

2016-2017 IMPACT REPORT

Building Capacity for
Personalized Learning and More



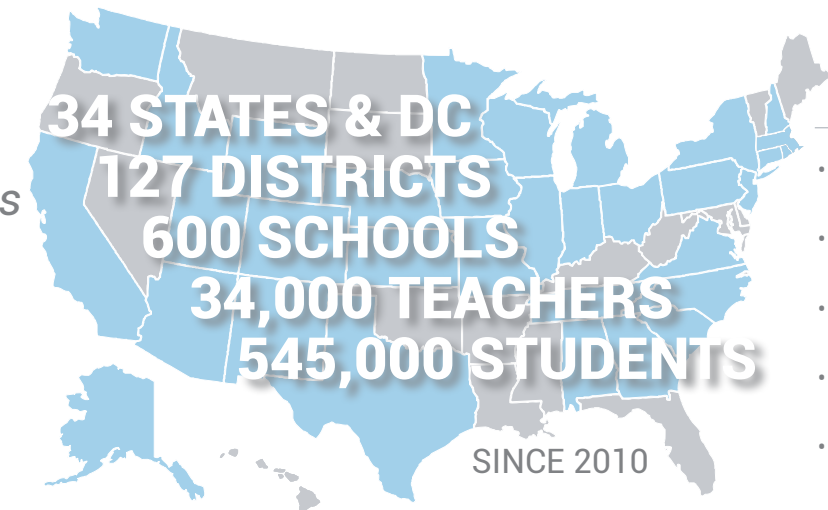
Learners of today. Ready for tomorrow.

2016-2017

Building Capacity for Personalized Learning and More

"Whenever we came to a plateau or standstill, Education Elements was able to help us come up with new ideas or approaches."

— DISTRICT LEADER, UINTE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT #1 (WY)

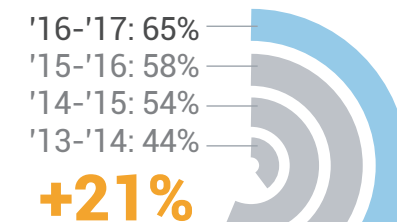


WE HELP DISTRICTS

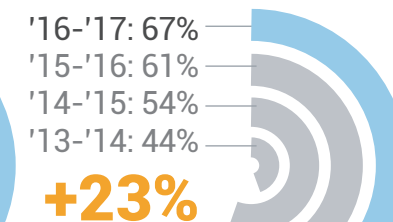
- Increase student engagement
- Improve student achievement
- Increase enrollment
- Build district capacity
- Maximize tech investments

Students Meeting Growth Targets **Increased**
Over the Course of Our Work¹

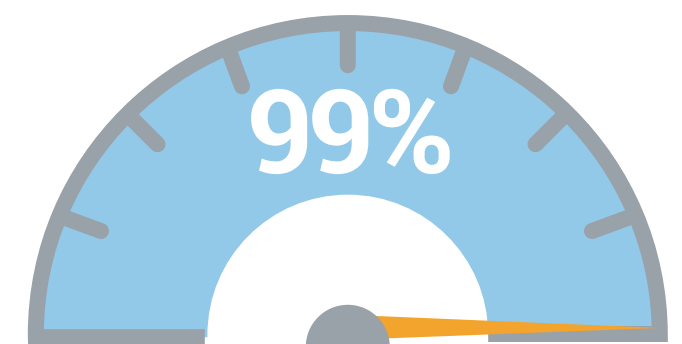
READING



MATH



District Leaders Consider Us
Trusted Advisers²



2X

2017 Summit attendee growth

4

Triathlon finishers

44

Our tEEm members

310

Blogs written to date

3,000+

Cups of coffee on the road

65,000

Miles each of our consultants traveled

250,000+

Our yearly Post-it consumption!

¹ An example from the Enlarged City School District of Middletown, NY, one of our partner school districts. Numbers based on K-8 student growth on NWEA MAP compared to national growth norms.

² Survey of 71 district leaders across 25 of our partner districts.



Learners of today. Ready for tomorrow.

Education Elements 2016–17 Impact Report
Building Capacity for Personalized Learning and More

Letter From Our Founder and CEO 4

Sustaining Success 8

Student Achievement

Student Engagement & Teacher Efficacy

Trusted Advisers

Overcoming Challenges.....16

Going Beyond Personalized Learning20

Competency-Based Education

Open Educational Resource Adoption

Collaboration & Creativity

Professional Development & Coaching Support

Curriculum Strategy

New School Design

Changing Culture.....26

Connecting Leaders.....30

Education Elements and
Our District Partners in the Media36

Education Elements...

A national K–12 education consulting firm with a proven track record in our work with more than 100 school districts



A team of seasoned educators, designers, technologists, and change-management experts



A trusted adviser to districts, helping them build and support dynamic school systems



Education Elements works with districts to build and support dynamic school systems that meet the needs of **every learner, today and tomorrow**.

Districts come to us to close achievement gaps, leverage technology investments, navigate curriculum strategy, and implement new instructional models. We take the time to **understand the unique challenges school leaders face** and then customize a solution for each district.

We have worked with **more than one hundred districts** across the country to provide deep expertise, design thinking, change management, expert facilitation, and a collaborative spirit, along with our extensive toolkit of resources and technology, to deliver **sustainable results**.

**OUR
DISTRICT
SUPPORT
INCLUDES**

- Personalized Learning
- Competency-Based Education
- Strategy Development
- Leadership & Capacity Building
- Curriculum Strategy
- OER Adoption
- Instructional Model Design
- PD & Support



Letter From Our Founder and CEO

Dear Friends,

As we close out school year 2016–17 and look forward to the next school year, it seems like a great time to reflect on what we've accomplished.

Last year was a year of growth and change. We expanded our reach across 34 states to support 127 districts, 600 schools, and 34,000 teachers to transform the learning experience for 545,000 students.

Additionally, we welcomed two new team members: Jack Witlin, formerly of Deloitte Consulting, joined our board of directors, and David Irwin, formerly of Gartner, joined our team as managing partner. We know they could spend their time and talents supporting any organization of their choosing. We're honored that they believe in our mission and our work.

Throughout this past year, we kept returning to the theme of “superheroes,” perhaps because we work with so many teachers, coaches, principals, and district leaders who are doing work that requires unwavering commitment, exceptional talent, and extraordinary passion. I'm pleased to share in this report the stories and successes of our superhero districts and schools as well as some of the amazing individuals behind their school systems' success.

I'd like to share a few of our accomplishments this year:

Sustaining Success. While our scope has expanded, we continue to see improved results in student achievement, student engagement, and teacher practices.

- This school year, across almost approximately 36,000 students from five of our districts that take the nationally normed NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), we saw students in personalized learning classrooms achieve average growth of 130% in reading and 122% in math, compared to nationally normed MAP growth targets.

- For the fourth year in row, students in the Enlarged City School District of Middletown (NY) and Horry County Schools (SC) have shown the cumulative benefits of consecutive years of personalized instruction. In both reading and math, more students are meeting or exceeding nationally normed growth targets.

- We are already seeing some promising growth on other academic measures from our districts that have been implementing personalized learning for two or fewer years.

- District leaders and teachers are seeing changes in teacher practice and increases in student engagement.

- Districts and schools report that working with us helps them clarify their vision and rollout plans, understand personalized learning instructional models, improve utilization of curriculum, strengthen instructional and IT support, and improve teacher practice.

- We're proud and grateful that 99% of district leaders consider us to be trusted advisers.

Overcoming Challenges. While the goal of many districts is to increase student achievement, districts also turn to personalized learning to solve other issues, including poor student engagement, declining enrollment, and lack of return on large investments in classroom technology.

We're thrilled to share the stories and videos of districts that have overcome these challenges: districts as diverse as Loudoun County Public Schools (VA), a wealthy, high-performing district in suburban Washington, DC; Yuma Elementary School District One (AZ), a district near the U.S.-Mexico border that struggled with declining enrollment; Fulton County Schools (GA), a large district challenged to move nearly 100 schools to personalized learning; and MSD of Warren Township (IN), winner of a coveted \$28.5M Race to the Top grant.

Going Beyond Personalized Learning. We are a mission-driven team and compelled to do whatever it takes to build and support dynamic school systems where the students of today are prepared for tomorrow. Personalized learning is one way to affect real, sustainable change that improves students' life trajectories, teacher retention rates, district accolades, and the future workforce. But it is not the only way. This year, as a result of what we heard from district leaders and the experts we hired, combined with what we learned from our own observations of the needs of school systems, we have expanded our work to include support around competency-based education (CBE), open educational resource adoption, curriculum strategy, and new school design, among others. We focus on solving the biggest challenges district leaders face. As those challenges evolve, we will too, just as we have in this past year.

This work has taken us to exciting new places, from partnering with Digital Promise and 10 school districts to develop a CBE toolkit, to helping Wake County Public Schools (NC) design a new school that will open in the fall of 2017. We look forward to seeing what the upcoming school year will bring.

Changing Culture. Our approach to working with districts does more than change the student experience. It changes the way districts operate and the relationship between districts and schools.

District leaders say their district meetings are more effective, district staff are more trusted to work in the way they think is best, and roles and accountabilities within the district are clearer. Furthermore, teachers say that, after working with us, they feel more supported by their district and that the working environment in their district is more positive.

To support this culture change, this year we created Touchpoint, our project-management tool that supports our consulting services. We believe that for change to be successful and sustainable, everyone needs to be on the same page.

I'm finishing up a book with Alexis Gonzalez-Black from IDEO on organizational systems, in which I'll share some of our findings on culture change.

Connecting Leaders. We hosted our third annual Personalized Learning Summit that brought together more than 500 leaders from 38 states and 2 countries!

We also graduated our third cohort of Lexington Education Leadership Award (LELA) Fellows. Across three cohorts, 30 district leaders from 19 states have brought what they learned through the LELA Fellowship back to 328 schools, more than 7,000 teachers, and more than 200,000 students.

Additionally, we focused on helping our districts establish themselves as proof points of success in their local communities through leading groups of districts in consortium models and supporting the planning and delivery of regional conferences.

With strong leadership in place, a passionate team, and bold district leaders, we are making strides in achieving our mission of supporting dynamic school systems that meet the needs of every learner, today and tomorrow.

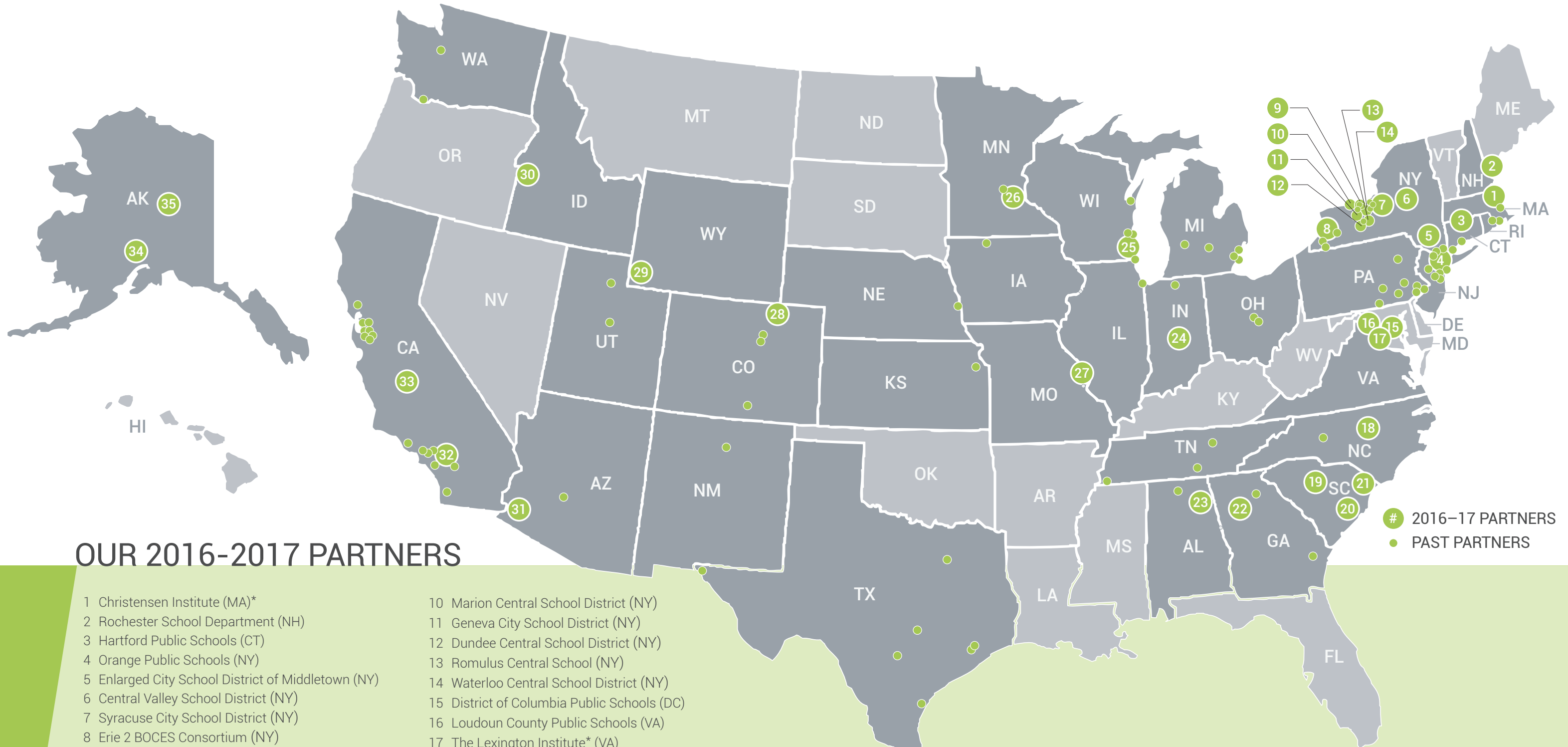
As we move forward, I am proud of what Education Elements accomplished in school year 2016–17, and I'm excited about the future. As we begin a new school year, I'd like to stand and applaud the work of our incredible team and the extraordinary educators who have trusted us to make the impossible possible.

Anthony Kim

Founder and CEO, Education Elements



Since 2010, we've worked with more than 34,000 teachers, 600 schools, and 127 districts across the nation to redesign learning for 545,000 students.



OUR 2016-2017 PARTNERS

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| 1 Christensen Institute (MA)* | 10 Marion Central School District (NY) | 25 Racine Unified School District (WI) | 31 Yuma Elementary School District One (AZ) |
| 2 Rochester School Department (NH) | 11 Geneva City School District (NY) | 26 School District 197 (MN) | 32 Riverside Unified School District (CA) |
| 3 Hartford Public Schools (CT) | 12 Dundee Central School District (NY) | 27 St. Louis Public Schools (MO) | 33 Corcoran Unified School District (CA) |
| 4 Orange Public Schools (NY) | 13 Romulus Central School (NY) | 28 Greeley-Evans School District #6 (CO) | 34 Kenai Peninsula Borough School District (AK) |
| 5 Enlarged City School District of Middletown (NY) | 14 Waterloo Central School District (NY) | 29 Uinta County School District One (WY) | 35 Fairbanks North Star Borough School District (AK) |
| 6 Central Valley School District (NY) | 15 District of Columbia Public Schools (DC) | 30 Nampa School District #131 (ID) | |
| 7 Syracuse City School District (NY) | 16 Loudoun County Public Schools (VA) | | |
| 8 Erie 2 BOCES Consortium (NY) | 17 The Lexington Institute* (VA) | | |
| • Eden Central School District | 18 Wake County Public School System (NC) | | |
| • Frewsburg Central School District | 19 Lexington County School District One (SC) | | |
| • Pine Valley Central School District | 20 Charleston County School District (SC) | | |
| 9 BOCES Wayne-Finger Lakes Consortium (NY) | 21 Horry County Schools (SC) | | |
| • Clyde-Savannah Central School District | 22 Fulton County School System (GA) | | |
| • Gananda Central School District | 23 Piedmont City School District (AL) | | |
| • Penn Yan Central School District | 24 Metropolitan School District of Warren Township (IN) | | |
| • Red Creek Central School District | | | |
| • Sodus Central School District | | | |
| • Williamson Central School District | | | |

*Foundation/Thought Partner

Sustaining Success

“Personalized learning has changed the game in Loudoun. I have seen our student engagement and personal responsibility for students increase dramatically.”

— Teacher, Loudoun County Public Schools (VA)

We want all students to reach their fullest potential.
We want all teachers to love to teach.

That's why we are thrilled to report that our districts and schools have again seen increases in student achievement, student engagement, and teacher efficacy. We are honored that districts consider us trusted partners.



Sustaining Success

Student Achievement

This school year, across 36,000 students from five of our districts with established implementations of personalized learning, students achieved average growth of 130% in reading and 122% in math on the NWEA MAP exam. Fifty-seven percent of those students met or exceeded the reading growth target, and 61% met or exceeded the math growth target.

Additionally, many districts individually saw strong growth on both NWEA MAP and other academic measures:

The Enlarged City School District of Middletown (NY)

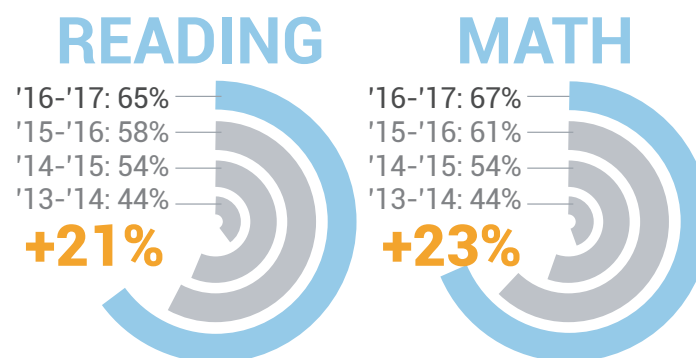
Sustained K–8 Growth Over Four Years

- Students: 7,000+
- Years working with Education Elements: 4
- Rollout approach: Opt-in for all teachers over a period of four years
- Instructional model: Focus on [Core Four elements](#) of personalized learning

Middletown's 2016–17 NWEA MAP results continue to show the cumulative benefits of consecutive years of personalized instruction. In both reading and math across all elementary and middle schools, more students are meeting or exceeding nationally normed growth targets:

- **DISTRICT WIDE:** This year, 65% of all Middletown K–8 students' growth in reading met or exceeded the nationally normed growth target for their grade, an increase of 7% from last year and an increase of 21% since 2013–14. Sixty-seven percent of all Middletown K–8 students' growth in math met or exceeded the nationally normed growth target for their grade, an increase of 6% from last year and an increase of 23% since 2013–14.
- Middletown's increased student growth means over 1,000 more students met or exceeded growth targets in reading and 1,100 more students met or exceeded growth targets in math than would have had Middletown continued to see the same student growth it did in 2013–14 before implementing blended learning.

- Middletown's consistent growth translates to substantially increased student proficiency rates compared to their first year of implementing personalized learning. Fifty-six percent of Middletown K–8 students tested proficient in English Language Arts (ELA) this year, up from 43% in 2013–14. Fifty-eight percent of Middletown K–8 students tested proficient in math this year, up from 47% in 2013–14.



Horry County Schools (SC)

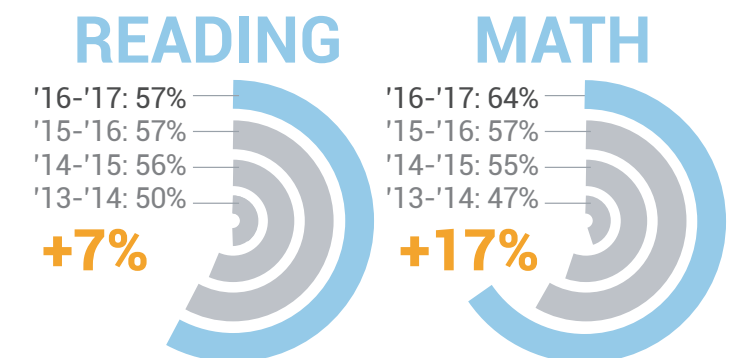
Sustained 6–8 Growth Over Four Years

- Students: 40,000+
- Years working with Education Elements: 4
- Rollout approach: Middle schools first, then high schools, then elementary schools
- Instructional model: Focus on [Core Four elements](#) of personalized learning

This year, Horry County Schools students in grades 6–8 grew by 40% more than nationally normed growth targets in reading and 37% more than nationally normed growth targets in math on NWEA MAP. Compared to four years ago, that's a 40 percentage point rise in average reading growth and a 45 percentage point rise in average math growth.

Additionally, Horry has seen a 7 percentage point rise in middle school students meeting or exceeding growth targets in reading and a 17 percentage point rise in math.

That means approximately 600 more middle school students in reading and 1,460 middle school more students in math met or exceeded growth targets in reading and math, respectively, than would have had Horry continued to see the same student growth it did in 2013–14.



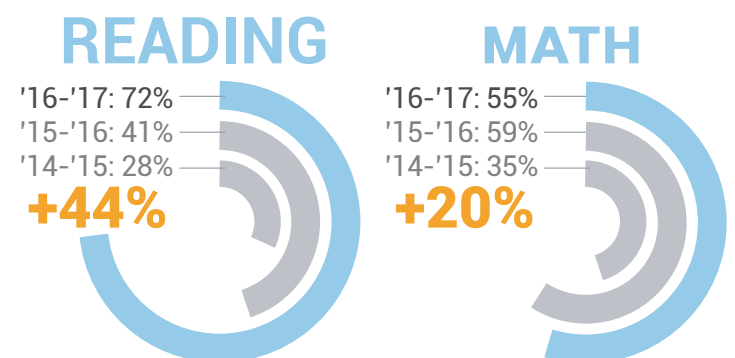
Piedmont City School District (AL)

Small District, Steady Growth

- Students: 1,300+
- Years working with Education Elements: 4
- Rollout approach: Grades 6–8 first, then Grades 4–5 and 9
- Instructional model: Mastery-based, blended model

Math: This year, 55% of Piedmont 3–8 students tested as "on target" to be College and Career Ready on the ACT Aspire exam. That's 20% more than two years ago, when only 35% tested College and Career Ready.

Reading: This year, 72% of Piedmont 3–8 students tested as "on target" to be College and Career Ready on the ACT Aspire exam. That's more than twice as many as two years ago, when only 28% tested College and Career Ready.





Sustaining Success

MSD of Warren Township (IN)

Showing Progress

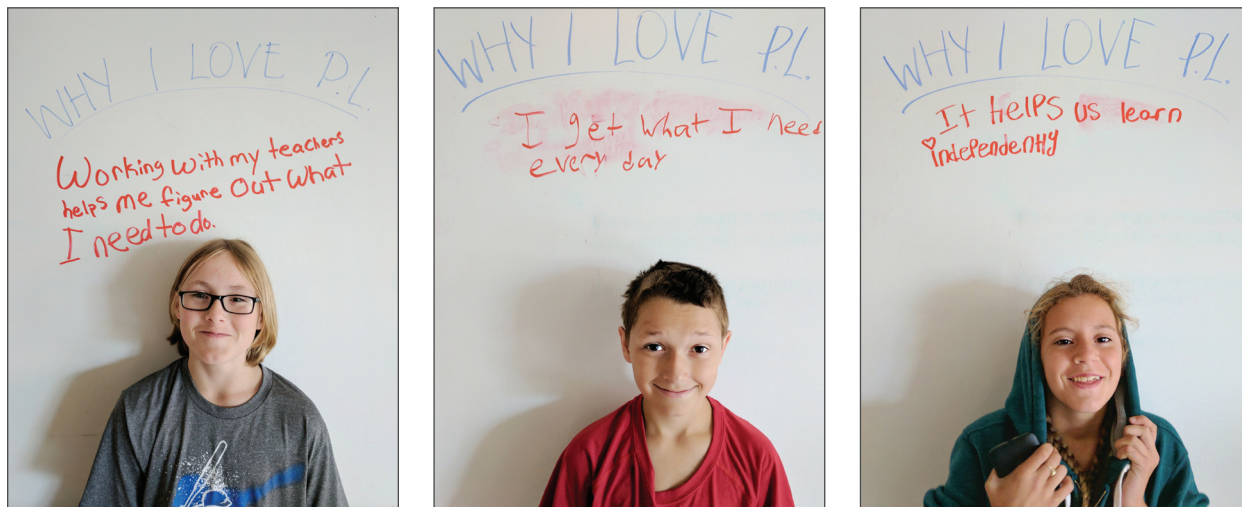
- Students: 12,000+
- Years working with Education Elements: 2+
- Rollout approach: All schools across three different cohorts of readiness
- Instructional model: Focus on [Core Four elements](#) of personalized learning

This school year was Warren's first year with reliable NWEA test data, and the results are promising. Warren K–8 students grew 22% more than nationally normed growth targets in reading and 7% more than nationally normed growth targets in math. Fifty-seven percent and 56% of all Warren's K–8 students' growth in reading and math, respectively, met or exceeded the nationally normed growth target for their grade.

These are highlights from districts we support that were ready and able to provide academic data at the time of publication of this report. Some of the districts were not able to share academic data due to the timing of this report, and others are still establishing baseline data.

For many districts, including those that take NWEA MAP such as **Loudoun County Public Schools (VA)**, **Rochester School Department (NH)**, and **Romulus City Schools (NY)**, SY 2016–17 was a foundational year to build a common language and strategy for personalized learning and to begin slowly implementing personalized learning strategies. Other districts have internal research and evaluation teams that have focused on monitoring implementation fidelity and will investigate personalized learning's impact on student outcomes in the upcoming school year. These districts include **Fulton County Schools (GA)** and **Syracuse City School District (NY)**.

We're excited to support these districts over the coming years and to report back on their academic progress.



Middle school students from Rochester School Department (NH) share why they love personalized learning.

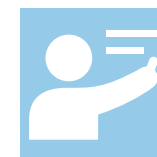
Student Engagement & Teacher Efficacy

We want all students to love school. We believe that to achieve at high levels now and be prepared for the future, students must be engaged in their learning. We believe students will not love school unless they have effective teachers who meet their individual needs.



District leaders are seeing changes in teacher practice and student engagement. Since their district started personalized learning, they have seen the following results: ¹

- **92%** of district leaders say that teachers are more effective,
- **90%** of district leaders say that students are more engaged in their learning,
- **86%** of district leaders say that students show more self-direction in class, and
- **74%** of district leaders say that teachers collaborate more effectively.



Teachers also say they feel more effective and that students are more engaged. After implementing personalized learning, they cite the following achievements:

- **70%** of teachers say they are confident that personalized learning has a positive effect on teaching and learning,²
- **68%** of teachers say that they feel more effective since they started personalized learning,³ and
- **67%** of teachers say that students are more engaged since they started personalized learning.⁴

"I could not express how much I have enjoyed tackling this work. It has made me a better practitioner and learner."

—Teacher,
Charleston County School District (SC)

District highlights:

- After one year of implementing personalized learning, **72%** of teachers across 15 schools in **Loudoun County Public Schools (VA)** say they feel more effective.⁵
- After two years of implementing personalized learning, **67%** of teachers in **MSD Warren Township (IN)** say they feel comfortable innovating and taking risks with their instruction to personalize learning.⁶
- After three years of implementing personalized learning, **95%** of teachers in **Piedmont City Schools (AL)** say they are able to use digital content very well to complement their offline curriculum.⁷
- After four years of implementing personalized learning, **94%** of elementary school teachers in the **Enlarged City School District of Middletown (NY)** say they target instruction to address specific student needs and learning goals. After three years, **91%** of middle school teachers had the same opinion.⁸

¹ Includes 65 responses from 25 districts.

² Includes over 2,000 responses from 15 districts.

³ Includes over 2,000 responses from 14 districts.

⁴ Includes over 1,700 responses from 12 districts.

⁵ Survey of 271 Loudoun teachers.

⁶ Survey of 260 Warren teachers.

⁷ Survey of 28 Piedmont teachers.

⁸ Survey of 160 ES and MS Middletown teachers.



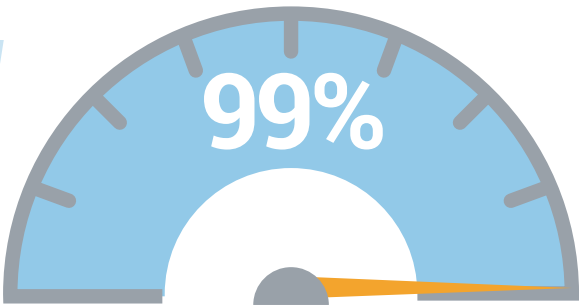
Sustaining Success

Trusted Advisers

We are passionate and love what we do. We do not think of the work we do as a series of projects but instead as the building of partnerships and friendships. We measure our success by the success of the districts we support.

“Education Elements’ ability to get a pulse of what is going on in our world is impressive and appreciated. They modify, adapt, and adjust to meet our needs.”

–District Leader,
Loudoun County Public Schools (VA)



In a survey of 71 district leaders across 25 districts, **99%** of district leaders consider Education Elements to be a trusted partner.

We believe that everyone should be aligned around the “why” and should understand the need for change. We believe that implementation with fidelity is critical. We believe that, like students, every teacher is different. No two teachers are quite in the same place with regard to their abilities and mindset.

That’s why we are excited to report that our districts and schools report that working with us helps them clarify their vision and rollout plans, understand personalized learning instructional models, improve utilization of curriculum, strengthen instructional and IT support, and improve teacher practice.



We are honored to share that:

- **98%** of district leaders say Education Elements’ support was effective in helping their district to understand personalized learning,⁹ and
- **93%** of district leaders say Education Elements’ support was effective in helping their schools design personalized learning instructional models.¹⁰

“The Education Elements team supported both district visioning and district collaboration. Our Education Elements team inspired and engaged and reignited a passion for learning among our district team members. Their depth of knowledge and resources, flexibility, creativity, encouragement, and 24/7 willingness to collaborate and support the district staff members in all aspects of district work (not only the personalized-learning-focused work) affected all areas of district work and relationships. Seeing Personalized Learning Council members use the strategies and resources with other district teams, in principals’ meetings, and with other school teams has been a very strong indication of how profoundly the Education Elements team has brought about change in the district.”

– District Leader, Charleston County School District (SC)

We work with our district partners to survey teachers at the beginning and end of the school year. Survey questions align to our [personalized learning implementation framework](#). Across districts, comparing our fall and spring survey results reveals the progress we see in a single year:¹¹

STRATEGY	DESIGN	CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION	SUPPORT	OPERATIONS
PL Vision Alignment +11% understand their school's vision and purpose for personalized learning better	Teacher Role in PL Instructional Model +4% target instruction to student needs and learning goals	Online & Offline Curriculum Alignment +18% are better able to use digital content to complement the curriculum	Roles to Support PL Teachers +10% are clearer on how their school or district will support them to personalize learning	IT Support Plan +11% are more confident they have the IT support necessary to personalize learning
Multi-Year Roadmap +11% understand their school's rollout plan for personalized learning better	Students As Self-Directed Learners +8% give students the opportunity to reflect on and shape their learning journey	Grading, Assessment, and Data Culture +18% are better able to use data to differentiate instruction	PL Professional Learning Plan +10% feel well supported to implement personalized learning	Devices & Digital Tools +7% have the devices and digital tools to support personalized learning

Growth was particularly high for several districts in their first year implementing personalized learning:

- Central Valley School District (NY): 91% of teachers understood their school’s vision and purpose for personalized learning, +28% from the beginning of the year.
- Chicora Elementary School, Charleston County School District (SC): 71% of teachers now give an opportunity for student reflection, +42% from the beginning of the year.
- Rochester School Department (NH): 79% of teachers can use digital content to complement their curriculum, +36% from the beginning of the year.
- School District 197, West St. Paul-Mendota Heights-Eagan (MN): 89% of teachers are better able to use data to differentiate instruction, +33% from the beginning of the year.



School District 197 (MN) Principal Tom Benson’s school turned an old computer lab into a collaboration space “think tank.”

[Read Tom’s story](#)

⁹ Includes 44 responses from 25 districts.

¹⁰ Includes 44 responses from 25 districts.

¹¹ Survey of more than 3,500 responses from 15 districts.

Overcoming Challenges

We provide consulting services to help districts solve their biggest challenges.

Districts come to Education Elements for help with the following needs:

- increasing student engagement,
- declining enrollment,
- building district capacity, and
- getting the best return on large investments in classroom technology.

“Whenever we came to a plateau or standstill, Education Elements was able to help us come up with new ideas or approaches.”

— District Leader, Uinta County School District #1 (WY)



Overcoming Challenges



Student Engagement



WATCH LOUDOUN'S STORY

Loudoun County Public Schools (VA)

- Loudoun County Public Schools (LCPS) consistently ranks near the top of all Virginia districts on traditional measures of school performance. Despite these successes, LCPS wanted to go beyond state assessments and ensure students were meaningfully engaged in their learning.
- After one year of implementation, 68% of teachers report that students are more engaged in class.

[Watch LCPS's story](#)



Enrollment



WATCH YUMA'S STORY

Yuma Elementary School District One (AZ)

- Yuma Elementary School District One (Yuma) is the largest elementary school district in Yuma County with 8,600 K–8 students across 17 school sites. Yuma is near the U.S.-Mexico border and supports a diverse range of students, including children of migrant workers and military families.
- For 10 consecutive years, Yuma faced declining enrollment. The district wanted to be the premier district in its area to provide innovative programs, district-wide technology, and personalized instructional models to meet the needs of its students.
- Last year, after one year of personalized learning, Yuma saw its enrollment stabilize. As of fall 2017, enrollment is up by 180 students: an increase of over 2 percent!

[Watch Yuma's story](#)



Maximizing Tech Investments



WATCH WARREN'S STORY

Metropolitan School District of Warren Township (IN)

- In 2012, MSD Warren Township won a \$28.5M Race to the Top grant. Despite some initial success implementing its plans, Warren **struggled** with how to successfully use its technology to personalize instruction for students.
- After nearly two years of implementing personalized learning, 80% of teachers understand their school's vision and purpose for personalized learning and 75% of teachers say they can use digital content to effectively complement their curriculum.
- Sixty-eight percent of teachers feel more effective since implementing personalized learning.

[Watch Warren's story](#)



Building District Capacity



WATCH FULTON'S STORY

Fulton County Schools (GA)

- Fulton County Schools (FCS) is the fourth-largest school system in Georgia, serving 96,500 students across 105 schools.
- FCS spent two years developing a strategic plan and vision for personalized learning. The district was ready, but it lacked the process to turn its plans into reality at the school level.
- Since the spring of 2015, all schools have gone through a process with Education Elements to develop personalized learning instructional models, professional development plans, and communications plans.

[Watch FCS's story](#)



As Director of Teaching and Learning at Loudoun County Public Schools (VA), James Dallas says working with Education Elements has given teachers flexibility to create a learning environment that personalizes the student experience.

[Read James's story](#)



Fairbanks North Star Borough District (AK)
3rd grade teacher Eric Rush started a YouTube channel to share his personalized learning practices with teachers across the country.

[Read Eric's story](#)

"Each time we engage in conversation, I leave with clearer thoughts and direction."

– District Leader, MSD of Warren Township (IN)

Going Beyond Personalized Learning

In 2016–17, we expanded our work to formally include support around competency-based education, open educational resource adoption, curriculum strategy, strategic planning, and new school design, among others.

We focus on solving the biggest challenges district leaders face. As those challenges evolve, we will too.

“If I have any reservations, it is simply this: now that I have seen what education can look like, it saddens me that this is not the standard.”

— District Leader, Central Valley School District (NY)



Going Beyond Personalized Learning

Competency-Based Education (CBE)

Surveying the CBE landscape, it can be difficult to know where to start. For many, CBE involves rethinking many of the fundamental structures in school districts, from assessment schedules to grade levels and teacher roles. Education Elements helps districts plan for CBE, from initial steps at a few pilot schools to strategic planning for district-wide transformation.

This year, Education Elements developed a [CBE Framework](#) to help district leaders focus on what really matters by breaking CBE planning down into actionable areas. Using this framework as our guide, we partnered with [Digital Promise](#) to document and share lessons learned on CBE from school districts across the country. We designed and facilitated a workshop where 20 districts from the [League of Innovative Schools](#) collaborated to document their efforts to shift to CBE.

From there, we worked with 10 districts to help them deeply reflect on their work and share it with the education community at large. The result was a [CBE Toolkit](#) that includes each district's rationale for moving to CBE, surprises and tradeoffs they've faced, considerations for other organizations, and artifacts that show "what it looks like."

We are also working with **Fulton County Schools (FCS) (GA)** to help a variety of stakeholders think through how to plan for, communicate, and support a shift to teaching and assessing with a CBE approach. FCS uses the term "Standards Mastery Framework" to describe this work, which will flow from district-

led principals' meetings down to teacher-led professional learning communities. Our work will ensure that the tools developed by FCS allow schools to implement a more personalized curriculum that is guaranteed and viable for all students.

The Standards Mastery Framework builds upon our work with FCS over the past two years, bringing personalized learning instructional models, professional learning plans, and communications plans to 96 schools.

Resources:

[Education Elements website: CBE Services Overview](#)

[Resource: Competency-Based Education Framework](#)

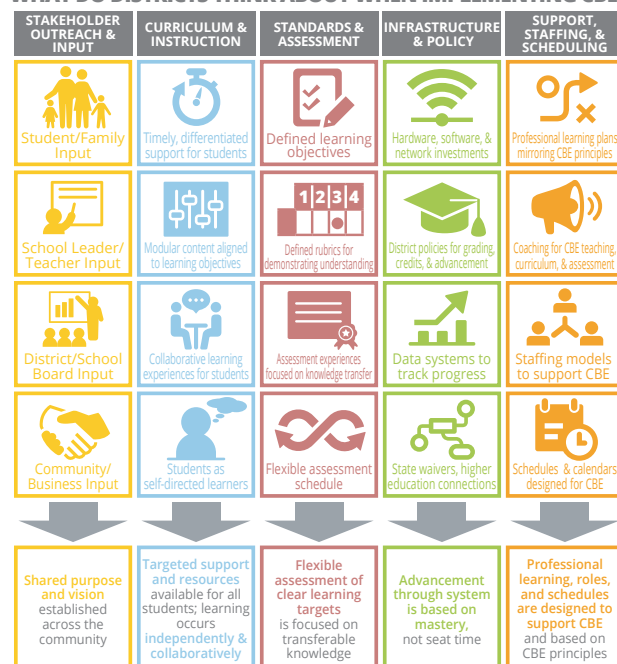
[Resource: Competency-Based Education Toolkit](#)

[Education Elements blog: Personalized Learning and CBE: A Partnership and a Toolkit](#)

[Blog: Creating a Culture of Relearning in Your CBE Classroom \(Piedmont, AL City School District\)](#)

[District Profile: Fulton County Schools \(GA\)](#)

WHAT DO DISTRICTS THINK ABOUT WHEN IMPLEMENTING CBE?



As an instructional coach at Hartford Public Schools (CT), Kim Childress is all about sharing best practices. When something works, she looks for ways to make sure other schools are hearing about it.

[Read Kim's story](#)

Open Educational Resource Adoption

The increasing accessibility of open educational resources (OER) creates a need for schools and districts to understand, evaluate, support, and monitor the types of freely available resources that teachers use to drive instruction.

This year, we worked with the **Enlarged City School District of Middletown (NY)** and **Loudoun County Public Schools (VA)** to build their understanding and support their implementation of OER to offer students access to significant, relevant content. We provided professional development to help them understand the current landscape of OER, OER providers, and implementation options; conducted strategy sessions to develop a district road map for implementing OER; helped build an OER player; and trained pilot teachers to implement OER.

We relied on a mix of case studies, massive open online courses (MOOCs), and the U.S. Department of Education's #GoOpen initiative to bring a national and international perspective to the work at each district. We identified clear challenges that OER could address, such as out-of-date textbooks or fragmented resource repositories, and opportunities, such as the professional learning that occurs when a group of teachers are empowered to curate and create open courses.

Resources:

[Education Elements website: OER Service Overview](#)

[Guest blog: OER 101: Building the Future of Education Beyond Brick and Mortar](#)

[District Profile: A New Tool to Personalize Learning With Open-Education Resources: The Middletown Learning Path](#)

Under Antonia Stone's leadership, Corcoran High School (CA) has led the way in personalized learning.

[Read Antonia's story](#)

Collaboration & Creativity

As districts and schools grow in their comfort with personalized learning, our support evolves with them. We were fortunate this year to work with two districts to deepen their understanding of instructional practices around student collaboration and creativity.

We have worked with **Horry County Schools (SC)** since 2012. This year, our work focused on ensuring that personalized learning classrooms are places where "teachers facilitate an authentic exchange of ideas and students learn to become caring, principled people as well as thoughtful, creative learners and thinkers." We worked with Horry County Schools to bring this vision for collaboration to life by developing tools to support teachers and facilitating learning walks to provide feedback to school leaders and a district-wide overview of instructional practices.

We have also worked with the **District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) (DC)** since 2013. While DCPS teachers have become quite comfortable with integrating digital content and targeted small group instruction, they wanted to improve collaborative learning in their blended instructional models. This year, we worked with their elementary literacy team to create a collaborative learning framework and trained a select group of teachers on how to incorporate the framework into their instruction.

Resources:

[Resource: DCPS Collaborative Learning Framework](#)

[Resource: Education Elements Collaborative Learning Framework](#)

[Blog: Stop! Collaborate and Listen... to Enhance Personalized Learning](#)

[District Profile: Horry County Schools \(SC\)](#)



Going Beyond Personalized Learning

Professional Development & Coaching



Staff at Chicora School of Communications in Charleston County School District dress the part as pilots and flight attendants for their personalized learning launch day! (Credit: #FlyHightoPL)

Training and supporting teachers, coaches, and principals is just as key to sustaining and deepening personalized learning practices after initial strategies are in place as it is when an initiative is when first launching. While all our engagements make sure districts have strong professional learning plans, we have worked more intensively with several districts to design and deliver support for coaches.

In **Charleston County School District (SC)**, where we just began work this year, we provided coaching support in tandem with the district-level strategy work and intensive support for three schools in 2016–17.

In **Yuma Elementary School District One (AZ)**, where we have been working since 2015, we designed

and facilitated coaching workshops during which coaches created a new professional learning system for teachers to self-identify growth goals through a district-wide Core Four rubric and designed plans to meet with teachers to deepen personalized learning knowledge, skills, and mindsets.

In **Piedmont City Schools (AL)**, where we have worked since 2013, our focus this year was to provide onsite and virtual support to build the capacity of their coaching staff. Support focused on using observation debrief cycles (ODC) to encourage and support teachers struggling to adopt the personalized, competency-based models.

In **Dundee Central Schools (NY)**, where we have worked since 2015, school “design teams” hosted monthly “Core Four Wednesdays” to offer professional development. On these early-release days, faculty attended choice-based professional development sessions focused on Core Four practices. The teams surveyed teachers and used observation data to plan topics for each session.

Resources:

[Education Elements website: Professional Development & Support Services](#)

[District Profile: Yuma Elementary School District One \(AZ\)](#)

[Blog: Why I Am Loving Instead of Hating the Beginning of This School Year—MSD of Warren Township \(IN\)](#)

[Blog: Why Good Professional Development Matters](#)



Over the past two years, Sofia Ramirez, a principal at Yuma Elementary School District One (AZ), has led her school through the transition to personalized learning. In her words, “At the beginning, we were all very nervous. Now it’s a complete turnaround. Now we are all on the same page.”

[Read Sofia's story](#)

“In 23 years [in education], our partnership with Education Elements and the professional development model has been the most valuable, productive, focused and collaborative [partnership] I have participated in, to date.”

— Principal, Loudoun County Public Schools (VA)

Curriculum Strategy

Education Elements worked with the **St. Louis Public School District (MO)** to guide the district through the Master Planning for Innovation curriculum adoption project. We reviewed the current state map for curriculum adoption; examined the capabilities model; provided a road map and framework for the future state of the curriculum adoption process; and reviewed and recommended changes in organizational roles, capabilities, expertise, and processes. This project was a collaboration with the CELT Corporation, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and the University of Missouri.

Resources:

[Education Elements website: Curriculum Adoption & Strategy](#)

[Curriculum Adoption Process Framework](#)

Guide to Selecting Curriculum to Support Personalized Learning Whitepaper Series:

[Phase One: Align Curriculum Goals With Personalized Learning Vision](#)

[Phase Two: Determine Offline-Online Curriculum Alignment and the Role of Digital Tools](#)

[Phase Three: Review, Demo, and Select Digital Tools](#)

[SLPS Curriculum Adoption Process—Functional Capabilities and Process Maps](#)

New School Design

Education Elements partnered with the **Wake County Public School System (NC)** to design, launch, and support a new personalized learning elementary school that will open in fall 2017. The new school will focus on personalized learning, align with the district’s 4C’s (Collaboration, Creativity, Communication, and Critical Thinking), and support the specific student population and school community. Our work together included designing an instructional model and staffing and support plan.



Edward McFarland (Area Superintendent) and Shane Barham (Founding Principal) of Wake County Public School System (NC) led the work to develop a new school model, from rethinking everything from hiring procedures to staff support structures. Because of their hard work, Rogers Lane Elementary School will open this fall.

[Read Edward and Shane's story](#)

Changing Culture

We believe that to create lasting effects for students, more than instructional practices and support structures must change. The entire district culture must change.

That's why our approach to working with districts does more than change the student experience. It changes the way districts operate and the relationship between districts and schools.

"Education Elements has helped us build a 'we are in this together' work environment with school leadership teams."

— District Leader, Horry County Schools (SC)



Changing Culture

Engaged Organizations

Our work with districts goes beyond strategic planning or professional development. Our approach has a positive impact on the organizational culture of the districts we work with, building trust and helping school and district leaders work together effectively to create lasting change for students.

“Education Elements staff members have helped district staff to build trust with school teams. Having the help of Education Elements to lead open and honest conversations with school leadership teams in a nonthreatening way has been very beneficial. Education Elements has helped us to build a ‘we are in this together’ work environment with school leadership teams.”

— District Leader, Horry County Schools (SC)

“I have lived in Fairbanks for a long time, and I have been involved with the district many years, and I've never seen anything quite as exciting as personalized learning. The training that I participated in this week made me feel empowered, and the process our school teams have gone through this week has been truly customized to meet us where we are. This is an amazing opportunity.”

—Teacher, Fairbanks North Star Borough School District (AK)

When compared to teachers preparing to start personalized learning, teachers at the end of their district's second year partnering with Education Elements report positive changes in their working environments:

+21% more teachers feel their school is a positive working environment: 69% compared to 48%.

+11% more teachers feel their school is supportive of their professional growth: 77% compared to 66%.

Since moving to personalized learning, district leaders have noticed meaningful gains:

68% of district leaders say district meetings are more effective.

66% of district leaders say district staff are more trusted to work in the way they think is best.

56% of district leaders say relations between the district's central office and school staff are more positive.

68% of district leaders say roles and accountabilities within the district are clearer.

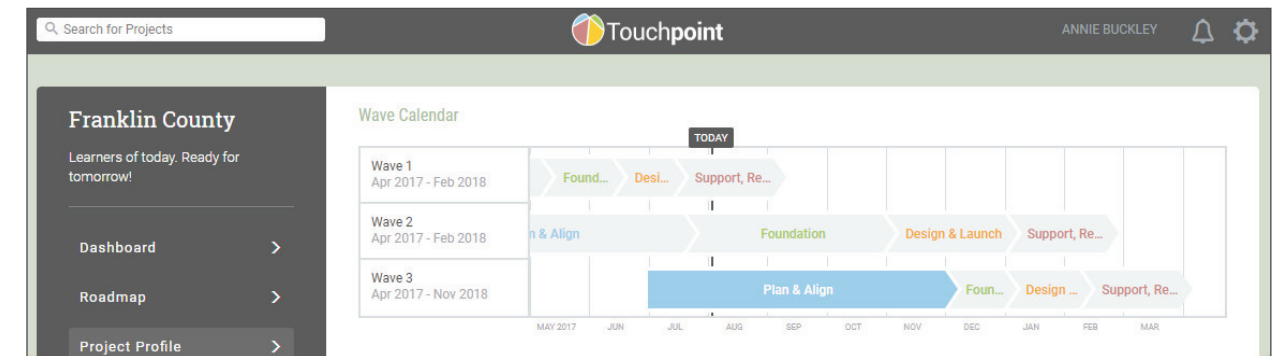


Trista Brundage and Gordy Baxter co-teach ELA at Geneva City School District (NY). They piloted PL this year and will become district PL coaches next year.

[Read Trista and Gordy's story](#)

Nathan L. Nelson, Associate Principal at Simmons-Pinckney Middle School, Charleston County School District (SC), says the most rewarding part of his school's shift to PL has been seeing students own their own learning and data.

[Read Nathan's story](#)



We believe that for change to be successful and sustainable, everyone needs to be on the same page. For that reason, this year we created Touchpoint.

Touchpoint is a cloud-based tool that complements the on-the-ground support from our expert consultants:

- **Touchpoint helps create alignment** between the district and each school site to support the successful execution of high-level strategy. Regardless of whether a district is implementing personalized learning or adopting a new curriculum, Touchpoint provides a visual road map and clear actions for each phase of work anchored in the district's shared vision.

- **Touchpoint reduces the number of websites, documents, and resources you use to manage change in your district.** With Touchpoint, there's no more navigating to multiple sites and pages or losing track of key decisions and documents in email. Everything is easy to find, in one place, through the Touchpoint experience.

- **Each component of the Touchpoint experience is customized** for the needs of your district and schools. A member of the Education Elements

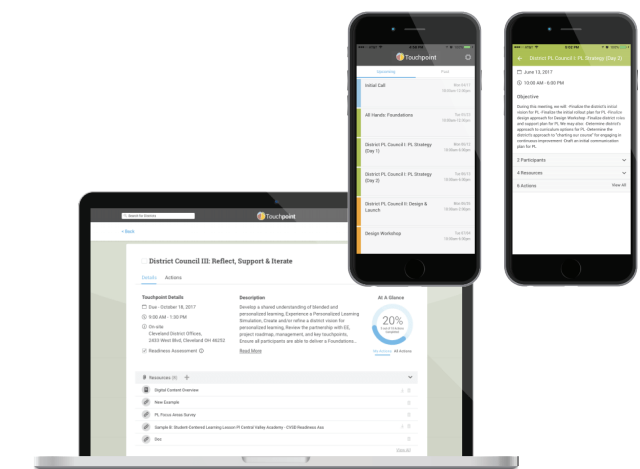
consulting team will customize a road map, create a set of prioritized actions, and help you build a library of resources, all based on the needs of your team.

Resources:

[Education Elements website: Touchpoint Tool](#)

[Blog: How Touchpoint Compares to Other Tools](#)

[Blog: Why This Brand-New Online Tool Will Help Districts Implement Initiatives More Effectively](#)



“The Touchpoint tool is REALLY helping us organize all of the materials we accumulate and share resources. I like it VERY much.”

— District Leader, Racine Unified School District (WI)

Connecting Leaders

"The Summit provided opportunities for inspiration and exposure to fresh ideas... the stuff that excites educators and motivates us to go back and use this enthusiasm to make what's happening in our schools even better."

— Teacher, Dundee Central Schools (NY)

Our school and district leaders are doing amazing work. They are bold, innovative risk-takers. They see opportunities where others see roadblocks. They relentlessly pursue what's best for students.

That's why we are so passionate about helping them connect with like-minded leaders and share their stories.



Connecting Leaders



Third Annual Personalized Learning Summit

Our [third annual Personalized Learning Summit](#) was our largest and best yet! The Summit brought together more than 500 leaders for two days of powerful professional development, inspiration, idea sharing, storytelling, and fun!

Since we had a 125-person waitlist, next year's fourth annual Summit is sure to be even bigger and better. Stay tuned!

38 states and 2 foreign countries

75% of attendees work in a school district

50% hold leadership roles in their school or district

17 tours of innovative Bay Area companies

46 workshops (selected out of more than 200 applicants)

93% rated it as a great experience

92% said they would recommend it to a friend, with

73% extremely likely to do so



Keynote Speakers:

- Brad Montague, Creator of Kid President
- Kaya Henderson, Former Chancellor of DC Public Schools
- Ray A. Owens, Ph.D., Pastor of the Metropolitan Baptist Church of Tulsa
- Lilly Hall and Brian Alvarenga-Molina, an elementary school student and a high school student

Select Workshop Titles:

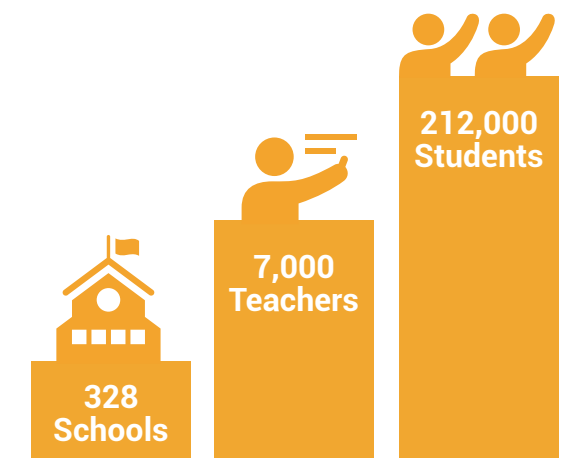
- Breaking the Cycle of School Turnaround: Year 0 in Denver Public Schools (Presenting Organization: Denver Public Schools, CO)
- Effective OER Planning & Implementation (Presenting Organization: Lakota Local School District, OH)
- The Droids You're Looking For: Teaching With Drones, Robots, and More (Presenting Organization: Workbench Platform)
- From Traditional to Data Driven—One Urban Math Class's Blended Learning Journey (Presenting Organization: Racine Unified School District, WI*)
- The Evolution of Blended Learning Models (Presenting Organization: Blended Learning Universe)
- Using Micro Credentialing to Supercharge Your Personalized Learning Initiative (Presenting Organization: Marion Central School District, NY*)

*Denotes Education Elements client

Lexington Education Leadership Award Fellowship

This year, we graduated the third cohort of **Lexington Education Leadership Award (LELA) Fellows**. The LELA Fellowship, a partnership of the Lexington Institute, is a six-month program designed to expose district superintendents and their teams to personalized learning and facilitate the first steps toward implementation.

Across three cohorts, 30 district leaders from 19 states have brought what they learned through the LELA Fellowship back to 328 schools, more than 7,000 teachers, and more than 212,000 students.



"I've been to 30+ conferences, and this has been my favorite. I loved the balance of keynotes, workshops, and time to network. The entire conference was very organized."

—Principal, Loudoun County Public Schools (VA)

"Honestly, it is probably the best conference I have attended."

—District Leader, Rochester School Department (NH)

"The great ideas shared in the workshops were amazing. We have already begun to talk about and use some of the strategies. The keynotes were amazing and inspiring."

—District Leader, Yuma Elementary School District One (AZ)

"The LELA Fellowship has been one of the best professional learning experiences I have participated in during my 22 years in education. We were challenged along the way to think deeply and critically about personalized learning and how it will allow us to meet the unique needs of our students and staff."

— Cohort 3 Fellow, West Oso ISD (TX)



Connecting Leaders

Communities of Collaboration

While our reach is national, we are passionate about fostering local communities of collaboration as well as meeting the different needs of districts through varied support models. For that reason, this year we have more intensively supported unique local efforts, including pioneering a consortium approach in New York, supporting several local summits, and promoting success stories through local media.

Consortium Model

New York: Since 2013, Education Elements has worked in New York to design, implement, and support personalized learning. Currently, 18 districts and two Boards of Educational Cooperative Services (BOCES) across the state have moved to a personalized learning instructional model, changing the educational experience for over 45,000 students.

This year, we worked with many smaller districts through a consortium model to better meet their needs. Though much of the work is individualized for each district, it is accomplished through a series of collaborative and group working sessions. These touchpoints build the capacity of the districts and enable Education Elements to pass along cost savings to each participant.

Local Summits

Several districts expressed interest in pulling together “local summits” to showcase the amazing work at their schools and increase excitement and momentum around personalized learning in their regions.

In June 2016, **Metropolitan School District of Warren Township (IN)** held its first Warren Blended Learning Forum. The forum brought together 260 district and school leaders from five districts and featured keynote speakers, workshop sessions, and blended learning simulations. Due to the success of the first forum, in July 2017, Warren hosted its second [Blended Learning Forum](#) with



over 300 attendees and 10 districts. Education Elements worked with Warren to craft the agenda and topics for breakout sessions as well as provide connections to keynote speakers.



In October 2016, **Greeley-Evans District 6 (CO)** hosted its first [Greeley Blended Learning Summit](#) that brought together 142 district and school leaders to learn about Greeley’s blended learning implementation. It

was an incredible showcase of the work that has been done to personalize education for all Greeley students. Greeley provided a rich professional learning experience to its own teachers and those from neighboring districts alike. Education Elements was happy to help coordinate the theme, pricing, and keynote for the conference with the incredible Greeley team.

Sharing Success Through Media

We are passionate about helping districts share their stories. We work with leaders to write and publish articles in a variety of sources. In just this past year, we helped leaders get published in *EdSurge*, *Getting Smart*, and *District Administration*, among others. To see some examples, check out the list at the end of the report.



David O'Rourke and Scott Bishoping are both superintendents of BOCES in New York. Together, they are leading 52 small districts in the shift to personalized learning!

[Read David and Scott's story](#)


Closing

Sustaining Success. Overcoming Challenges. Going Beyond Personalized Learning. Changing Culture. Connecting Leaders.

As we look back on school year 2016–17, we are proud of what we and our district partners have accomplished and are grateful to the extraordinary educators who have trusted us in this work.

We look forward to the 2017–18 school year and continuing to help school districts solve their toughest problems.



 **Education Elements**
Learners of today. Ready for tomorrow.



Education Elements and Our District Partners in the Media

		FEBRUARY	
Education Elements & ECSD of Middletown (NY)	AUGUST	Freehold Township School District (NJ)	Team Effort Paves Way for Personalized Learning
		Education Elements	Education Elements Adds Jack Witlin to Esteemed Board of Directors
		Education Elements Framework	Competency-Based Education Framework
Education Elements	SEPTEMBER	Education Elements Article	Five Predictions for Education in 2017
			MARCH
ECSD of Middletown (NY)		Loudoun County School District (VA)	Virginia's New 'School Divisions of Innovation' Plan Eyes the Future of Learning
ECSD of Middletown (NY)		Education Elements Publication	Communications Planning for Innovation in Education
Fulton County Schools (GA)		Education Elements Article	Communications Tips for School Leaders
		APRIL	
Education Elements	OCTOBER	Rochester School Department (NH)	Rochester Middle School Offering Individualized Learning
		Syracuse City School District (NY)	Personalized Learning Turns Struggling Schools Around
		Education Elements White Paper	Selecting Curriculum to Support Personalized Learning: Align Curriculum Goals With Vision (Part 1)
Piedmont City School District (AL)		Education Elements Resource	Framework for Collaborative Learning
Greeley-Evans School District 6 (CO)		Education Elements Article	Why Schools—Not Just Start-Ups—Need to Fail Fast
Education Elements	NOVEMBER	Education Elements Article	3 Ways to Get Millennials to Teach
			MAY
Fairbanks North Star Borough School District (AK)		Piedmont City School District (AL)	SMATH: How to Turn 2 Subjects Into 1 Super-Class
Education Elements/LELA Fellowship		Education Elements	Why We Must Reboot Our Schools
MSD of Warren Township (IN)		MSD of Warren Township (IN)	Teacher to Teacher: My Journey to Personalized Learning
Education Elements	DECEMBER	Education Elements	In this New Hampshire High School, Internships Offer a Stepladder to the Future of Learning
		Education Elements White Paper	Personalized Learning Implementation Framework
		Education Elements White Paper	Selecting Curriculum to Support Personalized Learning: Determine the Right Mix of Offline and Online Curriculum (Part 2)
Romulus City Schools (NY)		Education Elements Toolkit	Competency-Based Education (CBE) Toolkit
Fairbanks North Star Borough School District (AK)		Education Elements Article	Why We Must Reboot Our Schools
		JULY	
ECSD of Middletown (NY)	JANUARY	Education Elements, DC Public Schools (DC), Greeley-Evans School District 6 (CO)	Blended Revolution: How 5 Teachers Are Modifying the Station Rotation to Fit Students' Needs
		Education Elements White Paper	Selecting Curriculum to Support Personalized Learning: Review, Demo and Select Digital Tools (Part 3)