



# LEADING FOR IMPACT WITH **HYBRID LEARNING**

AUGUST 2021



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## INTRODUCTION

New Leaders is an educational leadership organization and our mission is to ensure high academic achievement for all children, underscored by our commitment to racial equity, social justice, and an unwavering belief in the potential of every student.

Our rigorous and evidence-based approach to professional learning has been proven to work, with the RAND Corporation finding in 2019 that school leaders trained by New Leaders:

- have a positive, statistically significant impact on student's math and literacy performance;
- and are retained in their roles at higher rates and support higher student attendance than their peers.

Similarly, when surveyed by RAND district leaders reported New Leaders' professional learning programming to be responsive, capacity-building, a valuable investment, and — perhaps most importantly — highly effective.



Patricia Alexia  
Otway-Drummond  
New Leaders Cohort 10  
Principal at Hamilton Elementary/  
Middle School, Baltimore

## LEADING FOR IMPACT WITH HYBRID LEARNING

New Leaders is at the intersection of policy and practice, leading the field with our groundbreaking research and learning models. We understand that adults learn best when their training is rooted in challenging, real-world work, so we implement a job-embedded and data-driven approach to development that builds the capacity of school leaders to deliver breakthrough results and sustained student outcomes.

In 2013 New Leaders transitioned to a hybrid learning model, redesigning and adapting our program content and activities to better incorporate best practices around adult learning and better equip school leaders to translate theory into practice.

Through our hybrid learning model, school and district leaders engage in:

- cohort-based learning experiences;
- interactive communities of practice (professional learning communities);
- authentic practice via reflective learning exercises;
- one-on-one coaching sessions; and
- competency-based online learning modules.

Each of these hybrid learning model components are designed to equip participants with the leadership practices to get real results where it matters most: in schools, for students.

An efficacy study on the net effect of New Leaders' hybrid delivery model for leadership development demonstrated our ability to drive the learning, instruction, and equity outcomes that have led to New Leaders being cited as the leadership development program with the strongest evidence of positive impact.

When surveying participants that experienced our hybrid leadership development learning model:



**98%** of program participants felt prepared to apply their learning to practice



**97%** of program participants agreed that their personal coaching sessions were effective



**96%** of program participants reported an impact on student outcomes



**96%** of program participants agreed that their facilitators and the program content were high quality

## NEW LEADERS HYBRID LEARNING IMPACT ALIGNED TO LEARNING FORWARD STANDARDS

In evaluating the impact of our hybrid learning model, we noticed marked improvements in participant data across several of the tenets identified by Learning Forward in their *Standards for Professional Learning* when compared to in-person only delivery models. Each of these improvements accelerate our efforts to advance instructional excellence, create school cultures focused on increasing equity, and dramatically improve student outcomes.

### LF STANDARD DEFINITION

**Develop Collective Responsibility:** Learning Forward found that “the more an educator’s learning is shared and supported by others, the more quickly the culture of continuous improvement, collective responsibility, and high expectations for students and educators grows.”

### OUR APPROACH

New Leaders’ hybrid learning model enables school leaders to build and participate in an online learning community, allowing leaders to build new relationships and form deep connections with their peers in a way that might not have occurred in the absence of online mechanisms such as randomized breakout rooms or the need to plan for logistical hurdles, such as substitute stipends and travel time. The online learning community enables school leaders to prioritize their own learning and immerse themselves in active community-building, paving the way for greater interaction, resource sharing, problem-solving and learning transfer amongst program participants throughout the school year.

“The pacing for the online sessions is great. We are able to learn in a whole group, collaborate in a small group and then reflect together.”

— Hybrid Learning Program Participant

“I love all of the web-based resources/protocols/samples that are included. I will use them as we work to make specific plans for staff and students.”

— Hybrid Learning Program Participant

## LF STANDARD DEFINITION

**Assess Progress: As Learning Forward shares in their research, engaging leaders in collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data allows for ongoing adjustments in the learning process to increase results for students, educators, and systems.**

## OUR APPROACH

New Leaders' hybrid learning model includes a virtual learning environment, allowing participants to access their professional learning resources at the click of a button. Program participants can refer to the resources to evaluate changes in practice and self-efficacy, assess progress against their individual professional learning goals, and better understand their strengths and growth areas.

## LF STANDARD DEFINITION

**Apply Learning Theories, Research, and Models: As Learning Forward discusses in their findings, technology extends the opportunities for professional learning and increases the possibilities for personalized and deepened learning enabling participants to work beyond the boundaries of their work setting and share new ideas.**

## OUR APPROACH

New Leaders' job-embedded nature of instructional design remains unchanged, but through our hybrid learning model we are now able to use technology to enhance and extend opportunities to individualize and differentiate learning for our program participants. Our virtual "hub" enables participants to consume information at their own pace in advance of joining the live community of practice sessions. This shift towards blending asynchronous learning along with synchronous learning sessions promotes more productive conversations that deepen everyone's learning, fosters greater collaboration, and supports the transfer of learning to practice.

"The articles were very good, but the platforms where principals were afforded time to discuss topics was especially useful and something we want to replicate."

— Hybrid Learning Program Participant

"The learning platform was informative, engaging, and packed with tools, templates, and resources!"

— Hybrid Learning Program Participant

## LF STANDARD DEFINITION

**Promote Active Engagement:** As Learning Forward has observed, “Active engagement in professional learning promotes change in educator practice and student learning.”

This occurs when participants interact during the learning process with the content and with one another. Through active engagement, educators construct personal meaning of their learning, are more committed to its success, and identify authentic applications for their learning.

## OUR APPROACH

New Leaders’ hybrid learning model enables professional learning facilitators to better monitor and catalyze participant engagement, underscored by an intense focus on using both in-person and online forums of discussion to both create space for all voices to be heard and reduce facilitator talk-time in favor of more time for peer-to-peer breakout group discussions. The intentional orientation towards active engagement in our hybrid learning model has not only allowed participants to hear many more diverse perspectives than they may have otherwise in an in-person, localized setting, but it has also enabled greater collegial relationship building and collective efficacy amongst colleagues.

## LF STANDARD DEFINITION

**Build Coherence:** In Learning Forward’s research, they recognize that in order to build coherence, the professional learning must build upon learning with a focus on learning outcomes and pedagogy.

## OUR APPROACH

New Leaders’ hybrid learning model allows program participants to build on prior learning by spending more time on the readings and assignments that they don’t have prior experience with, and less on those they do.

“I appreciated the combination of live and independent work.”

— Hybrid Learning  
Program Participant

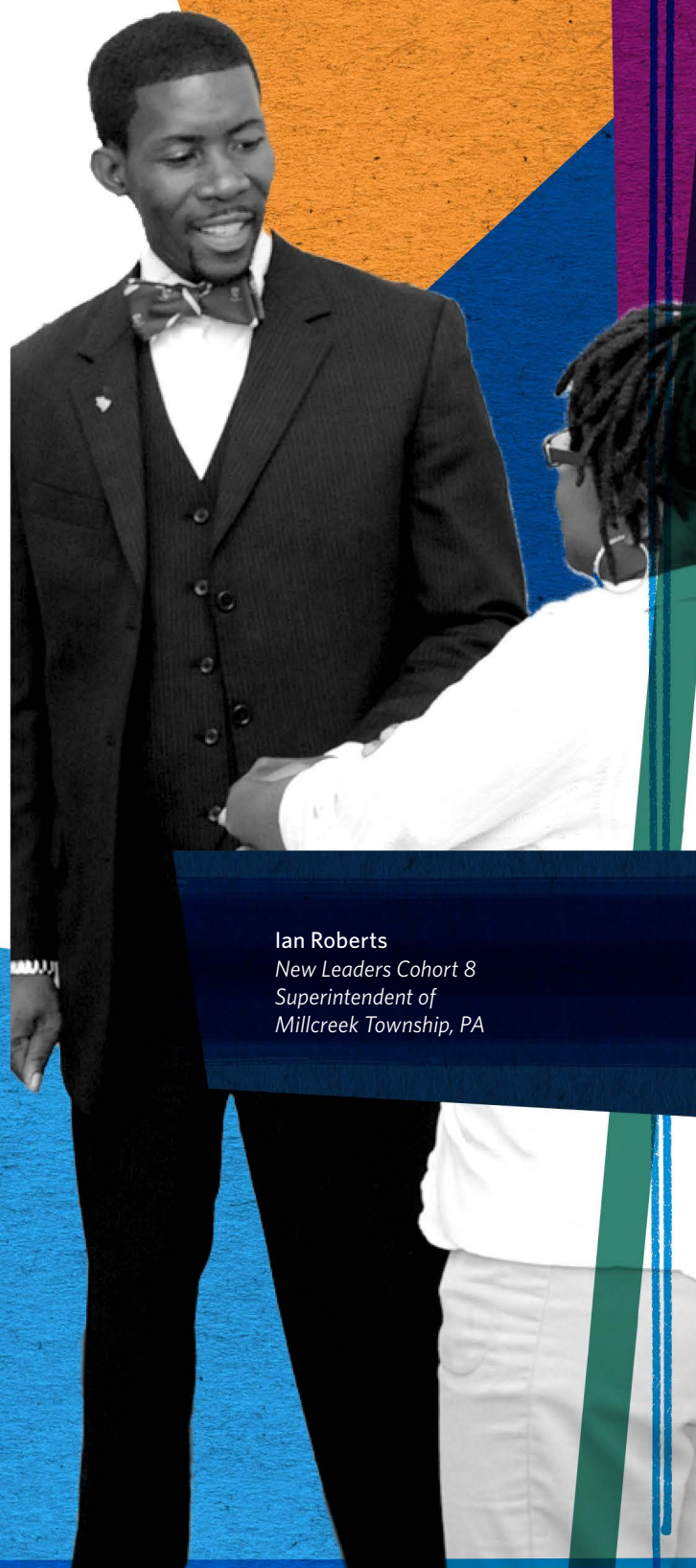
“The rich dialogue during the whole group and breakout sessions was helpful. It allowed the members to reflect on their leadership moves and areas of concern. In the spirit of sharing, we were able to gain insight and strategies to further support our work as leaders.”

— Hybrid Learning  
Program Participant

## OUR COMMITMENT TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

As a learning organization, New Leaders has spent the past 20 years committed to continuous improvement and innovation in service of teachers, leaders, teachers, and students across the country. We look forward to continuing to collect evidence and feedback around our impact as we innovate, iterate and learn alongside the schools and districts we partner with in service of developing transformational leaders that can identify and address the needs of all students.

**To learn more about partnering with New Leaders to increase leadership capacity, instructional excellence, student achievement and racial equity in your school or district, please contact us at [partnerships@newleaders.org](mailto:partnerships@newleaders.org).**



**Ian Roberts**  
*New Leaders Cohort 8  
Superintendent of  
Millcreek Township, PA*



Our mission is to ensure high academic achievement for all children, especially students in poverty and students of color, by developing transformational school leaders and advancing the policies and practices that allow great leaders to succeed.

Learn more at [www.newleaders.org](http://www.newleaders.org).

