

ED ABSTRACT: EMPOWERING EDUCATORS TO EXCEL (E3)

This application is submitted on behalf of a partnership between Colonial School District (New Castle, DE), Gainesville Independent School District (Gainesville, TX), Marion County School District (Marion, SC), Marlboro County School District (Marlboro, SC), Metropolitan School District of Decatur Township (Decatur, IN), and Insight Education Group.

Educators, schools, districts and even states value opportunities to collaborate with peers and leverage the learning of other organizations. Empowering Educators to Excel (E3), a private-public partnership, provides 47 schools across four states the opportunity to work together in a Networked Improvement Community (NIC) context with a focus on critical levers impacting student achievement. A large percentage of school districts across the US are comprised of 15 or fewer schools. Many of these school districts lack the resources of the larger, urban districts but confront many of the same basic challenges—albeit on a smaller scale. Large districts are also able—through a sheer byproduct of their size—to create job-alike communities. Small, more rural districts do not have the infrastructure or support systems in place; however, research indicates promising trends in achievement for students in smaller, close-knit environments. This project provides the benefits of a NIC’s expertise while retaining the small district feel. Rather than espousing specific programs (the what), the connective tissue among the schools and districts represented in this proposal focuses on the how and why from a systems-level perspective—the levers available to schools and leaders. In 2017, schools and districts should not accept geographic isolation but instead leverage technology to forge partnerships across states who share a similar “growth mindset”.