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 more than 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.

Utah Fellows Join Professional Teaching Standards Council

State Director Tabitha Pacheco and five Utah Teacher Fellows -- Kristin van Brunt, Denise Willmore, Mohsen Ghaffari, Allison Riddle and Melody Apeztaguia -- were asked to join a Council of experts to assist the State Superintendent in moving forward the Utah Professional Teaching Standards. The council will be focusing on various areas of Professional Learning in Utah for educators, including:

- the creation of a useful toolkit to be used by the Utah education field for quality use of these standards at all levels of professional learning;
- examining the interest, feasibility and standardization of micro credentials;
- supporting building principals with opportunities for learning on their chosen topics, possible state-wide PLCs, mentoring for new principals, as well as other possible methods to meet their unique needs; and
- exploring the current law and Board rule around teacher leadership in preparation to advance statewide initiatives through grants for LEAs that develop or extend current practices for hybrid teacher leader roles.

The second convening of the Utah Teacher Fellows was held September 22-23, 2017 in downtown Salt Lake City. The teachers remarked on the strong connection they feel with their Fellow cohort and that they are building lifelong relationships.

Utah is in the middle of its first statewide data collection. The Fellows have already connected with more than 300 teachers via focus groups and are anticipating a high response rate from the survey.

"Teachers gave beautiful insight about their thoughts on teacher leadership with very little effort on my part as the moderator. In the end, I simply extended the invitation, provided the topic, and found these teachers were genuinely interested in the data collection process, the Fellowship, and providing heartfelt responses."

- Debbie Morgan, Utah Teacher Fellow, regarding her experience moderating focus groups
Kentucky STFs Complete Data Collection

Kentucky Teacher Fellows just wrapped up the Fall 2017 data collection. With overwhelming support from alumni Fellows, current Fellows were able to engage more than 3,500 teachers through the teacher perception survey (a 1,400-teacher increase from Fall 2016), which focused on topics related to developing student employability skills, strengthening the relationship between schools and employers, creating more opportunity and access that leads to student success, and designing culturally competent instruction. The Teacher Fellows conducted focus groups across the state, interacting with more than 390 teachers in the process. Fellows are already seeing early wins with local policy-makers as a result of using evidence from focus group sessions to guide those conversations.

Stan Torzewski Introduced as Kentucky State Teacher Fellows Program Director

Stan Torzewski will be taking over for Brad Clark as Director of the Kentucky State Teacher Fellows Program. He has been an educator in Kentucky since 2004, serving as a teacher, coach and administrator in Nelson County, Oldham County and Jefferson County. Stan is a National Board Certified Teacher, was a KY State Teacher Fellow from 2015-2017, and served on the Hope Street Group Teacher Advisory Council (TAC) prior to stepping into the State Director role. In 2015, Stan founded a program called LIFT (Learn, Invest, Friend, Teach) devoted to Student Agency, with a focus on young people developing leadership skills through passion projects. This program has become a model for student engagement and project-based learning throughout the Jefferson County Public Schools district and state. Stan hopes to continue to expand the reach and deepen the work of the Kentucky Teacher Fellows Program as Director.

“It is because of Hope Street Group, that I have been able to find my voice as a teacher and help my peers find their voice as well. It is vital that we advocate for our profession because our students deserve the best.” - Amanda Klare, Kentucky State Teacher Fellow
Hawai'i State Teacher Fellows Plan ECET2 Conference

In September, alumni and current Fellows, along with a handful of other colleagues, planned the first Hawai'i regional ECET2 (Elevating and Celebrating Effective Teachers and Teaching) summit for teachers on the rural island of Moloka'i, which has a total population of approximately 7,400 people. On-island professional development opportunities are very rare. In September, teachers on the island gathered for a day of high-quality and culturally responsive professional development sessions, plus inspirational keynotes, both featuring teachers from the island. During the day, participants also gathered for colleague circles to discuss their problems of practice. The event ended with a celebratory dinner, where teachers were honored individually by Moloka'i State Representative Lynn DeCoite.
Tennessee State Teacher Fellows Present At LEAD Conference

The Tennessee Department of Education hosted the annual LEAD conference in Nashville October 15-17, 2017. The conference, which gives school and district leaders a chance to share and discuss effective practices, featured five Hope Street Group Teacher Fellows as presenters. Rachel Turner and Heidi King (Hamilton County) shared their strategies for helping disengaged students graduate, and Jessica Childers (Putnam County) discussed effective blended learning in middle school classrooms. Hope Street Group alumni leaders Marc Walls, Teacher Advisory Council (TAC) Member, and Mike Stein, Statewide Engager, reflected on their teacher leadership experiences and provided tangible strategies for teachers interested in pursuing teacher leadership roles in their districts.

Tennessee State Teacher Fellowship Welcomes New Members

The Tennessee Hope Street Group Teacher Fellowship welcomed 21 new members to the cohort this summer. The first convening of the new cohort, facilitated completely by alumni Tennessee Fellows, was held in June. At this Orientation, Fellows learned how to leverage their Professional Learning Networks (PLNs), how to effectively utilize social media and discussed the Tennessee Department of Education’s strategic plan with Dr. Vicki Kirk, Chief Academic Officer at TDOE. After a summer of targeted learning, Fellows reconvened in September to learn how to facilitate the upcoming data collection, which focused on Educator Support and New Teacher Preparation. Amy Owen, Director of Policy and Research at the State Board of Education, facilitated the Ed Policy 201 session, and Dr. Martin Nash, TDOE Executive Director of Educator Preparation and Accreditation, also led a session for Fellows. The final data report, which will include Fellow-driven recommendations, will be publicly released Spring 2018.

“By including teachers in educational changes, you are able to receive a variety of feedback about what is really happening in classrooms across the state. Teachers have the most to gain or lose from changes in education; who better to take ownership than those who have invested their lives in it? With any change comes ‘buy-in’ by those who must live it every day. If you implore educators in the change, they will in turn take it to their colleagues and share.” - Lynnsey Metcalf, Tennessee State Teacher Fellow
Beginning and experienced teacher teams traveled together to Charlotte, North Carolina on October 20 and 21 for the state's second ECET2 conference. Pairs of teachers from districts across the state applied to attend the conference to learn alongside one another, (re)invigorate their practice, solve common problems and leave jointly charged to disseminate impact to colleagues. Hope Street Group North Carolina Teacher Voice Network Fellows Joanna Schimizzi, Justin Parmenter, Lauren Genesky and Kimberly Mahwinhey -- plus alumni Fellows Mamie Hall, Guy Hill and Ben Owens -- were key planners or active participants.

This type of conference, coordinated by Hope Street Group State Teacher Fellows in many of the states in which we work, is intended to elevate and celebrate teachers while focusing on teacher leadership, collaboration and innovation.
Arizona Welcomes New Teacher Fellows

The first cohort of 26 Arizona Teacher Fellows, led by Hope Street Group in partnership with the Arizona K12 Center, were selected in May 2017 and have been learning more and more about the Fellowship experience with each professional learning opportunity that they have had the opportunity to participate in over the past five months.

The Fellows have each endeavored to develop a strong social media presence and successfully complete the first statewide Arizona Data Collection. The Arizona Fellows are hoping to be a voice for educators in their state and serve in both an advisory and advocacy capacity. At their second convening in September, they formed four work groups and are starting to understand the limitless potential of this Fellowship.