predictable.

Q. WHAT DOES IT MEAN WHEN WE HEAR THAT OPPORTUNITY GAPS ARE THE GREATEST CRISIS FACING U.S. SCHOOLS?

A. Closing opportunity gaps fully will require grappling with structural systems and the privilege that created them which sit underneath the surface of education in this country. For example, the way most states fund public education through property taxes generates tremendous inequities in the financial resources school

systems have available. That said, our focus at NTN is on Opportunity Gaps that exist at the level of school and classroom practice. NTN is taking action to solve two gaps now:

A Culture Gap - Students of color and students in poverty are more likely to experience a school environment that isn't safe, welcoming, or supportive

An Instruction Gap - Students of color and students in poverty are more likely to experience rote, low level instruction that emphasizes memorization.

Q. HOW DOES THE NEW TECH NETWORK MODEL TRY TO SOLVE FOR THE CHALLENGES OF THE OPPORTUNITY GAPS?

A. New Tech Network doesn't view public schools as the sorting engines they have historically been, preparing some students for vocation, some for college, and some for the military. When public schools tracked students into different pathways of preparation, typically students of color and students in poverty disproportionately get tracked into non-college pathways. If we want to increase the percentage of students graduating ready for the workforce and ready for college, then we have to ask, historically speaking, who have public schools not been successful at getting ready and why? This always leads to a conversation about race, class, and opportunity gaps.

The NTN school model has always placed an emphasis on the importance of a school culture of trust, respect, and responsibility. That work is evolving to address the reality that, generally speaking, students of color and students in poverty are more likely to

experience a school environment that isn't safe, welcoming, or supportive. NTN is crafting tools, resources, and experiences for our teachers and school leaders that name and examine this reality and make concrete the work of creating and sustaining cultures that are emotionally supportive and intellectually demanding for students.

Additionally, the NTN school model has always emphasized the belief that students ought to be engaged in a thinking curriculum and teachers ought to practice a thinking pedagogy. NTN has operationalized this by building teacher capacity around 1) the practice of project and problem-based learning and 2) the use of a broad set of learning outcomes for students. Our work is evolving to attend to the reality that, generally speaking, students of color and students in poverty are more likely to experience rote, low level instruction that emphasizes memorization. We are working to name this reality and fashion concrete tools, resources, and experiences that ensure authentic, complex thinking and problem-solving is a part of the daily reality in school for every student.

While I have named two opportunity gaps that are central to our school model, each community also has specific opportunity gaps. NTN can play a role in helping school communities reflect on the opportunity gaps that are specific to their community and the most salient for their students. The contours of inequity share broad patterns across the country, but the details can be different. In the future, we can play a role in helping schools and districts identify, name and strategize around those dimensions of opportunity.

CAROLINA HIGH ACADEMY

When the education system fails, it becomes the bad system that beats a good kid every time. Forging systems change requires discipline, intention, and expertise; anything less than a total rebuild is ineffective. There is no “accidental transformation.”

Carolina High Academy Principal Michael Delaney understood the education system in Greenville, South Carolina was broken long before he was an educator. He began his tenure as a math teacher and eventually became principal. Two years after he became principal, he and his staff decided to partner with New Tech Network (NTN).

Through facilitation and coaching, the shift to the NTN

model and project-based learning (PBL) took shape. The instincts of traditional teaching faded, and PBL was implemented in every class, including Special Education and English as a Second Language courses (ESL). Delaney is diligent about keeping close tabs on former teaching instincts, carefully assessing each integrated course, aligning PBL course curricula with state standards, and ensuring that grading requirements keep learning relevant to every student.

“It is amazing what happens when we accept people for their gifts and strengths instead of trying to get them all into the formal education box,” Delaney said.

At Carolina High, 81.2 percent of students participate in NSLP’s Free or Reduced Lunch Program, determined by family income. NSLP data paints a clearer picture of the socio-economic challenges Delaney’s students face.



According to Eric Jensen’s *Teaching with Poverty in Mind*, the stress students living in poverty face not only negatively impacts academic performance but can be so severe that it impedes the growth of brain cells and increases a student’s likelihood of depression. Impoverished students, like those served at Carolina High Academy, are at greater risk of diminished cognition, creativity, and memory, along with stunted social skills and social judgment.

The staff at Carolina High can’t shield students from the pressures of their home lives, but Delaney has worked to ensure that his school allows students access to a high-quality education, closing the gap that impacts so many in his school.

Every morning, Delaney and the administrative staff stand at the school entrance so that the staff can check in with each student. When a student looks upset, that student is heard and then directed to, “Leave it at the rock.” Knowing exactly what to do, the student walks to touch a boulder painted “Thankful Trojans!” before returning to begin the day. Delaney credits this act of mindfulness with re-focusing a student for learning before entering the classroom.

“[...] they give the problem, concern, or issue away. For a brief moment, it no longer belongs to them. They can be them again,” Delaney said.

This daily commitment to well-being doesn’t just serve the students. Delaney uses it as an opportunity for the administrators to get to know the students and to build relationships.

EDUCATION FOR EVERY STUDENT



New Tech Network positively impacts academic achievement for students of all income levels.⁹



New Tech Network PBL implementation **enabled access for traditionally underrepresented students to high quality STEM curriculum, instruction, and learning environments** designed to build STEM social capital, dispositions, knowledge, and skills necessary for success in STEM study and careers.⁴



New Tech Network schools **servicing high poverty student populations (40% or more FRL) have higher high school graduation rates (93%)** than the national average for similar schools (75%).¹⁰



New Tech Network schools have success supporting college access high poverty communities: **outperforming statewide averages in math and English Language Arts, higher on-time graduation rates, enrolling in college at higher rates, completing more AP exams than the national average, and outperforming the national average** on both the math and reading components of the SAT.¹⁰

CONT'D CAROLINA HIGH ACADEMY

“Sometimes I think it’s more important that the administrators have a connection with the students than the other way around. We are here to serve, and it’s hard to love and serve someone you do not know,” Delaney said.

Delaney challenges himself and his staff to examine the entire student experience

ensuring that a once-broken system works for everyone.

“It takes time and intentionality; everything has to be built around your school’s ‘why.’ There is a written and unwritten plan of where we are trying to take our school, for us, it’s the little things that make a huge difference,” Delaney said.

BETTER TOGETHER

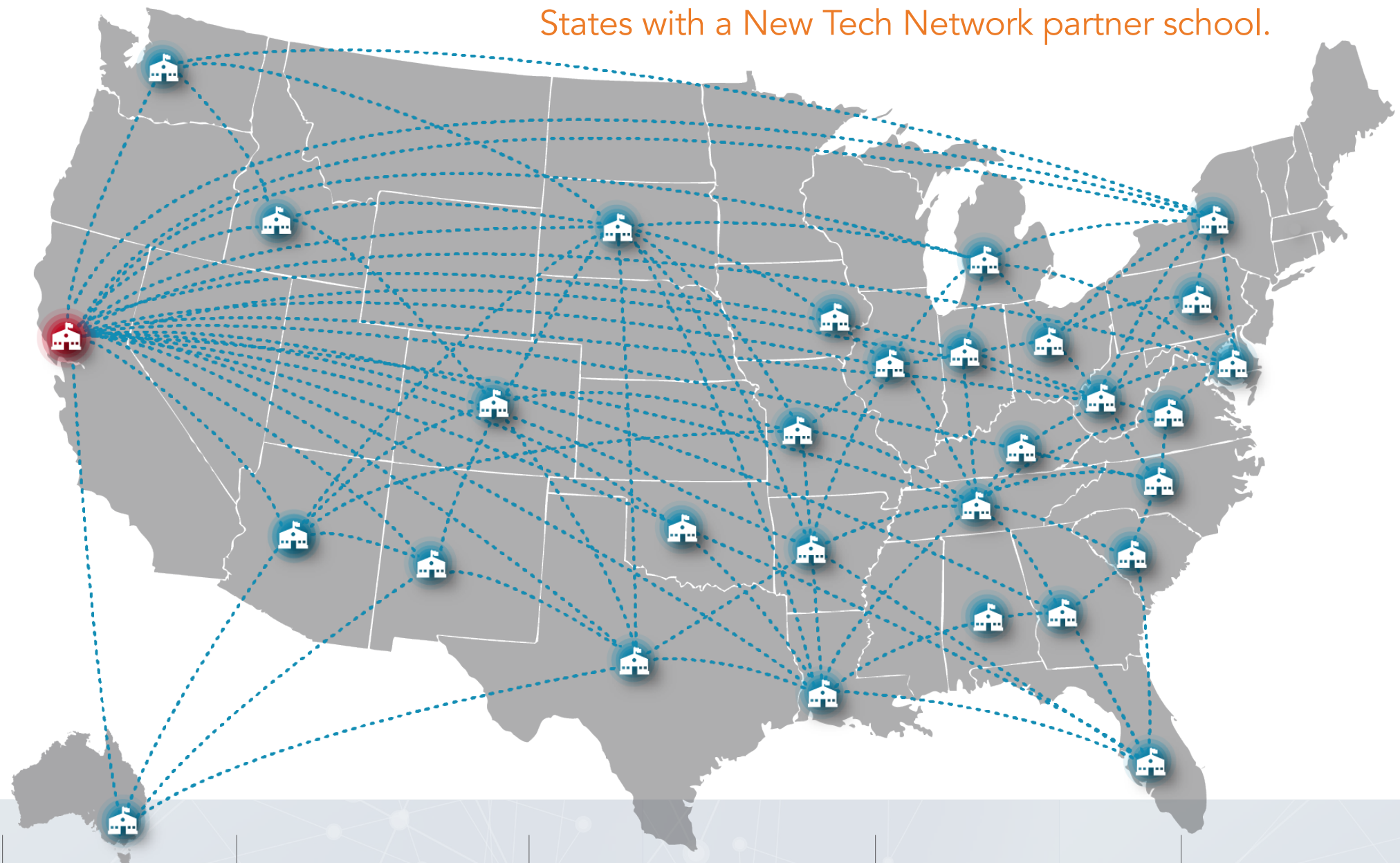
NTN partner schools succeed because they work together – sharing ideas and results from each of their schools with other NTN communities. For New Tech Network, this spirit of collaboration stems from a shared vision of changing how students are educated so they are prepared for an ever-changing world.

The Network enables educators at all levels to connect collaboratively, like teachers sharing project ideas or district leaders convening to discuss best practices. The network of NTN educators models an NTN classroom. When an active network of people work together, they produce better quality ideas and resources. Implementing comprehensive change brings both predictable and unexpected challenges. Not only is facing these challenges in isolation ineffective and unsustainable, it is in opposition to the NTN model – to build a better education system, schools must work together.

THE POWER OF THE NETWORK

THE NETWORK MAP

States with a New Tech Network partner school.



120

HIGH SCHOOLS

50

MIDDLE SCHOOLS

44

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

5,000

TEACHERS

85,000

STUDENTS

116

DISTRICTS

43

DISTRICTS WITH MULTIPLE SCHOOLS

Data is from the 2018-2019 academic year.

7 STEPS TO GUIDE SCHOOL CHANGE

CASSOPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

When superintendent Angela Piazza started at Cassopolis Public Schools (CPS) in Southwestern Michigan, she was resolute that the district needed change for the K-12 schools. Through her previous roles at New Tech Network (NTN) schools, Piazza knew it was the right framework for CPS to put students ahead of the curve for the state's educational initiatives and ready for the workforce of the future. Read her advice on bringing a district and community on board with school change.

1. BE HONEST: EVALUATE THE NEED

When Piazza first became superintendent at Cassopolis Public Schools (CPS), she didn't sugarcoat the facts. "Immediately I started having conversations with my board about the existing test scores and data and said, here's a real picture of where we are. Here are our needs; here is where we're failing students," said Piazza. CPS needed a model that fit their diverse community in rural Michigan, a model that would meet the needs of K-12 students from different ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds.

2. SOURCE COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

One of the most valuable tactics for engaging the Cassopolis community with New Tech Network was sourcing community feedback through Business Education Roundtables. Piazza gathered business leaders together to learn about her vision and voice their desires. "The very first thing I had them do was to describe their ideal employee candidate. They listed things like communication and work ethic, and Piazza realized that the skills they were looking for aligned with our [NTN] Learning Outcomes. We want the same things—the same things I'm looking for in the graduates for my district, they're looking for in successful employees. That exercise opened a lot of doors and gained so much support."

3. FIND WHAT "WORKS" FOR YOU

"We needed a model that met the needs of our individualized district, and that's what we love about New Tech Network—it's a framework, not a canned curriculum." In addition to her appreciation for the adaptability of the model, Piazza acknowledges the benefits of being a part of the Network. "As a rural community, being connected to the Network for us is huge. Anytime you're connected in a network,

it strengthens your program, and no one else in our area is doing this framework with project-based learning (PBL). The Network gives us a chance to connect with others doing the same thing."

4. VISIT NTN SCHOOLS

"[...] We were able to see schools that had all the bells and whistles in the classroom, and others that didn't. When cost and resource are a concern, it's nice to see that NTN offers customizable options that support good teaching and learning," said Piazza.

5. INVOLVE STUDENTS REGULARLY

Piazza regularly schedules students to present final projects at school board meetings, which serves two purposes: 1. Students gain practice with oral communication and presentation skills 2. Board members can see the level of competence and confidence students display in their learning.

6. UNANIMITY IS NOT THE GOAL

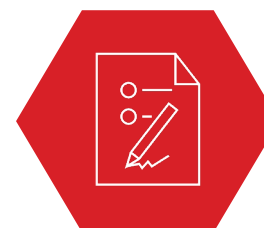
"You're never going to get 100 percent buy-in," says Piazza. She emphasizes that while there will always be a small group of naysayers or traditionalists, showing stakeholders why school transformation is important and achievable and keeping the focus on what's best for the teachers and students is the ultimate goal.

7. CELEBRATE!

Since implementing the NTN model, two CPS schools have been recognized with an MIBALSI award (Michigan's Integrated Behavior and Learning Support Initiative) "Discipline has been so minimal compared to what we've experienced before," said Piazza. "In implementing PBL as our culture, there's been an impact on discipline. That's the accountability and agency piece and being consistent."

THE FOUR DESIGN PILLARS

New Tech Network's decades of experience guiding schools through comprehensive transformation led to the Four Design Pillars. NTN developed these four categories to bucket the work of whole school transformation and help school communities understand the overarching goals that impact the work through all phases of the school development process.



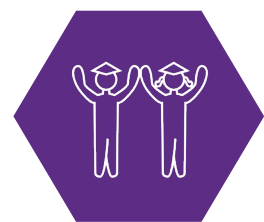
OUTCOMES THAT MATTER

Every NTN partner school adopts the five New Tech Network Learning Outcomes. The outcomes are: Collaboration, Knowledge and Thinking, Written and Oral Communication, and the development of student responsibility for their own learning, or Agency.



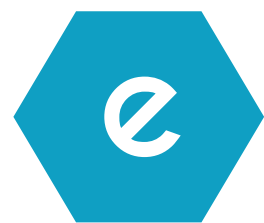
TEACHING THAT ENGAGES

Project-based learning (PBL) is the primary pedagogical method that all NTN teachers use in their schools. It is the best way for students to demonstrate proficiency on school-wide learning outcomes. PBL requires contextual, creative, and shared learning. Students collaborate on meaningful projects that require critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration in order to answer challenging questions. By making learning relevant, students see a purpose for mastering state-required skills and concepts.



CULTURE THAT EMPOWERS

Each NTN partner school promotes a culture of trust, respect, and responsibility, encompassing student and professional culture. Students and teachers alike have ownership over the learning experience and their school environment.



TECHNOLOGY THAT ENABLES

Echo supports project-based learning and features an innovative gradebook that aligns to the deeper learning skills students will need in college and career.

Digital tools, cultivated and aligned content, and a community of shared learning are integrated to create a powerful platform to support student and adult learning.

THE IMPROVEMENT JOURNEY



Teachers rediscover their passion for education through New Tech Network's Professional Learning opportunities. Professional Learning at NTN offers a personalized system of opportunities that allow teachers to learn at their own pace, focus on their areas of improvement, and connect to a network of like-minded educators. Along with the convenience of a virtual model, educators have opportunities to attend convenings and national NTN events.

NTN BADGING

In the same way that NTN encourages and teach students to have power over their learning, the badging process allows teachers to do the same. This professional development best-practice was developed to be manageable for teachers and help them to refine and perfect their PBL skills with the goal of providing each student with deeper learning outcomes. Each badge accomplishment represents an element of high quality PBL and includes a description of the practice, tools, and resources developed by NTN, and Network teachers.

CONTINUATION SERVICES

Continuation Services provide schools and districts an avenue to receive New Tech Network (NTN) services consistent with post-implementation interests. Continuation supports each school's individual growth and allows communities to stay connected with NTN innovations and current thinking around leadership and PBL design. Through Community, the core Continuation service, NTN provides an environment for regularly structured dialogue between a school team and the NTN school development coach that is both time-efficient and cost-effective.

CONTINUATION COMMUNITIES

New Tech Network (NTN) Continuation Communities provide direct NTN guidance along with robust connections to Network schools. Communities provides space for school leaders to connect, collaborate and learn together concerning similar problems of practice, based on the Spectrum of School Development. These virtual convenings, called Studio Sessions, focus on topics including but not limited to: student recruitment and retention, advisory, coaching teachers towards scaffolding agency skills in their classrooms, and formative assessments. Each individual school in Community is also supported by an NTN coach with 1-1 leadership coaching support throughout the school year. This support can include coaching an individual school might require, as well as serving as a connector between teachers and leaders across the Network. Moreover, NTN Coaches continue to develop and deploy Network toolkits around emerging topics to further support community growth.

“ Leading a learning organization at the forefront of innovation poses numerous technical and adaptive challenges. Even though the school might be up and running for a few years, it doesn't mean organizational growth and development stops. Continuation Community affords leaders a haven to connect with colleagues championing similar work; to learn from and with each other, and to stay tapped into the wellspring of new learning and resources outpouring from the Network. ”

- Andrew Biros, School Development Coach, New Tech Network

“ I have found tremendous value in the wealth of expertise [...]. Studio sessions offered timely topics that provoke thought with practical application opportunities. The 1:1 meetings have resulted in connections with other school development coaches and three different schools I never would have had to the chance to learn with. I would highly recommend active participation in Continuation Communities, each online gathering has been invigorating and I've left excited to continue to do the hard work of providing high quality PBL experiences for students and teachers. ”

- Jacob Bretz, Director, Danville New Tech High School

“ As a first year Director[...], it has been very helpful to have the Continuation Community as a resource, support, and arena for connection within the network. Specifically, my 1:1 sessions with our School Development Coach, Andrew, have given me an opportunity to share successes and challenges with respect to our school initiatives. In addition, Andrew has been a wonderful thought partner for me, helping me to navigate my first year as a Director including providing direction, supports, and useful network connections which have been invaluable. ”

- Sarah Butler, Director, Central Coast New Tech High School

A NETWORK AT WORK

LOBO SCHOOL OF INNOVATION

In the heart of Silicon Valley, many schools seek recognition as tech-savvy or cutting-edge. While schools may promise innovation and a genuine connection to real-world learning outcomes, it is often a challenge to support these claims.

In San Jose, California, the teachers and school leaders at Lobo School of Innovation (LSI), a public district school nestled on the campus of Quimby Middle School, are living up to their school's name and using the power of the New Tech Network community to improve both adult and student learning. Their dedication to the model and fast progress earned them a California Distinguished School award.

"I think we've made this growth because we spent so much time developing our why and how we wanted to roll out a school within a school and also make enhancements for all of our middle school, and that's what makes us successful," Site Director Ryan Hansen-Vera said.

LSI is three years into a partnership with New Tech Network (NTN) and is one of several NTN schools in the Evergreen School District. Quimby Middle School Principal, Ryan

Hansen-Vera works with LSI Site Director Ginger George to keep the integrity and fidelity of the NTN model intact, while customizing for the needs of their school. Hansen-Vera and George both said they feel lucky to be a part of a network because it allows them to learn ideas from other NTN campuses whether or not the campus looks like LSI.



"The power of the network is really important to our teachers, and they have received so many great project ideas and resources. It [acquiring NTN community resources] used to be a get, get, get. Now, they've found opportunities to give back to the community who

gave to us," George said.

George said that when the LSI math teachers needed to adapt an NTN resource to fit their needs, they channeled their students' agency skills to rethink the tool, then shared it with the rest of the network.

"I'm so impressed with the work that the teachers did. They could have just said, 'there's no tool for us, so we're just not going to use it'. But I admire their dedication to developing it and their agency, on wanting to create something for the network and share it back with other network teachers," George said.

ENDNOTES

1. Persistence sourced from National Student Clearinghouse (NSC). NSC data current as of April 2019. The data used to calculate persistence rates is obtained from the NSC database. NSC is a nonprofit organization providing student enrollment, performance and related information for more than 3,600 colleges and universities (originally intended for enrollment verification for student loan purposes). These NSC participating universities enroll 98 percent of public and private U.S. institutions which includes 96 percent of currently enrolled postsecondary students. Organizations can submit requests to the NSC for student records. When data requests are submitted, the NSC returns records for all students identified. A returned record from NSC indicates that student has enrolled in a NSC participating institution. For each student record returned we are provided with enrollment dates. Calculations are done to determine consecutive enrollment windows for students to identify continued enrollment. Persistence rates refer to yearly progression and continued enrollment one year following initial enrollment (either at the same institution or as a transfer student at a different institution). Retention and persistence are often used interchangeably. However, some researchers distinguish the two, indicating retention requires return to the same institution and persistence is return to any institution. NTN analyzes enrollment and persistence at the school level for NTN schools with a graduating class of students who experienced 4 years of a NTN education. We don't collect student level demographics, so our data is reported at the school level. NSC releases data reports on persistence. We use these for context when sharing our results: <https://nscresearchcenter.org/snapshotreport33-first-year-persistence-and-retention/>

2. ED Facts Data Groups 695, School year 2016-17; September 28, 2018; Department of Education website, 2016-2017 Cohort Graduation Rate, NCES, <https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=805>

3. Culclasure, B., Odell, M., & Stocks, E. (2019, April). The Effect of the New Tech Network Design on Students' Academic Achievement and Workforce Skills. Paper presentation at the annual conference of the American Educational Research Association, Toronto, Canada.

4. Lynch, S. J., Peters Burton, E., Behrend, T., House, A., Ford, M. Spillane, N., Matray, S., Han, E., Means, B. (2018). Understanding Inclusive STEM High Schools as Opportunity Structures for Underrepresented Students: Critical Components. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching*, 55, 712-748.

5. Bergeron, L., Boesche-Taylor, B., Gehrke, A., Dugan-Knight, M., Kamdar, S., Vorse Wilka, J., & Gittens, C. (2019, March). A multifaceted examination of deeper learning in PBL elementary schools: school culture, critical thinking, and access to opportunity. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness, Washington, DC.

6. Culclasure, B., Odell, M., & Stocks, E. (2019, April). The Effect of the New Tech Network Design on Students' Academic Achievement and Workforce Skills. Paper presentation at the annual conference of the American Educational Research Association, Toronto, Canada.

7. *Analysis based on 16 high schools implementing a school-wide approach to promoting deeper learning within the context of small schools Rickles, J., Zeiser, K. L., Yang, R., O'Day, J., & Garet, M. S. (2019). Promoting Deeper Learning in High School: Evidence of Opportunities and Outcomes. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 41(2), 214-234. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0162373719837949>

8. Bergeron, L. (2019, February). Reconsidering research paradigms: using Texas End of Course performance to evaluate innovation in EPISD. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Southwest Educational Research Association, San Antonio, TX.

9. Gordon, M. & Bergeron, L. (2018, November). Using Different Data Sources to Address the Same Research Questions: Evaluating the Effectiveness of New Curriculum on Student Outcomes. Presentation at the California Education Research Association annual meeting, Anaheim, CA

10. Bergeron, L. (2017, February). Examining Student Outcomes in New Tech Network Title 1 Eligible Schools. Paper presentation at the annual conference of the Eastern Educational Research Association, Richmond, VA.

11. National data based on 2015-2016, <http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/elsi/> and ELL: https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_cgf.asp



The flagship Napa New Technology High School (NNTHS) opened in 1996, as a collaboration between local entrepreneurs, teachers, and district leadership. Business leaders felt the high school experience was not helping students develop the collaboration and communication skills they needed, alongside their academic preparation.

The start to a completely re-imagined school experience was based on a bold vision. Within a few years, student-centered focus, attention to culture, and pervasive use of project-based learning was the genesis of a new school model. NNTHS attracted national philanthropic support to create what is now New Tech Network, a non-profit organization based in Napa, California. What started as one district-operated high school is now a vibrant network of more than 200 elementary, middle, and high schools in diverse communities across the country and in Australia.

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