



Engaging Teachers in Policy Development

A Review of the 2013 Hope Street Group
National Teacher Fellows' Policy Projects



hope street group

A woman in a red top is standing at the front of a room, gesturing with her hands as if presenting. In the foreground, the back of a person's head and shoulders is visible, looking towards the presenter. The background is a chalkboard with some faint writing. The scene is set in a classroom or meeting room.

Founded on South Hope Street in Los Angeles, Hope Street Group is a national nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that mobilizes leaders across sectors and partisan lines to help tackle our nation's economic challenges. A coalition of the reasonable, we are dedicated to finding smart solutions that can expand economic opportunity and prosperity in America.

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Hope Street Group's (HSG) National Teacher Fellows (NTFs) are classroom teachers and instructional coaches who, as peer leaders, want to contribute their ideas and expertise to help shape national education policy. NTFs interact online and in-person with other teachers, administrators, and policymakers from across the country to learn, share ideas and experiences with education reform, and advocate for policy changes. The work of the NTFs informs education policy in their districts and states throughout the term of their fellowship and beyond.

Every year, HSG selects a new group of NTFs from across the country who receive a stipend to contribute 15-20 hours a month during their one-year fellowship. As local and national spokespersons for teachers' ideas and perspectives, NTF responsibilities include:

- Exploring reform efforts in states;
- Meeting with local, state, and federal policymakers to present teacher-generated solutions to public policy and reform implementation challenges;

- Serving as a local spokesperson for teachers' ideas and perspectives through media interviews and writing op-eds and letters to the editor;
- Initiating, moderating, and analyzing online and in-person teacher discussions about education issues and then developing policy recommendations;
- Attending invitation-only national teacher voice group convenings; and
- Developing and executing a policy project that includes the collection of data, the support of colleagues, and ultimately a policy recommendation that addresses a public policy challenge.

HSG's NTF 2013 cohort consisted of 12 outstanding teachers from: Delaware, Washington, DC, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Maine, New Jersey, New York, Tennessee, and Washington.

Introduction

Each year, NTFs develop and execute a policy project that they work on during their yearlong commitment as a NTF. The policy projects are designed by the NTFs with input and guidance from HSG staff. The projects represent an opportunity for NTFs to work intensively for one year on an issue that is of particular importance to the NTF and their peers. For the 2013 NTFs, policy projects focused on a myriad of topics. 2013 NTF policy project topics included:

- The development of Student Learning Objectives (SLOs);
- The use of Student Perception Surveys used in educator evaluations;
- The development of a districtwide teacher evaluation system;
- The development of a new middle school Career and Technical Education (CTE) course;
- The development of a district-based teacher voice group;
- The development of a research partnership for the purpose of designing a professional learning experience for teachers;
- The development of a virtual space where teachers can post resources for a teacher evaluation tool;
- An analysis of teacher perceptions about the implementation of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS);
- The development of a statewide teacher advisory panel;
- The development of a process to ensure that new standards are disseminated to CTE teachers; and
- The development of resources for the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) for middle school science teachers.

The degree to which the policy projects undertaken by NTFs resulted in a new policy being developed or enacted varied across the projects; however, all of the projects undertaken by NTFs made a contribution to their profession by:

- Engaging peers, some of whom had not previously participated in activities focused on policy-level discussions and decision-making;
- Addressing a concern among teachers that was not being addressed by district or state leaders;
- Creating a new resource for teachers by teachers;
- Advocating for a new resource, policy, or opportunity for teachers or students;
- Identifying gaps in resources; and
- Voicing the concerns of teachers about the overall readiness to implement new standards or a new education reform.

Several themes emerged in the 2013 policy projects, including the value NTFs gained from engaging with policymakers. NTFs felt that building these relationships was a valuable use of their personal and professional time. Other themes also emerged, such as:

- **Overcoming challenges.** Challenges did emerge in the course of the policy projects. Challenges were overcome to varying degrees and required NTFs to employ a wide array of leadership skills.
- **The importance of networking.** The NTFs' pre-existing professional and personal networks were instrumental in the success of their policy projects. The policy projects helped them grow their networks to engage with teachers who they may not have ordinarily interacted with. The NTFs also found value in networking with the other NTFs. Such networking helped grow their networks to include teachers in other states.
- **Collecting data.** NTFs were encouraged to collect data as part of their policy project. This emphasis is predicated on the idea that data can strengthen a position on an issue. Those NTFs that collected data found that the data informed the design of the project and to varying degrees, the form and shape the project took over time.
- **Selection of project focus.** NTFs invariably took on project topics that addressed a need they observed from their unique point of view. Most of the topics focused on some aspect of education reform, such as the implementation of the CCSS, the implementation of educator evaluation systems, and the quality of professional development.
- **NTFs will continue the work they began as part of the fellowship largely because they see the value in the work and know that influencing policy is a process that can take time.** Given that many NTFs had limited experience engaging in the issues they chose as the theme of their policy project, understanding that policy change often occurs slowly was a valuable lesson learned by NTFs.



A close-up photograph of a woman with long, dark, curly hair and a black headband looking intently at a computer monitor. In the foreground, a young girl with her hand resting on her chin looks towards the screen with a focused expression. The background is blurred, suggesting an indoor setting like a library or classroom.

NTF Policy Project Profiles



Indira Bailey is from Plainfield, New Jersey. Indira teaches Commercial Illustration at Essex County Vocational Schools/Bloomfield Campus. Because Indira teaches a non-academic, non-core subject, she observed that both she and her colleagues did not have the information and resources they needed to fully understand and infuse elements of the CCSS into their courses. Indira decided to design a policy project that would address this deficiency. She established the following goals for her project:

- Streamline communication efforts between district and state CTE leaders and instructors;
- Provide CTE instructors with professional development, resources, and supports for classroom implementation; and
- Create a CTE teacher voice network that would serve as a way for CTE teachers to share information.

“The reason why I choose this topic is specifically due to the fact the majority of CTE teachers are unaware and uncomfortable with new state policies.”

Her project began as a district-based endeavor.

Indira’s focus on professional development was one that resonated with many of her colleagues who felt that the quality of professional development they received was not sufficient to help them improve their instruction and infuse elements of CCSS into their daily lessons. To guide her project and the modifications she made over time, Indira designed and administered a survey to her peers in her district. The survey indicated that the majority of teachers

were only “somewhat comfortable” with understanding the various education reforms, including the implementation of CCSS in New Jersey.

Challenges

One of the primary challenges Indira encountered was gathering the support and engagement of district leaders. Though she attempted to meet with them, she was unable to develop a plan with them to improve CCSS training for CTE teachers. In spite of this challenge, Indira was able to meet with state level CTE leaders to learn more about how CCSS implementation impacts CTE teachers. Through this process, she learned that the state has established a working group to address this issue. Indira is now pursuing a role within that group.

Recommendations

Over the course of her project, Indira learned a lot about her colleagues’ perceptions and concerns with CCSS implementation. Her work on this project underscores the importance of clear communication and transparency from the state education agency to the classroom. Indira recommends that state departments of education help support teachers by sharing information with them about new policies that affect them.

NTF Policy Project Profiles



Mella Baxter is a high school reading and English teacher in Palm Coast, Florida. Mella attempted to solve a problem related to her district’s new teacher evaluation model—that evaluative feedback was inadequate in providing actionable guidance to help improve instruction and classroom practice. Her solution was to establish a private online workspace that would serve as a repository of resources for teachers and as a venue where teachers could share ideas about how to improve classroom instruction. For example, if a teacher received feedback on his/her evaluation that lesson planning needed improvement, that teacher could post that issue on the site and another teacher that had more refined skills in lesson planning could post a resource or offer advice for that teacher. Essentially, Mella saw this as a professional development opportunity for herself and her peers.

Challenges

She encountered a number of challenges with fully implementing her project. There was resistance at both the school and district levels to this form of

professional development. Part of the district-based resistance dealt with ongoing negotiations with the teachers’ union about the teacher evaluation model itself. While the school-level resistance was resolved over time, a new challenge emerged when Florida made the decision to withdraw from the Partnership for Assessment

of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessment consortium. Because teachers in Florida do not know how students will be assessed, implementing this project was challenging.

Recommendations

While her fellowship term is over, Mella continues to work on this project because she believes she is meeting an acute need. She knows that feedback is a critical piece of the evaluation process, yet her interaction with peers indicates that the feedback they get is not actionable and in many cases, not timely. She believes that modifications to the original project design will enable her to move forward in spite of the state’s decision about the use of the PARCC assessment. Interestingly, her focus on this project has resulted in a better understanding of the challenges administrators conducting evaluations encounter relative to the training (or lack thereof) they receive on providing feedback to teachers. She sees a clear professional development need among administrators in this regard. Overall, her experience with this project has led her to the conclusion that before an evaluation model can be implemented, high-quality professional development should be provided to teachers and administrators along with an opportunity to pilot or practice the model before high-stakes are attached to the results.

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“I wanted to create a platform where I could provide PD to my teachers outside the school day.”



Brittany Clark is a high school composition teacher from Memphis, Tennessee. Brittany’s policy project focused on the use of student surveys as part of the state’s teacher evaluation system. Specifically, Brittany wanted to know if teachers would be more supportive of student surveys if they could select the classes that would be surveyed. Brittany had observed that in general, teachers in Memphis did not support the use of student surveys in the evaluation process and had overheard peers say they felt the “wrong” students had been surveyed.

Brittany has spent a lot of time reading about the use of student surveys as part of the Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) Project. She feels they are useful and that including them in evaluation results could be beneficial. Brittany also believes that students can provide valuable feedback to their teachers, as they are in the classroom every day.

“The most important takeaway from working on this project is the need for teacher voice and for teachers to be able trust in the system. In order for an evaluation measure to truly be effective, teachers have to buy into it and also understand how to use the data to drive success in their classrooms.”

Challenges

Working with her colleagues at Teach Plus, Brittany engaged teachers across the district. During Brittany’s project, Memphis City Schools merged with Shelby County Schools. The merger presented a challenge to Brittany as she had secured the support of district leaders in Memphis prior to the merger. The merger required her to identify new contacts at the district level to secure support. School district mergers are complex and Brittany found that the complexities of the merger compromised support of her project. The district’s priorities were centered on the issues that emerged once the merger was completed.

Recommendations

Due to the merger, Brittany is still working on her project.

Brittany wrote a synopsis of her struggles to implement this project and the barriers she encountered. She plans to present the synopsis to district leaders. She recommends that the district allow teachers to choose one of the classes surveyed and then provide teachers with the professional development to understand and utilize survey results to improve their instructional practice. She is confident that once new district leadership understands the concerns of teachers relative to the use of the survey, they will invest support and resources in her endeavor.

NTF Policy Project Profiles



Jeanne DelColle is a former high school history teacher in New Jersey and spent the 2013-2014 school year as a teacher in residence at the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE). While at the NJDOE, she developed the New Jersey Teacher Advisory Panel Pilot (NJTAPP) to help bridge the gap between policymakers and practitioners. Teachers met once a month in three regional locations to learn about current initiatives, provide insight, and engage in discussions about content and pedagogy with the goal of informing policy and developing teacher leaders.

The teachers who participated in NJTAPP were selected via a rigorous application process. There was an interest in bringing together a diverse group of educators who would volunteer their time to participate in NJTAPP. Ultimately, the group included teachers representing all grade levels, each county in New Jersey, and a range of teaching experience. All of teachers ultimately selected were considered leaders among their peers.

“When you have information, passion, creativity, and critical thinking in the same place, it is magical. It was enlightening to get a perspective outside of my own classroom/district that I could adapt and take home. I want other teachers to have a similar experience.”

Jeanne is New Jersey’s 2012 Teacher of the Year.

In her role as a state teacher of the year, Jeannie knew firsthand the power teachers have when they work with policymakers to develop innovative and creative solutions to public policy challenges that pertain to teachers. Jeanne collected pre-and post-meeting data from her peers largely because she understood the power of data to policymakers. She used HSG’s Virtual Engagement Platform (VEP), as well as email to engage with her colleagues in between meetings.

Challenges

Jeanne encountered several challenges. One challenge

was keeping conversations productive. She found that with very few, if any, outlets for teachers to discuss their frustrations with the challenges they were experiencing, the NJTAPP meetings could quickly become focused on voicing such frustrations. Jeanne had a vision for the meetings to go beyond discussing what was challenging. It was her goal to move the conversations toward discussing possible solutions.

Recommendations

Overall, Jeanne and the teachers who participated in NJTAPP found the experience valuable. As a result of the productive feedback and input, NJDOE continues to convene NJTAPP teachers. In that regard, Jeanne’s project successfully conveyed to the NJDOE the importance of including educators in their decision-making. Jeanne reports that this project substantiated her belief that teacher engagement works and it is important to genuinely engage teachers as partners in the policy development process.



Courtney Fox is a first grade teacher in Wilmington, Delaware. As Delaware's 2008 Teacher of the Year, Courtney is an active member of a Delaware Teacher of the Year workgroup. As her group was looking for ways to make a greater impact, Courtney decided to develop a partnership with several state partners including the Delaware Department of Education and The Rodel Foundation of Delaware. After working with these partners and HSG staff, Courtney decided to administer a survey to the Teachers of the Year to determine how they felt about the implementation of the CCSS. These same teachers met on three different occasions and reviewed the data, ultimately leading to a set of recommendations for how three distinct stakeholder groups (state policymakers, local leaders, and community members) in Delaware can better help teachers implement CCSS.

"I kept hearing strong teachers talk about the implementation of CCSS and I wanted to bring them together in a formal way and give them an opportunity to impact positive change."

Challenges

Courtney experienced two main challenges as part of this project. The first was that of timing as some of the work was done in the summer. Prior commitments among teachers during the summer months made it difficult to secure teacher participation. Courtney set up a workspace on HSG's Virtual Engagement Platform for the workgroup to communicate between in-person meetings over the summer but found it was a challenge to get teachers to use the workspace largely because they had no prior experience using an online platform to communicate.

Recommendations

The recommendations have been widely distributed in Delaware. HSG, The Rodel Foundation of Delaware, and the Delaware Department of Education created several briefs (the briefs can be found on HSG's Teacher Evaluation Playbook), as well as a video describing the process and detailing how these three stakeholder groups can assist teachers. Courtney presented these findings and issued a call to action at the statewide Vision 2015 conference in October 2013. In addition, she co-authored an op-ed about her experience as well as the survey findings. The op-ed was published in both *Delaware Online* and *Education Week*. Her work has been cited by the Delaware PTA and supported by the State Education Secretary as the type of engagement needed from teachers.

NTF Policy Project Profiles



Doug Hodum is a biology teacher in Farmington, Maine.

Doug established a school district-based working group tasked with making recommendations on the development of a new teacher evaluation system. Doug chose this project because Maine has mandated that a pilot evaluation system be prepared by the end of the 2013-2014 school year for use in the 2014-2015 school year. He felt it would be important to make this endeavor teacher-centered because ultimately, teachers would be impacted. Along with the district assistant superintendent, Doug engaged teachers and community members throughout the district. Participants were selected at the beginning of the process in several ways. As the union president, Doug worked with school representatives to gather recommendations. He also led several information sessions where he asked for volunteers. Doug used the local newspaper to solicit participation from community members. Ultimately the working group included a representative from every school in the district. Since the selection of the workgroup, Doug has co-lead bi-weekly research meetings to determine the best evaluation system for the district.

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“If this committee is truly successful, it will be a shining example of how the public, administration, and teachers can collaborate and generate a high quality, student and teacher centered product that the administration can use.”

Challenges

Doug encountered few, if any, obstacles in this work largely because the district superintendent supported the project and Doug was intentionally inclusive. From the outset, the assistant superintendent and Doug worked closely to establish a strategy to maintain support for the committee among teachers and the community. Doug is still actively working on this project even though his fellowship term ended in January 2014. He is eager to continue the work and feels strongly that the evaluation system he and his colleagues are working to develop will

receive widespread support from his colleagues in the district largely because teachers have been involved in the process to select a model.

Recommendations

Based on the work done by Doug and his colleagues, a pilot of the new evaluation system will be presented to the Maine Department of Education at the end of May 2014. If approved, the pilot will take place during the 2014-2015 school year. Doug’s experience with policymakers has been a positive one. He is committed to continuing to engage with his peers and policymakers as he feels that doing so is worthwhile.



Jatisha Marsh transitioned from a middle school health teacher to Teacher Performance Analyst/Adjunct Instructor for Atlanta Public Schools during her term as a National Teaching Fellow.¹ Jatisha used her policy project as an opportunity to create a local teacher voice group in Atlanta. Known as ACTIVE (Advocate, Connect, Teach, Inform, Voice, Empower), she is the founder and board chair.

The purpose of ACTIVE is to:

- Inform teachers of changes in their working conditions and provide opportunities for feedback;
- Inform teachers of opportunities to comment on proposed policies and budgets;
- Provide advocacy training for teachers;
- Connect teachers with opportunities to engage with political candidates around issues in education; and
- Host events that uplift the teaching profession.

“There are people who make things happen, there are people who watch things happen, and there are people who wonder what happened.’ I want teachers and former teachers in Atlanta to be part of the first group.”

Because some teachers have expressed concerns about being asked to participate in a lot of meetings, ACTIVE meets as part of already scheduled events. During the term of Jatisha’s fellowship, the group met three times to take part in school board debates. They developed and provided questions for the candidates.

Challenges

The challenges Jatisha faced are focused primarily on recruiting members for the group. Jatisha believes the major obstacle in recruiting teachers is teacher burnout.

In addition, Jatisha believes her new role at the central district office has hampered her ability to recruit new teachers for the group. She feels that her current role presents the false pretense that the group’s leadership is central office-based as opposed to teacher-based.

Recommendations

Jatisha is passionate about ensuring that teacher voice is taken into consideration in district decision-making. As a result of her work with ACTIVE, she recommends that when districts make major decisions that impact educators, a representative sample of teachers are consulted. She believes teacher input should be considered before a policy is adopted. In addition, current economic conditions coupled with a changing political landscape have increased teacher burnout. As a result, Jatisha also recommends that policymakers quantify and capture the responsibilities placed on teachers and be strategic when changing certain aspects of a teacher’s workload.

1. NTFs are required to be either a classroom teacher or instructional coach. Because the fellowship spans two school years, fellows who are promoted to positions in the second half of their fellowship year are allowed to continue in the fellowship.

NTF Policy Project Profiles



Lauren McAlee taught kindergarten in Washington, DC during the term of her fellowship. She now serves as a Coordinator for Close Reading Professional Development in the district's Office of Teaching and Learning. Because she has served as both a classroom teacher and district-level educator, she saw firsthand that while some professional development is theoretically sound, the practices are not always transferred into classrooms. She observed several challenges to transferring what is learned in professional development to classroom practice. Primary among these challenges is the lack of alignment between district programs.

Lauren initiated and studied district-to-classroom research partnerships in her district as her policy project. She worked with an existing district initiative that provides yearlong professional learning for classroom teachers centered on reading of complex texts. Throughout her project, Lauren worked closely with six of her colleagues from schools across the district. These teachers participated in research partnerships where they worked collaboratively with

district level professional learning designers for one year. The partnerships were developed with two goals—to improve the design and implementation of the district professional development program and support teachers' professional growth. From this initial project work, Lauren created templates and tools for additional research partnerships. She also developed the beginnings of a set of best practices for research partnerships, something she hopes to refine over time and use district-wide.

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“Districts put a huge amount of resources into generating classroom support, and teachers desperately need support for their work.”

Challenges

Lauren experienced a number of challenges with this project. Chief among them was a change in project focus after a team with which she had begun collaboration shifted their work. While this challenge was significant, Lauren was able to find other opportunities for collaboration within the district and was able to continue her work.

Recommendations

Lauren decided to evaluate teachers' growth of close reading practice through ongoing evaluation of classroom teaching on the Student Achievement Partners' (SAP) Instructional Practice Guides. These data can ultimately help prove that the research partnerships within the district meet the goal of improving instruction. Additionally, these data could indicate long-term effectiveness of research partnerships. Based on initial, anecdotal evidence that research partnerships improve district professional development design, she recommends that districts pilot district-to-classroom research partnerships for priority professional learning programs, using the templates and tools from her district's research partnerships.



Greg Mullenholz is currently an assistant principal in Maryland. While Greg was a National Teacher Fellow, he was an instructional coach and classroom teacher.¹ Greg chose to take on the issue of developing SLOs because he felt there was confusion among his peers about their intent and function. He had also observed that there was minimal professional development being offered to teachers on how to develop SLOs. Because SLOs have the potential to be a powerful metric in evaluating teachers, he felt strongly that his policy project should be focused on SLOs.

His project works to harness the expertise of a group of teachers from several districts in Maryland. The project is intended to create locally created and appropriate supports for teachers. Along with colleagues from other districts, Greg has designed a series of professional development offerings, as well as the beginnings of what will become a resource bank for teachers to use to develop meaningful, targeted

SLOs. The project also focuses on developing other resources such as: training videos, SLO exemplars, FAQs, analytic tools, and rubrics. The teachers engaged in this project will serve as district point persons for SLO development. Greg has not only engaged with his peers as a result of his project, but also officials from the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and Governor Martin O'Malley's office.

“As a proof of concept, it would provide the source of data to show the critical nature of engaging educators in reforms that directly impact their profession.”

Challenges

With the emphasis of the project on working across the state to tap into the expertise that currently exists within the state among teachers, trying to work through currently existing structures and organizations to engage the educators they represent has been difficult. In spite of this challenge, Greg and his colleagues are working hard to ensure that teachers receive high quality, highly effective professional development and support on the development of SLOs.

Recommendations

As is the case with many of the 2013 NTFs, Greg is still working on this project even though his term as a fellow has ended. There is still a lot of work to be done but he feels that the project's long-term prospects are good, particularly because of the pervasive need to provide teachers with these resources and support. Greg recommends that specific requirements for professional development be established when a new policy is developed so teachers get the training, support, and resources they need.

1. NTFs are required to be either a classroom teacher or instructional coach. Because the fellowship spans two school years, fellows who are promoted to positions in the second half of their fellowship year are allowed to continue in the fellowship.

NTF Policy Project Profiles



Lauren Prentiss is a middle school science teacher in New York City. Lauren focused her project on the creation of resources for middle school science teachers that are aligned to NGSS and the CCSS. Lauren was intentional in her efforts to build and grow the network of teachers she worked with on this project. Her membership in several professional networks proved to be invaluable in this effort.

Lauren and her peers initially set out to develop, review, and share performance assessments because initially, no guidance was provided to teachers on what constituted a performance assessment. There was also a deficit in terms of resources available to science teachers on how to infuse the NGSS into their subject area. For her policy project, Lauren worked with a group of science teachers from numerous middle schools in New York.

Challenges

At the outset of her project, New York City had just finalized the design of an evaluation system for all teachers to be implemented beginning in the 2013-2014 school year. Though the evaluation components were clear, the assessment tools for non-tested grades and subjects were not released until August 2013. Infrequent communication and confusion among teachers about assessment tools made it difficult to develop performance assessments that would be aligned with New York City's standards.

"In order for teachers to be useful in policy conversations, they need relevant classroom experience and also time to contribute to policy work."

Recommendations

While eventually these resources were provided by the New York City Department of Education, Lauren still felt that additional curricular resources were needed to help teachers and as a result, her project is still in progress. Using performance assessments that genuinely assess a student's understanding and application of the scientific method is far superior to reciting isolated facts. By creating these assessments, Lauren hopes to support other science teachers. She believes she has a capable, dedicated group of educators to complete the project and expects to have educator-designed resources available in the coming months. Her goal at this time is finding a way to get the resources she and her peers developed vetted by department of education officials so they can be distributed via district-supported tools.



Tammie Schrader is a middle school science teacher in Washington. She believes early exposure to computer programming will help students take an interest in STEM (science, technology, engineering, or mathematics) careers. She began searching for a computer coding curriculum for her middle school students to engage them early in STEM-centric coursework. She realized that such a curriculum did not exist, so she decided to build her own curriculum.

To develop her curriculum, Tammie engaged with her peers at conferences and in person. She developed partnerships with leaders in her district, as well as with leaders in neighboring districts. She also recruited the local university faculty in her efforts. As part of this partnership, Eastern Washington University started a mentoring program for their college students to come to the middle school and help Tammie's students learn to code.

"I recommend that all teachers learn about policy and how to impact policy from the beginning of their teacher tenure. Every teacher should be exposed to local, state, and federal legislation and learn that they have the power to positively influence change through hard work and perseverance."

Assessments for the course are currently being designed and piloted. Tammie has been working closely with the Washington State Department of Education and code.org throughout her project. These partnerships have been valuable, specifically in terms of informing the training of teachers, the creation of assessments for the curriculum, and assessing the curriculum itself.

Challenges

Tammie encountered some challenges finding a model she could use to develop the course. Because she was unable to find a model, she developed a model of her own. This means that the course has to be piloted for at least one year. Along with this, assessments and a

framework are also being created. The biggest challenge with this project has been time, as she was balancing building the new curriculum and facilitating collaboration with peers. Finding partners from across the state, as well as from other regions of the country, has been difficult but also one of the most rewarding parts of the project.

Recommendations

Tammie continues to work on this project with her peers and knows there is still more work to be done, including aligning the student results from the course assessment to the state evaluation system. Tammie has been asked to write and publish a beginner's guide for other teachers to implement coding in the classroom. She has also been asked to present at several conferences and was highlighted in the *Seattle Times* for her work on gaming and coding.



Biographies of 2013

Indira Bailey

High School Arts Teacher

Plainfield, New Jersey

Indira Bailey teaches Commercial Illustration at Essex County Vocational Schools/Bloomfield Campus. Indira's goal is to teach students to communicate their ideas using creative methods. With her dedication to art education and student achievement, she started the district's first National Art Honor Society. She also publishes the "Indira," a newsletter designed to inspire art. Indira received a Bachelor's in Fine Arts from Pratt Institute, New York, and a Master's of Arts in Educational Leadership and Supervision from Kean University. Indira was named 2012-2013 Essex County Teacher of the Year and a Finalist for New Jersey Teacher of the Year. She has been the recipient of Fulbright Fellowships to South Africa, Japan, and Morocco. Indira was the first co-recipient of the Inaugural South African Initiative Vision Award from Rutgers Graduate School of Education. She is also a professional artist and exhibits her artwork throughout the tri-state area.

Mella Baxter

High School English/Language Arts Teacher

Palm Coast, Florida

Mella Baxter, named the Flagler County Secondary Reading Coach of the Year in 2007, works as a Reading Coach and English Teacher at Matanzas High School in Palm Coast, Florida. She planned and conducted professional development that helped her school go from a D to an A average in a single year. She enjoys working with teachers and struggling readers to help them graduate and prepare them for life beyond high school. Mella graduated cum laude from Missouri University of Science and Technology with a Bachelor's in English and minors in Computer Science, Communications and Psychology. She earned her Master's of Juridical

Studies degree from Washington University School of Law with a thesis on law-related education while simultaneously earning her certification in secondary education-English from the University of Missouri-St. Louis. Mella has experience writing curriculum, speaking at public education events, serving as English Department Chair, and working as an adjunct professor/instructor teaching both remedial college courses and graduate education courses.

Brittany Clark

High School Composition Teacher

Memphis, Tennessee

Brittany Clark teaches 10th-12th grade English, as well as Dual Enrollment Composition at Middle College High School in Memphis, Tennessee. Brittany is also an adjunct professor at the University of Memphis. She has mentored teachers for the past four years through the Memphis Teacher Residency Program. Several of Brittany's opinion pieces have been published in the *Huffington Post* and *The Impatient Optimist*, among others. Brittany currently serves as the co-chair of the Memphis City/Shelby County Schools Compensation Working Group, is an Ambassador for the Teacher Effectiveness Measure, is the teacher representative for the Memphis City Schools Professional Development Council, and is one of the few teachers in Memphis City Schools to receive the title of "Irreplaceable" due to her level 5 evaluation score. Brittany has participated in many speaking engagements centered on teacher effectiveness including the Bill and Melinda Gates Elevating Effective Teaching Conference and a Senate committee hearing in Washington, DC. Brittany is a former Teacher Plus Policy Fellow, a current America Achieves Fellow and also serves on the Gates Teacher Advisory Council.

Biographies of 2013

Jeanne DelColle

High School History Teacher

Marlton, New Jersey

Jeanne DelColle was the 2012 New Jersey State Teacher of the Year. She teaches U.S. and World History at the Burlington County Institute of Technology, where she has been since 2003. Referred to as the “real-life female Indiana Jones” by her students, Jeanne brings the rest of the world into the classroom by sharing her experiences. Currently on sabbatical as a teacher-in-residence at the NJDOE, Jeanne is a member of the state’s committees on educator evaluation, model curriculum design, and higher education reform. She is the creator and editor of an educator newsletter called “The Bridge.” Jeanne earned a Master’s in Liberal Studies from Rutgers University-Camden and a Postgraduate Diploma in Politics and International Studies from the University of Warwick in Coventry, England. She earned two Bachelor’s degrees from Richard Stockton College, during which time she spent a year at Cambridge University in England studying history. Jeanne was named the 2012 NJ History Teacher of the Year, the 2010 NJ Humanities Teacher of the Year, and a Woman of Distinction by Senator Menendez during Women’s History Month.

Courtney Fox

1st Grade Self-Contained Gifted Teacher

Wilmington, Delaware

Courtney Fox was the Delaware State Teacher of the Year in 2008. She is a first grade teacher in Wilmington, Delaware. Over the fourteen years she has taught, she has also worked as a consultant for the Northeast Foundation for Children and has been presenting the Responsive Classroom Approach nationally for ten years. Her graduate work has included a Master’s degree in Curriculum and Instruction, Gifted Education Certification, and

Administrative Certification. She is Nationally Board Certified. Currently, Courtney is pursuing a Ph.D. in Administrative Leadership. She serves on an Advisory Board for the Delaware Department of Education and is a Board member for the Delaware Teacher Center. Courtney has received a number of awards including a National Endowment for the Humanities Picturing America Award, NEA Teaching Excellence Award, Secretary of Education Merit Award, Character in Education Promising Practices Award, and a Delaware Superstars in Education Award.

Doug Hodum

10th Grade Biology Teacher

Farmington, Maine

Douglas Hodum is a science teacher and the science department head at Mt. Blue High School in Farmington, Maine. He is active in science education, both as a past participant in the Maine Governor’s Academy for Teacher Leaders in Mathematics and Science and in his current role as President of the Maine Science Teachers’ Association (MSTA). In his capacity as a member of the board of MSTA, Doug has provided input into the review process of the drafts of the NGSS at the state level. Doug has a Master’s degree in Ecology and Environmental Science from the University of Maine and a Bachelor’s degree in Environmental Technology from Grinnell College in Grinnell, Iowa.

Allison Hunt

High School AP Human Geography Teacher

Jefferson County, Kentucky

Allison Hunt, the 2013 Kentucky High School Teacher of the Year, is an Advanced Placement Human Geography teacher at duPont Manual High School in Louisville, KY. She earned her Bachelor’s of Science degree from Georgetown College and her Master’s of Arts in Teaching from the University of Louisville.



Allison is also a National Board Certified Teacher. In addition to her teaching load, she also advises the Student Senate, sponsors the Class of 2015, sponsors the History Club, and coaches the EuroChallenge and History Bowl teams. She is also the moderator of the AP Human Geography Community, a steering committee member for the Kentucky Geography Alliance, a board member for the Kentucky Association of School Councils, and president of the Kentucky Association of Teachers of History. She has received awards including the 2012 Gold Star Teacher Award from wlse, 2012 Behring National History Day Kentucky Teacher of the Year, 2011 WHAS-TV ExCEL Award, 2009 Distinguished Teacher Award from the National Council for Geographic Education, and the 2008 Kentucky Outstanding Social Studies Teacher of the Year Award from the Kentucky Council of Social Studies. Allison worked closely with HSG to launch the State Teacher Fellows program

in Kentucky. She currently works with HSG's State Director in Kentucky to run the program.

Jatisha Marsh

Middle School Health Teacher

Atlanta, Georgia

During her time as a NTF, Jatisha Marsh worked as a middle school teacher at Inman Middle School where she is a member of the local School Council, an Atlanta Public Schools Ethics Advocate, and the Site Director for the before care and after school program. Jatisha was selected as a Fellow for the Atlanta New Leaders Council Institute. She also serves as the Research Subcommittee-Committee Chair for the Junior League of Atlanta Political Affairs Committee and Graduate Advisor in the Pi Alpha Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. She attended Florida A&M University on a full scholarship and graduated summa cum laude with Bachelor's degrees in Business Management and History as well as a Master's in Business Administration. She holds a Master of Public Policy degree from Georgia State University. Jatisha entered the teaching profession in 2006 through Teach For America. She has received a number of recognitions and honors, which include appointment to the APS Farm to School Task Force, TFA/CRSS School Board Fellowship, and IIE Korean Workshop for American Educators Award Recipient. Jatisha also serves as a Recruitment Ambassador for TNTP.

Lauren McAlee

Kindergarten Teacher

Washington, D.C.

Lauren McAlee has taught Kindergarten since 2008 at Scott Montgomery Elementary and The Walker-Jones Education Campus. In her school, she coordinates the Vertical Alignment Team and represents teachers on the Leadership Team. Within D.C. Public Schools,



she writes curriculum and assessments aligned to the CCSS for the Common Core Reading Corps and the D.C. Collaborative for Change. Lauren majored in Education Policy at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where she graduated Phi Beta Kappa with Honors. She also holds a Master's degree in Early Childhood Education from George Mason University and has served as a Teacher for America Corp member. Lauren has been recognized as a Highly Effective teacher under D.C.'s rigorous IMPACT Evaluation System, and was named as a Distinguished Teacher, the highest stage available on the District's LIFT Career Ladder in 2012. Her project-based teaching with her school's urban farm was featured on CNN, and she has received a Truman Scholarship for exceptional leadership potential.

Greg Mullenholz

K-5 Math Coach

Montgomery County, Maryland

Greg Mullenholz, a 2004 Kurzweil Educational Systems Teaching Excellence Award Winner. During his term as a NTF, Greg worked as a Math Content Coach at Greencastle Elementary School in Montgomery County, Maryland. Greg helped to pilot his school's full-inclusion special education program. He also led initiatives around the state's Race to the Top grant. Greg has also served as a professional developer and instructional coach to his school community. Greg has a Master's degree in Educational Administration and Supervision from Johns Hopkins University and a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education from Mount Saint Mary's University, where he sits on the School of Education and Human Services Alumni Council. Greg spent the 2011-2012 school year at the U.S. Department of Education serving as a Washington Teaching Ambassador Fellow. While in Washington, Greg worked in the Office of the Secretary in the Reform Support Network, providing technical assistance to state-level Race to the Top grantees in the areas of Teacher & Leader Evaluation and Standards & Assessments.

Lauren Prentiss

K-5 Math Coach

New York City, New York

Lauren Prentiss is a 7th and 8th grade science teacher at Dual Language Middle School MS 247 in New York. Her experience teaching in a high needs setting has inspired her passion for educational equity for all children. Her current interests include teacher development and evaluation along with advancements in STEM education. Lauren doubled majored in Ecology & Biodiversity and Environmental Science and

double minored in Leadership Studies and Geography at the University of Denver. She is a Teach for America alumna. She completed her Master of Science for Teachers in Adolescent Education at Pace University in 2010. Lauren has been a part of the National Science Foundation Graduate Teaching Fellows in K-12 Education Fellowship for five years. In connection with this fellowship, each of her eighth grade students is currently conducting data collection at Columbia University for their science fair projects.

Tammie Schrader

7th Grade Life Science Teacher

Cheney, Washington

Tammie Schrader is a science teacher at Cheney Middle School in Cheney, Washington, as well as an adjunct science methods instructor at Gonzaga University. Tammie has a B.A. in Education as well as a B.S. in Biology. She earned her M.A. in Education and Teaching At Risk Students and is currently enrolled as a Ph.D. candidate and is writing her dissertation on Leadership and Policy in the Classroom. She is also National Board Certified in Early Adolescent Science. Tammie currently works for the state of Washington on their Science Assessment Leadership Team and sits on the Education Board working on implementing video games into curriculum. Tammie was a 2008-2009 Teacher Fellow for the U.S. Department of Education and was awarded Pacific Northwest Earth Science Teacher of the Year, as well as being selected to work on Washington State STEM programs. Tammie spent the first 7 years of her career life in Southern California working on the Space Shuttle Program for Rocketdyne International.







Hope Street Group's Education Program seeks to transform the teaching profession to improve outcomes for students. Our Education Program features a collaborative approach that brings together the most experienced thought leaders in education, with leading involvement from teachers themselves.

Convenings: Through bipartisan events, Hope Street Group convenes our diverse network of thought leaders and practitioners to focus on developing bold, evidence-based solutions, and identifying the structural changes needed in education.

National Teacher Fellows Program: The Hope Street Group National Teacher Fellows Program is a highly competitive opportunity for classroom teachers and instructional coaches from across the country to serve for one year as a distinguished National Teacher Fellow. Our Fellows are leaders among their peers and are passionate about contributing their ideas and expertise to help shape education reform.

State Teacher Fellows Program: Currently in operation in Kentucky, the State Teacher Fellows program is a highly competitive opportunity for classroom teachers and instructional coaches to spend one year recruiting and organizing a group of their colleagues from their region into a Professional Learning Network (PLN). This local outreach method gives thousands of teachers a sought-after seat at the table and a voice in shaping education policy and informing the implementation of education reforms. The State Teacher Fellows program will expand to additional states in 2014-2015.

Strategic Partnerships: Hope Street Group is involved in a number of strategic partnerships with national organizations, all designed to improve the working conditions of educators and the outcomes of students.



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