Public Education Leadership Project

Extending and Expanding the Impact into the Second Decade
Executive Summary

• In 2003, Harvard Business School (HBS) and Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE) launched the Public Education Leadership Project (PELP) in order to improve the management and leadership competencies of public school leaders to drive greater education outcomes and educate all children to their optimum potential.

• During the past ten years, PELP developed new integrated managerial knowledge and strengthened the leadership capacity of nearly 500 leaders from 22 participating urban school districts.

• However, the public education sector is at an important inflection point and districts are operating in an increasingly complex ecosystem.

• In order to realize its vision, PELP proposes to extend and build on PELP's traditional program by finding ways to sustain and deepen the learning while integrating more closely with other parts of HBS and HGSE. In addition, PELP will seek ways to expand to other important and appropriate institutions in the sector.
Agenda

- PELP 2003 - 2013

- PELP’s Second Decade – Extending and Expanding
Questions of District Performance

When PELP launched in 2003, there were no examples of high performing urban school districts:

- Excellent schools exist in struggling districts
- Outstanding classrooms exist in underperforming schools

How does a district achieve excellent performance in every school and every classroom?

How does a school district make best practice into common practice?
Public Education Leadership Project (PELP) launched in 2003

A collaboration between Harvard Business School (HBS) and Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE) with a mission to improve the management and leadership competencies of public school leaders in order to drive greater educational outcomes.

First critical step was to engage in deep research and knowledge development in order to close the knowledge gap.
PELP developed the Coherence Framework, one of the only comprehensive managerial frameworks for education leaders.
The Impact of PELP

Knowledge Development

• Cases
• Teaching Notes
• Books/Articles

Leadership Development

• Managing High Performing District: Summer Institute

PELP has developed a library of 58 teaching cases and notes.

PELP has served 22 unique districts and nearly 500 participants.

Case Sales 2007-2011

Total Participants

Total Districts

# of District Teams

# of Total Unique Participants
Montgomery County Public Schools: Example of a large urban district benefiting from PELP participation.
Examples of Other District Feedback.

- **Improving Equity**: “I was so touched by the discussions we had on race and achievement that I brought the case studies back to my principals to open up an honest conversation. We could begin to look at our data more rigorously and reflect on whether our practices were hindering African American achievement.” – Associate Superintendent

- **Forming Networks**: “PELP has been the most helpful and intense professional development I've ever had. It's such a rare and unique experience...there are many opportunities to interact and bond with a good number of people who are working on important issues in K-12 education.” – Deputy Superintendent

- **Providing Coherence**: “This program has probably caused me to think differently about what I do more than any other program I've been in...it's helped me to realize that the systems, the culture, the resources, the environments, stakeholders, all have to be working together in sync in a coherent manner to really allow you to do what you're supposed to do. And that's educate children” – Superintendent

- **Encouraging Collaboration**: “There are a lot of union locals that don't want to perceive their relationship with management as being anything other than confrontational...At PELP, I was able to tell district and union leaders a little bit about the work that we're doing, and help them understand how to approach working with unions more productively.” – Teachers’ Union President
The Core Competencies of PELP

Integrating business, education, and social sector knowledge to build comprehensive managerial and problem solving frameworks

Applying principles of management and leadership to education that enable school systems to develop coherent strategies to improve performance

Assessing the alignment of a school district’s systems, structures, stakeholders, resources, and culture to a strategy and theory of change that improve the instructional core

Understanding the organizational design factors in districts that affect culture and performance

Building and cultivating networks of school and district leaders to sustain ongoing learning

Building effective senior leadership teams

Facilitating senior leadership teams through an approach to diagnose and analyze complex problems in schools and districts

Fostering the inclusion of a diverse range of stakeholders in developing and implementing strategies to improve district performance

Focused on strengthening managerial and organizational capabilities / capacity not policy and pedagogical topics.
Agenda

• PELP 2003 - 2013

• PELP’s Second Decade— Extending and Expanding
Opportunity to shape the future of leadership and management in the public education sector

**PELP has a unique path-breaking approach in this field that combines deep research and transformational management development programs.**

No other institution provides this combination in the sector.

**Extend**
Deepening the impact of PELP by building on its first decade of experience and participants

**Expand**
Applying principles of knowledge creation and leadership development to a complex ecosystem that affect school reform efforts
Extending PELP’s Impact

- Creating new opportunities through online or other executive education programs to complement the summer institute and provide opportunities for non-core PELP faculty to participate.
- Integrate with existing executive education programs at HGSE and HBS.
- Formalizing and building the network of reform-minded PELP participants to sustain the impact.
- Utilizing coaches similar to ones used in PLD or RC to sustain the impact of leadership development and personalize learning.
School district performance is highly influenced by a complex ecosystem of stakeholders and environmental factors.
Prioritizing expansion efforts

Sector stakeholders

- Fit with PELP core competencies of leadership development and practice-based knowledge development

Expansion focus

- Opportunity to integrate with HBS / HGSE talent development
- Opportunity to integrate with HBS / HGSE faculty research
Connecting PELP

Integrating with HGSE, HBS, and Beyond

Knowledge Generation
- Cases/Notes
- Books
- Articles

Transformational Learning Experiences
- Executive Education

Developing Talent Pipelines
- MBA
- EdLD
- PLD Executive Education

Convenings
- Building Networks
- Online/Offline Interactions

Knowledge Dissemination
- Partnerships with Harvard Ed Press and Harvard Business Press

Grounded in Practice

Shaping the public education sector to achieve sustained higher performance