Impact Points
The Hope Street Group State Teacher Fellows Program Newsletter

Across the nation, Hope Street Group (HSG) creates pathways for teachers’ voices to impact and shape better education policy. Our State Teacher Fellows (STFs) have engaged nearly 50,000 colleagues as part of their Professional Learning Network (PLN), ensuring that teacher voice is heard and acted upon in the creation and implementation of education policy.

STATE SUPERINTENDENT ATKINSON ADDRESSES NORTH CAROLINA TEACHER VOICE NETWORK

In February, the North Carolina Teacher Voice Network (TVN) Leaders convened in Raleigh to meet with policymakers and hear from State Superintendent Dr. June Atkinson. Representative Craig Horn, Wake County Commissioner John Burns, Durham School Board member Natalie Beyer and North Carolina Department of Public Instruction Consultant Cynthia Martin. The Leaders conversed in small groups about teacher voice, the decision-making authority of different entities in North Carolina and challenges facing educators and schools.

Most notably, Dr. Atkinson referred to the TVN Fall Survey results when discussing NCDPI’s recommendation to the State Board of Education to formally drop Standard 6 from the state teacher evaluation rubric. The inclusion of NC’s first data collection in an important statewide education issue speaks to the power of the Network’s partnership with NCDPI and its amplification of teacher voice.

NETWORK LEADERS VISIT OPPORTUNITY CULTURE SCHOOLS

On March 10th, TVN Leaders Angie Sciolli, Courtney Sears and John DeVille traveled to Charlotte to visit three “Opportunity Culture” schools and observe an innovative model of teacher leadership. An “Opportunity Culture” school “extends the reach of excellent teachers and their teams to more students, for more pay, within recurring budgets.”

TVN Leaders were able to add the takeaways from their visit to increasingly frequent conversations on teacher leadership roles and their compensation. Angie Sciolli, for example, serves on a Wake County team to design career pathways for teachers and models for teacher leadership. Due to the partnerships formed by the NC TVN, Angie is able to supplement her perspective as an educator to add further value to her County’s strategic planning team.

STF WRITINGS

Stan Torzewski writes about relationship building and emotional intelligence for the Courier Journal.

Michael Bradburn discusses educators weighing in on education policy for The Daily Times.

Myra Creech asks the question, “What Kind of Specialist Are You?” for EducationNC.

Allison Slone advocates for increased awareness of the needs of dyslexic students for Kentucky Teacher Magazine.

The Honolulu Star Advertiser highlights the state’s embrace of the teacher voice movement (subscription only.)
KENTUCKY STFS PARTNER WITH KDE FOR LISTENING TOUR WITH THE COMMISSIONER

Current and former STFs have partnered with the Kentucky Department of Education and the Commissioner’s office to collect and synthesize educator and public perception data during Dr. Pruitt’s eleven-stop town hall tour of the Commonwealth (photo right). The town hall forums are asking questions such as, “What do you expect from our schools?”, “How should we measure school success?” and “How do we ensure all schools are successful?”

Hope Street Group Kentucky State Teacher Fellows, building on their training and experience conducting focus groups across the state, are serving in an official capacity as note takers for these well-attended public forums. The information the Fellows gather will be made available to the public and used by various advisory and shareholder groups to design a new accountability system in line with the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

KENTUCKY STFS PARTNER TO INFORM COLLEAGUES ON LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

Kentucky STFs Cassie Reding, Tiffany Gruen, Kari Patrick and former STF Kip Hottman partnered with the Kentucky State Teacher of the Year, Ashley Lamb Sinclair, and Katrina Boone of EngagEDKY to create KYedpolicy.org. Together, they will inform Kentucky teachers about the proposed bills in the House and Senate Education Committees, while creating a feedback loop that allows educators to ask questions about proposed bills and share perceived implications of their implementation.

One of the many initiatives emanating from KYedpolicy.org is interviewing legislators using questions provided by teachers that visit the website. Fellow Stan Torzewski, from Jefferson County Public Schools, brought one of his students to interview Senator Gerald Neal for KYedpolicy.org. (Photo Right) The interview focused on current education policy topics and how teachers and students can build meaningful relationships with legislators.

KENTUCKY STFS HARD AT WORK

Fellows Kari Patrick and Cassie Reding, left, won the Elementary and High School English Teachers of the Year awards from the Kentucky Council of Teachers of English (KCTE). Lora Wimsatt, the communications director at Daviess County Public Schools, won the Gretchen Niva Outstanding Service Award from KCTE for being lead editor of the Owensboro Messenger Inquirer’s Lessons from the Classroom, a weekly column by local teachers initiated and supported by Fellows Carrie Wedding and Angie Gunter.
SHELBY COUNTY TEACHER ADVISORY COUNCIL

Tennessee STFs in Shelby County, Monica Brown and Comeshia Williams, had the opportunity to present at the Teaching and Learning Conference in Washington, D.C. with Shelby County Superintendent Dorsey Hopson (photo right). The presentation centered on the Teacher Advisory Council the Fellows created with the Superintendent to give him authentic teacher feedback on pertinent topics. The well-attended workshop consisted of a panel discussion and had a robust question and answer session.

HSG WINTER CONVENING

The Tennessee STFs convened in early February to discuss the Fall Report, community build and action plan for the spring. Fellows participated in a round table discussion on ESSA with US Teacher Ambassador Josalyn McGee as well as a panel on Teacher Leadership and Professional Learning with partners from the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE), SCORE, the Tennessee Education Association (TEA) and the Nashville Mayor’s Office. Commissioner McQueen was unable to attend but sent a video detailing her response to the Fall data. A press release was also sent detailing the response of TDOE, SCORE and TEA.

TENNESSEE TEACHER VOICES

Tennessee Fellow Michael Stein now has a weekly editorial column in the Manchester Times titled Tennessee Teacher Voice. His vision for the column is to elevate teachers’ voices in his county and across the state by making the public aware of teachers’ solutions-oriented views on educational issues. In addition, he will highlight many of the positive things occurring in teachers’ classrooms of which the general public is unaware. The first column appeared Wednesday, March 2nd.

PERSONALIZED LEARNING TASK FORCE

State Director Keilani Goggins is now a member of the TDOE Personalized Learning Task Force. The mission of the task force is to develop recommendations on the best way to incorporate personalized learning to best support the needs of students. The task force consists of education partners from across the state and meets every other month.

PRESENTING THE TENNESSEE STFS WORK

Tennessee State Director, Keilani Goggins and Michael Stein, Tennessee STF presented the Fall Report findings to the South Central CORE office. CORE offices work to provide differentiated professional development and support for school districts. Karen Vogelsang and Keilani Goggins presented the Fall Report findings to the Department of Education Teacher Advisory Council. The council, which consists of Tennessee Teachers of the Year as well as finalists, convene to give feedback to the Department of Education, as well as participate in professional development opportunities.

Twitter Impact of our STFs

- Kentucky – 13,050 Followers
- Hawaii – 4,328 Followers
- Tennessee – 7,056 Followers
- North Carolina – 3,990 Followers

Latest Twitter Chat in Tennessee

Breakdown of Twitter Chat
825 Posts
97,974 Reach
561,892 Impressions
ECET2 LANDS IN HAWAI’I

In late February HI STFs, in partnership with the National Network of State Teachers of the Year, hosted the first ever ECET2 Hawaii conference on the island of Oahu. Eighty teacher leaders from across the state came together for two days to partake in inspirational keynotes from teachers, break out sessions led by teachers and colleague circles to engage with other teachers around problems of practice. The event also included a celebratory dinner event with Hawaii Governor and First Lady, David and Dawn Ige at the Governor’s home.

Here is what some of the participants had to say:

The ECET2.HI convening reconfirmed my ability to raise my voice constructively and lead change beyond my class and school.
-Jonathon Medeiros, 11th Lang Arts Teacher, Kauai High School

This experience has helped me to feel more confident in what I do in and out of the classroom. This has inspired me to share my accomplishments with others and to be more involved in my community of teachers.
-DanaLei Ko’omoa, 4th Grade, Pā‘ia Elementary

I was reminded that being a teacher leader doesn’t have to be on a grand scale like at a district/state/national level. It begins with what we do within our own classroom and departments. Imagine the impact if every teacher within a department found one strength in which they could lead the rest of their team.
-Middle School Teacher, Maui

I can’t think of anything more celebratory and supportive of teachers. Loved the performance and that we all ended up dancing together with the governor.
-Michael Kline, Sped Preschool, Kilauea Elementary School

EDUCATION WEEK AT THE CAPITOL

During their spring break, HI STFs participated in Education Week at the Capitol by shadowing their legislators for the day. HI STFs attended hearings, sat in on meetings, were introduced and honored on the House floor and hosted a lunch gathering to continue building relationships. Wonderful connections were made that will continue beyond the day and this will become an annual event for the Hawaii STF program.

Above, HI Fellows visit in Legislature during spring break to learn about the process.
Left, Why I Teach at ECET2
Would you like to join the Hope Street Group Teacher Voice Network? **Click to here to join!**