



DEEPER LEARNING NETWORKS: TAKING STUDENT-CENTERED LEARNING AND EQUITY TO SCALE

Highlights from Laura E. Hernández, Linda Darling-Hammond, Julie Adams, and Kathryn Bradley

RESEARCH METHODS

Research design: multisite nested case study approach using exemplar cases

Analysis techniques: qualitative coding

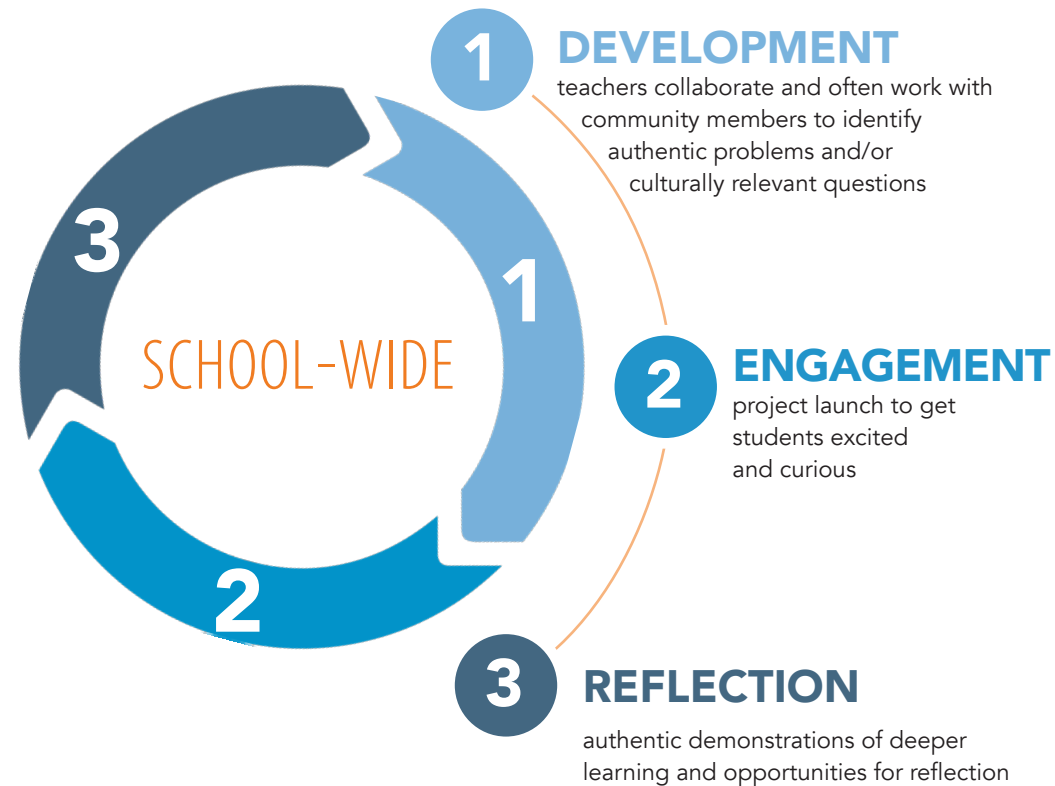
Data sources: 71 interviews, observations across 6 trainings and events, analysis of 165 documents

Timeframe: July 2017 to May 2018

Hernández, Darling-Hammond, Adams, and Bradley conducted a multisite case study to investigate school networks successfully using deeper learning to meet all student needs and to identify the mechanisms that have enabled these school networks to replicate their sophisticated and equity-oriented learning models. Three networks, including New Tech Network (NTN), were identified by Hernández, Darling-Hammond, Adams, and Bradley as examples of information-rich cases with an exemplary track record of partnering with school districts to establish and sustain deeper learning schools enabling each student to excel academically and in noncognitive domains.

ABOUT LPI This Learning Policy Institute (LPI) research project was funded by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. Linda Darling-Hammond is the founding president of LPI, created to provide high-quality research for policies that enable equitable and empowering education for each child. In 2006, Linda Darling-Hammond was named one of the nation's 10 most influential people affecting educational policy. Learning Policy Institute is a nonprofit and nonpartisan organization that conducts independent, high-quality research to improve education policy and practice.

NTN PROJECT BASED LEARNING MODEL



This summary was prepared in December 2019 by New Tech Network. To cite the full report please use the following: Hernández, L. E., Darling-Hammond L., Adams, J., & Bradley, K. (with Duncan Grand, D., Roc, M., & Ross, P.). (2019). *Deeper learning networks: Taking student-centered learning and equity to scale*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.

The full report can be found online at: <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/deeper-learning-networks>.




DESCRIPTION OF NTN

New Tech Network has spread a powerful school model featuring deeper learning without diluting their practices. New Tech Network engages in inquiry-based learning that has resulted in positive outcomes for students and successfully instantiated, sustained, and spread deeper learning practices across multiple sites in ways that advance equity. The NTN model is designed around inclusion in, and equitable access to, deeper learning experiences for all students, including designing for students who are ELL and/or have IEPs: "PBL is for every kid."



"Furthermore, they have supported practitioners in enacting their sophisticated school models in ways that bring these experiences to students furthest from opportunity, mitigating inequities that generate disparities in access, school quality, and achievement." Pg 2

Hernández, Darling-Hammond, Adams, and Bradley highlight the following features of New Tech Network Schools:

-  project based learning
-  college and career readiness for all
-  provide systems of academic and social-emotional learning



supported through access to project exemplars, assessment banks, and tools in the NTN learning management system



teachers build relationships with their students using structures like advisories



design for diversity in ability levels to include each student in the learning as noted by one school leader:



"There's no sitting in the back and getting lost... This forces those students to come out of that background and actually be active in what's taking place. That's the beauty of it. It's turning over the learning to the students." Pg 31

IMPLICATIONS

New Tech Network effectively sustains and scales an innovative school model, successfully overcoming a common challenge for many other innovative school models. It is simply not enough for school models to be innovative, these models must also be sustainable and scalable.

Hernández, Darling-Hammond, Adams, and Bradley's data analysis identified common systems across the networks that are **key drivers of success**:



School design

features that enable interdisciplinary learning, teacher looping, time for teachers and students to

engage in collaborative and applied learning, academic credit for real-world tasks, and systems of social and emotional support.



Collaboration

with local stakeholders to ensure adoption is not a top-down mandate.



Ongoing teacher and school leader **professional learning opportunities** that

enable educators to experience deeper learning in ways that build and reinforce their knowledge.



Leadership pipelines

that create a workforce that can successfully instantiate their deeper learning and equity-oriented models in new and existing sites.

