LearnLaunch

Massachusetts Accelerates Adoption of Personalized Learning Through New Public-Private Partnership

Education Innovator David O'Connor to Serve as Executive Director

December 14, 2016 - Boston, MA. The LearnLaunch Institute and the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education today announced the creation of a public-private consortium to catalyze personalized learning: the Massachusetts Personalized Learning Edtech (MAPLE) Consortium. Supported by The Barr Foundation and Nellie Mae Education Foundation, MAPLE will leverage the work being done by the Commonwealth's most innovative schools to enable all districts to incorporate personalized learning approaches and cutting-edge pedagogies, ensuring all students are prepared to be productive and successful citizens in the 21st Century.

"While proud of how Massachusetts schools perform when compared to other states, we need to enable success for all students, preparing them to compete globally in the 21st Century. This requires fostering and accelerating the rate of adoption of effective practices in teaching and learning," said Mitchell Chester, Massachusetts commissioner of elementary and secondary education. "The MAPLE Consortium is a collaborative effort with local school districts to identify, analyze, and nurture successful new models of personalized learning and then catalyze and support the expansion of these models and practices across the Commonwealth."

The announcement took place at Natick Public Schools, one of the founding MAPLE Consortium members.   Natick's Superintendent Peter Sanchioni said "MAPLE will provide peer support for meeting our objective of supporting the best possible learning for all our students, tailored to their individual needs, interests, and talents. Our experiences will be instructive to other Massachusetts districts as they move toward personalized learning."

Somerville Superintendent Mary Skipper said, "The MAPLE Consortium will enable us to more rapidly identify innovations that work, make adjustments in those that don't, and strategically continue to move forward towards helping all of our students succeed."

Founding district members of the Consortium include Andover, Arlington, Beverly, Burlington, Concord, Millis, Natick, Needham, North Reading, Revere, Somerville, and Westford. Over the next year, MAPLE intends to add up to thirty more Member Districts to support the systemic expansion of personalized learning in Massachusetts. Member Districts will participate in peer learning, in which they share approaches, challenges and solutions as they move toward personalizing the education of all their students, with the aim of increasing student engagement and achievement. Research and technical assistance partners will also be members of the Consortium. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education will use the group as a sounding board for policies to help innovation flourish.

MAPLE will connect districts with necessary resources – a strong peer learning community, professional learning, digital tools, funding strategies, and a rich evidence base – to create thoughtful and innovative new models of teaching and learning that improve student engagement and achievement. "MAPLE will enable districts to learn from each other, as well as from our strong community of education researchers and education entrepreneurs, providing resources that strengthen local models, and supporting the broader adoption of promising innovations in teaching and learning," said Eileen Rudden, Chair of the LearnLaunch Institute.

Personalized learning seeks to accelerate student learning by tailoring the instructional environment – what, when, how and where students learn – to address the individual needs, skills and interests of each student. Within a framework of established curriculum standards and high expectations, personalized learning motivates students to reach their goals. Students take ownership of their own learning and develop deep, personal connections with each other, their teachers and other adults. Technology is necessary to implement personalized learning effectively, affordably, and at significant scale. Educators leverage technology to gain detailed and timely knowledge of their students that guides instruction. Effective use of technology allows teachers and students to focus more on creativity, critical thinking, and collaboration.

Education innovator David O'Connor will serve as MAPLE's executive director, bringing experience and expertise from a career of leadership at education innovators such as Pearson, Amplify Education, and Apple.

Founded in 2012, LearnLaunch has established itself as the hub for education innovation in New England, harnessing and advancing the potential for digital technologies to improve education outcomes. Implementing personalized learning requires readiness from teachers and administrators, support from parents and the local community, as well as increased sophistication in implementing and using classroom technologies. LearnLaunch has proven experience in both educator professional learning and education technology, as well as in how innovations begin, take root, and grow.

About MAPLE
MAPLE is a public-private consortium hosted by the LearnLaunch Institute and the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The Massachusetts Personalized Learning Edtech (MAPLE) Consortium aims to catalyze personalized learning throughout Massachusetts K-12 education.

MAPLE is dedicated to connecting districts and schools with necessary resources – a strong peer learning community, professional learning, digital tools, funding strategies, technology partners, and a rich evidence base – to create innovative models of teaching and learning to improve student engagement and achievement. Learn more at www.learnlaunch.org/MAPLE   or follow @LearnLaunch #MAPLE.

About LearnLaunch Institute

LearnLaunch Institute catalyzes a community that drives innovation to transform learning and increase achievement. Our education innovation ecosystem mobilizes educators, entrepreneurs, learners, investors, and industry affiliates. As a nonprofit, the Institute offers learning opportunities and connections to individuals, support services to schools, and a district network. We believe in expanding access to learning that is engaging, personalized, and effective. Edtech is a critical component of achieving this vision at scale. For more Information and our upcoming events, visit www.learnlaunch.org or follow us @LearnLaunch. LearnLaunch Institute is a part of the LearnLaunch family, which includes LearnLaunch Accelerator and co-working space LearnLaunch Campus. Learn more about our full family of services at www.learnlaunch.com.

About the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Ed

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is proud to support a public education system that is a national leader and among the best worldwide. The Department's work focuses on strengthening curriculum, instruction and assessment; improving educator effectiveness; supporting social-emotional learning, health and safety; turning around the lowest-performing districts and schools; and using data and technology to support student performance. www.doe.mass.edu