



Leadership for Equity & Accountability in Districts & Schools

LEADS Network Cohort II 2010-2013

Overview

Leadership for Equity and Accountability in Districts and Schools (LEADS) is a national network of districts launched in 2006 by the School Redesign Network at Stanford University (SRN) and SRN's parent program, the Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education (SCOPE). Combining knowledge from research, policy, and practice, SCOPE and SRN work to support and sustain equitable schools and districts that provide every student with the opportunity to receive a high-quality education. LEADS was established to further this work specifically at the district level.

LEADS network districts join in cohorts that work together for three years, learning from each other and from faculty, practitioners, and researchers from Stanford's School of Education, Graduate School of Business, and Institute of Design. Through sustained learning, inter-district networking, strategic planning, and professional accountability, district teams address the pressing needs of K-12 public education within their local contexts.

SCOPE/SRN

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Program Features

Cross-District Collaboration: The knowledge and experience member districts bring to the network is what drives its synergy. Collaboration includes a commitment to fundamental practices such as identifying and sustaining the focus on shared goals, learning from each others' successes and challenges, collective problem-solving, and supporting each other in monitoring progress around measurable goals.

Focus on Collaborative and Distributive Leadership: In network practices and professional learning events, LEADS emphasizes building team capacity and leadership development to support continuous and sustainable improvement.

Research and Professional Knowledge: As a Stanford University program, LEADS provides members with access to some of the nation's leading practitioners, scholars, and staff from Stanford's School of Education, Graduate School of Business, and Institute of Design (d.school). These experts work with network members to provide critical knowledge to district-specific issues of reform. Network members access this knowledge through face-to-face contact at the annual Summer Session, residencies, special events, and virtual contact through teleconferences and webinars.

Opportunities for Specialization: Recognizing that there will be emerging areas of interest within the network over time and urgent demands to respond to, LEADS is structured to adapt to new priorities while also providing consistent support to develop capacity for specific agreed-upon network and district priorities.

Linking Research, Policy, and Practice: The U.S. is in a time of extensive education policy development and reform through national initiatives such as Race to the Top, Investing in Innovation, and the Common Core State Standards initiative. Through SCOPE — SRN's parent program — LEADS enables members to access and contribute to emerging research on educational policy and practice.





Network Commitments

An effective network of education leaders requires a strong commitment to working together to learn through the network and to apply learning in practice. LEADS district teams share a commitment to the following:

- **Equity:** Member districts share a commitment and willingness to actively challenge the inequities affecting schools and students and to improve access and opportunity.
- **Continuous Learning and Action-Oriented Goals:** LEADS functions as a professional learning community and districts commit to openly discussing, reflecting, and sharing progress with other district teams in the LEADS Network. LEADS districts are committed to identifying measurable goals, creating action plans, and tracking progress of implementation toward outcomes.
- **Consistent Leadership Teams:** LEADS empowers leadership teams to implement change strategies that engage staff and stakeholders across the district, in school sites, and in the local community. These efforts succeed through the consistent presence and involvement of district teams with core members who participate in all LEADS events. The core team should include superintendents, cabinet members, and other central office leaders.
- **Distributive Leadership:** LEADS is committed to distributive models of leadership. Districts are expected to work with key stakeholders to build ownership of reform. LEADS will work with districts to involve and engage key local education leaders, including principals, teacher leaders, board of education members, and community partners, appropriate to each district's needs.
- **System Innovation:** LEADS supports districts to combine expertise about existing effective practices with innovative processes to implement improvement. Participants will experience multiple perspectives from different academic disciplines and from the intersections of practice, research, and policy. Teams will be challenged to apply new knowledge as they design strategies to advance equity, excellence, and opportunity for high needs students and schools.



Core Components

LEADS is structured on a three-year model of professional learning and development. Each year, the content and structure of professional learning progressively deepens and expands leadership capacity, while also responding to new and emerging needs and innovations. Following are the key elements offered each year:

Network Events and Meetings

- Annual summer institute at Stanford University
- District-hosted and theme-based residency
- Network conference calls: Regular check-ins on strategic goals, priorities, and challenges and collective problem-solving
- Webinars

LEADS Liaison Support

A dedicated LEADS liaison for each district provides:

- Initial consultation
- Regular follow-up
- Support at network events
- Review and feedback on key district documents and action

Goals and Progress Assessment

- Guided goal-setting, action planning and progress reviews
- Mid-year progress report
- End-of-year report

Research Briefs

- Research briefs focused on emerging issues and priorities for LEADS districts

Additional Opportunities

Along with LEADS-specific events, members may choose to access additional resources available through SCOPE, SRN, and Stanford University, including:

- Study visits to successful schools
- Research and policy briefs, reports, and multi-media presentations
- SCOPE-hosted webinars featuring leading researchers
- Other SCOPE- and SRN-hosted learning events



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Outcomes

LEADS teams will be supported to develop evidence of visible and measurable outcomes at different levels of their school system. To ensure broader systems change and strong alignment, participating districts will focus on multiple levels of practice and impact based on some core themes, including:

Equity: Member districts will investigate indicators of equity and identify opportunity gaps. This knowledge will inform district-specific strategies to address issues of resources, curriculum, supports for struggling students, and other concerns related to equity and opportunity.

Leadership: LEADS works with districts to improve structures, routines, and working cultures to develop effective leadership teams. The work includes attention to recruitment, retainment, and succession management for effective district and school site leadership that supports district initiatives.

Strategic planning: LEADS emphasizes mindful, planned approaches to systemically support positive, transformative change. Exemplary practices from both education and business are used to improve district strategic planning and to strengthen alignment between the central office, school sites, and students' needs.

School improvement: Network learning will inform district strategies for raising student achievement, reducing inequities, and improving persistently low-achieving schools.

Costs & Services

Network membership costs \$35,000 annually, per district leadership team (up to 10 people). Membership is open to school districts, leadership teams, and other organizations that exist to support multiple schools consortia. Costs for membership may vary depending on enhanced or adapted packages. The LEADS basic network fee pays for:

- Participation in annual summer institutes, residencies, network teleconferences, and webinars (lodging and travel costs are not covered).
- Follow up support for each district individually from a designated LEADS liaison.
- Preferential access to and discounted fees for other SCOPE and SRN professional learning events.
- Access to research, policy briefings, and other materials from SRN, SCOPE, and Stanford University.
- Networking opportunities with other SRN and SCOPE partner organizations.

LEADS Cohort II launches with the 2010 Summer Session, taking place June 22-25. Please contact us for more information.