

POWER NETWORKS: TEACHERS DRIVING CHANGE, PEER TO PEER

In the past ten years, Teach Plus has demonstrated the power of bringing teachers together to innovate and share solutions to systemic challenges facing their students. Our programs form local networks of teacher leaders who assess student needs and lead continuous improvement cycles to address them. In 2018, Teach Plus supported three forms of teacher networks that empowered teacher leaders to elevate teacher and student performance:

- In Indianapolis and Chicago Public Schools, Teach Plus Teacher Leaders partnered with their administrators through the Change Agent program to address a problem of practice in their school. These teacher leaders connected across their schools to learn from each other's successes in motivating and sustaining changes in the practices of their peers.
- In Philadelphia, Teach Plus Teacher Leaders in the T3 program led grade- and content-level teams of their peers in five School District of Philadelphia public schools to improve early literacy student outcomes. Supported by Teach Plus coaches, the teacher leaders met across schools to share strategies on how to more effectively use student data to drive next steps in their continuous improvement processes.
- In Los Angeles and Greater Boston, Teach Plus Teacher Leaders networked within individual schools and across communities to build skills in discrete priority areas, sharing expertise across traditional district and charter schools. Working with leadership and teachers to identify learning needs, Teach Plus selected and supported expert teachers to design and lead five-week, graduate-level courses for hundreds of their peers that changed how their participating teachers taught.

The work in Greater Boston illustrates how Teach Plus' policy and practice programs reinforce each other and allow for independent teacher voice to provide practical and timely solutions to urgent student challenges. In conversations with our teachers and with stakeholders, a key priority emerged around supporting social emotional learning in our schools. Subsequently, Teach Plus Teacher Leaders in the Massachusetts Policy Fellowship partnered with the Massachusetts Department of Education, the Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy, and Transforming Ed to host a conference for over 100 teachers that explored and addressed policy and practice issues on social and emotional learning, developing policy recommendations that will feed into advocacy during the 2019 legislative cycle.

At the same time, Teach Plus Teacher Leaders in the practice programs partnered with the Boston Compact, a cross-sector partnership led by the Mayor's office, to form the Boston Educators Collaborative (BEC), a series of professional learning courses led by expert teachers, and focused on scaling an individual teacher's expertise in SEL beyond the walls of her/his classroom to the broader Boston community.



Teacher participants at the Educator Perspectives and Promising Practices in Social Emotional Learning conference.



Deepening the Teach Plus Network Approach in 2019

Looking forward, Teach Plus will further deepen its expertise, creating ever-expanding networks that connect teachers across traditional divides to learn from one another and apply improvement science-based practices at scale. As a participant in the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation inaugural Networks for School Improvement (NSI) initiative, Teach Plus is focusing on improving math outcomes for middle school students. The Teach Plus NSI network of schools in Chicago and Los Angeles will work to increase the share of African-American, Latino, and low-income students across these two cities who are achieving proficiency in 8th grade math, elevating classroom practice and outcomes for these groups of learners.

Teacher leaders across the NSI network have begun to identify common problems of practice and will further develop, implement, and refine strategies to generate solutions based on a real-time analysis of data within their schools. Teach Plus is partnering closely with the Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy to scale learning across our network, using their evidence-based Change Management Framework to develop continuous improvement skills among teacher leaders, principals, and peer teachers.

Our work with NSI and across our regions is helping us fully realize the potential of the Teach Plus network of teacher leaders as they strive to build the teaching profession and advance equity and opportunity for students.

