



News Release

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Contact: Sharon Kebschull Barrett, OpportunityCultureInfo@publicimpact.com

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Three Of Nation's Largest School Districts Receive Federal Grant for Wide Use of Public Impact's Opportunity Culture Innovative Staffing Models

Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Montgomery County, and Fort Worth School Districts Form Teacher-Leader Consortium

CARRBORO, N.C.—Three of the nation's largest school districts—Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Fort Worth, and Montgomery County (Maryland)—have been awarded a \$7.7 million federal grant for widespread implementation of Opportunity Culture innovative staffing models, which Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools pioneered with Public Impact's support in 2013. With the Teacher and School Leader Incentive Program (TSL) grant, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools will expand its use of these models to all of its schools over three years, while the Fort Worth and Montgomery County districts will launch and expand the models over three years.

Districts using Opportunity Culture designs implement innovative staffing models that help schools reach all students with excellent teaching, consistently, and all educators with excellent, paid career opportunities. Public Impact, which founded the national Opportunity Culture initiative, is marking its 10th year supporting implementation of the models, which extend the reach of excellent teachers and the small teams they lead to more students, for more pay, within regular school budgets.

Public Impact will support Montgomery County (MCPS) and Fort Worth (FWISD) in launching and spreading Opportunity Culture models and provide Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) with data analysis to inform its expansion.

MCPS and FWISD, the nation's 15th- and 46th-largest districts, respectively, will visit CMS, the 17th-largest district, to see Opportunity Culture schools in action.

With a total of 529 schools and more than 375,000 students, the districts have committed to reaching at least 98 principals, 1,650 teachers, and 46,000 students during the grant period, using these staffing models proven to increase student learning. CMS will reach its remaining 67 campuses not already using Opportunity Culture models; FWISD and MCPS will begin in 31 high-need campuses.

The TSL program supports districts in implementing, improving, or expanding their human capital management system. Intended to primarily serve educators in high-need schools who raise student academic achievement and close the achievement gap between high- and low-performing students, it may also apply to high-need subject areas in other schools.

The districts' objectives include ensuring equitable access to highly effective teachers and their instructional teams, attracting and retaining top educators in high-need schools, and providing job-embedded professional development for all educators.

Public Impact is the nation's largest, longest-standing provider of school staffing design with proven results. Independent research has shown Opportunity Culture models boost student learning an extra half-year annually, on average. They retain effective teachers and pay many team positions more, giving educators support, collaboration, and career opportunities.

CMS, MCPS, and FWISD will be using Public Impact’s new online design platform by the 2024–25 school year, along with receiving substantial school design coaching. The platform, which helps decrease the cost and complexity of moving to Opportunity Culture models, will soon become available for states to purchase as well as individual districts.

As the [Opportunity Culture Dashboard](#) shows, more than 170,000 students are being reached by excellent teachers and their teams this year, in 65 sites—nearly all traditional districts—in 12 states that now are part of the Opportunity Culture initiative. In those sites, more than 800 schools are implementing, designing or committed to launch Opportunity Culture designs. More than 5,400 teachers serving on small Opportunity Culture teaching teams have advanced roles or receive on-the-job support and development. Since use of the models began 10 years ago, Opportunity Culture educators have earned \$57.9 million in extra pay.

The models are designed for all schools, but systems implement first in higher-need schools, and 93 percent of those now in the design or implementation phases are eligible for Title I funding.

In the annual, anonymous Opportunity Culture survey, educators consistently express strong confidence about Opportunity Culture implementation in their schools, with 97 percent of educators in the Multi-Classroom Leader role and 87 percent of all educators in Opportunity Culture roles saying in 2023 that they want these roles to continue in their schools.

How Opportunity Culture Models Work

In Opportunity Culture sites, each participating school forms a design and implementation team of teachers and administrators that determines how to use Opportunity Culture roles to reach more students with excellent teaching. The design teams reallocate school budgets to permanently fund pay supplements for those in Opportunity Culture roles, in contrast to temporary grant-funded programs. In addition to these supplements, the Opportunity Culture initiative continues to support higher pay for all teachers, where budgets allow.

The [Multi-Classroom Leader](#) (MCL) role is the cornerstone role, for a teacher with a track record of high-growth student learning who leads a small teaching team for a substantial pay supplement, averaging 21 percent of average teacher pay. MCLs continue to teach part of the time in some way while leading the team in lesson planning, data analysis, instructional changes and the creation of a tutoring culture. MCLs provide support through regular coaching and feedback, co-teaching and modeling of instruction.

An MCL’s team may include those in Team Reach Teacher roles, for teachers who—critically in a time of [teacher shortages](#)—directly teach more students, typically without raising instructional group sizes, for more pay. This avoids filling a portion of teacher vacancies with long-term substitutes. The team gets support and [MCL-guided tutoring](#) from advanced paraprofessionals in the Reach Associate role.

[Third-party studies](#) have found that, on average, teachers who joined MCL teams moved from producing 50th percentile student learning growth to 77th percentile student learning growth in both reading and math. The gains equate to an extra half-year of learning for students each year, on average.

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About Public Impact

Public Impact’s mission is to improve education dramatically for all students, especially low-income students, students of color, and other students whose needs historically have not been well met. We are a team of professionals from many backgrounds, including former teachers. We are researchers, thought leaders, tool-builders, and on-the-ground consultants who work with leading education reformers.

Learn more about the Opportunity Culture initiative on the [OpportunityCulture.org](#) website. To arrange an interview with Public Impact, contact Sharon Keschull Barrett at OpportunityCultureInfo@publicimpact.com.