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# UW College of Education

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## Central Office TEN launches to support educational equity practices in school districts

Mar 14 2022



The University of Washington College of Education District Leadership Design Lab

(<https://dl2.education.uw.edu/>) (DL2) is launching the Central Office Transformation for Equity Network (Central Office TEN), an innovative approach to advancing educational equity within school district central offices, thanks to a generous grant from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation (<https://hewlett.org/>).

School district central offices can be vital engines for educational equity by ensuring high-quality teaching and learning that centers, values and elevates the success of students of color, including students who identify as Black, Indigenous and Latinx, as well as students whose first language is not English. But historically, central offices have not had effective equity practices. Research and experience have shown that to make meaningful improvements, central offices must fundamentally transform every function in service of equity.

The Central Office TEN supports districts through this challenging work. Network leaders are from school districts across the country who have committed to advancing central office transformation for equity. Over two academic years, district teams will convene online and onsite to learn while doing — deepening their understanding of central office transformation as they design and implement their own approaches and support each other's efforts. Participants will also receive coaching to grow their capacity to lead central office transformation for equity from an anti-racist, teaching and learning stance.

We created the Central Office TEN to provide a new space for district leaders to come together to use the latest research to advance their equity work.

"So many school district superintendents know that their central offices are not performing nearly well enough in advancing educational equity," said director of DL2 and professor of Educational Policy, Organizations and Leadership, Meredith Honig. "But what does doing better look like? And how do you get there? Our research provides important answers to those questions. We created the Central Office TEN to provide a new space for district leaders to come together to use the latest research to advance their equity work."

"In Highline Public Schools, we are excited to be partnering with Central Office TEN, and the potential this partnership has for making a difference for students," said chief talent officer at Highline Public Schools Dr. Steven Grubb. "As we move from this most recent stage of the pandemic into a phase of recovery, now is the time to double down on our efforts to ensure that the services of the central office, and the human resources department in particular, make that difference. In Highline, we've been working over the course of several years with DL2 to build systems and structures which support the kind of high-quality teaching and learning that centers, values and elevates the success of our students — especially those who have historically been underserved by schools and central offices alike."

Dr. Monifa McKnight, superintendent of Montgomery County Public Schools in Maryland, also shared her excitement about this work. "We are thrilled to be part of the Central Office TEN. We are hopeful that we can use this opportunity to advance our transformation for equity, creating a school district where all students,

families and staff feel safe, valued, seen, heard and successful. We look forward to the opportunity to collaborate with leaders from other districts on this journey, sharing experiences and working together to design new systems where central offices are the engines of educational equity.”

The Central Office TEN will also produce resources for the field, including research-based tools for advancing central office transformation for equity, leaders to serve as learning partners for other districts and new scholarship about how central offices can be engines of educational equity. “Our research is a jumping off point,” said Honig. “It’s a foundation, a catapult that districts can use to then discover what’s possible. We are excited to learn from them!” She added, “We are also excited to learn from our partners at The Leadership Academy (<https://www.leadershipacademy.org/>) who will support participating district leaders in taking an anti-racist and culturally responsive approach to their leadership of central office transformation for equity.”

“It takes exceptional and intentional leadership to transform schools,” said The Leadership Academy president & CEO Nancy Gutiérrez. “We are thrilled to be part of this innovative project that will give senior education leaders the support, resources and research-based guidance they need to dismantle systemic inequities and create culturally responsive schools where every student feels valued and has access to the rigorous and engaging learning opportunities they need to thrive.”

Thank you to the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation for their generous two-year grant that will support this important work.

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## About the District Leadership Design Lab (DL2) at the University of Washington

Since 2014, DL2 has generated rigorous and actionable knowledge about what central offices do when they support equitable teaching and learning in schools. They help district leaders by:

- Providing access to research and the latest knowledge in the field,
- Helping them use that knowledge to design new central office systems likely to be successful in their settings and
- Leading central office transformation from a culturally responsive, teaching-and-learning stance to support an excellent education for every student.

Their central office focus areas include teaching and learning, human resources, principal supervision, operations, data systems and superintendent/cabinet leadership.

## Contact:

Inquiries about the District Leadership Design Lab (DL2) may be directed to [DL2uw@uw.edu](mailto:DL2uw@uw.edu) (<mailto:DL2uw@uw.edu>).

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The Spokesman Review (<https://www.spokesman.com/stories/2022/feb/17/washington-education-administrator-advances-to-sen/>)

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### Seattle's Academy for Rising Educators aims to fill a critical classroom need

The Seattle Times (<https://www.seattletimes.com/education-lab/seattles-academy-for-rising-educators-aims-to-fill-a-critical-classroom-need/>)

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February 14, 2022

### WA House bill would expand outdoor education statewide

The Seattle Times (<https://www.seattletimes.com/subscribe/signup-offers/?pw=redirect&subsource=paywall&return=https%3A//www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/politics/wa-house-bill-would-expand-outdoor-education-statewide/>)

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### The Athletics Money Monster: Presidents created the mess in college sports. Can they fix it?

The Chronicle of Higher Education ([https://www.chronicle.com/article/the-athletics-money-monster?cid=gen\\_sign\\_in](https://www.chronicle.com/article/the-athletics-money-monster?cid=gen_sign_in))

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### Washington students' test scores drop significantly in first exams since pandemic began

The Seattle Times (<https://www.seattletimes.com/education-lab/in-first-assessment-since-the-pandemic-began-washington-student-test-scores-drop-significantly/>)

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[The Seattle Times \(https://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/mlk-said-it-best-love-is-the-greatest-force-in-the-universe/\)](https://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/mlk-said-it-best-love-is-the-greatest-force-in-the-universe/)

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