



2012 ANNUAL REPORT

DEAR FRIENDS,

We are excited to share Digital Promise's 2012 Annual Report. When Digital Promise launched in 2011, we did not have offices, staff, or programs. But we did have \$500,000 in start-up capital from the U.S. Department of Education and a Congressional statute calling on us to advance innovation in education.

Since our launch, we have raised more than \$2.2 million in private support, a 4:1 match of private to public dollars, from philanthropies such as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Carnegie Corporation of New York, and Fortune 100 companies including Apple and Intel.

With this combination of public and private support, we established the Digital Promise League of Innovative Schools, a national coalition of 32 school districts in 21 states, serving 2.5 million students. By joining the League, district leaders commit to partnering with entrepreneurs, researchers, and each other to pilot, evaluate, and scale up innovations that deliver results.

We are also undertaking a range of other strategic initiatives to accelerate innovation in education, from beta-testing new digital learning tools to research collaborations with institutions such as Harvard University's Education Innovation Laboratory.

It has been an exciting time for Digital Promise, and this is just the beginning. Stay tuned for more big things to come!

Thank you for your interest and support,



Adam Frankel
Executive Director

HISTORY

More than a decade ago, the Carnegie Corporation of New York joined with the Century Foundation to launch the Digital Promise Project, an initiative to recommend policies that could harness breakthrough technologies to advance the public good.

At the request of Congress, the Digital Promise Project, in partnership with the Federation of American Scientists, developed a roadmap for transforming teaching and learning with technology. This roadmap was the basis for Section 802 of the 2008 Higher Education Opportunity Act, authorizing the National Center for Research in Advanced Information and Digital Technologies, also known as Digital Promise.

Digital Promise is an independent, bipartisan nonprofit, signed into law by President George W. Bush and launched in September 2011 by President Barack Obama. Initial board members were appointed by U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, whose department provided startup funds and support.

Digital Promise raised \$2.2 million in private funds, a 4:1 match of private to public dollars.

MISSION

Digital Promise is an independent, bipartisan nonprofit authorized by Congress "to support a comprehensive research and development program to harness the increasing capacity of advanced information and digital technologies to improve all levels of learning and education, formal and informal, in order to provide Americans with the knowledge and skills needed to compete in the global economy."



THE DIGITAL PROMISE LEAGUE OF INNOVATIVE SCHOOLS



The value proposition for Vancouver Public Schools and the League really is about leveraging learning. Leveraging learning... across school systems that have a shared vision of positively impacting student learning outcomes in public schools through digital transformations.

Dr. Steven Webb,
*Superintendent, Vancouver
Public Schools, Washington*

DESPITE ISLANDS OF INNOVATION across the country, America's public education system is largely resistant to the kinds of technological advances that have revolutionized other parts of 21st-century life. Meanwhile, it is increasingly difficult for school district leaders to understand how to make the most of cutting-edge digital tools and innovative approaches.

To overcome these challenges, Digital Promise launched the League of Innovative Schools, a national coalition of school district superintendents dedicated to harnessing technological innovation to drive better results for students. The idea behind the League is simple, but ambitious: together, innovative superintendents can transform student achievement.

Upon joining the League, members sign a charter committing to share what's working and what's not working when it comes to digital innovation, making the League a professional development resource for innovative superintendents. Beyond professional development, the League offers educators the opportunity to collaborate with both the entrepreneurs who are building new tools, and the researchers who are evaluating them.

To join, school district superintendents are invited to submit an application that is reviewed by the League's Advisory Committee, chaired by Dr. Mark Edwards, superintendent of the Mooresville Graded School District in North Carolina.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES



Making School Districts Better, Smarter Consumers

PROBLEM

A fractured market and outdated regulations make it difficult for developers to sell - and educators to buy - the innovative tools that students need.

SOLUTION

To help solve this problem, Digital Promise:

- Engaged award-winning global design firm IDEO to develop pilots to help knock down barriers blocking adoption of digital learning tools and accelerate the pace of innovation.
- Built a cloud-based web platform called DOCENT that allows school districts to access different digital learning tools in one place, spurring rapid evaluation and smarter adoption.
- Partnered with Discovery Education to beta-test their new Common-Core aligned Social Studies Techbook™ in school districts across the country.



Sharing Lessons to Scale Up Change

PROBLEM

Too often, educators do not know how to implement and scale proven innovations.

SOLUTION

To help solve this problem, Digital Promise:

- Hosted four meetings, including school visits, in Mooresville, North Carolina; Houston; Napa, California; and New York City.
- Produced newsletters, webinars, blog posts, and op-eds.
- Convened collaborative workshops with educators, policymakers, and researchers in Washington, D.C., and Cambridge, Massachusetts.



Spurring Better, Faster, Cheaper Research

PROBLEM

When it comes to digital innovation in education, we often do not know what works for which students under what circumstances.

SOLUTION

To help solve this problem, Digital Promise:

- Partnered with the Education Innovation Laboratory at Harvard University on multi-district, rapid, rigorous evaluations of Khan Academy and DreamBox Learning to shed light on the black box of learning and, as Harvard professor Roland Fryer puts it, do “20 years worth of research in 2 years.”
- Partnered with Pearson and a team of independent advisors to qualitatively and quantitatively identify the most effective teacher practices in cutting-edge, digitally rich classrooms.
- Partnered with Northwestern University and an Idaho school district to evaluate teacher-driven approaches to blended learning and digital innovation.



Competing for Innovation Prizes

PROBLEM

Too often, barriers between entrepreneurs and educators make it hard for educators to find resources that work, and also make it hard for entrepreneurs to know what educators need.

SOLUTION

To help solve this problem, Digital Promise:

- Secured a 2012 Prize Fellow to develop a competition for ideas that level the playing field for students with learning disabilities.



I’m learning from every superintendent about the best things happening in their district. And then I can steal, replicate, try it out. Every time we come together I walk away with 15 new fabulous ideas. I love being part of the League.

Barbara Nemko,
Superintendent, Napa County Office of Education, California



The League has been a great opportunity for me to collaborate with other urban, suburban and rural districts from around the country and to see how this work is evolving throughout the US. New York City wouldn’t be able to engage with these other folks without the League. It’s been a great added benefit for the students and schools in NYC.

David Weiner, *Deputy Chancellor for Talent, Labor and Innovation, New York City Department of Education*



DISTRICT SPOTLIGHTS

THE DIGITAL PROMISE LEAGUE OF INNOVATIVE SCHOOLS represents a wide array of school districts – large and small, urban and rural, low-income and middle-class. But common among them is a commitment to move education forward in a way that embraces technological innovation to meet the demands of a 21st-century workforce.

New York City Department of Education

New York City, New York

The nation's largest school district, at about 1.1 million students, the New York City Department of Education (NYC DOE) focuses on scaling the innovative school and classroom models it develops. A catalyst for that work is the iZone, a network of schools that serve as incubators of forward-looking practices, policies, and broader initiatives.

NYC DOE is conducting a two-year pilot that tests adaptive-learning software in elementary schools. Also, the iZone is developing the InnovateNYC Ecosystem, a network of schools, investors, and other stakeholders. One of its first challenges for vendors is as prize competition to reward most effective math apps. Another InnovateNYC initiative is School of One, a full-time, digital math program that uses a learning algorithm to personalize learning for students.

Piedmont City School District

Piedmont, Alabama

Serving a community once anchored by mills, where some homes go without running water or electricity, Piedmont City School District implemented the first one-to-one laptop program in Alabama, earning the distinction of a top district to watch in education technology by the National School Boards Association. The district, where almost two-thirds of the students are from low-income families, provides every student and teacher in grades 4-12 with a laptop to use at school and at home, and provides free Internet access to families.



It was really refreshing to see superintendents completely letting down their guard and talking very openly about both what they're excited about and their challenges.

Andrea Saenz,
*former Chief of Staff,
Chicago Public Schools*

Mooreville Graded School District

Mooreville, North Carolina

With the mantra "Every child, every day," Mooreville and its superintendent, Dr. Mark Edwards, have received recognition from the *New York Times*, Fox News, and other national media outlets for the district's digital conversion program, now in its fifth year, where every child in grades 4-12 is issued a laptop for use at home and school.

Located 20 miles north of Charlotte, Mooreville is second in academic performance in the state, though 100th in state funding. About 90 percent of students are proficient on state exams, roughly the same rate that graduates. The district received the 2012 Sylvia Chorp award for district innovation in technology, and Dr. Edwards was named the 2013 National Superintendent of the Year by the American Association of School Administrators.



What the League brings to our district is an association with different sized districts doing different things all over the country. It can be a small school district in rural Alabama gaining ideas from suburban North Carolina and urban Houston. And I think it can go both ways.

Matt Akin, *Superintendent, Piedmont City School District, Alabama*



LEAGUE OF INNOVATIVE SCHOOLS

The Digital Promise League of Innovative Schools consists of 32 districts and education agencies, serving 2.5 million students in 21 states.







★ Highest percentage of economically disadvantaged students: Sunnyside Unified School District, Arizona - 87 PERCENT

★ Largest District: New York City Department of Education - 1.1 MILLION STUDENTS

★ Smallest District: Piedmont City School District, Alabama - 1,200 STUDENTS

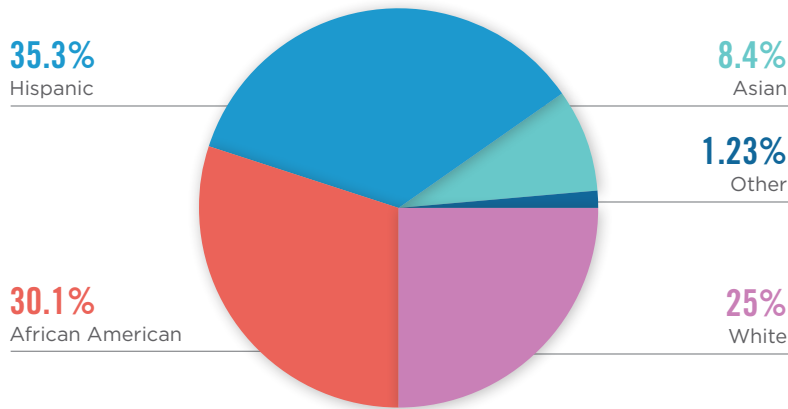
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|--|---|---|
| Baldwin County Public Schools, AL | Houston Independent School District, TX | New York City Department of Education, NY |
| Baltimore County Public Schools, MD | Howard-Suamico School District, WI | Onslow County Public Schools, NC |
| Blue Valley Unified School District #229, KS | Indian Prairie School District, IL | Piedmont City School District, AL |
| Charlottesville City Public Schools, VA | Iowa City Community School District, IA | Reynoldsburg City Schools, OH |
| Chicago Public Schools, IL | Lincoln Public Schools, NE | Roanoke County Public Schools, VA |
| District of Columbia Public Schools, DC | McAllen Independent School District, TX | Rock Hill Public Schools, SC |
| E.L. Haynes Public Charter School, DC | Meridian Joint School District No.2, ID | Sunnyside Unified School District, AZ |
| Educational Service Center of Central Ohio, OH | Moorsville Graded School District, NC | Utica Community Schools, MI |
| Florida Virtual School, FL | Napa County Schools, CA | Vancouver Public Schools, WA |
| Fulton County Schools, GA | Napa Valley Unified School District, CA | York County Schools, VA |
| Horry County Schools, SC | New Tech Network, CA | |

For more info, visit www.digitalpromise.org.

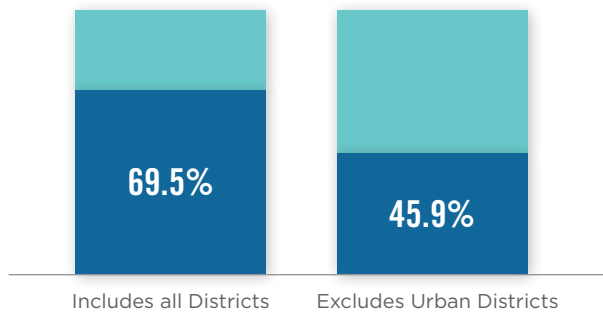
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District of Columbia Public Schools is piloting the ambitious “Teach to One” software and approach, based on School of One in New York City.
- 
Joint School District No. 2 in Meridian, ID which has one of the lowest per-pupil funding levels of any district of its size, is transforming five classrooms across the district with technology.
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York County Public Schools issued an “app challenge” to local developers for programs and apps that will help teachers find resources for new classrooms.
- 
Vancouver Public Schools in Vancouver, Washington, recently opened the iTech Preparatory Academy, a new magnet school for grades 6-12.

DISTRICTS AT A GLANCE

Composition of League Districts



Economically Disadvantaged Students*



*Determined by students eligible for free and reduced-priced meals (FARMs).

Size of League Districts

Largest District

1.1 million students

New York City Department of Education, New York

Smallest District

1,200 students

Piedmont City School District, Alabama

Average District

78,379 students

Average District Excluding Urban Areas

27,166 students



Digital Promise is a unique partnership that will bring everyone together – educators, entrepreneurs, and researchers – to use technology to help students learn and teachers teach. There's no silver bullet when it comes to education, but technology can be a powerful tool, and Digital Promise will help us make the most of it.

President Barack Obama



FUNDING*

PUBLIC

U.S. Department of Education

PHILANTHROPIC

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
 Carnegie Corporation of New York
 William & Flora Hewlett Foundation
 Poses Family Foundation
 Morgridge Family Foundation
 Verizon Foundation
 JPMorgan Chase Foundation
 Jewish Community Foundation
 of San Diego

CORPORATE

Apple Inc.
 Blackboard Inc.
 Cisco Systems Inc.
 Discovery Education
 Follett Library Resources
 Intel Corporation
 Pearson PLC
 Qualcomm Inc.
 Scholastic Corporation
 Wireless Generation

Funding Breakdown

\$850,000

Other Corporate,
 Philanthropic, and
 Individual Funding

\$500,000

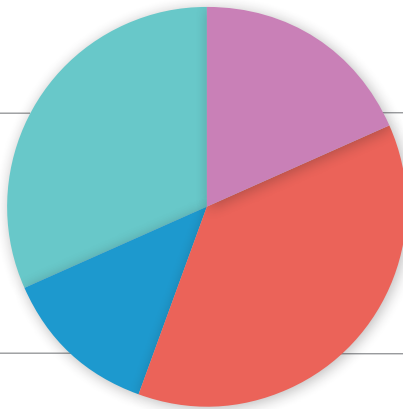
U.S. Department
 of Education

\$350,000

Carnegie
 Corporation
 of New York

\$1,000,000

The Bill & Melinda
 Gates Foundation



*Does not include all funders

OUR TEAM

STAFF

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FELLOWS

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 2012 Prize Fellow

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 of Instructional Psychology
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Digital Promise is an independent nonprofit that will help spur breakthrough learning technologies...

By harnessing the extraordinary work being done by educators, innovators, and citizens across this country, Digital Promise can help prepare Americans – and America – to succeed in the 21st Century

Arne Duncan,
U.S. Secretary of Education



Digital Promise

Accelerating Innovation in Education

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