For Immediate Release

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Texas Network for School Improvement Collaborative Announces Four North Texas Districts Chosen for Program to Improve 8th Grade Math Outcomes

Partners Educate Texas, Learning Forward and the Charles A. Dana Center will Lead Effort

DALLAS (Dec. 13, 2018) – After a rigorous submission and vetting process, the Texas Network for School Improvement Collaborative (TXNSI Collaborative), a partnership between Educate Texas, a public-private initiative of Communities Foundation of Texas, Learning Forward and the Charles A. Dana Center at The University of Texas at Austin (the Dana Center), has chosen four North Texas school districts to participate in an innovative, new program funded by a $500,000 grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. As one of 21 Network for School Improvement sites across the nation, this program aims to increase 8th grade math proficiency, a key indicator of ongoing educational success among low-income, Hispanic and Latino students utilizing a structured continuous improvement process.

The chosen districts include Duncanville ISD, Crowley ISD, Lancaster ISD and Garland ISD. Within those districts, 10 middle school campuses will be participating in the program:

- Duncanville ISD – Byrd Middle School, Kennemer Middle School, Reed Middle School
- Crowley ISD – Crowley Middle School, HF Stevens Middle School, Summer Creek Middle School
- Lancaster ISD – Elsie Robertson Middle School
- Garland ISD – Coyle Middle School, Schrade Middle School, Sellers Middle School

“We cast a wide net to find those school districts proactively looking to improve middle school math outcomes and who have shown themselves to be strong, collaborative partners,” said Kristin Kuhne, senior director of insights and analytics for Educate Texas. “We’re excited to kick-off this program and to move the needle on 8th grade math proficiency because we know it’s a gateway course and indicator of students’ future success.”

The one-year Gates grant, awarded to the newly formed TXNSI Collaborative, will support each district/school team by collaborating on a root-causes analysis, and will then equip and support teams to implement targeted interventions and improvements using a structured continuous improvement process.
Middle School Math Outcomes 1st Add

Our sincere hope is this grant will be just the first phase of a sustained, successful process to address the capacity of educators to support students’ ongoing educational success across the state,” said Stephanie Hirsh, executive director, Learning Forward.

“Collectively, we’ve seen the need – and sought out the opportunity – to take on 8th grade math outcomes as a way of equitably changing the trajectory for students as they enter high school, and now we have that chance,” said Doug Sovde, director of K-12 education strategy, policy, and services at The Dana Center.

“We see this collaborative as key to immediately improving outcomes for students in 8th grade math. Long-term, we’re also incredibly excited to scale the lessons we learn to our entire district to improve learning for all students in all schools at every level,” added Nicholas Keith, executive director or curriculum and instruction at Crowley ISD and TXNSI steering committee member.

Educate Texas, Learning Forward and the Dana Center each bring unique expertise to the initiative, all serving specific roles to ensure success.

For more than a decade, Educate Texas has partnered with public and private entities to achieve large-scale change to transform the Texas public and higher education systems so that every student is successful in school, the workforce and life. Educate Texas will serve as the lead network developer and will be responsible for identifying the network of schools, coordinating network communication and convenings, and providing data analysis.

Learning Forward, an international membership association focused on building education leaders’ capacity to establish and sustain highly effective professional learning, brings its expertise in continuous improvement to the project. Learning Forward will support the network and participating school teams to implement improvement science concepts to advance schools’ progress toward identified goals.

The Dana Center, with a long history in both K-12 and postsecondary mathematics instruction, policy, and research, will support the network with subject matter expertise in math education and student success. The Dana Center’s work supports educators, administrators, and policymakers in creating seamless transitions throughout the K–16 system for all students, especially the underserved.

Visit edtx.org for more information on this initiative. On Twitter: #TXNSI

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