

Learning Forward

What Matters Now

Network

Year Two Formative Evaluation Report

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Executive Summary

The What Matters Now (WMN) Network, launched in 2017, is a networked improvement community facilitated by Learning Forward and funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. WMN brings together three state coalitions (Maryland, Ohio, and Rhode Island) to utilize improvement science processes at the practitioner level to work toward a shared vision of promoting teacher access to high-quality job-embedded professional learning (JEPL) focused on identifying and implementing high-quality curriculum and instructional materials (HQCIM). The project fosters shared leadership among diverse stakeholders and develops scalable pathways for improvement contextualized to each state. WestEd conducted a two-year formative evaluation of the WMN work to generate learnings around network mechanisms, processes, and progress toward network and state coalition goals. The interview, focus group, survey, observation, and artifact-review data examined for year two of the formative evaluation suggest that professional learning communities (PLCs) have become much more focused and productive, teacher buy-in and capacity to effectively use student data have increased, and classroom practice and student outcomes have improved as a result of strengthened collaborative planning and more effective targeting of interventions. There was strong agreement among participants that PLCs in participating schools in the three states have been transformed by WMN work. Teacher professional learning time has become more efficient and purposeful, focused on examining student data and determining next steps, reflecting on practice, and observing and supporting peers. Teachers also continue to grow in their capacity to select and implement standards-aligned instructional materials. The year two cross-state convening was very highly rated by participants and the increased incorporation of teachers and involvement of principals at the network level was noted as a key success of year two, resulting in sustained momentum at the school level. Participants affirmed the importance of scaling and sustaining the work and emphasized further development of teacher leaders and strong support of administrators as key to this effort.

Background

The What Matters (WMN) Network, launched in 2017, is a networked improvement community (NIC) facilitated by Learning Forward and funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. WMN brings together three state coalitions (Maryland, Ohio, and Rhode Island) made up of educators at the school, district, and state levels to use improvement science processes to work toward a shared vision of promoting teacher access to high-quality job-embedded professional learning (JEPL) focused on identifying and implementing high-quality curriculum and instructional materials (HQCIM). The project fosters shared leadership among diverse stakeholders and develops scalable pathways for improvement contextualized to each state.

The work is guided by a network-level driver diagram with identified intermediate and long-term aims and associated primary and secondary drivers. The network identified three drivers that could be leveraged to improve teacher practice for increased student achievement—effective job-embedded professional development; identification and implementation of HQCIM; and leadership, policy, and resources for sustaining and scaling continuous improvement in these areas. Each state coalition is similarly guided by a driver

diagram articulating aims and drivers related to state-specific HQCIM content areas. Specifically, Maryland is focusing on increasing teacher capacity to identify and implement Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)-aligned professional learning and instructional resources; Ohio is focusing on using collaborative learning teams to strengthen teacher practices for pre-K–3 literacy outcomes; and Rhode Island is focusing on increasing teacher engagement by examining student data and reflective instructional practice to meet identified student needs.

Following intensive initial professional development in improvement science processes provided by the Center for Public Research and Leadership (CPRL), the state coalitions began implementation in their two participating districts with a series of school-level cycles of continuous learning related to their aims, with coaching and support provided by a university or government collaborative partner and Learning Forward. Coalition leadership teams (constituting the network “Hub”) met virtually and in-person over the first two years, both in their state teams and as a network Hub, to discuss progress and address challenges. Opportunities for cross-state learning took place during Hub calls and at in-person cross-state multistakeholder convenings.

The network seeks to promote practitioner-driven local and state policy. The state coalitions identify local contextualized problems of practice and inquiry [Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA)] cycles are carried out by school-level educator teams, with guidance from the collaborative partner and the state department of education partners. These PDSA cycles involve examining local student data and developing strategies to address learning imperatives. Within their focus areas, the state coalitions use the structure of the PDSA cycles to engage local educators in developing, honing, and implementing tools and processes for improving teacher collaborative time, teacher knowledge and effective use of research and standards-aligned instructional materials and approaches, and teacher understanding and use of student data to improve instruction.

For example, Ohio has developed a *Discussion Rubric for Teacher-Based Teams* (Teacher-Based Teams are Ohio’s equivalent of PLCs) and a *Decision Rules Flowchart* to orient the team to basing decisions on data and to guide selection of high-quality instructional materials. The Maryland coalition has developed *NGSS Lesson Checklists for Middle School Science Teachers* to assess the quality and NGSS-alignment of science lessons. Rhode Island developed a *Unit Unpacking Tool* to prompt and guide collaborative teacher discussions around unit alignment to curriculum and the *Looking at Student Work Protocol* to examine the effectiveness of instructional strategies employed with different subgroups. In addition, the state coalitions developed an array of teacher self-reflection tools to elicit reflection on changes in teacher practice and resulting impacts on student learning, as well as peer and administrator observation tools to assess connections between professional learning and classroom practice.

In addition to developing and implementing tools and processes to improve effectiveness of collaborative time and to tackle problems of practice, state coalitions gathered and analyzed data about the impact of their work on teacher practice. In Maryland, for example, nearly 90 percent of teachers reported that participation in the project improved their confidence in delivering NGSS-aligned instruction. In Ohio, teachers reported using data in every Teacher Based Teams (TBT) conversation 100 percent of the time, compared to 70

percent of the time prior to WMN implementation. Rhode Island attributed significant growth in student writing scores in WMN schools to improvements in teacher practice spurred by participation in WMN. As a result of increased teacher voice, district policy was influenced in all three states.

Following a highly successful WMN cross-state convening in February 2020 that saw increased deep engagement of teachers and principals, the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated virtual instruction for many schools and altered professional learning for the remainder of the WMN grant-funded period. As a result, statewide assessments that would have been used to explore potential student impacts of the WMN work were not conducted. As a testament to the extent of the embeddedness of WMN processes into teacher collaborative practice, stakeholders reported that PDSA cycles and implementation of WMN protocols continued mostly unimpeded despite the challenges and disruptions of the pandemic. Furthermore, the project was scaled within districts, and additional districts in participating states adopted WMN processes and tools.

Formative Evaluation Questions

WestEd conducted a formative evaluation over two years of the initial WMN work. The purpose of the evaluation was to collect and synthesize information about how the WMN project was carried out and about the emerging impacts reported by participants, as well as successes and challenges encountered. A key goal of the evaluation was to understand the role and importance of the leadership and facilitation of the network in supporting the WMN work at the state, district, and school levels.

The evaluation was organized around three levels prioritized by Learning Forward: network support, network aim progress, and participant results. The evaluation examined WMN's progress in each of these areas as it progressed toward meeting its network and state-specific aims related to changes in professional learning and teacher practice. The following questions guided the evaluation. During the final round of interviews in winter 2021, additional questions were added to interview protocols to gather information about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the WMN work in the states.

Network Support

- To what extent and in what ways does the network facilitate the work of state coalitions?
 - To what extent and in what ways does the network leadership foster shared purpose, collaboration, capacity-building, and common language and inquiry approaches?
 - To what extent and in what ways does Learning Forward support coalitions in using improvement science methods?
 - What is the role of the coalition collaborative partners in supporting the coalitions' work?

Network Aim Progress

- To what extent and in what ways is the network progressing toward its intermediate aim of teachers in network schools accessing and engaging in effective JEPL grounded in the use of HQCIM?

Participant Results

- To what extent and in what ways are state coalitions making progress toward achieving their intermediate aims?
- What are the successes and challenges encountered by state coalitions in pursuing their aims?

Data Sources

Data from the following sources was analyzed and synthesized to examine the evaluation questions during year two of the formative evaluation:

- In-person observation and data-gathering at February 2020 WMN cross-state convening
 - Role-alike focus groups conducted at meeting
 - Exit ticket participant survey
 - Artifacts and observation notes
- Virtual observation of WMN Hub calls
- Two rounds of interviews with WMN members, including state department of education staff and district and school administrators and teachers

Evaluation Findings

Information from the data sources listed above was triangulated to produce findings in the three overarching evaluation areas of network support, network aim progress, and participant results.

Network Support

Feedback from WMN participants obtained in interviews, focus groups, and the survey administered at cross-state convening (see appendix A for full results) indicated a high level of satisfaction with the support provided by the network. WMN members agreed that Learning Forward effectively supported the continuous improvement processes and held network members accountable, while providing actionable ideas and resources to support their work. In addition, WMN members reported that the state coalition collaborative partners and the network Hub effectively

“Everyone has a role. We all have a voice and work well together. When I missed a meeting, they noticed. It has been a good experience and everyone is growing from it.”

-Principal

“One of the most valuable things personally and for the principals involved has been Learning Forward resources.”

-Principal

“Giving teachers a voice that is genuinely listened to and appreciated is so empowering.”

-Cross-State Convening attendee

“Other departments are looking at how our PD and peer observation is done and are asking us questions. It’s contagious.”

-Assistant Principal

“WMN has made us critical thinkers instead of just accepting online tools. Now we are evaluating how aligned they are to our standards.”

-Teacher

facilitated communication, resource sharing, and collaboration. Respondents shared the following examples of helpful support provided by the network:

- Serving as thought partners
- Convening meetings and frequent check-ins
- Providing ideas and resources to support work with teachers
- Supporting sustainability planning
- Providing support to PLCs and PDSA cycles
- Ensuring that all network members have a voice

As detailed in appendix A, the feedback provided by participants in the February 2020 cross-state convening indicated a high level of satisfaction with the meeting—higher than for previous convenings. For example, all respondents indicated that they experienced a sense of community at the convening and had ample opportunities for reflection and dialogue with peers. In addition, 96 percent of respondents reported that they were leaving with ideas they would apply to their work, particularly ideas gleaned during the sharing-out portions of the meeting. Participants valued the substantive time to work within state coalitions as well as the relationship building learning across states.

Participants particularly appreciated that more teachers were given the opportunity to participate in the 2020 cross-state convening. Participants stressed that the project becomes so much more meaningful for teachers and buy-in becomes very strong when teachers are given the opportunity to attend the convenings and to see and learn from other teachers engaged in the work. One participant encapsulated how teachers’ voices were heard first in the meeting, setting the tone for the rest of the convening. Attendees also noted the direct engagement of principals, who in previous meetings tended to defer to state leaders and collaborative partners.

Shared Purpose

A salient finding throughout the data sources was the extent to which the network fostered shared purpose and common language and goals, both among its members across sites and states, and within PLCs. Participants reported that the cross-district and cross-state convenings provided important opportunities for their voices to be heard and for collaboration and resource sharing around common

Teacher practice is more intentional and purposeful. I see them reflecting and discussing, ‘How do we make this fit the need of this kid and also this kid?’ It is way more explicit and systematic than it has been in the past.”

-Principal

“Learning Forward has done a nice job of asking questions that aren’t typical of an educational entity to help our constituents and get information to them and challenging the way we typically view things.”

-Principal

“I believe this was one of the best meetings I have attended for WMN convenings. The level of organization, focus, and leadership is commendable!!”

-Cross-State Convening Attendee

“Teachers appreciated being involved. Being selected to be a part of it elevated them as professionals within their buildings. They could be showcased and talk about the work they do and it was motivating for them.”

-State Department of Education partner

expectations that bridged content areas. There was strong agreement among participants that the project provided clarity and focus for PLCs and moved teacher voice to the fore in the school-based work.

Improvement Science Capacity

Interview, focus group, and survey data showed that participants grew in their capacity to implement improvement science methods to further the goals of teacher teams. For example, in the survey, 90 percent of respondents indicated that they understood how to implement improvement science methods. In particular, participants shared that they appreciated the flexibility and adaptability of the WMN-supported improvement science processes that ensured that the work is practical and relevant for teachers. In interviews and focus groups, participants shared the following ways that using improvement science methods was improving their team-based practice.

- Making teacher discourse intentional and data-based
- Providing a structure to align instruction to standards
- Providing an opportunity for reflective change with each cycle
- Supporting more rigorous implementation of existing processes
- Maintaining continuous improvement momentum
- Foregrounding teacher voice

Network Aim Progress

Across data sources, participants detailed the ways that the network was progressing toward its aim of increasing access to effective JEPL grounded in the use of HQCIM. Participants shared that results were evident in the ways that tools developed through collaborative, teacher-driven improvement science processes have increased the effectiveness of teacher planning processes and use of student data. In addition, the process of developing the tools has provided opportunities for peer-to-peer learning that is seen as very valuable by teachers.

Participants reported the following specific ways that the network was meeting its goals.

- Teacher professional learning time has moved beyond compliance to become efficient and purposeful—focused on looking at data, reflecting on practice, and observing and supporting peers.

“We’ll get new curriculum because of this network. The decisionmakers and holders of the money respect the partners.”

-Department Supervisor

“Peer observations are the best thing that has come out of this. It encourages teachers to critique one another in a positive light and learn from one another.”

-Teacher

“The work has made our teacher-based teams stronger. There are more focused discussions—not off-topic like they used to be. There is a common language and focus.”

-Instructional Coach

“We often hypothesize what we think is going to work, but with this project, we can validate what’s working and make changes as we go along in the process based on feedback we are getting.”

-Principal

- Focused professional learning time has helped new teachers identify standards-aligned lessons and materials.
- The PDSA cycles have built teacher knowledge and capacity and have fostered better use of data to identify root causes and formulate interventions.
- Teacher mindsets have changed, such that they are now confident and positive about using data.
- The professional learning tools that have been developed have increased accountability and helped focus planning, instruction, and selection of high-quality instructional materials.
- Improvement science practices have become embedded in school practice.
- School administrators have received professional development through the project and have changed the ways they are running their buildings, for the better.
- WMN principles and processes have become part of standardized professional development, and concepts and tools have been disseminated and adopted across districts in participating states.
- The project has influenced district policy and stakeholders have seen implications for impacts on state policy, as well.
- Stakeholders have found that tools and processes are readily transferrable across grades and schools.

Participant Results

In addition to the improved use of collaborative learning time and increased ability to select standards-based instructional materials detailed above, participants reported changes in classroom practice and student outcomes as a result of the WMN project. For example, participants reported that teacher practice was more intentional and purposeful, with instructional decisions based on data, “not just your gut.” Teachers use the PDSA cycles to guide instruction through evaluating the environment of their classrooms, analyzing the alignment of instructional materials to standards, examining student data for learning gaps, and learning from peer observations.

One administrator shared a specific example of a young, first-year teacher who attended the WMN meetings and not only grew in her classroom practice, but also gained the

“Meetings were focused on our issues instead of looking at the kids; department meetings are so much more effective now.”

-Teacher

“Teachers are seeing results with their kids, leading them to want to do more of the work.”

-Assistant Superintendent

“We see where kids are and what we are going to attack. We’re not just following a pacing guide and standards—we are meeting kids where they are and getting at root cause, vs. just winging it like before.”

- Principal

“We are aligning instruction to standards, when before we weren’t sure what we were doing.”

-State Department of Education Partner

“Being a new teacher, it really helps a lot because I had never heard of NGSS. Now I know how to do data-analysis to find out how to fill gaps for children.”

-Teacher

motivation and capacity to lead professional learning for her PLC.

Other outcomes reported by participants included the following:

- Teachers leading the efforts this year, with administrators only following up
- Professional learning tied directly to curriculum implementation
- PDSA cycles being supplemented with accompanying instructional coaching cycles
- Teachers using student data purposefully, rather than just for compliance
- Increased coordination across buildings and districts
- Instead of additional work for teachers, doing the same work more efficiently with the ability to get to root causes more quickly
- Strong alignment with priorities and policies at school, district, and state levels
- Teachers using the PDSA cycles to make informed instructional decisions
- Students receiving targeted interventions that include multiple ways of learning
- PLCs are more organized, systematically setting agendas and pursuing common goals
- Teachers being able to carry out root cause analysis and tie it to differentiation, evidence-based instructional strategies, and standards-aligned instructional materials
- Teachers looking at data weekly, when before it was only on data days
- Districts allocating additional professional learning time to devote to the work

“WMN tools and processes are transferrable to all subject areas and grade levels.”

-Assistant Superintendent

“Buy-in at school is strong because we have focused on developing tools to fit into what we need to do already so it isn’t seen as an added, but more streamlined aspect.”

-Principal

“We had a supervisor at first but now it is purely teacher-run and that is very empowering. No one is telling us what to do. That is a powerful statement of how important we think the work is.”

-Teacher

“I am so pleased with the network for the professional development of one of my young teachers. She attended the meetings and the level that she stepped up to professionally, taking over our professional learning, was so rich... I know this partnership we have works and I know it is all up to the teachers to buy into it. She has really bought into it and it is evidenced in her classroom, behavior management, lessons—she knows what a rich lesson looks like. I have absolutely seen impacts on teaching and learning from WMN—it is why she has such rich instruction as a first-year teacher. She is helping other teachers and she is brand new.”

-Assistant Principal

- Teachers using common assessments and demonstrating a common understanding of next steps; ability to diagnose before prescribing
- Instructional changes being monitored through observations and walkthroughs tied to coaching cycles

Implementation During the COVID-19 Pandemic

While the COVID-19 pandemic deeply disrupted teaching and learning across contexts, including teacher professional learning, stakeholders reported that the WMN work successfully continued virtually, and even expanded to additional schools and districts. In fact, it was mentioned in interviews that WMN uniquely prepared participating schools to respond to the challenges of the pandemic because the schools already had embedded systems and tools that teachers were very familiar with and could implement virtually. Stakeholders attributed the continued effectiveness of the work, despite the challenges of the pandemic, to teachers in participating schools being in a better position to use data to monitor student progress and to the clear instructional next steps and strategies that the WMN approach enables teachers to formulate. For example, stakeholders reported that teachers were effectively using WMN tools and processes during virtual PLC meetings to look at student data and implement virtual interventions. One stakeholder credited these tools and processes with the result of 80 percent of the urban district's kindergarten students being proficient in literacy despite the pandemic.

Sustainability

With initial grant funding ending, sustainability of the WMN work is of key concern. Sustainability goals for the project include strengthening the existing structures and practices; growing the work through expanding to other grades, schools, districts, and states; and influencing local and state policy. Participants were asked, from their perspectives, how and if the work might be sustained. All respondents affirmed the importance of sustaining the work. They emphasized that the tools and processes, including PDSA cycles, that have been implemented so far at the school level would continue, even in the absence of a structured network, because teachers recognize the value of the tools and approaches, which have become embedded in the work of PLCs.

"WMN provides a very clear plan of where you need to go in terms of instruction so it actually helped the pandemic response."

-State Department of Education Partner

"We all communicate through WMN and it is nice to hear that the principal is very grateful that the building is in a good place and all systems running great for [PLCs]."

-Principal [having moved to a different school]

"Districts are collaborating and having PLCs and data is rolling in like we're not in a pandemic."

-State Department of Education Partner

"We thought the coach or principal would have to be leading but it is becoming more internalized for teachers and they can run the meetings when we aren't there."

-Instructional Coach

"We are continuing to implement with high fidelity... We added two more districts and... are scaling within the districts."

-State Department of Education Partner

Participants also felt that while the work could continue to be scaled to encompass additional departments, schools, and districts on the merit of the tools and processes and through policy, maintaining the network collaboration and the support of university partners would require additional resources. Some participants emphasized the key role of collaborative partners in supporting data analysis and expressed uncertainty about who would assume that role.

Administrators were also frequently mentioned as critical to sustaining the school-level WMN work. Participants stressed that the inquiry work of teacher-based-teams will continue to the extent that teachers see program and curriculum changes as a result of their research and suggestions. At the same time, participants shared that principals need to hear from teachers about the effectiveness of the project so that they will prioritize sustainability in their buildings.

Reflections

Feedback from WMN stakeholders was universally positive and very few challenges were reported. Salient changes from year one to year two of the evaluation centered around the continued strengthening of teacher collaborative time, principal buy-in, teacher voice informing policy, and increased ownership and leadership of teachers. Stakeholders agreed that the WMN approach results in a transformation of professional learning communities, as previously less-structured professional learning time becomes intensively focused on collaborative examination and addressing of highly contextualized and localized problems of practices using student data. Participant feedback also illuminated teachers' growing understanding of the goals and purpose of the initiative and the power of the tools and processes for ensuring effective teacher collaboration, building teacher capacity to select and effectively implement standards-aligned instructional materials and approaches, engaging teacher teams around student data and prescribing next steps to address learning gaps, and improving student outcomes.

Having teachers attend and fully participate in the cross-state convening was noted as a significant success of year two, and participants expressed that more opportunities for teachers to attend convenings and bring knowledge and information back to their teams would result in sustained momentum for the work. Participants noted that convenings became less theoretical and more relevant and accessible to practitioners. The power of the approach for changing teacher practice to improve student outcomes was not adequately understood by all participants during year one but has become clear as teachers become more proficient with the processes and begin to see results in the classroom.

In addition to increased ownership by teachers, participants noted increased ownership by schools and districts. Each school and district is developing a unique approach that works within their context and current practice, but common elements are shared across contexts—improved structure and purpose of teacher collaborative time; the incorporation of inquiry and reflection around data, high quality curriculum and materials, and instructional strategies, and common tools and language. The key role of administrators in

"You can't take away the knowledge, structures, protocols, and relationships."

-Department Supervisor

"This has been such a game-changer. I'm so glad I got involved. I am hooked."

-State Department of Education Partner

supporting the work was also highlighted. Participants emphasized that teachers with principals who strongly support the work have deeper knowledge and buy-in and that the possibilities for sustainability are much higher when administrators are on board. When school and district administrators recognize the value of ensuring effective use of the limited planning time they have with educators, they are more likely to encourage and sustain the inquiry work of PLCs. They are also more likely to encourage expansion of the work to additional teacher teams and schools.

Participant suggestions for sustaining the work coalesced around developing and supporting WMN teacher leaders to serve as coaches to keep the work moving forward. Participants emphasized the importance of enabling the work to continue through supportive scheduling and suggested that teachers with WMN experience could bring their knowledge to other schools and guide them in adapting the processes and protocols. Another suggestion for supporting sustainability of the project was housing and organizing all of the WMN materials online in such a way that teachers can access them very easily.

While the formative data strongly indicated that WMN increased the effectiveness of PLCs and positively influenced teacher practice to definitively establish the impact of the approach and the conditions within which it is successful, it will be important to quantify the extent of practice and policy change and how these impact student learning. Process and interim measures such as PDSA cycles completed; tools and protocols developed; implementation of standards-aligned lessons and HQCIM; teacher reflections on learning and change; peer and leader observations completed; participation in coalition and network convenings; and expansion to additional departments, grade levels, schools, and districts are useful for documenting the key steps for scaling up the work and the lessons learned. Systematically quantifying teacher and curricular change and examining impacts on student achievement across participating schools is the next step in establishing the value of the efforts of networked improvement communities, to ensure scale-up, sustainability, and policy enactment.

Appendix A: WMN Year Two Cross-State Convening Exit Ticket Survey Results

Summary

At the end of the February 6–7, 2020 WMN Cross-State Convening, participants were asked to complete an exit ticket survey to provide feedback on their level of satisfaction with various aspects of the convening and any suggestions for improvement. Participants were also asked about their satisfaction with the support provided by the network and to share outcomes of the work. As detailed below, a large majority of respondents indicated that the convening was relevant and useful and that they received the necessary support to carry out their roles within the network. Most respondents also reported that they saw impacts from the WMN work, including understanding improvement science methods and better use of collaborative planning time.

Participants were asked about their overall impressions of the cross-state convening (see table 1), including the extent to which they agreed that the convening provided useful ideas, a sense of community, and opportunities for reflection and dialogue. All respondents indicated that they experienced a sense of community at the convening and had ample opportunities for reflection and dialogue with peers. In addition, 96 percent of respondents reported that they were leaving with ideas they will apply.

Table 1. Overall Participant Impressions of WMN Cross-State Convening

	N	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Quite	Extremely
<i>I am leaving with ideas I will implement or apply.</i>	23	0%	0%	4%	26%	70%
<i>I experienced a sense of community at the conference.</i>	23	0%	0%	0%	9%	91%
<i>I had ample opportunities for reflection and dialogue with my peers.</i>	23	0%	0%	0%	13%	87%

Participants were asked about the relevance of the cross-state convening to various aspects of their work. As shown in table 2, a large majority of respondents indicated that the convening was highly relevant to their work, particularly to their ability to provide input to state and district leaders.

Table 2. How Relevant was the WMN Cross-state Convening to...

	N	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Quite	Extremely
<i>The content that you work with?</i>	21	0%	0%	10%	19%	71%
<i>Your day-to-day practice?</i>	22	0%	5%	14%	9%	73%
<i>The curriculum you most frequently use?</i>	20	0%	0%	5%	25%	70%
<i>Your ability to provide input to state and district leaders?</i>	22	0%	0%	5%	14%	82%

Participants were asked about their agreement with statements regarding their take-aways from the cross-state convening. As shown in table 3, nearly all respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the convening would help them better engage with and implement their curriculum and would help them better seek out or implement job-embedded professional learning. Nearly all respondents also agreed that they were excited to share what they had worked on with colleagues who are not members of the coalition.

Table 3. Outcomes of WMN Cross-State Convening

	N	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
<i>The coalition meeting will help me better engage with and implement my curriculum.</i>	17	0%	0%	0%	6%	30%	65%
<i>The coalition meeting will help me better seek out or implement job-embedded professional learning.</i>	20	0%	0%	0%	5%	30%	65%
<i>I am excited to share what we worked on today with my colleagues who are not members of the coalition.</i>	22	0%	0%	0%	5%	18%	77%

Most Effective Aspects of the Cross-State Convening

Using open-ended questions, participants were asked to share what they considered most effective about the convening. A common theme among the responses was being able to meet with, hear from, and learn from other districts and states. Another common response

was around the effectiveness of hearing from teachers, who were able to attend the meeting. In addition, respondents mentioned the effectiveness of being able to meet with state colleagues to discuss data and next steps. Selected illustrative responses follow.

- *“I found the sharing out session to be extremely effective, as I was able to learn from the other coalitions. There are several ideas that we will be using in future PDSA cycles.”*
- *“Giving teachers a voice that is genuinely listened to and appreciated is so empowering.”*
- *“Going over the data with our state and getting ideas and clarifications on next steps.”*
- *“State sharing was insightful and my team made connection to our work.”*
- *“Collaboration time across states—enjoyed the opportunity to speak with others who have a similar role.”*
- *“I feel like we have established a great cross-state community.”*

Areas for Improvement

Participants were also asked to share the least effective aspects of the cross-state convening. Only a few participants responded to this question, and their responses did not coalesce around common themes. The responses are shown below.

- *“I would love to dive deeper into the activity with other states.”*
- *“While we used the curriculum eval sessions to review some good science ed resources, more time on the sessions on data stories would have been better.”*
- *“Some materials seemed more geared to ELA, rather than science/math.”*
- *“Some of the information could have been consolidated; less PowerPoint time.”*

As shown below in table 4, a large majority of respondents agreed that WMN leadership, including Learning Forward, the WMN Hub, and the coalition collaborative partners, provided strong support to state coalitions. Examples of support shared by respondents included, meeting facilitation, resources sharing, data support, and support with PLCs and PDSA cycles.

Table 4. Support Provided by WMN Leaders

	N	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
<i>LF leadership provides the necessary support to my state coalition.</i>	22	5%	0%	0%	5%	23%	68%
<i>Examples:</i>							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Support tools via Google shared folders”</i> • <i>“Thursday things data collection”</i> • <i>“The data summaries”</i> • <i>“Publications and idea sharing”</i> • <i>“Lots of good ideas and plans for support”</i> • <i>“Driving the process and holding us accountable”</i> 							

	N	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
<p><i>The WMN Hub provides strong leadership to move forward the work of my state coalition.</i></p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Interesting tools for PDSA 6</i> • <i>Available resources; constant collaboration</i> • <i>Constant collaboration and feedback</i> • <i>Convening with other states and districts to discuss successes and learnings</i> 	22	5%	0%	0%	9%	18%	69%
<p><i>My state coalition's collaborative partner provides the support needed to move forward the coalition work.</i></p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>"Yes, coming out to support PLC and PDSA cycle"</i> • <i>"Available by phone call; great resources to help teachers"</i> • <i>"They are good thought partners and organize in state meetings."</i> • <i>"Frequent check-ins and sharing of resources"</i> • <i>"Ideas for funding from the state level"</i> • <i>"Not a lot of convenings; unclear role of collaborative partner"</i> • <i>"[Collaborative partner] is awesome; they listen and follow through and bring a load of information."</i> 	19	0%	0%	5%	5%	16%	74%

Participants reported outcomes related to their knowledge of improvement science methods and teacher/school changes they have seen as a result of the WMN work. As shown below in table 5, a large majority of respondents indicated that they understood how to use improvement science methods. In addition, nearly all respondents agreed that they had seen teacher/school changes as a result of the work of their state coalitions. Examples shared included improved collaborative planning and teacher knowledge, better use of teacher time, and student achievement gains.

Table 5. Outcomes

	N	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I understand how to use improvement science methods. Examples:	20	0%	0%	0%	10%	40%	50%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Improvement of PLC with additional tools, like student work analysis tools</i> • <i>The process is challenging; I need more practice.</i> • <i>Really helpful to actually dig in with help, because you learn what you don't know as you do.</i> • <i>Love it!</i> • <i>Gives meaning to the 'why'.</i> 							
I have seen teacher/school changes as a result of the work of my state coalition so far. Examples:	20	0%	0%	0%	5%	20%	75%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>More focused collaborative planning with a frequent referral to NGSS checklist</i> • <i>I recently visited one of our network schools and observed the new PLC and was impressed by the quality of the professional exchange.</i> • <i>Teacher knowledge of NGSS</i> • <i>Teacher use of time, and student achievement</i> 							