



2018-19

OSPI/AESD Professional Development Learning Network Evaluation

AESD ASSOCIATION OF
EDUCATIONAL
SERVICE DISTRICTS

Nine ESDs. One Network.
Supporting Washington's Schools and Communities.



**Kauffman
& Associates**
INCORPORATED

Contents

Executive Summary	1
Evaluation Briefs	2
Theory of Action and Overarching Evaluation Questions	3
Fellows' Convenings.....	3
Main Conclusions	4
Recommendations	4
Introduction	6
Evaluation Briefs from the 2018-2019 School Year	7
Regional Coordinator Evaluation Brief	7
Kent School District Evaluation Brief	16
Special Education Evaluation Brief	23
Mathematics Evaluation Brief.....	32
Implications to the Theory of Action and Overarching Evaluation Questions	41
Joining the Fellows' Network.....	41
Expectations of the Fellows' Network	41
Action Plans.....	42
Fellows' Convenings.....	42
Increased Effectiveness to Lead Colleagues through Change	42
Expanded and Deepened Pedagogical and Content Knowledge.....	43
Expanded Knowledge about Equity and Social-Emotional Learning	43
Improved Strategies to Involve and Serve Families.....	44
Early Learning Fellows' Contribution to State Initiatives.....	45
Challenges	47
Recommendations	48
Conclusion.....	49

This report was prepared by Kauffman & Associates, Inc., for OSPI/AESD.



Executive Summary

Each school year, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction Association of Education Service Districts (OSPI/AESD) evaluate data and outcomes of the professional learning experiences (PLEs) provided by Washington State’s nine Education Service Districts (ESDs). The PLEs are of very high quality and well attended by teachers, instructional coaches, district leadership, early learning providers and college faculty. For the 2018-19 school year, OSPI/AESD used the new online platform, PDforUs, to administer surveys and track quantitative and qualitative data regarding the PLEs provided by each ESD. Additional data collected in support of the evaluation included focus groups and interviews with Regional Coordinators and PLE attendees in the Fellows’ Network to assess their experiences and outcomes of participation.

Currently, there are 274 PDforUs users consisting of state and ESD leadership, Regional Coordinators, and Fellows. These stakeholders found the PDforUs data highly informative. Regional Coordinators reported that PDforUs provided user-friendly menus and allowed for easy and effective survey administration. Additionally, the new surveys provided valuable, real-time feedback, which the Regional Coordinators used to monitor and adjust their approaches in the PLEs.

The results of this year’s evaluation strongly suggest that the PLEs provided by the nine ESD Regional Coordinators resulted in more effective education leaders and classroom teachers. According to the survey results, PLE participants were very satisfied with the PLEs, as over 90% either strongly agreed or agreed that the PLEs helped them achieve the short- and long-term outcomes illustrated in the Theory of Action and Logic Model, including expanded and deepened content and pedagogical knowledge, and increased academic achievement for students. The OSPI/AESD 2018-19 Year-End Survey Report, located on the AESD website (<https://www.waesd.org/aesd-professional-learning-network/evaluation/>), provides more detailed information on the survey results.

The ESDs collaborated with OSPI and AESD to support the Fellows’ Professional Learning Network.¹ The Fellows are an integral part of the state’s teacher professional development delivery model and the Fellows’ Network enjoyed strong membership with 1,100 Fellows (343 math, 275 science, 287 English language arts, and 195 early learning). Regional Coordinators delivered 614 PLEs in the nine ESDs across Washington State to 12,412 participants during the 2018-19 school year. Participants represented a variety of job roles, including district leaders and educators, building administrators, classroom teachers, and support staff. This year’s evaluation report includes four briefs, a review of early learning Fellows’ contributions, outcomes of the Fellows’ convenings, conclusions, and recommendations for the Fellows’ Network.

¹ Please visit <https://www.k12.wa.us/educator-support/educator-leadership/washington-state-fellows-network> to learn more about the Washington State Fellows’ Network.

Evaluation Briefs

The evaluation briefs highlight the Regional Coordinators' coordinated, statewide delivery of professional development and how the Fellows' Network contributed to growth in leadership, knowledge, and improved student learning from the perspectives of Fellows.

Regional Coordinators Evaluation Brief Summary

The PLEs and the Fellows' convenings are made possible through the hard-work and dedication of the ESD Regional Coordinators. Collaborating closely with the Fellows Advisory Committee, they provide high-quality learning opportunities on leadership skills, pedagogy and content, strategies to promote equity, and strategies to acquire a systems-level view of education. Additionally, the Regional Coordinators foster a sense of belonging, support, and trust through the learning communities for all participants, and particularly rural participants. Fellows expressed the importance of being part of this type of learning community supporting their growth and journey as lifelong learners. Lastly, Regional Coordinators also designed an effective system to communicate the cycle of inquiry and document outcomes through the Fellows' Action Plans.

Kent School District Evaluation Brief Summary

At the Kent School District (KSD), a multi-Fellow team of science educators further confirmed the importance of camaraderie and collaboration to promote personal growth and achieve district goals. The team members strengthened relationships, fostered a greater sense of accountability, and motivated each other to successfully achieve their individual Action Plan goals. Their Action Plans led the district to transition to the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) throughout its 42 preK through 12th-grade buildings. The KSD team felt strongly that they could not have accomplished this transition without working together.

Special Education Evaluation Brief Summary

Out of the 1,100 Fellows statewide, 33 work in special education serving students with disabilities. These Fellows felt that the knowledge gained in through the PLEs improved collaboration with general education (GenEd) teachers. They adopted best practices to make content more accessible in math, science, and English Language Arts. They worked with GenEd teachers to scaffold instruction and provide entry points for SPED students in GenEd classrooms. They learned how to mitigate GenEd teachers' apprehension when working with SPED students while raising expectations of SPED students and familiarizing them with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Math Evaluation Brief Summary

The math Fellow attributed her participation in the Fellows' Network to steep increases in student mathematics achievement. She used what she learned in the Fellows' convenings to provide workshops about best practices to shift classroom culture to a mathematical mindset based on Jo Boaler's book, *Mathematical Mindsets*. The Fellow and her peers met regularly to

review and reflect on student data to help guide instructional decisions. Some teachers were early adopters of the shift in mathematical thinking; however, some of the skeptical teachers that were slow to change ultimately became the best advocates for the shift to a mathematical mindset.

Theory of Action and Overarching Evaluation Questions

Fellows stated they participated in the convenings to learn how to provide high quality, equitable, and accessible education to prepare their students for the future. Their personal learning goals for participation included expanded content and pedagogical knowledge, leadership skills, and strategies to engage families and to network with other educators. Some Fellows said they did not fully understand the Fellows' Network until their second year of participation. However, they noted that the support of the more experienced Fellows helped them better imagine possibilities for their own professional growth.

Fellows shared that the Action Plans were pivotal to their participation. During the four Fellows' convenings, Fellows had the opportunity to update their Action Plans, reflect on milestones they accomplished, and problem solve about challenges they encountered. Fellows' Action Plans guided their work toward achieving their goals and tracking their progress. The four Fellows' convenings provided the majority of time needed to update the plan. Fellows who met with their administrators and multi-Fellow teams used their Action Plans at least monthly as an agenda for monitoring and tracking.

Fellows' Convenings

Through the Fellows' convenings, Fellows reported that they: 1) expanded their ability to lead colleagues through change; 2) broadened and deepened their pedagogical and content knowledge; 3) improved their ability to promote social and emotional learning; and 4) gained a new awareness of ways to create equitable learning opportunities for students. Fellows used what they learned about the Concerns-Based Adoption Model² to lead colleagues through improvements in their classroom practice. This skill was particularly helpful for SPED teachers who were able to gently inform GenEd teachers about what students with learning disabilities need to succeed. The Regional Coordinators' curriculum also provided Fellows with effective, content-specific strategies to help student progress and pedagogical strategies to address common misconceptions held by students.

The Fellows' convenings also supported early learning Fellows who play a critical role in students' successful trajectory of readiness from pre-K to third grade. The convenings enabled early learning Fellows to identify curricula and activities that span pre-K to third grade. Fellows shared that these aligned curricular approaches are essential for effective early learning. The convenings also expanded early learning Fellows' content knowledge to better provide students with a solid foundation in early literacy and numeracy. Additionally, the Regional Coordinators allocated time to learn about students' social and emotional growth to aid students' academic

² Please visit <http://www.sedl.org/cbam/> to learn more about the Concerns-Based Adoption Model.

skill development. Fellows shared that social and emotional readiness is critical for students' success. Lastly, Regional Coordinators provided culturally relevant resources and activities. The Fellows noted an increased understanding of the importance of family involvement in these areas, especially for students with culturally diverse backgrounds and for students with disabilities who are English language learners. They also noted the importance of family involvement to better prepare children for kindergarten.

Main Conclusions

The evaluation found that the Regional Coordinators provided a safe, supportive place to learn and develop confidence to lead discussions about racial equity. They helped Fellows expand their knowledge of strategies to increase family participation at school events and engagement in their children's academic activities at home. The PLEs improved participants' ability to gauge peers' receptiveness to improving pedagogical ideas and navigate their Stages of Concern. They also deepened Fellows' content knowledge to better meet their students' needs.

The evaluation also found that Fellows increased and expanded their pedagogical and content knowledge through their participation in the PLEs and Fellows' Network. Fellows' experience levels vastly ranged from novice to seasoned, and Regional Coordinators had to create curricula that would meet all of the Fellows' needs. Ultimately, Fellows attributed improved student achievement when applying the best practices they learned. Fellows consistently praised the Fellows' Network and commented on the need to expand it even more districts.

Additionally, the Fellows' Network provided a venue for Regional Coordinators to deliver relevant, effective, and scalable professional development. Their curricula were guided by data-informed insights and decisions, which the PDforUs platform made possible. Through their Action Plans, Fellows were able to and evaluate their progress, reflect on their accomplishments, and determine how to overcome challenges.

Recommendations

Fellows and Regional Coordinators that participated in the study offered the following recommendations.

- Develop more effective strategies to engage administrators leading the schools in the Fellows' Network. For example, ESD Assistant Superintendents could communicate directly to district administrators about the benefits of participating in and supporting the Network.
- Work with experts (e.g. University of Washington, leadership and organizational development consulting firms trained in cultural responsive and equity) to develop a tightly integrated approach to teaching leadership, equity, and parent engagement.
- Solicit input from Fellows of color to inform resource choices, such as book studies and literature.
- Explore why some of the first-year Fellows reported that it took a year for them to understand the Fellows' Network.

- Include data fields on the Fellow Application Form that enable Regional Coordinators to make data-informed decisions for the Fellows’ convenings and to gather insights to improve the program. Fellows suggested such data fields suggested include, “What job roles do you play?” and “What grade bands do you teach?”
- Work with Regional Coordinators and stakeholders to build capacity and find high utility of PDforUs summaries and reports.
- Develop PDforUs data dashboards to guide data mining for ESD Assistant Superintendents and the Fellows Advisory Committee.
- Widely advertise the benefits of the Fellows’ Network to more teachers and discuss the Fellow’s Network’s exemplary approaches to teacher professional development at state and national conference venues.
- Actively recruit teachers who work with SPED students into the Fellows’ Network by reaching out to school administrators and communicating the benefits of participation.
- Provide opportunities to highlight exemplary GenEd-SPED collaboration practices.
- Explore how Emeritus Fellows can help sustain the Fellows’ accomplishments.
- Use multi-Fellow teams to effect district-wide change, especially across grade levels.
- Include data fields on the Fellow Application Form that support data-informed decisions about future plans.
- Create a way to solicit input from Fellows of color to inform resource choices, such as book studies and literature, for the Fellows’ convenings.

Introduction

During the 2016-17 school year, Regional Coordinators from all nine ESDs and four content areas were guided through a series of conversations that resulted in the development of the OSPI/AESD Professional Learning Network Theory of Action. With diligent attention to detail, the Regional Coordinators shared the multi-faceted nature of their work and intended outcomes. After synthesizing volumes of information, Kauffman & Associates, Inc., (KAI) created a Theory of Action and Logic Model that depicts the relationship between Regional Coordinators' PLE-focused tasks to desired short- and long-term outcomes (Appendix A). This framework allowed for this year's evaluation to test assumptions about this system. By collecting data to confirm, modify, or refute these relationships, this evaluation aims to ground practice in a clear analysis of what is working well and what may need to be improved.

For the 2018-19 school year, data collection occurred between November 2018 and May 2019. KAI conducted seven focus groups and seven interviews with a total of 22 individuals. Interviewees included Regional Coordinators and PLE participants who had attended multiple PLEs as members of the OSPI/AESD Fellows' Professional Learning Network. KAI uploaded and coded audio recordings of the focus groups and interviews in Dedoose, software designed for qualitative analysis. KAI also performed qualitative narrative analysis to identify emerging themes from the transcripts. Additionally, KAI downloaded data from PDforUs that originated from the Regional Coordinator Survey, PLE Participant Survey, and the Fellows Survey. These data are of high validity and reliability.

KAI used a participatory approach to explore how Fellows' engagement in the Fellows' Network influenced their practice and their students' achievement. KAI used qualitative and quantitative data (assessment scores, surveys, classroom work) to test the Theory of Action and Logic Model and show how the Fellows became more effective leaders and classroom teachers. KAI also developed four evaluation briefs to provide deeper insight into the Theory of Action processes and the short- and long-term outcomes of the Fellows' Network. Each evaluation brief is embedded into this larger evaluation report.

The first brief focuses on the Regional Coordinators. The Regional Coordinators are at the origin of the Theory of Action, and they begin the process by planning the Fellows' convenings, coordinating with the Fellows Advisory Committee and developing resources for the PLEs and state-wide Fellows' Network. Regional Coordinators across all four content areas engaged in focus groups to share their experiences, insights, and recommendations.

The second brief examines how a seven-Fellow team from the Kent School District (KSD) collaborated to accomplish district-wide change (beginning on page 16). The team orchestrated the transition from a conventional science curriculum to the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). The team members were chosen based on their motivation, drive, and commitment to high-quality work. Additionally, their positions serve as access points to share information that could effect systems change in science instruction throughout kindergarten (K)-12 classrooms. This highly-effective team comprised district-level instruction and coordinator staff, building

administrators, a building coach, and classroom teachers. The brief provides a roadmap for other districts looking to make impactful, systems-wide changes using a multi-Fellow team.

The third brief examines Fellows who serve students with learning disabilities (beginning on page 23). Out of 1,100 Fellows statewide, 33 work in special education (SPED) serving students with disabilities. Most of the Fellows (61%) who work with students with disabilities teach early learning, 21% teach English Language Arts (ELA), and 18% teach math. Federal legislation requires SPED teachers to collaborate with GenEd teachers to best meet the needs of their students. This brief provides a better understanding of how the Fellows' Network assists SPED teachers to carry out their responsibilities and grow through their professional learning journeys.

The fourth brief examines a K-6 mathematics Fellow (beginning on page 32). The Fellow supports approximately 90 math and science teachers and instructional facilitators across five elementary schools. She tells the story of teachers' initial resistance to shifting their teaching to the mathematical mindset practices she learned through PLEs. The mathematical mindset values students' errors. Eventually, teachers agreed that their students strengthened their neurological pathways through making and recognizing errors. The Fellow used two years of longitudinal data to show increases in students' math scores as teachers implemented mathematical mindset activities in their classroom.

Following the four briefs included in the next section, this report discusses findings from the focus groups regarding the Fellows' convenings (beginning on page 42). These findings relate to the overall evaluation questions and are grouped into four overarching topics from the evaluation plan and Theory of Action—leadership, relationship, growth, and racial equity. These findings also include information from a separate focus group KAI held with Early Learning Fellows. This focus group explored how the Fellows' Network helped them prepare Washington State's youngest children for success in school (beginning on page 45). Their collaborative work during the Fellows' convenings contributed to the alignment of pre-K through third-grade content.

Evaluation Briefs from the 2018-2019 School Year

This section includes the four evaluation briefs from the 2018-2019 school year for the Regional Coordinators, the KSD multi-Fellow team, SPED teachers, and a math Fellow.

Regional Coordinator Evaluation Brief

Executive Summary

Each Educational Service District (ESD) has three Regional Coordinators—one for each content area including math, science, and English Language Arts (ELA). Some ESDs also have staff who provide early childhood education and assistance that supports WaKIDS, Early Learning Fellows,

and other Pre-K–third-grade initiatives.³ Regional Coordinators are masters at navigating the complexities of education leadership. They are responsible for implementing a myriad of ever-changing and evolving state initiatives as OSPI and the legislature respond to Washington State students’ education needs. In particular, this study focused on Regional Coordinators’ valuable contribution to increasing and expanding the knowledge, skills, and abilities of teachers and education leaders within the Fellows’ Network. To conduct this study, Puget Sound Education Service District (PSESD) contracted with KAI to conduct focus groups with Regional Coordinators from each of the four content areas.

The first major theme in the Regional Coordinators’ work is the importance of building and maintaining strong relationships with the school districts and education partners. Regional Coordinators create a trusting learning environment and foster a sense of belonging to an expansive professional learning community.

As a second major theme, Regional Coordinators are engaged in the design and implementation of the Fellows’ Network, a highly successful professional learning program convened by OSPI and AESD. Four essential elements emerged about their work within the Fellows’ Network. First, Regional Coordinators collaborate with the Fellows Advisory Committee to strategically design and implement the program. Implementation includes helping write the curriculum for Fellows’ Network meetings across the state. The curriculum has common statewide and regional features designed to meet the needs of local schools. Second, Regional Coordinators weave a common thread of racial equity throughout all of the Fellows’ Network meetings. Conducting research and turning to their professional organizations, Regional Coordinators meticulously search for resources to teach Fellows how to lead and teach with equity in mind.

A third major theme of Regional Coordinators’ work in the Fellows’ Network is their intentional focus on cultivating personal connections through feedback. They promote a culture of open feedback through carefully designed surveys to solicit formative input. They encourage Fellows to voice their opinions and critically examine the feasibility of practicing the ideas they learn in the Fellows’ convenings. Regional Coordinators demonstrate a growth mindset as they strive to improve the program and their own practices. Lastly, Regional Coordinators engage in the cycle of inquiry and documentation of outcomes from the program. In 2018-19, a group of Fellows completed the Fellows’ Action Plan and data collection on the PDforUs online platform. Regional Coordinators use this data to monitor outcomes, provide assistance to Fellows, observe Fellows’ growth, and reflect on ways to improve.

Overall, racial equity is at the center of all of the Regional Coordinators’ work. This fourth theme pervades across all of the professional learning offered in math, science, early learning, and ELA content and pedagogy. Regional Coordinators model how to lead with equity,

³ Early Learning Regional Coordinators were not funded in the 2018 legislative session. However, ESD staff with early learning expertise may operate similarly to a Regional Coordinator offering services and supporting Early Learning Fellows.

bolstering the Fellows' confidence to engage in conversations with their peers and district leaders about equitable education.

Many Regional Coordinators bring expertise in adult learning and foster networking and collaboration among the Fellows throughout the year. Informal email, Canvas pages, and Schoology are a few ways that Regional Coordinators offer Fellows so they can share their experiences with implementing the new strategies they learned in the Fellows' convenings.

In sum, Regional Coordinators play a key role with OPSI and ESD leadership to develop and implement a successful Fellows' Network. They invite Fellows' administrators to participate and have found that their participation accelerates progress made toward Action Plan goals. Always engaged, Regional Coordinators continue to collect qualitative and quantitative data that demonstrates longitudinal evidence of program effectiveness.

Introduction

Across the content areas and ESDs, Regional Coordinators are responsible for delivering timely, relevant, and effective professional learning. Regional Coordinators play a key role in the delivery of professional learning to educators, district administrators, and school leaders within the Washington State Fellows' Network. To learn more about this key role, a sample of nine Regional Coordinators participated in a 60-minute focus group or interview (three science Regional Coordinators, three math Regional Coordinators, one ELA Regional Coordinator, and two early learning Regional Coordinators). Using Dedoose software, KAI coded the transcripts and performed a qualitative narrative analysis. Themes that emerged in the analysis are discussed throughout this study.

The Fellows' Network aims to build the capacity of teacher leaders and administrators to improve student academic and non-academic outcomes. Fellows commit to a three-year program, facilitated by Regional Coordinators, that is designed to increase their leadership capacity and enhance their content knowledge, skills, and abilities. In tandem with the Fellows Advisory Committee, Regional Coordinators across Washington State operate as a collaborative that prioritizes the goals and develops the curriculum and content agenda for the Fellows' convenings. The Regional Coordinators from the nine ESDs assemble by content area to collaborate on planning the content, focus, and materials for the four Fellows' convenings each year. One Regional Coordinator explained, *"Our really big piece of shared work is thinking about what this year's Fellows are doing, what's the curriculum for the Fellows, what's going to be in the [Convening]. We plan most of the meeting together."*

Actively seeking research-based teaching methods, Regional Coordinators look to their professional organizations, such as the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, the National Council of Teachers of English, the National Science Teachers Association, and the National Association for the Education of Young Children, to inform the Fellows' Convening curricula. Simultaneously, Regional Coordinators are self-motivated to learn about new practices and research to share and discuss as a group. They also use book studies to delve deep into material they could potentially use to teach the Fellows content and pedagogy.

Regional Coordinators choose resources that address equity, such as this year's study of the book, *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain* by Zaretta Hammond. (See Figure 1.)

Building Strong Relationships

Each Regional Coordinator conducts independent work to meet the needs of the teachers and school districts in their ESD region. This work takes the form of onsite school visits, facilitating professional learning classes, and developing education resources. Overtime, their efforts result in strong relationships with professional learning participants and Fellows.

Regional Coordinators used the terms *collegial*, *supportive*, *partnership*, and *trusting* to describe their relationship with their Fellows and staff who frequently attend professional learning sessions. A Regional Coordinator said, "I just realized it's like a family. I hate to sound sappy, but everyone comes to the ESD and it's, 'Oh my gosh, welcome back,' and it's like a homecoming and there's hugs. These are the teacher leaders that come to everything and we go to other sessions together as well. It's just a warm place of learning." Another Regional Coordinator added, "There is just an energy in the room that is so wonderful that it's hard to describe." Regional Coordinators walk beside educators, administrators, and district leaders in their journey and go the extra mile to build strong and meaningful professional relationships. A Regional Coordinator said:

Rapport means everything to me ... so beyond just what we're doing in the convening, how's life back in your classroom? What can I do to help? Can I come out for a visit? It's not about an evaluative visit. It's just simply just to be there as like a partner in the experience. Over time you build this kind of a collaborative and collegial relationship rather than "I'm an instructor and you're a learner" relationship.

The Regional Coordinators worked with Fellows and non-Fellows to build a sense of belonging to a learning community. Their collaboration and knowledge sharing have established a trusting, supportive network that effectively builds participants' capacity to lead. A Regional Coordinator said:

I love all the different types of professional developments that I do, so I can't ever say that a certain one is my favorite, but the reason that I love Fellows is really about the leadership and the teacher capacity. We have teachers that are coming in that are just beginning to feel comfortable to talk with their peers and to know

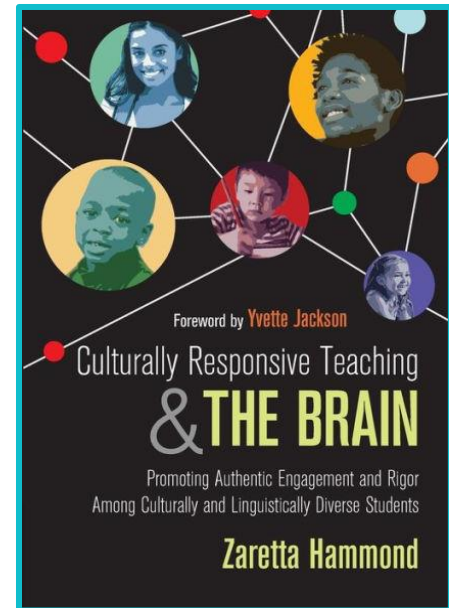


Figure 1. Cover of *Culturally Responsive Teaching & The Brain* by Zaretta Hammond

and have confidence and they have great ideas and they know some strategies that they can share with other people.

Developing Education Leaders across Washington State

The Regional Coordinators are engaged in the development and implementation of the Fellows' Network. Regional Coordinators talked extensively about the Fellows' Network and shared the following four key ways they are involved.

COLLABORATING WITH EDUCATION LEADERS IN THE FELLOWS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Under the first element in the Fellows' Network, Regional Coordinators collaborate with state education stakeholders in the Fellows Advisory Committee. The committee is composed of OSPI and ESD leadership who provide strategic direction to optimize the program for participants' growth, positive impacts at the system and school levels, and program sustainability. Regional Coordinators work with designated OSPI and ESD assistant superintendents to effectively implement the direction provided. For example, in 2017-18, the Fellows Advisory Committee decided to use the Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM)⁴ for the state-wide leadership strand, as it is a three-year cycle that fits well with the three-year program. (See Figure 2.) A Regional Coordinator shared that the CBAM leadership strand *"has gone really well this year."*

BRINGING EQUITY TO STUDENT LEARNING

Under the second element in the Fellow's Network, Regional Coordinators emphasize equitable opportunities and accessibility. The Regional Coordinators weave together a common thread about equity in student learning across school systems, including remote rural schools, and accessibility, such as for students with special needs, diverse cultures, etc., throughout the four Fellows' convenings. All of the Regional Coordinators mentioned the importance of equity and cited research on how scholars across the

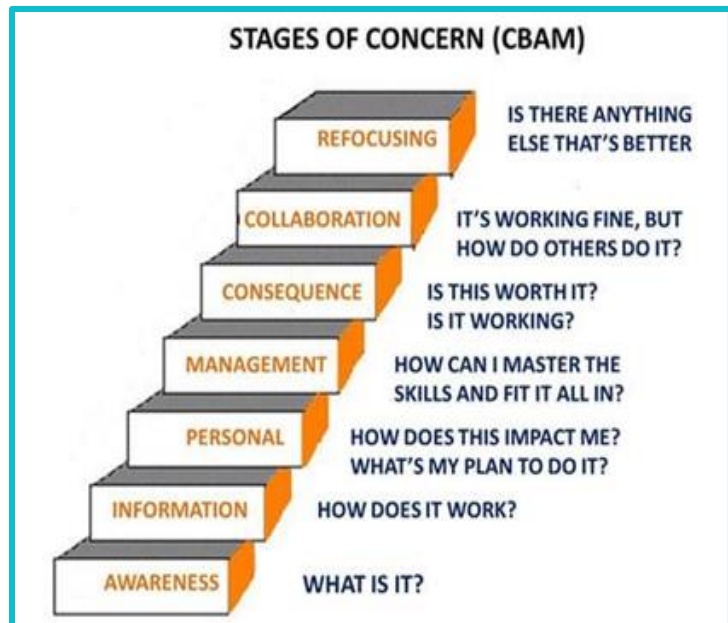


Figure 2. The CBAM model

⁴ Hord, S. (2014). Taking Charge of Change. Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, 2. <https://www.air.org/sites/default/files/downloads/report/taking-charge-of-change-2014.pdf>

country recognize the need to include discussions of race and social justice in education leadership programs.^{5, 6}

There are several layers of conversation about equity in the Fellows' Program. First, equity appears in the conversations about leadership. Across all content areas, Regional Coordinators facilitate discussions about ways to lead with equity. They also cover tactics and strategies to tackle discriminatory practices. Within each content strand, they study ways to increase equitable access to academic content and assessment. Lastly, they consider the unique context of each ESD's communities and challenge Fellows to transform any student marginalization.

CULTIVATING CONNECTIONS

Under the third element in the Fellow's Network, Regional Coordinators cultivate feedback and input from the Fellows. This communication fosters connections between themselves and their Fellows' learning experiences. This culture demonstrates a growth mindset, as the Regional Coordinators strive to improve their own professional practices.

Regional Coordinators cultivate connections by promoting a culture of open feedback. They encourage Fellows to voice their opinions and critically examine the feasibility of practicing the ideas they learn in the Fellows' Network meetings. When Fellows reconvene, Regional Coordinators facilitate guided reflection periods and promote feedback about their strategies to implement the NGSS, *Routines for Reasoning* in math, differentiated instruction in ELA, and social/emotional management in early learning.

Regional Coordinators also carefully designed formal surveys to cultivate connections and solicit input. A Regional Coordinator said, *"I think that surveys are a big part crosstalk."* The crosstalk provides formative information to improve the program. A Regional Coordinator explained, *"Going through the PDforUs surveys, we always provide the survey at the end of all our convenings. [Response rate] is always 90% or higher ... we [Regional Coordinators] always make it a point to go in after the fact and look through their responses to see what went well and what can be improved."*

COMMUNICATING THE CYCLE OF INQUIRY AND DOCUMENTING OUTCOMES

The last essential element in the Fellows' program is the Regional Coordinators' communication regarding the cycle of inquiry and documenting outcomes. Through this effort, the Regional Coordinators help their Fellows complete Action Plans, which include personal goals. (See Figure 4.) Fellows work collaboratively with their district leadership to outline how the Fellow's leadership will support the implementation of their personal goals, such as the adoption of the Common Core State Standards, Early Learning Guidelines, or participation in leadership opportunities. Fellows use their Action Plans in slightly different ways across the content areas; however, these documents provide a universal way to capture Fellows' professional growth as

⁵ Furman, G. (2012). Social justice leadership as praxis: Developing capacities through preparation programs. *Educational Administrative Quarterly*, 48, pp. 191–229. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X11427394>

⁶ López, G. R. (2003). The (Racially Neutral) Politics of education: A critical race theory perspective. *Educational Administrative Quarterly*, 39(1), pp. 68–94. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X02239761>

ideas are tried, modified, adopted, or rejected. Action Plans document and communicate the cycle of inquiry. A Regional Coordinator explained:

The Action Plans are a source of data ... specifically how their Action Plan changes and evolves over the course of one, two, or three years. A lot of my Fellows start the year and their Action Plan thinking changes based largely on or at least based in part on the work that we're doing as a group and also what they're learning from each other.

The Regional Coordinators can efficiently access data through the PDforUs platform and approximately 10% are piloting the online plan in 2018-19. (See Figure 3.) A Regional Coordinator said, *"I'm looking forward to online Action Plan going live for all Fellows. I think I would be able to monitor and offer assistance in a more nimble way."*



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February Professional Development


AESD Professional Learning English Language Arts Survey

★ Required field

★ 1. Grade level(s) currently teaching/current role (please check all that apply)


<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-K	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
<input type="checkbox"/> K	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 9
<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 10
<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 11
<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 12
<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> College or University
<input type="checkbox"/> 6	

Figure 3. A screen capture of the PDforUs database used by Regional Coordinators to solicit Fellows' input



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Some ESDs, One Network,
Learning, Growing, Achieving and Connecting



Ongoing Reflections & Plans - Section B

As part of ongoing reflection and planning, complete Section B, in collaboration with the principal and/or district administrator, after each Fellows convening. Keep an ongoing, dated log that addresses the following:

Action Items/Strategies <small>What is are your next action items for your school/district? What are the steps you will take to implement this element?</small>	Timeline <small>When will you complete each action item/ strategies?</small>	Responsibilities <small>Who will be responsible for completing this element? The Fellow? Others?</small>	Equity <small>In what ways might this action item support all educators (e.g. special education, ELL, highly capable)?</small>	Resources <small>May include teacher release time, meeting space, differentiated materials for all educators and their focus, facilitation materials, etc.</small>	How Will We Monitor and Evaluate? <small>What will be the evidence of impact of the Fellows' work? What will you see teachers and students doing differently?</small>

Figure 4. A Fellows' action plan template facilitates communication between Fellows, Regional Coordinators and administrators

Facilitating Continued Networking between Fellows

Many Regional Coordinators bring expertise in adult learning and foster networking and collaboration among the Fellows. They know the value of continued networking after the professional learning sessions and Fellows' convenings. Regional Coordinators facilitate ongoing connections with their Fellows through informal emails. Some Regional Coordinators are experimenting with different ways to keep Fellows connected to continue fostering collaboration. For example, one Regional Coordinator is experimenting with the Canvas platform where Fellows can share what they learned from implementing new strategies and materials discussed during the convening. She explained:

I have created Canvas pages for my Fellows and a Canvas page for my district leaders. The Fellows' [pages] are open to anybody who is or has been a Fellow. It has discussion groups, and they can pull the material from Fellows' meetings and interact with it. The district leader [pages] are open to anybody who has asked and is a district leader in our region or close by. There are also materials and discussion groups and ongoing work there.

Another Regional Coordinator has had success with Schoology and is considering using it with the Fellows. (See Figure 5.) Schoology is a learning management system for K-12 schools that allows users to create, manage, and share content and resources. She explained:

We use Schoology for one of our other coordinator groups. [It is] just like Canvas, but it offers opportunity for dialogue. You can still house your resources. We house our materials from the meeting into that and then it has a chat section. If there's any after-conversation, you can use that.

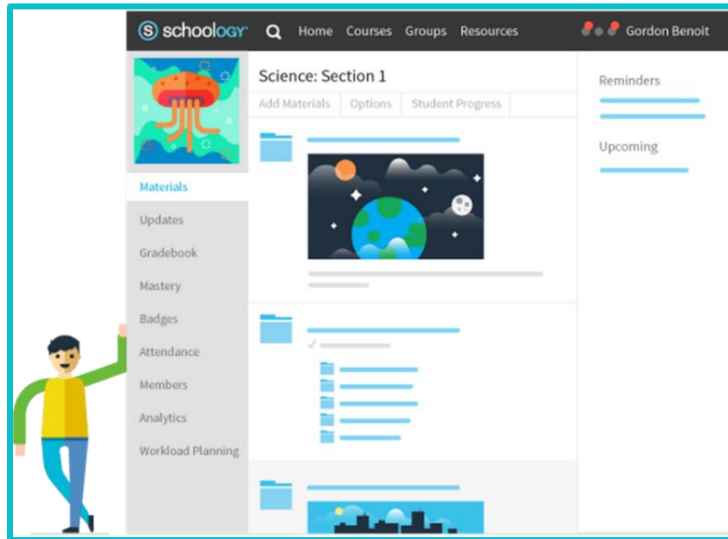


Figure 5. Schoology is a learning management system that some Regional Coordinators use to facilitate Fellows' discussion.

Engaging Fellows' Administrators

Regional Coordinators facilitate the engagement of Fellows' principals and assistant principals in the buildings where they work to promote greater awareness of their Fellows' expanding capabilities. Some Regional Coordinators initiate communication with congratulatory welcome messages to the Fellow and their administrator in the beginning of the program. Currently, they invite administrators to the Fellows' orientation each year and encourage them to attend the Fellows' convenings. This method is very effective because a Fellow and their administrator can collaborate on the Action Plan. A Regional Coordinator explained, "[This method has] been really useful. Districts that have their administrator [at the convening] actually make progress on their plans in terms of doing the actions they planned." All of the Regional Coordinators felt that even attending two hours of the meeting is extremely beneficial to administrators. They routinely encourage frequent, open dialogue between the Fellow and their administrator to share relevant content, materials, and activities for their school and to share any concerns and questions.

Regional Coordinator Evaluation Conclusion

Regional Coordinators collaborated with education leaders at OSPI and the ESDs to implement a successful Fellows' Network across all content areas. Many Regional Coordinators referenced longitudinal data on Fellows' growth and commented that the transformation from classroom teacher to education leader is observable. A Regional Coordinator said, *"A fair amount of Fellows move onto [being a] Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA) or [take on] administrator roles. Some become tutor instructors. That's a data point for me."* Another Regional Coordinator commented, *"I look at ... people that no longer participate in [the] Fellows [Program] that used to [participate] and they've moved on to other leadership positions. They might [have become a] principal [or] they might [have taken] on different roles."* Effects of teacher leaders are also evident at the building level. A Regional Coordinator said, *"I know that [one Fellow] ... totally changed their [building's] science fair and how they ran it and how they did science STEM Night. That ripple effect went to all of the other teachers and students that she was working with there. So I think that that was really powerful."*

By dedicating their expertise to the Fellows' Network, Regional Coordinators have supported a growing group of educators who are well positioned to lead Washington State to improved outcomes for all students. One Regional Coordinator shared:

I would just finally ... say that [a] critical mass of expertise [has been developed] that is so needed in the classroom and ... leadership ... so that we don't just have little pockets of excellence for teachers here ... but we're developing a critical mass where the whole system is beginning to shift, which is something we rarely accomplish in education ... it's a big enough piece of a system that the system is beginning to change.

Kent School District Evaluation Brief

The Strategic Use of a Multi-Fellow Team to Achieve District Goals

In 2016-17, Kent School District (KSD) embarked on the goal of implementing the NGSS⁷ throughout all buildings and across all grade levels. The implementation strategy included building a multi-Fellow district team of individuals from key access points who could serve as a conduit of information. Each Fellow was responsible for communicating the holistic vision within his or her sphere of influence, collaborating with peers, and providing the support needed to successfully change their previous science culture to align with NGSS. This brief tells the story of how KSD strategically used Fellows to undertake this effort. It also provides a roadmap for other districts looking to make impactful, system-wide changes using a multi-Fellow team model.

⁷ Next Generation Science Standards: <https://www.nextgenscience.org/>

A TEAM ADVANTAGE – PLANNING PHASE

KSD is comprised of 28 elementary schools, 6 middle schools, 4 high schools, 3 academies, and 1 early learning center that serves a total of 25,416 students. Approximately one-third of the students are White, 22% are Hispanic/Latino, 19% are Asian, 12% are Black/African American, 10% are 2 or more races, 3% are Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and less than 1% are American Indian/Alaska Native.

Using seven strategically placed Fellows, KSD successfully transitioned to NGSS and now has a team of NGSS expert educators and support staff. The KSD Fellows team represent a range of roles, including district education leaders, building administration, and classroom educators. The multi-Fellow team included the District STEM Coordinator, K-12 STEM Specialist, and the Elementary Science Specialist; one middle school, one high school, and one elementary school teacher; and the high school principal.

Regular Collaboration to Stay on Track

The team worked together at the four 2018-19 Science Fellows’ convenings and met at least monthly to discuss progress made on the roll out, tackle questions from the field, reflect, and plan the next steps. A team member shared, “[We] had a commitment to meet regularly ... even if it was just informal dialogue where we continually revisit these topics. [We didn’t] just [meet] once or twice a year where we were throwing out ideas and waiting to solve them until next time.” The team heard and respected each members’ perspective, which they used to adapt and modify the approach as needed.

Planning – From Implementation through the Long-term

The initial meetings focused on planning and preparing a structure to implement NGSS standards, content, and supporting materials. Discussions included a long-term K-12 planning approach to help elementary teachers prepare students for middle and high school science. The team built consensus around how to introduce the new concepts and integrate them into the current practice. Employing a diverse team provided a tremendous advantage. A Fellow explained:

Having a mixture of teachers, administrators, and district personnel ... made [the NGSS rollout] so much stronger [because] we all had our own spirit and influence. And we knew that we were an integral part of this team, that we all had a purpose, and we all had a reason for wanting to succeed. I don’t think you’d get that if you were just one individual.

The Value of Multiple Perspectives

Each Fellow’s knowledge was essential to the collective group. School-level Fellows spoke about the importance of the district-level perspectives. The district-level Fellow provided a comprehensive view of district priorities and directives, which was essential in arranging the

team's work. The district-level Fellow also reported progress made and hurdles to school leadership, building administrators, and other district personnel. A team member explained:

If this was run, let's say, from a group of teachers in the classroom solely as a team, without having a district person involved, too, I think it might be difficult ... Just having people that had a clear vision of what the district's goals were [was important] so that we could align [our work with them]... Also [it was important] having different levels of administrators that can actually make some of those changes that, as a classroom teacher, we wouldn't be able to do.

Additionally, district-level KSD team Fellows spoke about the importance of the teachers' perspectives, as one Fellow explained:

If it had just been me, we could've thought that ideas were good, but we actually had teachers that we could ask, 'Is this reasonable? Is this going to work? Can you try this and give us feedback?' And if it's not going to work, you ditch it! You don't keep doing something that's not going to work... It's just nice to have a group of people to talk to, as we're trying to implement change, to bounce ideas off, but then also to think about how a particular change would look in an elementary classroom or a high school classroom, and in the middle school level.

A TEAM ADVANTAGE — IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

The next step was to implement all that they had learned from their ESD Regional Science Coordinator and their peers in the Fellows' convenings. The ESD Regional Science Coordinator had dedicated time in the Fellows' convenings to explain the new science standards. Fellows left the Fellows' convenings with an understanding of key NGSS components, including:

- Argumentation, or the need to make arguments based on evidence;
- The implications of literacy and mathematics to instruction; and
- Cross-cutting concepts that illustrate science phenomena and dilemmas, identify students' science misconceptions, and lead students to "ah-ha" moments for a better understanding of engineering and science.

The Regional Coordinator also covered topics such as formative assessments, so Fellows could teach others how to assess students' understanding.

An Iterative Process to Test and Retest

During implementation, the KSD Fellow team used an iterative design process to create a safe space to explore ideas, learn, and build capacity to transition the district to NGSS. (See Figure 6.⁸)

⁸ Design Thinking Process. Graphic by d.school Hasso Plattner Institute of Design. Stanford University. 2004. Retrieved from <https://dschool.stanford.edu/>

The process included the following steps.

- **Empathize** – The KSD Fellows empathized with each other when sharing their viewpoints as administrators, teachers, and specialists.
- **Define** – They defined and clarified priorities for each grade and identified unique NGSS transition challenges and constraints for students, teachers, administrators, and district-level specialists.
- **Ideate** – They discussed and formed ideas as a group.
- **Prototype** – They proposed implementation plans for each grade level and created necessary supporting resources.
- **Test** – They worked throughout the district to implement their ideas and transition the teachers to the new science standards.



Figure 6. Cycle of NGSS Implementation Phases

Throughout this process, the KSD Fellows repeated these steps, meeting to discuss what worked and what did not work well. They asked, “What could be better? What could be revised?” The team used their new insights into teachers’ learning processes to create innovative ways to bring NGSS-based learning into the classroom.

Action Plans – Different Pieces of the Same Puzzle

Action plans were pivotal in completing the rollout of the NGSS. The KSD Fellow team constructed their Action Plans together and described their tasks and outcomes within their sphere of influence. (See Figure 7.) They tightly aligned their plans to the district's goals. In the focus groups, Fellows expressed how these plans bolstered their confidence to accomplish the work. One Fellow said:

I felt much more confident because we all had an Action Plan. We wrote [our tasks] down and worked for three years [to] implement it. We had a team, and that's safety in numbers, knowing that someone else was trying to do the same thing.

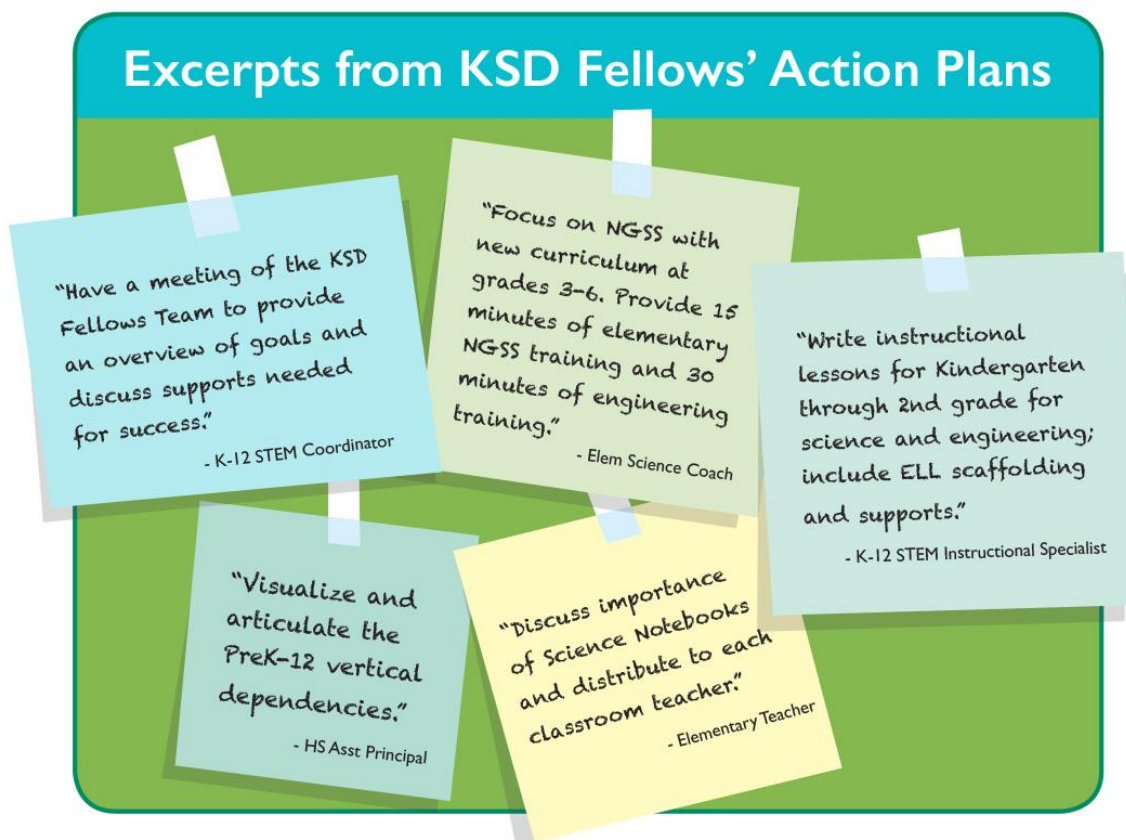


Figure 7. Excerpts from KSD Fellows' Action Plans

The team delivered high quality NGSS training in the form of workshops, classroom coaching, and mentoring. For example, they taught elementary teachers how to use high impact strategies for teaching science to their elementary students when time is limited. They modeled what exemplary science teaching looks like and ways to foster different types of science conversation in the classroom, such as argumentation. The Fellows developed the lessons, tools, and processes to three dimensions in the NGSS framework: Disciplinary core ideas (core content), science and engineering practices (eight specific practices that students do), and cross-cutting concepts (ideas that extend across all science and engineering domains).

Tailored Professional Development

The KSD Fellows team tailored their professional development to specific groups of individuals. For example, prior to 2013, elementary school teachers were not required to teach science. a Fellow shared, *“For many years, there was not a required number of science [teaching] minutes.”* The adoption of the NGSS by Washington State marked the first time that elementary school teachers were required to dedicate 200 minutes to teaching science. *“We often called seventh grade ‘middle school science kindergarten’ because [the students] are ... mostly lacking science experiences, that we’re just laying the ground layer in that first year of middle school.”*

Elementary School

Building elementary school teachers’ knowledge and confidence to teach and assess science learning required many academic and emotional supports. The Fellows team was prepared to meet these needs due to the professional development provided in their Fellows’ convenings. As a result of working together as a team, Fellows could answer elementary teachers’ questions about why a particular topic was important to teach. One team member said he explains to his elementary school peers that *“this is the feedback I’ve gotten from [the middle and high school] teachers. This is why it is important we [teach] this [topic] here at the elementary level.”*

Secondary School

At the secondary level, the team provided professional development to teach teachers how to bring NGSS into their classroom. For example, NGSS requires teachers to design an investigation for their students that includes collecting data, interpreting data, and arguing what they learned from their evidence. Fellows at the secondary level led by example and provided teachers with professional development on project-based activities.

School Administration

The team also conducted specific sessions for building principals and administrators on NGSS implementation and implications to science teaching. As a result, building principals gained a greater appreciation for the enormity of the transition and approved substitute teachers while the Fellows team travelled to different district buildings to deliver professional development.

Reaching a Large Audience Overall

As a result, NGSS training reached a very large audience in the district. Approximately 310 teachers completed the professional development class, called NGSS 101, which built a strong foundation of teacher knowledge. A team member shared, *“We weren’t able to capture all 41 sites, but we could at least get a bit of a range. So, I think that’s really important too because ... what one building needs may not be what another building needs even in the same district.”* Another Fellow explained the advantages of having ample support to gain momentum and credibility to influence perceptions of the value added by NGSS:

[The professional development] was across different buildings within the district [and] the principals talked to each other, [teachers] talked to each other... [When] more than one person hears [that] and says, ‘Oh, the people who get this training and [NGSS] background really do come back with some skills that we are able to use,’ I think that makes a huge difference.

Fellows outside of KSD also supported the transition to the new standards. The Fellows' Network expanded access to other districts that were learning how to best apply the new ideas in the classroom. The deep, trusting professional relationships developed through the Fellows' Network served as an asset for these district-, building-, and classroom-level changes to improve science education. A district-level Fellow explained:

Just having those connections with people I've met and worked with [at the Fellows' convenings] ... I feel like I can contact them, not only within our group, but [also within] the bigger group throughout the region. And when I have a concern, or something I'm working on, or something I can learn about, I contact those people, and they get right back and have become real collaborators who are very, very willing to share. So, I think that makes a huge difference.

SCIENCE FELLOWS' REFLECTIONS

Upon reflection, the KSD Fellows team strongly felt that progress toward the districts' goals would have gone differently without the team approach to NGSS implementation. A KSD Fellows team member shared, *"It would be impossible, I think. People can't affect change usually by themselves without conversation with others, especially vertically."* They unanimously agreed that working within a team of Fellows allowed them to optimize the implementation of NGSS throughout their district and better prepare students to move to the next grade level with strong foundational science knowledge. They felt that every Fellow was critical to successfully carrying out the district's NGSS directives.

Focus group participants expressed they felt more accountability when working in a team. One Fellow said, *"When you know that you're sort of accountable to this school that you are working with, it just changes your motivation and drive to succeed."* A second Fellow shared, *"I think that the team gave me greater purpose and motivation because, if I knew that whatever I'm doing could have an effect positively for those teachers, then I'm going to work much harder."* The team also agreed that the teachers throughout the district felt more accountable to each other for vertical and horizontal coherence, as a team member shared:

I think [our KSD Fellows team] helped to maybe make the level of accountability feel a little more real for my colleagues, who [thought], 'It's out of sight, out of mind, because there's already so much to try to deal with' ... [But our team approach] helped bring home that 'Oh, this is important, too.'

The team approach mitigated staff turnover and personnel changes, as the effort continued to maintain momentum even through challenges. *"We did end up in a situation where half of the team ended up leaving ... So, I think that's a big reason for [using multiple Fellows] because you're always going to have turnover. [With one Fellow], if they leave and they're the only one, you've lost all of that within the district."*

The NGSS implementation was a slow and intentional process, particularly in elementary schools, to increase teachers' confidence who do not have science backgrounds. A Fellow

shared, “I’m in my fourth year at Kent now, and I’m really, finally, seeing huge changes, huge changes in elementary science.”

Realizing that the work needs to be sustained, the Fellows feel encouraged by the assistance Emeritus Fellows can provide to continue the work. The Fellows shared that they look forward to collaborating with the Emeritus Fellows to build a stronger science education for all students. A Fellow shared:

There is a sustainability model built in because the Emeritus Fellows are now going to be called upon to help with the training or help with doing WSTA [the Washington Science Teachers Association conference] ... and just being called on to continue using their leadership skills in other capacities... What a great way to show sustainability in a program.

Special Education Evaluation Brief

Executive Summary

Convened by the OSPI and the Association of Educational Service Districts (AESD), the Washington State Fellows’ Network is a group of instructional leaders who support district and community implementation of state learning standards in mathematics, ELA, science, and the Early Learning Guidelines.⁹ Out of the 1,100 Fellows statewide, 33 work in SPED serving students with disabilities. Most (61%) of the SPED teachers in the Fellows’ Network teach early learning, 18% teach math, and 21% teach ELA.

To better understand how the Fellows’ Network assists SPED teachers, PSESD, OSPI, and AESD contracted with KAI to conduct a focused study as part of the statewide evaluation work. The SPED teachers involved in this study shared their experiences and opinions on a wide range of topics through interviews and focus groups. They shared that they joined the Fellows’ Network: (1) to provide high quality, equitable, and accessible education to prepare their students for the future; (2) to build an expanded understanding of system organization and change management strategies; and (3) to reduce their isolation and receive support in their profession.

Two overarching professional learning goals emerged. SPED teachers wanted to better understand state content standards for math, science, and ELA. They felt that this knowledge would lead to more effective collaboration with GenEd teachers to make content more accessible for students with disabilities. SPED teachers also wanted to learn how to build strong, trusting relationships with students’ families. They found value in learning how to work with parents to reinforce skills taught in the classroom, leading to a reduction in challenging behaviors at home and school.

⁹ Visit <http://k12.wa.us/CurriculumInstruct/Fellows.aspx> to learn more about the Fellows’ Network.

The Fellows appreciated the requirement to complete an Action Plan with their administrator to proactively approach equity in student achievement. Their considerations of equity began with introspection of their own personal assumptions and biases. Then, they looked beyond academics to include equity in a student's ability to perform academic and physical tasks, such as opening Ziplock bags during lunch. They also included SPED students' families, who may also be English learners, in equity. As a result of participating in the Fellows' Network, they said they (1) are more confident leading discussions on equity, (2) are more aware of how systems work together to meet student and families' needs, and (3) have a reinforced understanding of the importance of family engagement.

The focus group participants said the Fellows' Network helped them learn how to mitigate GenEd teachers' apprehension when working with students with disabilities. They noted improved collaboration with GenEd teachers, leading to better understanding how to make math and science content more accessible for students with disabilities. However, they have ongoing challenges with GenEd teachers' lower expectations of students with disabilities, little understanding of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and fear of doing the wrong thing for these students.

Several recommendations emerged from the study to expand the knowledge and abilities of all Fellows to improve experiences for students with disabilities. One recommendation is to provide opportunities for all Fellows to learn more about SPED. Another recommendation is to actively recruit SPED teachers from the four content areas into the Fellows' Network.

Introduction

This study began by interviewing two SPED subject matter experts (SMEs). The SMEs included Glenna Gallo, Assistant Superintendent of SPED at OSPI, and Erin Stewart, Co-Director of SPED Services at PSESD. The SMEs provided guidance and expertise regarding prominent issues and challenges in the SPED discipline. This information informed the development of the focus group and interview protocol used with a sample of SPED teachers in the Fellows' Network.

Using the protocol, KAI conducted focus groups with four SPED teachers in the Fellows' Network. Three of the Fellows teach early learning and one teaches ELA and math. One early learning Fellow teaches pre-K students (ages three to five) with disabilities, most of whom have individualized education programs and experience delays in the areas of adaptive, social, language, fine and gross motor skills, and/or cognition. The second early learning Fellow teaches in a specialized program for students with autism. The third early learning Fellow teaches in a classroom dedicated to high school students with disabilities. Lastly, the Fellow that teaches ELA and math works with 13 high school students in a classroom dedicated to students with disabilities. Many of these high school students read and write at a third-grade level thus requiring collaboration with the GenEd science teachers to make their content accessible.

This brief first highlights why the four teachers felt motivated to participate in the Fellows' Network and their personal learning goals. Next, the brief reviews the Action Plan and other

professional learning components. The brief shares key themes around their perspectives of leading with equity and collaborating with GenEd teachers. Lastly, based on the interviews and focus groups, the brief provides recommendations to enhance state-level efforts to support students with disabilities.

Reasons for Participating in the Fellows' Network

All of the interviewees shared similar motivations for why they became Fellows. They wanted to advocate on behalf of their students for systems change and to improve their teaching and learning skills with research-based practices. These Fellows view themselves as change agents working to improve the quality of SPED. They focus strongly on achieving equity for their students to better prepare them for transitions, such as graduating from pre-K or middle school. Fellows are eager to learn about the content standards above their students' current grade-level achievement. This knowledge assists them in collaborating with GenEd teachers to scaffold instruction and better prepare students for successful transitions.

Participants' experiences reflected diverse content areas, grade levels, class sizes, and learning abilities. They joined the Fellows to ensure they are providing a high quality, equitable, and accessible education that prepares their students for the future. One Fellow shared, *"I noticed that there was a big need in our school for equity in science and meeting the needs of all students in science and making sure that everybody has access to it regardless of cognitive ability, or home life, or ability to understand science, or background."*

The SPED teachers were excited to join a statewide community of practitioners that includes GenEd teachers. They appreciated that the community encouraged them to share their SPED knowledge and experience. These Fellows expressed how their understanding of system organization and change management strategies deepened through the Fellows' Network. One Fellow shared:

I was really excited about the opportunity for new ideas and new learnings, and also the rich discussions that we've been having with the other teachers that are a part of our group. And then learning about change within a large system with colleagues and improving my own craft and utilizing best practices.

Similarly, participants described how the Fellows' convenings reflect diversity in geography, school type (public and private), student ethnicity, and more. They said this diversity adds to their professional learning. One Fellow shared:

I like that Washington is such a diverse state, and there [are] teachers that are in the Fellowship that are [teaching in]... public schools, rural areas, suburban areas. And I like that I get to learn from them. I do like to give my information, coming from special education, because as far as I believe, I'm the only early childhood special education at least in the cohort that I'm in.

Participants shared that the Fellows' Network reduces feelings of isolation that SPED teachers sometimes experience due to their limited numbers. It provides professional support and a safe-space for reflection. It also keeps them informed about state- and national-level systems change issues, enabling them to join a more significant movement to support diverse learners with varying skills and needed supports.

Fellows' Personal Learning Goals

The Fellows shared their personal learning goals are to increase their content knowledge, better understand learning standards, and learn how to implement the standards. They also wanted more strategies to engage students' families in their academic, social, and emotional learning. Additionally, they emphasized the need to improve communication and collaboration between themselves and the GenEd teachers. The SPED teachers in the Fellows' Network frequently mentioned the goal of bridging gaps in terminology use and co-construction of instructional scaffolding between SPED and GenEd teachers.

Several of the Fellows wanted to better understand the NGSS and Washington State's learning standards. They also want to increase their content knowledge and adopt best practices in math, science, and ELA, especially those that help scaffold instruction to promote entry points. A Fellow shared:

I want to learn the best practices in science. Like when we look at the science content, I can identify ways that teachers can expand and provide equity to all students with small adjustments. So, taking their best practices and then applying accommodations or shifts or slight teaching changes to make it more accessible.

The Fellows set personal goals to build good rapport with their students' families. Strong teacher-family relationships increase families' likelihood to accept assistance. This assistance could be as simple as helping the family obtain the right information, locate additional support, or problem solve. A Fellow shared:

We are welcoming to families of all walks of life. When we approach families with that [open attitude] we are not making judgments... I really get to know my families. I do really understand what each family's background is. I try to meet them where they're at to help them with their children.

Focus group participants expressed that they found value in learning how to successfully engage their students' families during the Fellows' convenings. They learned ways to involve parents with their students' academic, social, and emotional learning. Some interviewees learned how to collaborate with parents to reinforce skills taught in the classroom and reduce challenging behaviors in the school and the home. A Fellow shared, "So, for me, it's to learn new ideas and strategies in working with people, working with the families, understanding the challenges that they may face and helping them find bridges and solutions to those to help their children in learning."

Action Plans

To participate in the Fellows' Network, all teachers first need to get their administrator's approval. The SPED teachers interviewed appreciated this requirement. They felt it resulted in the co-development of an Action Plan with their school principal and helped ensure leadership support. The Fellows led the development of their Action Plan, which they said was a highly valued and integral part of their experience. (See Figure 4 for an example Action Plan template.)

Some Action Plans focused widely on a systems-level understanding of how SPED programs overlap at the classroom, school, district, and state levels. Interviewees perceived the Action Plan requirement as a pro-active approach to equity, student learning, organizational change management, and teacher professional development. One Fellow shared, *"We create equity from the beginning instead of trying to get to it once the students are failing, and realizing that something's off."* Other Action Plans focused more narrowly on the creation of a curriculum for a self-contained classroom. Action Plans frequently included collaboration with other teachers to create tailored, quality curricula for students with disabilities.

Participants frequently mentioned that the design of the Fellows' Network was the number one reason they grew and successfully achieved their Action Plan goals. For example, one Fellow described the Fellows' Network's accessible experts. In the Fellows' convenings, she collaborated with the instructional leaders (e.g., Regional Coordinators) in a safe, supportive space. The Fellow shared:

One of the things I really like about the Fellows, especially with the social justice, is that we are a safe place, so we have those uneasy conversations that need to be had about race and equity. There's no judgment... so I really appreciate that we have a place we're able to share information, share stories.

The Network's Effect on Professional Practice

Like the majority of the GenEd Fellows who participated in the 2018-19 evaluation, the SPED teachers in the focus group strongly identify as professional Fellows. They shared the same goal of learning how to best support their students and their students' families. They also discussed the joyful benefits of this work. A Fellow shared, *"One of my greatest joys is when a child comes to me on their third birthday, and through their hard work, through the dedication of the early childhood team and the support from their family, is that they move on into a general education setting with minimal support."*

The Fellows felt the CBAM¹⁰ studied in the Fellows' convenings contributed to their successful engagement with their GenEd peers. (See Figure 2 for the CBAM model.) They were able to navigate GenEd teachers' Stages of Concern and receptiveness to improving pedagogical ideas. They also found CBAM useful to better understand students, families, paraprofessionals, and instructional leaders across learning settings.

¹⁰ Visit <http://www.sedl.org/cbam/> to learn more about CBAM.

Networking with program administrators helped broaden the Fellows' awareness of how systems work together (e.g. private and public education agencies) to best meet student and families' needs. Further, the Fellows' convenings provided the opportunity for SPED and GenEd teachers in the Fellows' Network to address their concerns and biases. Both groups learned about each other's priorities, interests, and goals, and they recognized each other's valuable contributions, expertise, and knowledge.

The Fellows' in the focus group reported increased confidence to facilitate discussions on equity. This confidence demonstrates their strengthened leadership skills gained from the Fellows' Network. One Fellow described their method of approaching GenEd instructors to maximize the possibility of a successful accommodation. The Fellow shared:

I think it would be best to say, "Here's this lesson that you would teach to your class. Here's the ways you can make this more accessible. This graphic organizer would work here. This type of focused note taking would work here. In this modified assignment, you have a sentenced framed." I think the teachers would be willing to do it if they understood what they were being asked to do. It's kind of like showing them examples of what it is.

Lastly, the Fellows' Network reinforced the importance of family engagement. Fellows shared that learning about their students and their families, cultures, and experiences guided their approaches and the resources they use to teach their students. A Fellow shared: *"One of the things that the Fellows group helped me understand [is] we're not just educating a child, but educating a family while educating ourselves in that process."*

Collaboration between SPED and GenEd Teachers

The SPED teachers interviewed unanimously agreed that the Fellows' Network taught them skills to work across the education landscape (e.g., with other preschool providers, community providers, and GenEd teachers). For example, they typically collaborate with the GenEd teachers on what methods, strategies, and resources will result in effective learning experiences for students in SPED. A Fellow shared, *"There's a [SPED] staff member in the [Gen Ed] classes to support modifying and accommodating... Then I bridge that gap between the general ed teacher and... work closely with the general ed teachers to... allow them to access the curriculum."*

The Fellows in the focus group said this collaboration has been particularly rich for math and science content. The in-depth standards they learned from the Fellows' convenings fostered more effective collaboration with math and science GenEd teachers. They said they now feel more confident discussing pedagogical approaches and strategies to make math and science

content more accessible, which promotes a shared responsibility between SPED and GenEd teachers. The Fellow shared:

I felt that there needed to be support in transitioning into Next Generation Science Standards. We're adopting new curriculum this year in our building, and we're making sure that we don't go back and think, "Oh, now we have to plug in accommodations and modifications." [Instead] in reality, we can make small adjustments through your [science] teaching, and then it feels like it's more fluid than rather trying to, "Oh I have to do these type[s] of [accommodations]."

Another Fellow explained how small adjustments in a GenEd history class made the content and assessments accessible for students in SPED. The Fellow shared:

Last year, special education and history general education teachers collaborated, and applied the inclusion model to co-construct content and curriculum. For example, instead of 25 end-of-the-unit questions, a modified packet of questions [was developed]. And history and general education teachers were able to supplement the learning content by providing access to digital, web-based study materials and web-based textbooks.

The SPED teachers who are also Early Learning Fellows explained that they liberally share their expertise, such as their pedagogical strategies, with GenEd teachers to meet their students' needs before recommending the student for SPED services. An Early Learning Fellow shared, *"In my other preschool cohort, we created a PowerPoint on what to do before special education. Looking at it, here's some things that you can try before you recommend a child for special education."*

CHALLENGES FOR SPED AND GENED TEACHERS

Focus groups participants shared some of their most common challenges when collaborating with GenEd teachers. They noted that many teachers and staff inaccurately perceive the abilities of students with disabilities and have low expectations for the students' academic achievement. In addition, some GenEd teachers need additional support to adjust their teaching strategies for students with disabilities. The Fellows interviewed said they routinely work with their GenEd peers to change mindsets and offer ideas. Other barriers included a fear of doing the wrong thing when teaching students with disabilities. This fear stems from their unfamiliarity with SPED vocabulary and jargon and little understanding of IDEA.

The SPED teachers interviewed said they approach collaboration with the GenEd teachers with diplomacy and respect, as many of the teachers have a Master of Science degree and decades of experience. However, GenEd teachers' extensive experience in their content areas does not always include substantial SPED experience. The Fellows said they learned that a surprising

number of GenEd teachers have experienced significant challenges working with students with disabilities. A Fellow shared:

Essentially, the [GenEd teachers] have a bad taste in their mouth of working with special education teachers or having to make accommodations and modifications... they just feel like... "I'm not really sure what you're asking me to do, because I tried it one time and it wasn't what they wanted, and I got in trouble, because I wasn't doing it right."

Lastly, the Fellows said that many of their GenEd peers are not familiar with federal laws for students with disabilities and do not understand the requirements of IDEA. A Fellow explained how this lack of understanding can potentially create a communication barrier when trying to collaborate with a GenEd teacher. The Fellow explained, *"When you go and talk to a general ed teacher, and they have 30 kids in their room, [they] ask you, 'How is it fair that I can do this for this [SPED] student, but not another student?' I can't just say, 'Because it's the law.'"*

SPED Teachers' Perspectives on Equity

During the focus groups and interviews, the Fellows were asked how the Fellows' Network helped them lead with equity and improve their equity practices. They described scenarios where they had led with equity, advocating for students with physical, sensory, intellectual, processing, or emotional disorders. One Fellow explained that equity begins with an awareness of personal assumptions, and biases. The Fellow shared, *"Looking at that equity awareness of yourself. Are there any biases that you are unaware of that you may have? And then... looking at what you're using and presenting and how it might impact a student who may not have those [same] background experiences."*

Fellows felt that SPED departments are treated differently than other school departments. For example, the SPED department may be excluded from communication and school events. Fellows felt that equity includes being invited to join these conversations and events. A Fellow shared:

We just didn't really feel like part of the school... maybe my kids can't sit through a 30-minute assembly, but it's sure nice to be invited, to be thought about in saying, "Hey, we're having this really cool assembly where the mascot for the Thunderbirds is gonna come and would your kids like to be able to come?"

The Fellows described ways they provide accessible instruction for students with disabilities. This instructional time may occur when teachers are also trying to address students' behavioral needs. Two Fellows shared how they lead with equity when mitigating students' behavior:

We've been talking about the equity of instruction for those kids that have some pretty severe social and emotional needs and how do we provide equitable teaching to those students when we're also working on their behaviors....

Equity is constantly on my mind that everybody gets [treated equitably]. It [doesn't mean that] they all get the same [but rather] they get what they need at that moment in time. And, if at that moment in time, the behavior piece is the biggest because learning can't happen if the brain is overstimulated, [then] I'm still managing to get both needs met.

Educators often think of equity as access to academic instruction; however, the focus group participants provided an expanded view. For example, an interviewee described how equity also includes teaching students basic tasks so they feel self-reliant and confident, “[The idea of equity] helps us have conversations with kindergarten teachers and ask, ‘What kind of things would you want a kid coming in with?’ And it's... not always the academics... they want them to be able to open their Ziplock bags [in their lunch].”

Overall, the SPED teachers in the focus group expressed ideas about equity primarily around inclusion. However, some also discussed equity in the context of engaging families from different cultures, languages, socio-economic status, etc. They said a strong focus on engagement with all families ensures that all families feel welcome and supported. “Not all parents are going to be able to go out to buy the things that they need to support their kids... I try to level that by sending materials home with families so they can work on specific things... and help them to understand what we're working on day to day.” Like all Fellows, the SPED teachers who join the Fellows’ Network also advocate to their school administrators to provide communication in plain language and include familiar cultural artifacts in the school to create a welcoming environment.

Success Stories

The Fellows described many success stories as a result of their participation in the Fellows’ Network. These stories addressed a range of topics, including successful collaboration with GenEd teachers, strong support of administrators, development of learning communities, and student growth. One such success story was shared by the SPED teacher who is also an ELA Fellow. She works with students in grades 9 through 12; however, most of her students are at a third-grade level for reading, math, and writing. She shared a success story about a student in grade 11:

Well, I have a student who uses every moment of her day to complete her school work. She is the perfect student... She doesn't want us to shorten assignments... She works at home constantly. I'm on the phone with her parents all the time. But then when you look at what she's produced... if it's a 10-point assignment, she might get 1 of those points.

But... she thinks she's got it. She's getting low grades but she tried so hard... She found the answers that she thought were the answers because we haven't scaffolded and modified [the instruction] appropriately... She's a junior, so she reads text books that are you know... really high level content [for her].

The Fellow said that her student did not understand why she received a D on an assignment that took her two hours to complete. This assignment would have taken a non-SPED student approximately 15 minutes to complete. The Fellow stated, *“That’s equity... where she has put in way more... energy and frustration into one assignment, but she just got a D. So, what did we really teach her about what working hard and putting your time in actually means?”*

The Fellow continued to collaborate with the GenEd science teacher. The Fellow shared:

It’s not that [the student] doesn’t understand [the content]. She can’t read it. Then [the science teacher and I] worked at getting the level text, so she can actually access the curriculum, because the level text is about an eighth-grade level, so she can start reading.

Their successful collaboration resulted in a student who is excited to learn. Additionally, the student’s other GenEd teachers now understand how to adjust their assignments, and they willingly pre-check the student’s assignments to provide her with feedback. She started out with a D- in history but is now earning a C+.

Recommendations

Five recommendations emerged from the interview and focus groups regarding ways to expand the knowledge, skills, and abilities of all Fellows (GenEd teachers, administrators, district leadership, etc.) to improve the experience of students with disabilities.

1. Actively recruit SPED teachers from the four content areas into the Fellows’ Network by reaching out to school administrators and communicating the benefits of participation in the Fellows’ Network.
2. Supplement the Fellows’ Network with face-to-face and virtual professional development opportunities to gain a more expansive knowledge of SPED.
3. The SPED teachers raised concerns about the limited knowledge of their GenEd colleagues regarding disabilities and suggested to train GenEd teachers on anti-bias in SPED as well as basic SPED terminology.
4. Provide opportunities for SPED and GenEd teachers to collaborate to vertically align their curricula across grade levels.
5. Provide opportunities during Fellows’ convenings to highlight exemplary practices of collaboration among GenEd and SPED teachers.

Mathematics Evaluation Brief

Student Learning Exploration

Throughout Washington State, Regional Content Coordinators provide information from state education leaders to school districts spanning 71,362 square miles, from the snow-capped Cascade Mountains to the forested islands of Puget Sound to the rich agricultural fields in Eastern Washington. The Regional Coordinators work diligently in their ESDs to share resources

from the OSPI that address equity, standards, and assessments with teachers to help improve instruction and student learning. They offer professional development courses throughout the year and work within schools, in cooperation with teachers, instructional coaches, and administrators, to support instruction through professional learning communities, classroom demonstrations, and embedded coaching practices. One venue of professional development is the OSPI/AESD Fellows' Network. This Fellows' Network is a three-year program led by Regional Coordinators who teach leadership and instructional strategies¹¹.

To better understand how Regional Coordinators' efforts may influence student achievement, KAI's evaluation team guided Regional Coordinators from all nine ESDs and four content areas through a series of conversations in September 2016. With diligent attention to detail, the Regional Coordinators shared the multi-faceted nature and intended outcomes of their work. After reviewing all of this information, KAI created a Theory of Action¹² based on these conversations to depict how the Regional Coordinators' actions and tasks lead to the desired outcomes, including increased student learning.

This brief explores how the Fellows' convenings influenced the leadership and instructional practice of a K-6 Elementary Math and Science Specialist, Sara Alvarado. Dr. Janet Gordon, KAI Senior Researcher, used a participatory approach to conduct research for this brief that analyzed quantitative (assessment scores) and qualitative (classroom work, interviews) data to tell the story. Ms. Alvarado's cycle began with professional learning in the Fellows' convenings, progressed to classroom implementation and practice adjustments, and resulted in the influence on students.

Mathematics Spotlight

Ms. Sara Alvarado is a K-6 Elementary Math and Science Specialist at Centralia School District in Centralia, WA, located in ESD 113. (See Figure 8.) The students come from the following racial backgrounds: 57% White; 36% Hispanic; 4% two or more races; and 1% or less Asian, African American, American Indian, and Native Hawaiian. Of these students, 89% participate in the free or reduced lunch program. Many of the students experience food insecurity at home and other stressors due to poverty and other environmental variables. The incoming kindergarteners struggle with social emotional skills and early numeracy skills. Elementary teachers prioritize relationship building, consistent daily schedules, and reliable learning environments for their students. This work is critical for classroom success.

¹¹ Visit <http://www.k12.wa.us/CurriculumInstruct/Fellows.aspx> to learn more about the Washington State Fellows Network.

¹² Visit <https://bit.ly/28NRSuZ> to learn more about the Theory of Action.

Ms. Alvarado has been a Math and Science Specialist for three years. She supports approximately 90 math and science teachers and instructional facilitators across five elementary schools. She provides classroom support, professional learning community (PLC) support, and professional development sessions for the district.

Professional Learning

Ms. Alvarado has been an active participant in ESD professional development opportunities and has been in the Fellows' Network for three years. She continually shares what she learned in the Fellows' convenings with her colleagues.



Figure 8. Sara Alvarado, Elementary Math

Two of her most profound learning experiences came from Jo Boaler's book, *Mathematical Mindsets*, and learning about the CBAM.¹³ She described how reading *Mathematical Mindsets* resulted in her first step in making instructional shifts. She explained:

This book, along with other research by Jo Boaler, was the first step in recognizing changes that I needed to make in my own learning and understanding of powerful mathematics instruction and what that meant for me as an instructional specialist—and a teacher. Then identifying that to positively impact the greatest number of teachers and kids, [and the] systemic changes [that] had to be made at the classroom, building, and district level.

Regarding CBAM, Ms. Alvarado uses the CBAM model to develop a culture of learning and shared leadership among her peers. She uses her knowledge and skills from CBAM to guide other teachers to make instructional changes and adopt mathematical mindsets. She explained, *"The tremendous shift that we are seeing in classrooms, that is teachers redefining for themselves what math is and who can do math—isn't about me... It's much bigger than me. It's the shared leadership and building a culture of learning in the whole school ... that becomes the fabric of the community [to] sustain this. You need to have the philosophy and belief."*

She shared how the Fellows' Network helped build a foundation for her to learn and apply her knowledge. For example, through the Fellows' convenings, Ms. Alvarado learned how to effectively lead others through the Stages of Concern. She explained:

If you don't have the philosophy or the belief behind the strategy, it's not going to be as impactful... So, I lead conversation[s] with educators to unpack some beliefs, and then move forward from there. I tell people I'm pushing edges, and I am doing

¹³ CBAM is a framework for measuring implementation and for facilitating change in schools. Visit <http://www.sedl.org/cbam/> to learn more about CBAM.

so gently because I don't want to burn bridges or ruin a relationship ... [as] we move forward in a meaningful way and have a real dialog and conversation around these issues.

Application of Knowledge and Skills Learned

Once Ms. Alvarado was comfortable and confident with the changes she had made in her own personal beliefs about math learning, her next goal was to fully integrate her ideas into the school. She explained, *"There is so much to take into account when teaching adults. How are you able to make [mathematical mindsets] a culture instead of [it being] regimented? How do I lead discussions on people's beliefs about math?"*

Ms. Alvarado explained that she began introducing Boaler's resources to the teachers by asking them questions that prompted deep thought and potential transformational shifts. She asked them, *"Why be a math educator? What are your beliefs and core values you hold close to yourself? Do you know when they are being challenged? How do you react? How does that get in the way of collaboration?"* Using herself as an example, Ms. Alvarado told them, *"When [my beliefs are] challenged, my first reaction is to close my door, rather than collaborate and move forward."* She explained to her peers that, by acknowledging her emotions, she was able to reflect, react, and then push forward to have conversations with colleagues. She described how the teachers she spoke with slowly changed their perceptions from feeling like they were being challenged to valuing the cycle of inquiry. She explained:

There are so many components about beliefs about math. I asked [the teachers], "When do you need your belief to be backed up by research?" The teachers in the moment didn't appreciate the reflection, but afterward, they have asked their administrator for reflection time built into their professional learning community.

Informed by CBAM strategies, Ms. Alvarado guided teachers through reflection of their math practice. Ms. Alvarado noted that this exercise helped teachers progress from having low expectations of their students to realizing that *"all kids are capable of learning at high levels."* Some teachers began to release their unproductive strategies, which were based on their old beliefs, for those strategies that might better support their students. She said they started wondering, *"How are they going to talk about math? How can [students] show they are learning? How we can connect strategies?"* She told the teachers, *"It's okay that somebody did [the math] differently... How can we both get the same answer and do something different?"* This process helped build the teachers' mathematical mindsets. She explained that the teachers were more *"accepting of mistakes, and [they] use mistakes as a jumping-off point for some big learning in the classroom."*

Ms. Alvarado persevered through criticism and reluctance, and now teachers are supportive of her ideas. Most of the grade levels have incorporated Boaler's work into their scope and sequence, she explained, *"to revitalize and strengthen the math climate and culture in their classrooms."* Teachers in several grade levels, especially fifth grade, use Boaler's activities to

introduce a new unit or to wrap up a unit and help students connect with their math education. Ms. Alvarado described the progress made in implementation:

Our teachers are really working on looking at the curriculum, using strategies such as Number Talks, Routines for Reasoning, My Favorite Know, Notice/Wonder, 3 Reads, etc., to get students to access the math. More teachers are letting go of workbook pages and are embracing the talking, grappling, thinking, reflecting, and showing. Our goal is [to understand] a few really good problems versus doing many problems for the sake of quantity.

Ms. Alvarado successfully supports teachers through difficult conversations. The teachers value the resultant deep learning and request that more time be set aside for reflection. She added, *“If [teachers] don’t feel that ... the systems [are] in place to support [new] learning, [teachers] can feel like [they] are drowning.”*

Influence on Student Achievement

The influence of Ms. Alvarado’s professional development on student achievement can be seen after two years. To recap, in the 2016-17 school year, Ms. Alvarado conducted professional development classes for elementary school teachers on Boaler’s philosophy and growth mindsets (e.g., Number Talks). The teachers who attended these classes discussed the materials in their PLCs to prepare to include them in their practice. Ms. Alvarado shared, *“This is the second year of implementation, and, depending on teacher comfort level, we have teachers who are applying these strategies... We have these teacher leaders ... and their data speaks for itself... [They] are the early adopters sparking their change.”*

Next, Ms. Alvarado visited teachers’ classrooms to ensure that they deeply understood how to implement with fidelity what they had learned. In the 2017-18 school year, she visited the third- and fourth-grade classrooms to observe how teachers were effectively using the new activities, like My Favorite No, Routines for Reasoning, and Notice and Wonder. She explained:

We’re seeing a lot of [math] growth with our students who haven’t had a voice. So, where teachers are seeing the best success is where they are using strategies like Notice and Wonder and really tuning in to the different core strategies and leaning heavily on the visual and hands-on components where they can.

Lastly, Ms. Alvarado along with the teachers she coached, systematically reviewed student assessment results to uncover changes in student achievement. The following sections of this brief include student assessment data from two of the teachers that she coached: one third-grade and one fourth-grade teacher. These teachers have implemented what they have learned from Ms. Alvarado with fidelity. They are leaders in their building and frequently interact with and coach their peers. They also collaborate with other members in their PLC to continuously analyze student data and improve classroom practice.

This study included comparisons of two years of Fall and Winter iReady math assessment data from the third- and fourth-grade teacher. The 2016–17 school year assessment is the baseline

and occurred before they implemented the instructional strategies learned in Ms. Alvarado's professional development classes. The 2017–18 school year assessment results occurred after the teachers implemented the new math instructional strategies. The assessment results are reported as percent below grade level in math. Data are disaggregated by gender (boy/girl) and ethnicity (White/Non-White).

THIRD-GRADE CLASSROOM

For the third-grade classroom, during the 2016-17 school year, the girls showed no growth in their understanding of math after five months of instruction between fall 2016 (100% below grade level) and winter 2016 (100% below grade level). However, the 2017-18 school year produced a markedly different growth pattern after the teacher implemented strategies to promote a mathematical mindset and culture. In fall 2017, 100% of the girls were below grade level, but only 42% remained below grade level in winter 2017.

Likewise, in the 2016-17 school year, the boys showed little improvement in their understanding of math after five months of instruction between fall 2016 (100% below grade level) and winter 2016 (91% below grade level). However, the 2017-18 school year showed noticeable improvements after the teacher implemented the new math strategies. In fall 2017, 75% of the boys were below grade level, but only 57% remained below grade level in winter 2017. Figure 9 shows third-grade results by gender for school years 2016-17 and 2017-18.

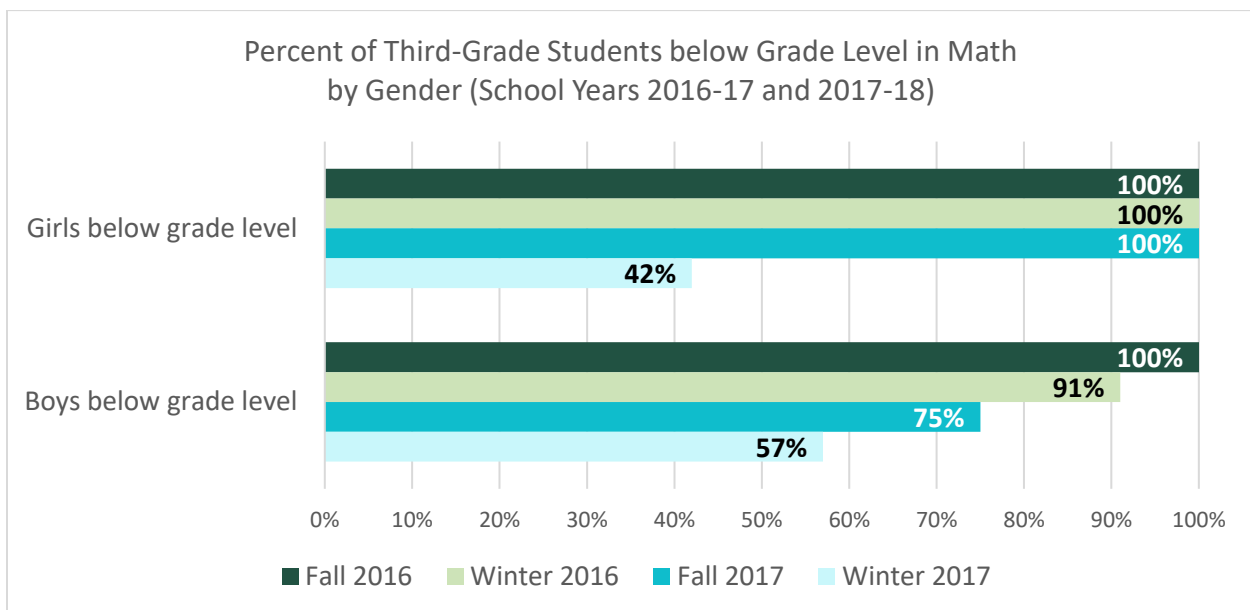


Figure 9. Percent of Third-Grade Students below Grade Level in Math by Gender (School Years 2016-17 and 2017-18)

A review of the test results by student race and ethnicity also revealed unprecedented growth in math understanding. In the 2016-17 school year, Non-White students showed no growth in their understanding of math after five months of instruction between fall 2016 (100% below grade level) and winter 2016 (100% below grade level). However, Non-White students showed noticeable improvement during the 2017-18 school year after the teacher implemented the

new math strategies. In fall 2017, 100% of Non-White students were below grade level, but only 38% remained below grade level in winter 2017. Figure 10 shows third-grade results by ethnicity for school years 2016-17 and 2017-18.

Likewise, White students showed little improvement in their understanding of math after five months of instruction between fall 2016 (100% below grade level) and winter 2016 (88% below grade level). However, White students showed noticeable improvement during the 2017-18 school year after the teacher implemented strategies to promote a mathematical mindset and culture. In fall 2017, 82% of White students were below grade level, but only 55% of students remained below grade level in winter 2017.

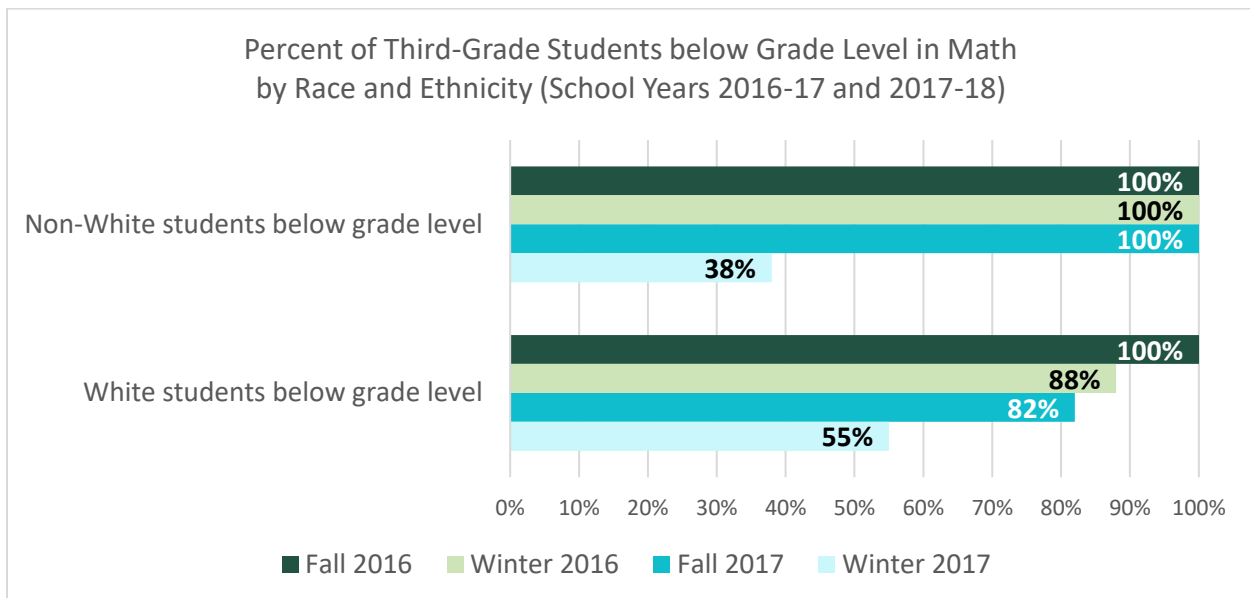


Figure 10. Percent of Third-Grade Students below Grade Level in Math by Ethnicity (School Years 2016-17 and 2017-18)

The third-grade teacher reflected:

I always believed that kids were capable of more, but I didn't realize how much I was blocking that potential with my teaching choices—when I would model and then have the students go and practice. Now I say, 'Let's see what they can do.' And then I think about how I can support them—it's about intentionally putting the learning in their hands and me diving in to see what their thinking is.

FOURTH-GRADE CLASSROOM

In the fourth-grade classroom, test results by student gender also revealed markedly different growth patterns in math understanding between school years 2016-17 and 2017-18. In the 2016-17 school year, the girls showed no growth in their understanding of math after 5 months of instruction between fall 2016 (94% below grade level) and winter 2016 (94% below grade level). However, the 2017-18 school year produced a markedly different growth pattern after the teacher implemented strategies to promote a mathematical mindset and culture. In fall

2017, 72% of the girls were below grade level, but only 53% remained below grade level in the winter 2017.

Likewise, in the 2016-17 school year, the boys showed no growth in their understanding of math after 5 months of instruction between fall 2016 (100% below grade level) and winter 2016 (100% below grade level). However, the boys showed noticeable improvement during the 2017-18 school year after the teacher implemented the new math strategies. In fall 2017, 100% of boys were below grade level, but only 40% remained below grade level in the winter 2017. Figure 11 shows fourth-grade results by gender for school years 2016-17 and 2017-18.

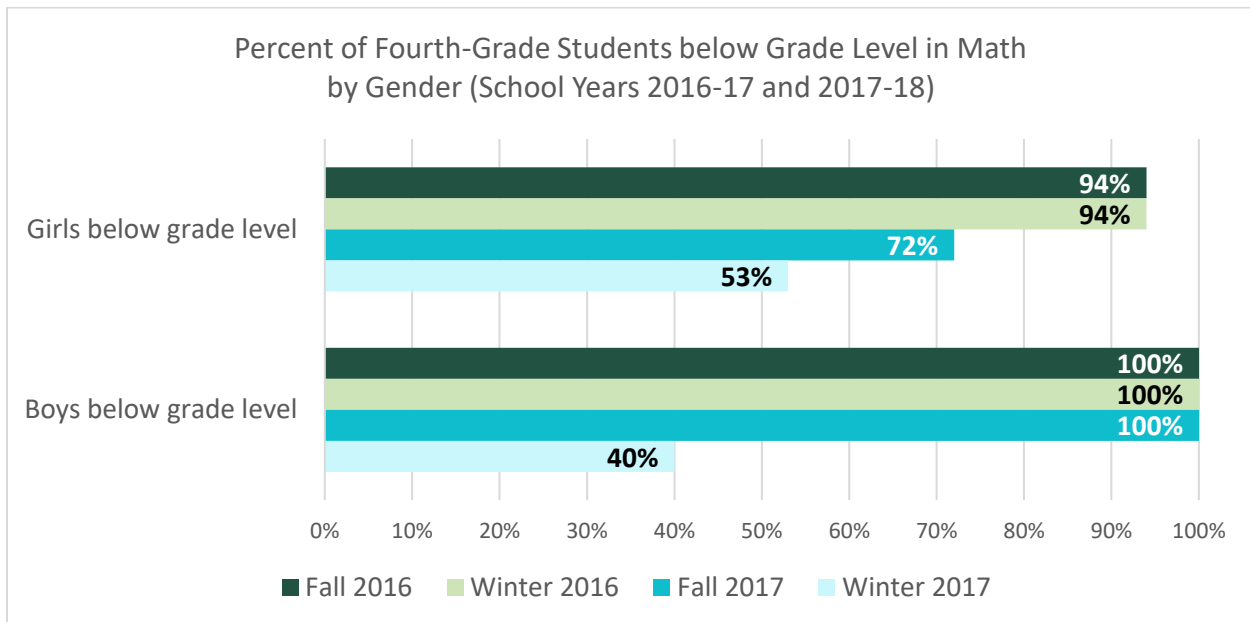


Figure 11. Percent of Fourth-Grade Students below Grade Level in Math by Gender (School Years 2016-17 and 2017-18)

A review of the test results by student race and ethnicity also revealed unprecedented growth in math understanding. In the 2016-17 school year, Non-White students showed no growth after five months of instruction between fall 2016 (100% below grade level) and winter 2016 (100% below grade level). However, Non-White students also made steep improvements between fall and winter 2017 after the teacher implemented the new math strategies. In fall 2017, 100% of Non-White students were below grade level, but only 40% remained below grade level in winter 2017. Figure 12 shows fourth-grade results by ethnicity for school years 2016-17 and 2017-18.

Likewise, in the 2016-17 school year, White students showed no growth after five months of instruction between fall 2016 (94% below grade level) and winter 2016 (94% below grade level). However, White students made steep improvements between fall and winter 2017 after the teacher implemented strategies to promote a mathematical mindset and culture. In fall 2017, 72% of White students were below grade level, but only 53% remained below grade level in winter 2017.

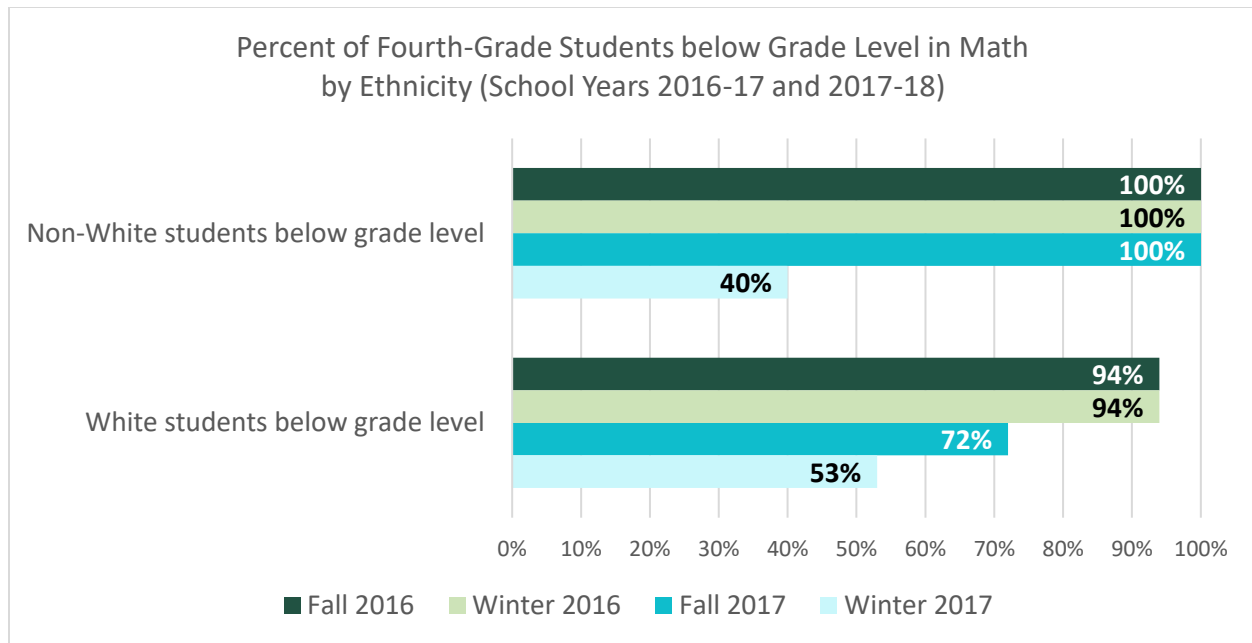


Figure 12. Percent of Fourth-Grade Students below Grade Level in Math by Ethnicity (School Years 2016-17 and 2017-18)

Teachers have noticed the differences in their classrooms and observed that the students appear comfortable, engaged, and seem to be visibly enjoying math. The teachers asked their students to reflect on their math class. One student said, *“We have this thing in our class that we always say, ‘When we make a mistake, our brain grows. And when you make mistakes, you learn more.’ [Our teacher] makes the challenge fun.”* Teachers have learned how to encourage productive struggle to build students’ persistence and confidence. This type of learning culture creates a safe environment that may nourishes students’ dreams. One student shared, *“Math isn’t my strongest, but I always want to try my best and keep on trying because, when I get older, I want to work for NASA.”*

Mathematics Evaluation Conclusion

Professor Boaler’s *Mathematical Mindsets* is a foundational text that Ms. Alvarado first encountered through Fellows. This book was the catalyst in changing the Centralia School District’s vision and mission for mathematics. Ms. Alvarado is quick to acknowledge that this effort has been successful because of the combined support received from her ESD’s Math Regional Coordinator, Ms. Carrie Black, the Executive Director of Teaching and Learning, Kristy Vetter, and the administrators. She shared:

I think my supervisor has a lot to do with that. So, she is the Executive Director of Teaching and Learning, and she has said from the beginning, “You know, we need to give ourselves grace [because] we are relearning math as [an] adult for ourselves. How do we hold each other up? How do we let ourselves make mistakes and then learn from them and be reflective?”

Now, Ms. Vetter presents to the Superintendent, School Board, parent community, and a community foundation organization comprised of business leaders who want to make an impact on math learning. Ms. Alvarado will be recording math assessment scores by demographic to study how the teachers in Centralia Elementary School are closing the gap for all of their students, including recording scores by gender, ethnicity, English learners, and students with disabilities.

Inspired by the Fellows' Convening, Ms. Alvarado is planning the next stage of the work around equity. She wants to dig deeper into racial equity and guide teacher reflection by asking them if they talk about equity. She explained, *"[Some] teachers are saying 'Well, it's just a fad... It's going to come and go.' [Yes,] there's been a lot [of things] that have come and gone, so I can understand [their sentiment], but [I want to ask them] 'Can we talk at least a little bit about equity and accessibility using these strategies?'"*

Implications to the Theory of Action and Overarching Evaluation Questions

The remaining sections of this report provide insight into the overarching evaluation questions. This section presents the results of a cross analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data from the evaluation couched in the assumptions about the inputs, outputs, and mechanisms in the Theory of Action and Logic Model.

Joining the Fellows' Network

First, we wanted to learn more about the individuals who were attracted to the Fellows' Network and their initial motivation for joining. Looking across the interviews and focus groups conducted, the Fellows' Network attracts a diverse group of educators, administrators, and education leaders across the state. They were attracted to the Network predominantly to enhance and deepen knowledge in content and pedagogy, develop leadership skills, learn strategies to engage families, and network with other educators. Fellows who work with students with learning disabilities desired deeper knowledge across all content areas to collaborate with GenEd teachers to better meet students' needs.

Expectations of the Fellows' Network

Fellows mostly learned about the Fellows' Network through their colleagues. Prior to participating in the Network, many of them did not have clear understandings or expectations of what it meant to be a "Fellow"; however, they joined with eager anticipation. Reflecting on their first year, some interviewees shared that they did not know enough about the program to set personal learning goals. *"I did not have a strong feeling about what it was, [and] I did not come [into the Fellows' Network] with a set of learning goals X, Y, and Z ... A lot of things were confusing to me in the first year,"* shared a Fellow. Some of the Fellows said that it was not until their second year that they understood the Fellows' Network more fully and realized the assets available to them through participation. With support from more experienced colleagues in the

Fellows’ convenings, the Fellows better imagined possibilities for their own professional growth.

Action Plans

Fellows shared that the Action Plans were pivotal in completing their objectives individually or as teams. The plan increased their confidence and accountability to make progress toward their goals, including implementing a curriculum, influencing peers, engaging families, and meeting their professional growth targets. Fellows who regularly checked in with their administrators used their Action Plan to promote dialogue. For Fellows who worked in teams, the Action Plan was a powerful project management tool that aligned efforts across a very large district.

Fellows’ Convenings

In the focus groups, Fellows reflected on the rich and authentic dialogue, the high-quality resources, and access to education experts experienced during the Fellows’ convenings. Fellows unanimously agreed that the Fellows’ convenings had advanced their understanding in leadership, content, pedagogy, equity, assessment, and implementation of new curricula. More specifically they felt they had: (1) increased their ability to effectively lead colleagues through change to improve their instructional practices; (2) expanded and deepened their pedagogical and content knowledge; (3) increased their knowledge about equity and social emotional learning; and (4) improved strategies to involve and serve their students’ families. Examples of each of these outcomes are shared in each evaluation briefs (beginning on page 7) and are highlighted in the sections below.

Increased Effectiveness to Lead Colleagues through Change

A predominant theme across the evaluation included Fellows’ increased ability to lead colleagues through the change process to improve classroom practice. For example, Fellows cited the CBAM coupled with Regional Coordinator’s expert guidance throughout the book study as a “game changer.” They found CBAM helpful to conceptualize the readiness of an individual to change. CBAM’s Stages of Concern enabled Fellows to identify which stage an individual is in and to know what to do to help them move to the next stage.

One of the most profound examples of CBAM implementation is found in the mathematics brief when the mathematics coach worked with a reluctant classroom teacher. The coach honored the slow, two-year process needed for the teacher to move through the stages and begin to implement activities to promote a mathematical mindset. Now, that teacher is the school’s best advocate for the power of adopting a mathematical mindset because student achievement data shows it works.

The multi-Fellow district team in Kent was tasked with making a systems-wide change in their current science teaching methods by implementing NGSS for K-12th grade. They felt that they would not have been able to complete this work without the Network, which helped broaden their leadership skills to coach, facilitate, mediate, broker resources, and provide moral support to their teaching peers and colleagues.

Lastly, Fellows who work with students with disabilities felt confident and effective when working with their GenEd colleagues. They attributed this increased confidence and effectiveness to what they learned as Fellows. Fellows were able to gently correct GenEd teachers' misinformation and misconceptions about students with disabilities to better customize supports for inclusion of SPED students in GenEd classrooms.

Expanded and Deepened Pedagogical and Content Knowledge

Fellows also reported expanded and deepened pedagogical and content knowledge, which aligns with the Theory of Action outcome for Regional Coordinators' activities. Each summer, Regional Coordinators in each content area work as a collaborative to identify common content to teach Fellows. Informed by national professional organizations, such as the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) and the National Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators (NAECTE), the Regional Coordinators develop the curriculum for the upcoming Fellows' convenings. The curriculum and resources provide Fellows with effective teaching requirements in terms of content understanding, pedagogical strategies, common misconceptions held by students, and content-specific interventions that help move students' thinking forward.

Using the high quality curriculum and resources, Regional Coordinators expanded the Fellows' content knowledge by modeling inquiry, exploration, reasoning, writing, assessment, and evaluation process to determine what students should know. As a result, all of the Fellows in the pre-K-12 focus groups reported expanded and deepened pedagogical and content knowledge and an improved ability to make informed instructional decisions based on that content knowledge.

Each brief describes outcomes predicated, in part, on the Fellows' richer understanding of their subject matter. The SPED brief, for example, provides an excellent example of how expanded science content knowledge helped a Science Fellow better communicate SPED students' needs. The Fellow had sufficient science content knowledge to correctly scaffold complex science ideas into an accessible learning format for students with disabilities in the GenEd classroom.

Expanded Knowledge about Equity and Social-Emotional Learning

OSPI is dedicated to providing an equitable education system.¹⁴ During interviews, Regional Coordinators shared that the development of the Fellows' convenings' agendas, content, and resources are all rooted in racial equity. The Fellows responded similarly and shared that equity is at the core of everything they learn in the program.

For some, the Fellows' Network was their first introduction to racial equity and its implications to education. They described that, before the Hammond book study, they thought that race did

¹⁴Nondiscrimination Statement for Districts:
<http://www.k12.wa.us/Equity/Districts/NondiscriminationStatement.aspx>

not matter to people, that we are all the same, and that it was inconsiderate for educators to talk about race. Next, they described a transformation in their understanding of the issues through the difficult, uncomfortable conversations that occurred in the Fellows' convenings. A Fellow shared that they learned that *"[race] does matter in ways that you can honor and respect cultural backgrounds. [Being a Fellow] opened my eyes and I want to be better."*

In many of the focus groups, Fellows expressed increased ability to lead others in their district through difficult conversations and a deeper understanding of racial equity helped Fellows influence others. *"I would say, definitely, this year has been easier as far as people getting people on my team interested in the topic [of equity] as I'm trying to bring forward to them. So, I would say that's a success for sure ... getting their participation,"* said an Early Learning Fellow. Fellows reported high utility in applying their new knowledge and resources to begin conversations about equity in their district. A Fellow shared, *"[The Hammond book] was a really nice addition this year, and I like the way it's been used. I do reflective supervision with my coaches individually, [and the book] has allowed me to have ... probing conversations with them."*

The idea of raising colleagues' awareness of equity resounds throughout the evaluation briefs, as well. Fellows who work with students with disabilities, early learning Fellows, and GenEd teachers of math, science, ELA were motivated to share what they learned from the Fellows' convenings to provide equal access to learning opportunities for all students.

Improved Strategies to Involve and Serve Families

The fourth and final outcome addressed strategies to involve and serve families. ESD Regional Coordinators assist a wide variety of schools from very small rural districts in eastern Washington to very large districts in western Washington that serve families that speak more than 130 different languages.¹⁵ Regional Coordinators know that effective pedagogical strategies consider the cultures of the students and their families. So, they customize their professional learning and resources to meet the specific needs of the families and students in their region.

As a result of their professional learning, the Fellows interviewed felt they had improved strategies to involve and serve families. The Fellows relied on the Regional Coordinators to search, filter, and adapt evidence-based practices and resources to be place-based and relevant to them. Early Learning Fellows reported good success using the new strategies, for example, when working with families of students with disabilities who are English language learners. Fellows learned ways to build in-home literacy of parents and extended family who are English language learners, as well as strategies to help the student with learning disabilities be successful in school and in the home.

The multi-Fellow brief also discusses how team members involved families through science. Fellows described how they deliberately moved away from competitive, intimidating academic

¹⁵ Kent School District webpage, About Us section: <https://www.kent.k12.wa.us/domain/4199>

science fairs to fun, engaging, and welcoming citizen science. Fellows described ways they learned to heighten the interest of students and their families, such as by using an “anchoring phenomena” to make the science relevant to them and their local community. For example, one topic discussed ways to keep a local river healthy and clean.

Early Learning Fellows focused on attracting disadvantaged families to the school and designed activities to increase attitudes of efficacy and positive parenting. Their goal has been to improve school readiness and reduce socio-economic disparities in school. One new strategy was hosting evening preschool and pre-kindergarten family nights where participants learn how to support their children in academics. Several Fellows also cited family toolkits as another strategy to empower families to support students with disabilities.

Early Learning Fellows’ Contribution to State Initiatives

Early Learning Fellows are comprised of classroom teachers, instructional coaches, SPED directors, childcare providers, family service advocates, building administrators, higher education faculty, and migrant education staff. Even through challenges to fund professional development for early learning, the Fellows’ Network helped convert the vision of high quality early learning into a reality. This section of the report draws from the interviews and focus groups with early learning Fellows to better understand the significant contributions of the Network and how those contribution furthers Washington State’s early learning initiatives.

Washington State is recognized as a national leader in early learning and has received very high ratings on state-focused efforts, such as Head Start and home-based childcare.¹⁶ In addition, enrollment in the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) in the state in 2017-18 was at an all-time high of 12,491 children, up by 800 children from the previous year.¹⁷ The ESDs play an important role in providing professional learning opportunities to Fellows working with Pre-K children.

Early Learning Fellows have made significant contributions to state initiatives. Fellows have worked to promote the alignment of Pre-K curriculum to third grade standards. In the focus groups, Fellows talked extensively about how effective early learning spans Pre-K to third grade, and to create a high-quality learning environment, they need a coordinated, aligned approach to curriculum. *“I think one of the biggest contributions has been that we have a greater sense of community and are all working towards the same goals and P3 [Pre-K to third grade] alignment,”* shared a Fellow.

This learning community, developed through the Network, facilitated key discussions about the shared teaching responsibilities between birth to Pre-K programs, K through third grade classrooms, families, and communities. *“[The Fellows’ convenings have] sparked a lot of good conversations around what an elementary teacher is doing and how we could look at that from*

¹⁶ Early learning data from the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families:
https://nieer.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Washington_YB2018.pdf

¹⁷ See Footnote 16

the birth-to-five realm and bridge that whole [developmental stage],” explained one Fellow in the focus group. Fellows engaged in discussions with teachers in grade levels Pre-K to fifth grade and gained a broader perspective of the content standards and students’ cognitive abilities at each developmental level. This broadened perspective allowed the Fellows to better align Pre-K-3 content across math, science, and ELA to ensure a smoother transition into kindergarten.

In the Fellows’ convenings this year, most Regional Coordinators focused on students’ cognitive abilities and social and emotional skills at each grade level. Learning and practicing key instructional and interactional skills at the Fellows’ convenings, coupled with high-quality resources, help early learning Fellows know what classroom activities best meet children’s social-emotional learning needs. Focus group participants emphasized the importance of family involvement and shared ways they empower parents to meet their children’s social-emotional needs at home to prepare for kindergarten. One participant shared her strategy:

I’m bringing the conscious discipline model to our coaching team to view and learn about. And it’s something that we’re offering out into the community, as well ... in particular as a tool for adults ... so it’s going to tie into the family engagement piece, as well.

For some, the Action Plan became a three-year strategic plan aimed at achieving specific, overarching goals. A common goal of Early Learning Fellows is to increase parent involvement and education opportunities. Some Fellows used their Action Plans to enumerate the sequence of activities needed to increase engagement and apply what they have learned in innovative ways, such as the development of a Teacher’s Guide for Evening Preschool and pre-K family nights that includes activities, strategies, and routines from numeracy modules. Holding these events at night successfully increased parent involvement and education opportunities by providing access to working families so they could learn and develop new mathematical mindsets to support their children with math readiness activities.

Early Learning Fellows are keenly aware that a child’s literacy foundation begins at birth. Fellows use the OSPI Early Literacy Pathways document to guide literacy development at each developmental stage.¹⁸ They found the document helpful to bridge the knowledge gap and build a strong foundation in language, thinking and communicating for each student.

The Regional Coordinators have also taught ways to collect and use formative and summative assessment data to inform the selection of targeted interventions. Fellows have learned these methods and how to interpret assessment data. As such, after each benchmark assessment, some Early Learning Fellows lead their school’s Professional Learning Circle (PLC) to identify where students’ knowledge has deepened and where they still need targeted intervention.

¹⁸ Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction & Association of Education Service Districts Learning Pathways in Literacy: <https://www.k12.wa.us/sites/default/files/public/ela/pubdocs/earlyliteracypathways.pdf>

The Washington Department of Children, Youth, and Families has a goal to ensure 90% of the children in the state are ready for kindergarten by 2020, with race and income eliminated as predictors of their readiness. The Fellows' Network is contributing to the attainment of this goal. With predicted growth in student preschool enrollment in Washington State, it is imperative to find a way to deliver relevant, effective, and scalable professional development. The Fellows' Network currently provides such a platform for teachers in Early Learning.

Challenges

Delivering statewide professional development is not without challenges. Evidence- and practice-based approaches to education are comprehensive, and it takes time for the Regional Coordinators to teach, digest, reflect on them. Yet, Fellows' convenings occur only four times per year, presenting the necessity to cover a lot of material in a short amount of time. Several Fellows commented on the need for a more integrated approach to professional learning. One Fellow shared:

[There is] the parent engagement piece, the equity piece, and then the leadership piece, and they didn't seem to cross over very much. So, it just felt like we had chunks of time and never enough time to go into any of those four topics.

The Hammond text helped many Fellows to connect the different pieces, while other Fellows felt that the text had limited success. One Fellow shared:

We are focused on one particular text that's about multicultural education, and it seems that we're trying to use the text to cover all [equity, leadership, parent engagement] areas. But through the text, it's not been real clear to me, and so I think that's partly why I think it hasn't been that successful.

Fellows' experience levels range from novice to many years of lived experiences and knowledge. Some Fellows are just beginning to think about racial equity while others have been active participants in this work for many years, which can be challenging to manage in the Fellows' convenings. There has been some criticism about how the equity work within the Fellows' convenings has "lagged behind." Some Fellows felt that better resources are available for professional development and wondered about the selection committee's first-hand experiences and expertise around racial bias.

Fellows consistently praised the Network throughout the interviews and focus groups, reporting the program is "high quality," "timely," "relevant," "meaningful," and "transformational." However, Fellows also felt that more districts could benefit from participation if their colleague knew about the Fellows Network. A participant shared:

Districts need more direction from the state regarding opportunities that are presented through the Fellows program. They're missing free training provided, and that continuum of learning is vital.

Some Regional Coordinators felt that the Action Plan process may be confusing to administrators with Fellows across multiple content areas because Action Plans are not consistent or standardized across content areas. One Regional Coordinator shared:

We have completely different requirements about what the Fellows do with an Action Plan. So, a principal working with both Fellows could potentially become confused [and say], 'Why am I doing this with ELA's Action Plan but not with the math Action Plan?'

Fellows are also challenged with sustaining their progress in the case of attrition. For example, vertical curriculum alignment is a priority for some districts. To achieve this priority, these districts have supported one Fellow in each building (elementary, junior/middle school, high school) to attend the Fellows' convenings, learn best practices, and continue to work on curriculum alignment across the grade levels. But when one Fellow leaves, that essential knowledge leaves with them. The KSD seven-Fellow team (describe in the brief beginning on page 15) successfully responded to this challenge by duplicating the knowledge across team members; however, in many cases, Fellows are not part of teams.

Recommendations

The following recommendations emerged from the Regional Coordinators and Fellows who participated in the evaluation.

- Develop more effective strategies to engage administrators leading the schools in the Fellows' Network. For example, ESD Assistant Superintendents could communicate directly to district administrators about the benefits of participating in and supporting the Network.
- Work with experts (e.g. University of Washington, leadership and organizational development consulting firms trained in cultural responsive and equity) to develop a tightly integrated approach to teaching leadership, equity, and parent engagement.
- Solicit input from Fellows of color to inform resource choices, such as book studies and literature.
- Explore why some of the first-year Fellows reported that it took a year for them to understand the structure, relationships, artifacts, and what to expect in the Fellows' Network.
- Include data fields on the Fellow Application Form that enable Regional Coordinators to make data-informed decisions for the Fellows' convenings and to gather insights to improve the program. Fellows suggested such data fields suggested include, "What job roles do you play?" and "What grade bands do you teach?"
- Work with Regional Coordinators and stakeholders to build capacity and find high utility of PDforUs summaries and reports.
- Develop PDforUs data dashboards to guide data mining for ESD Assistant Superintendents and the Fellows Advisory Committee.

- Widely advertise the benefits of the Fellows' Network to more teachers and discuss the Fellow's Network's exemplary approaches to teacher professional development at state and national conference venues.
- Actively recruit teachers who work with SPED students into the Fellows' Network by reaching out to school administrators and communicating the benefits of participation.
- Provide opportunities to highlight exemplary GenEd-SPED collaboration practices.
- Explore how Emeritus Fellows can help sustain the Fellows' accomplishments.
- Use multi-Fellow teams to effect district-wide change, especially across grade levels.
- Include data fields on the Fellow Application Form that support data-informed decisions about future plans.
- Create a way to solicit input from Fellows of color to inform resource choices, such as book studies and literature, for the Fellows' convenings.

Conclusion

OSPI/AESD and the ESDs collaborate to offer coordinated professional development modeled after best practices known to be more effective than one-time weekend workshops, informal advice from peers, district-mandated sessions, and trial-and-error in the classroom without feedback.¹⁹ Based on the Theory of Action, this work is designed specifically with outcomes in mind, including developing learning networks, building leadership competencies, and increasing student achievement. Each ESD Regional Coordinator successfully sustained a professional learning community to support PLE participants' continued personal and professional growth. They collaborated with OSPI/AESD and other stakeholders to identify best practices based on current content and pedagogy research to effect systems-wide improvement. In collaboration with the Fellows' Advisory Committee, they also developed state-wide professional learning content for the ESD offerings and Fellows' convenings.

The 2018-19 school year comprehensive evaluation strongly suggests that the Fellows' Network's PLEs successfully achieved the intended short- and long-term outcomes indicated in the Theory of Action and Logic Model. For short-term outcomes, Fellows expressed high satisfaction with the PLEs, expanded and deepened knowledge and skills, improved practice, and the ability to influence colleagues to use best practices. For long-term outcomes, Fellows increased school-based and district professional learning networks, improved student performance on assessments, and increased the percentage of students meeting standards. The new online data collection platform, PDforUs, proved essential to supporting these outcomes. Regional Coordinators and ESD leadership relied heavily on PDforUs to make data informed-decisions based on timely information and make mid-course corrections to meet professional development participants' needs.

¹⁹Darling-Hammond, L., Hyler, M. E., & Gardner, M. (2017). *Effective Teacher Professional Development*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.

Washington State has a cohesive, statewide system to deliver professional development to district instructional support staff, teachers, education leaders, building administrators, and early learning community educators. Going forward, the ESDs and the OSPI/AESD Fellows' Professional Learning Network are well-positioned to continue to create optimal collaborative learning situations that develop high-quality teachers and leaders who meet the needs of their students.