BUILDING A GLOBAL LEARNING SCIENCES NETWORK FOR WIDESCALE IMPLEMENTATION OF EQUITY AND WHOLE CHILD EDUCATION

PREMISE:
Findings from science of learning (SoL) research cannot improve the learning environments and outcomes for millions of students if those findings never reach classrooms or if implementation is not supported through policy. Achieving maximum implementation requires scientists, practitioners, policymakers, and philanthropists to work together more effectively to share knowledge, develop multiple strategies for implementation, and validate the effectiveness of that implementation.

WHY A GLOBAL NETWORK:
For several decades, the collaboration of research institutions across the United States and the world has generated major advances in the multidisciplinary science of learning. Achieving widescale implementation in education policy and practice requires a similar multidisciplinary effort by the sectors of learning scientists, educators, philanthropists, and policymakers to determine what works in the field and develop effective implementation at scale. This unprecedented global infrastructure would accelerate sharing between the various SoL sectors, networks, and initiatives to maximize U.S. and worldwide implementation of science-based strategies that meet the learning needs of students. As OECD's PISA and PIAAC have assisted many nations in learning from others; the global network can similarly provide lessons learned from the implementation of SoL in different cultures that a nation may find useful.

BACKGROUND:
In September 2018, leaders from the Temporal Dynamics of Learning Center at UC San Diego, the Alliance for Excellent Education, and the National Public Education Support Fund (NPESF) convened forty-seven participants to explore a vision for a Global Science of Learning in Education Network (GSOLEN). Supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Jacobs Foundation, and NPESF, the Los Angeles conference included scientists, practitioners, policymakers, and philanthropists from Argentina, Australia, Brazil, China, India, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States. This convening explored next steps following the end of the NSF funding for its large-scale Science of Learning Centers program.

The concept of a global network evolved from previous conferences supported by the NSF in Paris, Shanghai, Rio de Janeiro, and Alexandria, Va. Through facilitated planning and design sessions, the Los Angeles participants crafted a shared vision for the GSOLEN involving scientists, practitioners, policymakers, and philanthropists as the key to creating an action plan for a collaborative network for improving learning and education on a global scale. All four sectors agreed the global network should proceed with the following recommendations:.

(1) Build and strengthen infrastructure that supports the implementation of well-delineated projects that steadily advance children's learning and well-being.

(2) Represent a unique collaboration of synergistic organizations committed to utilizing science in order to improve the quality of children's learning opportunities. The network should support and complement, not compete with, current efforts in the US and various nations. A partial listing of likely participants includes international organizations (UNESCO and OECD), national policymaker organizations such as education ministries and national research programs (US NSF Centers of SoL), national private and nonprofit initiatives (Brazilian SfEdnetwork, SoLD, etc), and international funders.

(3) Foster close interactions between the many organizations to ensure the next phase of science and research is collaboratively designed with policy, practice, and philanthropic experts.

(4) Increase focus on strategies for policy and practice implementation of the learning sciences including the development of consensus statements that facilitate application of whole child equity.

(5) Partner with the philanthropic community to identify worthwhile investment opportunities to develop a more integrated and informed global infrastructure that supports members of each community to bridge gaps in areas of SoL research, policy, and practice.

NEXT STEPS IN 2019:

- Work with the GSOLEN international advisory committee and interim coordinator to codify consensus statements and identify areas for GSOLEN action.
- Identify individuals to focus on specific and tactical issues of building the GSOLEN.
- Determine structure, create an executive team, and develop an operational plan.
- Undertake immediate activities, such as identification of specific key opportunities for bringing the science to bear on a few high-profile challenges.

Different countries have implemented different aspects of the science of learning; bringing together research, translation, implementation, and evaluation requires creating an unprecedented global collaborative infrastructure.

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