

League of Innovative Schools

Fall 2014 Meeting Summary

Digital Promise welcomed more than 150 superintendents, school leaders, and representatives from businesses and nonprofits to the nation's capital Oct. 5-7 for the League of Innovative Schools Fall 2014 Meeting, co-hosted by District of Columbia Public Schools.

During the meeting, attendees ...

- Visited diverse classrooms in District of Columbia Public Schools, getting a first-hand look at the application of an array of innovations.
- Discussed college access, connectivity, STEM, and the need for better education technology with officials from the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy and the U.S. Department of Education during a daylong meeting at the [White House](#).
- Identified the primary challenges standing in the way of innovation in education and developed plans of action, collectively committing to work on issues such as assessments, connectivity, competency-based learning, and funding, among others.



Robert Avossa
@Supt_Avossa



Looking forward to learning from colleagues across the USA #LISDC@DigitalPromise



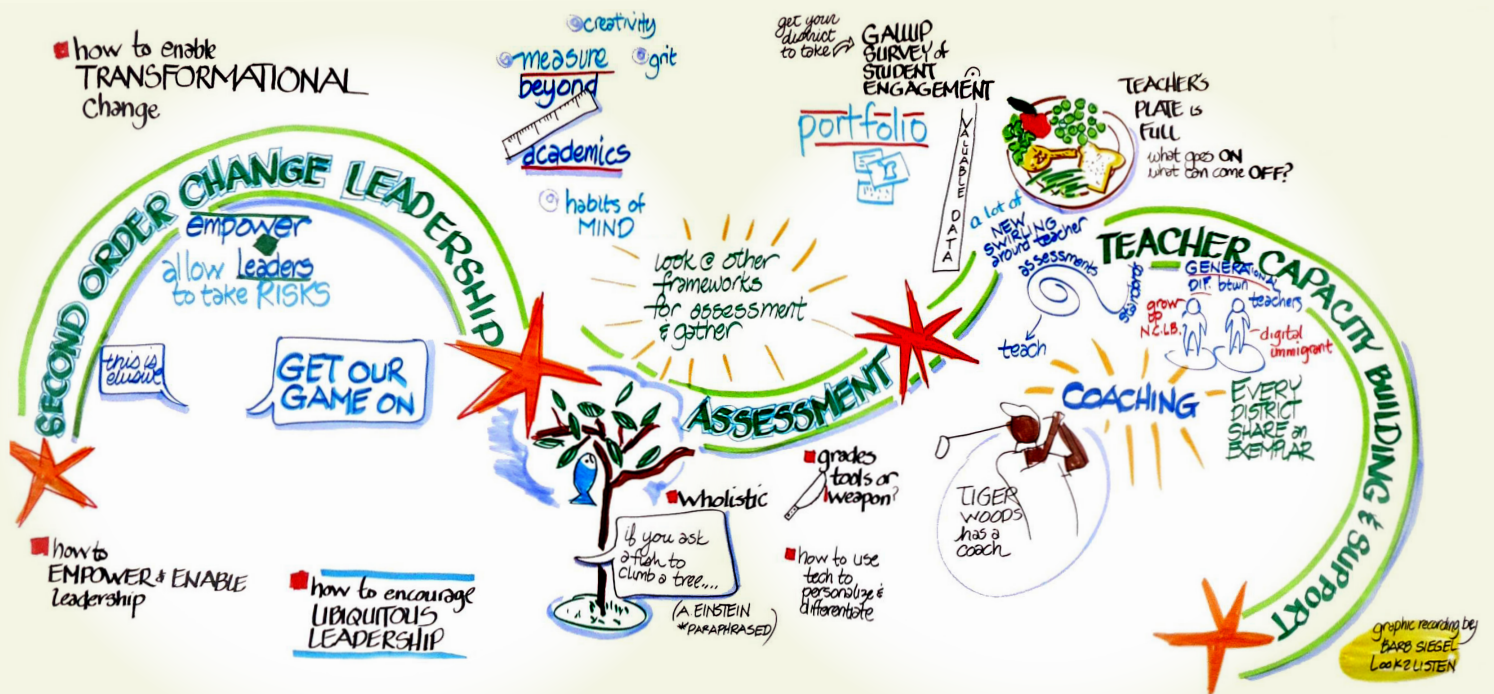
digitalpromise

#Students at Bell Multicultural High School in Columbia Heights #learn #coding and #animation! Thank you @dcpublicschools for hosting inspiring #school visits for #LISDC #regram

#LISDC

The Challenges

Second-order Change Leadership



WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Leadership is more than dictating orders. It is creating a culture that empowers and enables others to lead. Moving beyond traditional leadership structures can help move districts – and public education – forward.

WHAT WE CAN DO

Share examples of stellar leadership from throughout the League of Innovative Schools, helping all superintendents to create the space for others to lead.



Lydia Dobyns
@LydiaDobyns



Rich discussion re 2nd Order Change Leadership
#LISDC #digitalpromise

HOW WE CAN DO IT

- Group members will collectively develop an agreed-upon definition of second-order change leadership.
- Members of the working group will share multiple vignettes of what second-order change leadership looks like across their districts.
- Digital Promise will build a repository of resources on second-order change leadership, including video examples, research, and best practices, to be housed on the Digital Promise website.
- Superintendents will enable educators in their districts to lead, learn, innovate, and take risks.

The Challenges

Competency-based Education

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Seat time is not always an accurate measure of what students are learning. Measuring students' progress toward mastering a specific skill or piece of knowledge ensures students truly grasp the content they need to learn, while allowing them to move at their own pace.

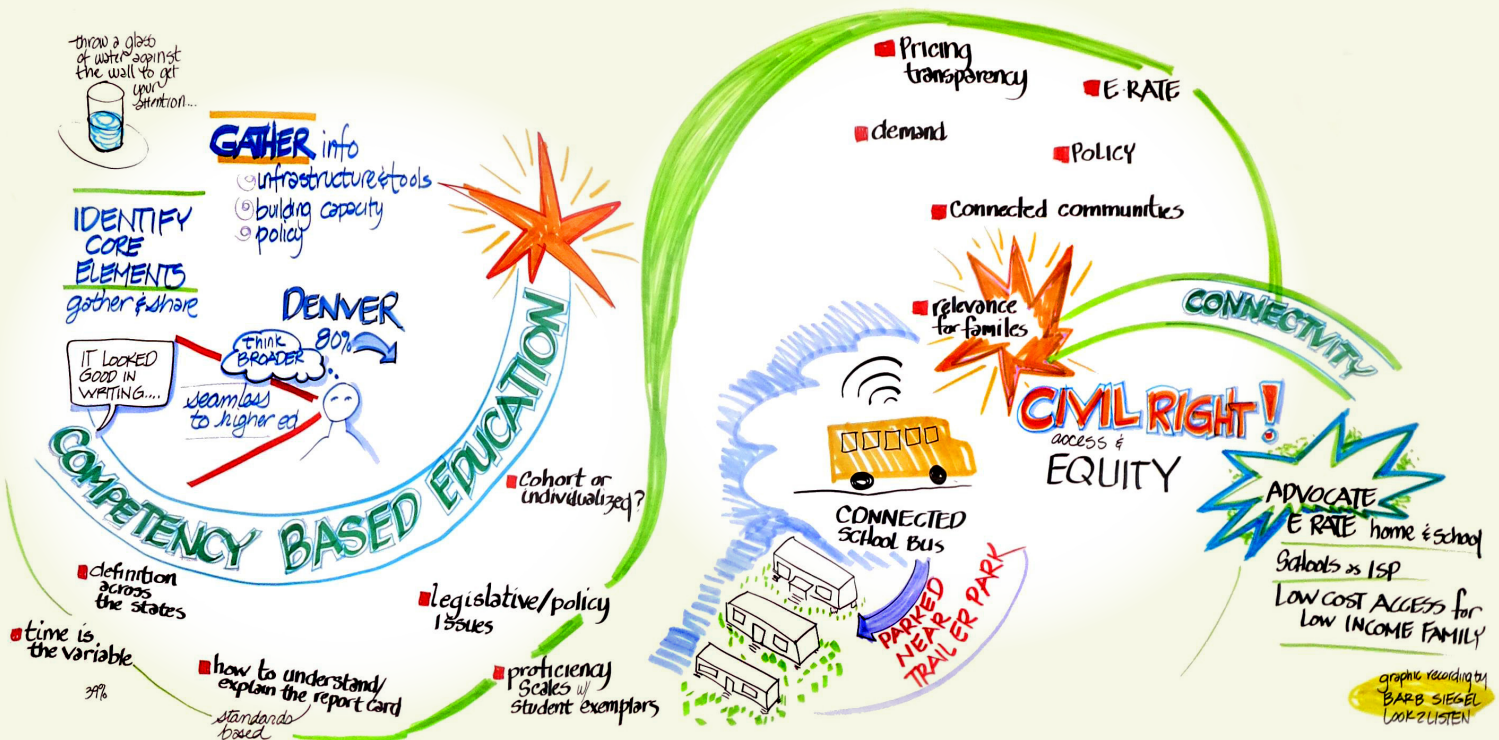
WHAT WE CAN DO

Learn from schools and districts immersed in competency-based education to identify what works in terms of infrastructure, tools, and policies.

It goes beyond just making small changes to the current system.

HOW WE CAN DO IT

- Group members will gather information and exemplars in three major areas related to competency-based learning: tools, infrastructure, and policy.
- Digital Promise will create a website that curates stories, artifacts, and the gathered examples of competency-based learning in action.
- Members of the competency-based education working group will visit select schools in New Hampshire to learn about the state's transition to a competency-based model and report back to the larger group.



The Challenges

Assessments

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Current assessments fail to capture some important student characteristics, such as grit and critical thinking, and don't adequately measure student learning outside of traditional classroom activities.

WHAT WE CAN DO

Identify the most valuable attributes in terms of student growth and work with partners and thought leaders to conceive a method that measures the whole child, which schools can use to build a student portfolio.

Kids are blowing 21st century and modern learning skills out of the water, but how do we measure that?

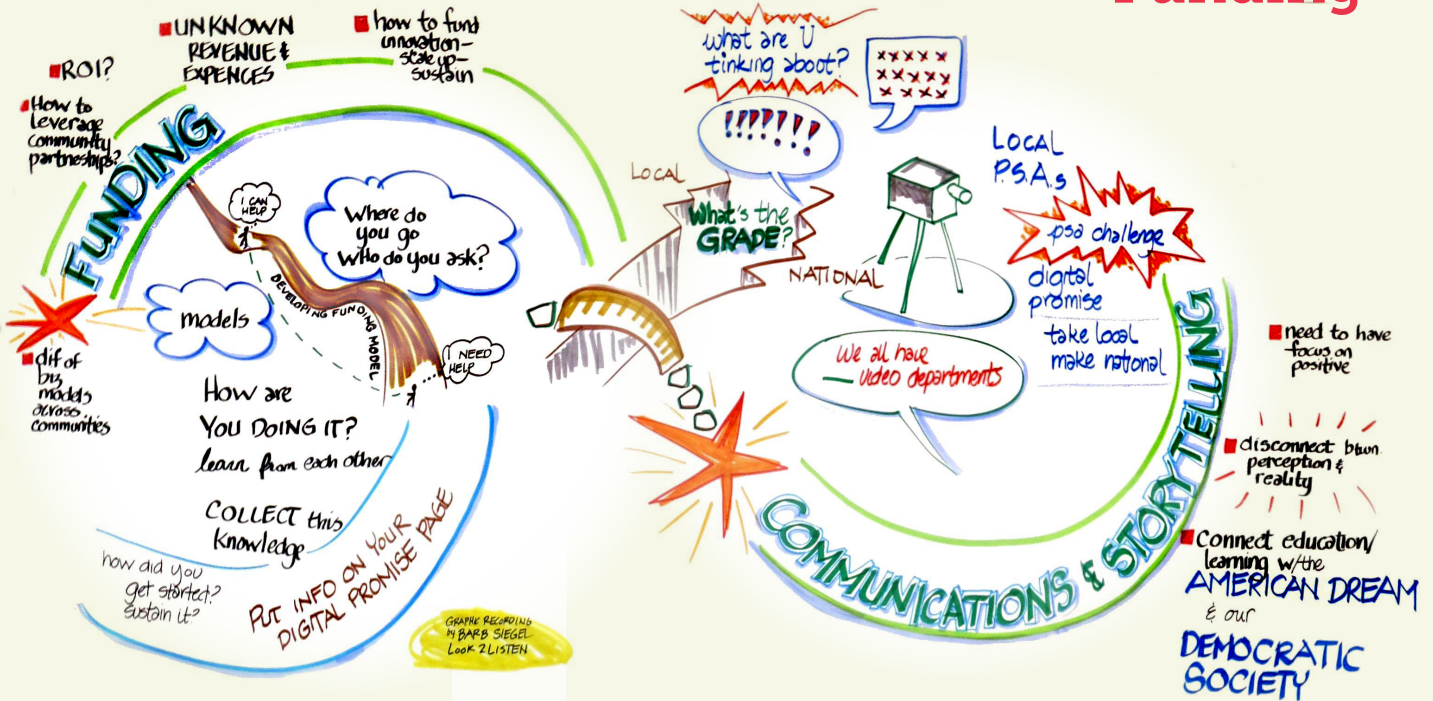
HOW WE CAN DO IT

- Have students in all League districts take the [Gallup Student Poll](#).
- Clearly define important attributes to measure, beyond traditional academic skills, such as character, creativity, and problem solving.
- Curate research that supports the need for assessing noncognitive skills such as motivation and engagement.



The Challenges

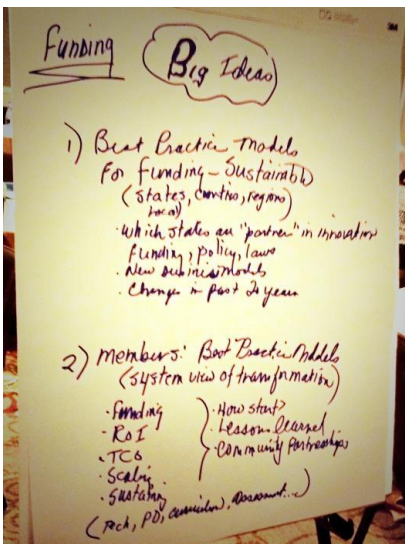
Funding



Devin Vodicka, EdD
@dvodicka



Great ideas generated in small group re funding innovation in schools. We will share sustained success models #LISDC



WHY
IT'S
IMPORTANT

How districts spend funding has changed drastically over the past 20 years, but the revenue sources they have to work with have changed very little. To initiate and sustain digital transformations, districts need to be efficient, creative, and flexible.

WHAT
WE CAN DO

Learn from one another. League districts can share their own models for acquiring resources and sustaining funding for various digital learning initiatives.

HOW
WE CAN DO IT

- Ask all League members the following questions through a brief survey:
 - Where did you get the funding to start your initiative?
 - What are you using for ongoing funding?
 - Where do you see opportunities for future funding?
 - What lessons have you learned?
- Share the responses to these questions through League member profiles published on the Digital Promise website.

The Challenges

Equitable Connectivity

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

We have a moral imperative to ensure all students have access to the Internet – at home and at school – but only 27 percent of schools have basic connectivity and 30 percent of Americans have slow or no Internet at home. Digital learning initiatives are difficult to carry out if students and teachers can't get connected.



WHAT WE CAN DO

Use our collective voice to advocate for the families and communities we serve in order to secure improved Internet options for low-income and disadvantaged families.



Krista Moroder
@kristamoroder



"Access to wifi is the civil rights issue of the 21st C., and we have a moral imperative to leave no child behind the digital divide" #LISDC

HOW WE CAN DO IT

- Share best practices used to connect students throughout the League, including:
 - Community Internet kiosks in [Kent School District \(WA\)](#).
 - Parking school buses equipped with Wi-Fi in neighborhoods so students can connect to the Internet while at home in [Coachella Unified School District \(CA\)](#).
 - Partnerships with local businesses to create a web of free Wi-Fi zones for [students in Vancouver, WA](#).
- Develop a plan to voice League perspectives on connectivity to congressional representatives, federal officials, the FCC, and the White House, advocating for:
 - Flexibility to use E-rate funds to connect students at home, as well as at school.
 - The ability for schools to become their own Internet service provider.
 - Improved Internet access to low-income and disadvantaged families.

The Challenges

Communications & Storytelling

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We need to share stories of our challenges and success, both locally and nationally.

WHY
IT'S
IMPORTANT

There is a gap between perception and reality about public education. For us to overcome that disconnect, we need to effectively tell our stories and persuade community members and other stakeholders that educational technology is an investment worth making.

WHAT
WE CAN DO

Talk about League districts' work in ways that all stakeholders can understand, and amplify student and teacher voices in communications campaigns that show how technology helps them teach and learn.

HOW
WE CAN DO IT

- Create an editorial calendar, outlining topics for the League to focus on throughout the year, in order to develop a uniformed message.
- Digital Promise will create an online badge that districts can use to identify themselves as members of the League of Innovative Schools.
- Member of the working group will develop a plan to produce a national ad campaign using student-submitted videos and work with corporate partners to provide additional support.
- League districts, with Digital Promise's leadership, will draft an Op-Ed on the value of technology for teaching and learning, to be signed by all 57 members of the League.



The Challenges

Teacher Capacity & Support

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Educators are the most important part of our schools. We cannot keep asking teachers to take on more, without providing them the time, resources, and support to do so.

WHAT WE CAN DO

Share best practices in teacher development and support, as well as exemplars of what great teaching and learning looks like in League districts.

HOW WE CAN DO IT

- Each League district shares one exemplar of what great teaching and learning looks like, to be shared via the Digital Promise website and promoted by League districts and partners.
- League districts commit to providing personalized, data-driven professional development that meets teachers' needs.

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We keep asking more and more of teachers, without giving them anything more in terms of raises or professional opportunities.



Digital Promise
@DigitalPromise



“We need to personalize learning for our kids as well as professional development for our teachers” #LISDC



White House Takeaways & Resources

League superintendents sat down with White House officials to talk about the Obama administration's programs and priorities for K-12 education.

SESSIONS

K-12 Reform Agenda • Helping Students Become Makers • What's Next for ConnectED • Helping Students Reach Higher: Improving College Access and Opportunity • Educating the Whole Student: Developing and Measuring Non-cognitive Skills • Prizes and Procurement: Making Smart Ed-Tech Purchases

HIGHLIGHTS

The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy's newly-appointed Chief Technology Officer Megan Smith made a surprise appearance.

Tom Power, deputy chief technology office for telecommunications at OSTP, led an impromptu meeting on rural technology issues with a group of superintendents.

SPEAKERS

White House Office of Science and Technology Policy

- **Kumar Garg**, Assistant Director for Learning and Innovation
- **Stephanie Santoso**, Senior Advisor for Making
- **Maya Shankar**, Senior Advisor for Social and Behavioral Sciences
- **Tom Kalil**, Deputy Director for Technology and Innovation

Department of Education

- **Richard Culatta**, Director of the Office of Educational Technology
- **Russ Shilling**, Executive Director of Stem Initiatives
- **Joseph South**, Deputy Director of the Office of Educational Technology



Erik Gundersen
@egunder

Displaying positive Digital Citizenship is something that @OfficeofEdTech is emphasizing today @WhiteHouse. #LISDC @PVRTechDirector

White House Takeaways & Resources

Resources shared by White House speakers and League participants:

K-12 Reform Agenda

- [Federal Registry for Educational Excellence](#)
Open educational resources.
- [EveryoneOn](#)
Connecting low-income families with affordable Internet.

STEM and the Maker Movement

- [White House Maker Faire Fact Sheet](#)
Highlights key commitments from federal agencies, companies, universities and nonprofit organizations around making and STEM.
- [3D Systems Makerlab Club](#)
3D Systems is currently running a program in which they are donating Cube printers to museums and libraries across the country who join the MakerLab Club and establish access to 3D printing and design opportunities for their communities. School libraries can apply to join and receive a free Cube printer to support 3D printing and design opportunities. Deadline is Nov. 17, 2014.
- [National Science Foundation: Advancing Information STEM Learning](#)
Program includes collaborations with NASA and the National Park Service, among others.
- [The Tinkering Studio](#)
Makerspace at the Exploratorium offering projects, classes and curriculum.
- [Computer Science Student Network](#)
Scratch and art lessons, including robotics programming and lessons that allow students to create a prototype, even if they don't have a robot to work with.
- [Maker Education Initiative](#)
Free online library with a variety of resources on project ideas, creating maker spaces, and more.
- [Instructables](#)
Online platform and community for DIY projects in a variety of subjects.

White House Takeaways & Resources

Resources shared by White House speakers and League participants:

ConnectED

- Sprint committed to provide high-speed wireless broadband service for qualifying schools starting August 2014. [Apply here](#)
- AT&T committed to provide an array of services that enable tablet-based education capability in Title I districts. [Apply here](#)
- [Learn more about other commitments and how to benefit from them.](#)

Prizes and Procurement

- [Navigating Choice: Toward Better Ed-Tech Product Discovery](#)
- [Paying for Success to Transform Learning](#)
- [Share your learning challenges](#) with the White House and Digital Promise

College Access

- [Reach Higher](#)
An initiative spearheaded by the First Lady to inspire all students to pursue education beyond high school.



Dr. Steve Webb
@SuptVPS

"ConnectED is about people and learning. Not wires and hardware." Zealan Hoover Policy Assistant Domestic Policy Council #LISDC #TeamVPS

#LISDC