

TRANSFORMING PUBLIC EDUCATION INTO A LEARNING SYSTEM

Imagine a school that inspires and empowers everyone – including students, educators, staff and the community – to reach their full potential. A school that continuously grows and improves in every aspect, both inside and outside the classroom. Everything from curriculum and pedagogy to school schedules and mental health support is designed and continuously improved to create the best learning environment and outcome for every student.

This could be every school...if we made public education function like a true learning system.

The **Learning Systems Leadership Network (LSLN)** is bringing together leaders from across the field who are committed to creating urgency around transforming public education to function as a true learning system. We are working both individually and collectively to strengthen the culture and infrastructures necessary to support this vital shift, inspiring education leaders and practitioners at every level to be part of creating a brighter future for our students.

A **learning system** is when infrastructure and culture work together to harness the power of data, research, innovation, judgment, input, and feedback to continuously adapt to meet every individual's needs. A learning system is dynamic, not static. Learning system approaches foster continuous improvement and growth, support practitioners in making better decisions, and promote promising solutions to sticky challenges. When our education system functions as a living, continuously improving learning system, we create conditions that can close opportunity gaps and boost outcomes for every student.

Learning Systems Unlock Potential

The science of learning and development has taught us that each child has incredible potential, but to help them reach it, our *education system* must function like a dynamic *learning system* that embraces data, research, innovation, judgment, input, and feedback, and responds to the needs of everyone within them. Our current education system is disjointed and compliance-oriented, which has for too long hindered efforts to change.

The LSLN is looking at the system holistically in order to strengthen it, focusing on the infrastructure, culture and people that bring it to life. By promoting learning systems approaches at all levels of the education system, we're creating an ecosystem where everyone within it is incentivized to continuously learn from each other and improve at scale. This lays the foundation for a smart, adaptive public education system that is able to create the outcomes students want and deserve.

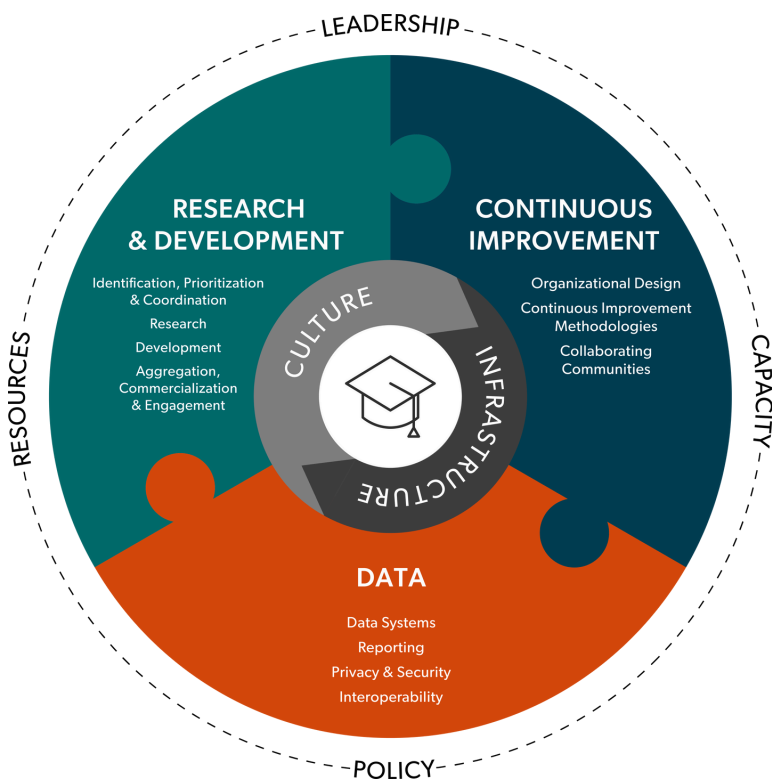
Learning Systems in Action

- A fourth-grade **teacher** adjusts the next day's lesson plan based on his students' exit ticket answers. He relies in part on a What Works Clearinghouse practice guide, a synthesis of evidence-based approaches, to correct a common misunderstanding about comparing fractions within his class.
- A **school district operations team** analyzes data to design more efficient bus routes, which increases students' on-time attendance.
- A **state department of education** co-develops a learning agenda — an evidence-building plan that systematically identifies and seeks to answer priority short- and long-term questions—with a diverse set of stakeholders and then partners with a local university to implement it. They design both impact and implementation studies that match the authentic questions being asked by practitioners and community members.

WHAT EXACTLY IS A LEARNING SYSTEM?

Learning systems, across industries like health and technology, have common **culture** and **infrastructure**.

Culture within a learning system is created by the habits, norms, and patterns of the people within it, and it influences how everyone thinks, acts and adapts. By holding ourselves to the same standards of learning and improving that we hold our students to, we can create a culture that empowers educators and policymakers to use a wide variety of evidence to learn and improve all aspects of their work. **Infrastructure** within learning systems provides the critical backbone that helps reinforce and enable a culture that doesn't just allow for, but accelerates change. When it's in place, it's like a smooth and well-maintained road that can take us from the status quo to the incredible places we want to go. The three components of a learning system infrastructure in education are **Research & Development, Data, and Continuous Improvement**.



Research & Development Infrastructure: A robust R&D infrastructure supports the generation and evaluation of research, evidence, tools, programs, policies, and practices to bolster student outcomes.

Data Infrastructure: An effective data infrastructure provides stakeholders in education with timely, tailored information to support informed decision-making while protecting privacy.

Continuous Improvement Infrastructure: A continuous improvement infrastructure helps teams in education keep getting better by working together on policies and practices, using different types of information to make smart decisions, adapting ideas to fit different situations, and growing successful methods to help more people learn effectively.

And within a learning system are four **key drivers** that keep it moving: people with the necessary **capacity**, sufficient **resources**, strong **leadership**, and enabling **policies** and incentives. All of the drivers must align with the overall vision.

Who We Are & How to Get Involved

LSLN members come from all corners of the education ecosystem. We are committed to creating urgency around transforming public education into functioning as a true learning system, and we are acting both individually and collectively to strengthen the culture and infrastructures to support this shift. Join us in elevating learning systems as a priority and advancing our shared vision.

Members Include Leaders from the Following Organizations

AERDF
Bush Institute
Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching
CAST
Data Foundation
Data Quality Campaign
Delivery Associates
Digital Promise
EDGE Consulting, LLC
EducationCounsel
Federation of American Scientists
Harvard Graduate School of Education
High Tech High Graduate School of Education
InnovateEDU

Knowledge Alliance
LEAP Innovations
Mathematica
National Association of State Boards of Education
National Network of Education Research Practice Partnerships
NewSchools Venture Fund
Project Evident
Results for America
The Chicago Consortium on School Research
The Education Trust
The Learning Agency
The Opportunity Institute
Tobin Center for Economic Policy
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If you are interested in learning more, visit learningsystems.org.



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