School systems implementing Next Education Workforce models bring together teams of educators with distributed expertise to deepen and personalize learning for students. They also empower educators by developing new opportunities for role-based specialization and advancement. This document defines the elements that compose these models. We know, however, that transitioning to this model is a process, and the progression will look different for each team, school and system.

Teams of educators with distributed expertise

Dynamic teams
A core team of educators collectively supports a shared group of students. Other educators may join the team to support students and educators. Their roles will vary in size (e.g., full-time, half-time, a few hours each week) and duration (e.g., entire year, just one unit of study) and may be filled by professional educators or prepared members from the community.

Distributed expertise
Team members have complementary strengths and take on roles that play to those strengths (e.g., lead teacher, mathematics lead planner, content expert from the community).

Self-improving teams
School and district leadership trusts teams to be self-directed and operate with fluidity to pivot quickly and make real-time adjustments when needed. The educator team has sufficient time to analyze data, plan and develop professionally.

Team culture
Teams establish an environment of trust and leverage strategies to collaboratively solve challenges that arise within the classroom and within the team itself. Individuals see themselves as part of a collective unit and practice empathy and inter/intrapersonal awareness and promote the resiliency of both the individual educator and the team.

Deeper and personalized learning

Instructional components

Learner-centered instruction
The team leverages instructional approaches that enable learners to develop knowledge, skills and dispositions in relevant and contextualized ways (e.g., inquiry, project-based learning, design thinking, multidisciplinary approaches).

Learning paths
The team uses data to tailor learning to each student's strengths, needs and interests, including enabling student voice and choice in what, how, when and where they learn. Students build agency in their own learning by helping to co-create learning paths from a curriculum that is accessible and transparent.

Authentic assessment
The team provides students with opportunities to demonstrate learning by producing original, authentic work connected to learners' identities, in which they see their core selves as vitally connected to what they are learning and doing.
Broader student outcomes

Student mastery
Students have multiple and iterative opportunities to understand rigorous academic content, solve problems, apply knowledge and make connections within and across disciplines.

Intrapersonal skills
Students have multiple opportunities to practice and demonstrate growth in understanding themselves as learners (e.g., self-direction, curiosity, creativity) and humans (e.g., self-awareness, emotional literacy, purpose). They have many opportunities to reflect on and monitor their progress.

Interpersonal skills
Students have multiple opportunities to develop skills in working with peers and adults (e.g., collaboration, communication). They build social awareness, authentic relationships, and a sense of collective responsibility for their community.

Structures and systems

Shared rosters
Together, the team serves a shared group of students, and each educator considers all students “their” students. This allows for more dynamic grouping of students to better meet the needs of all learners.

Sustaining relationships
There are structures in place to promote long-term relationships among students and the adults who support them (e.g., advisory groups, educator looping, multi-age bands).

Flexible space and scheduling
The educator team and students share space according to task and need, moving across multiple spaces in varied group sizes that best meet students’ and educators’ needs. Resources are thoughtfully shared across the learning space. The team also has the ability to modify schedules as a function of both students’ and the team’s needs, interests and strengths.

Intentional use of technology
The team leverages technology (e.g., courseware, virtual access to experts in the field, online collaboration) in service of tailoring students’ educational experiences. It is a means to learning and not an end in and of itself. Teams, leveraging technology, ensure that all students have equitable access to the people and resources they need.

Specializations and advancement pathways

Continuum of educator roles
Teams intentionally include educators who, together, are better able to sustainably meet the needs of all students. Roles vary based on student needs, but teams likely include some combination of teacher leaders, specialists, experienced and novice educators and members from the community. Roles are clearly defined and the knowledge, skills and dispositions required to do each role well are articulated.

Just-right responsibilities
Educators fill only those roles that match their current level of knowledge and skill (e.g., novice educators have intentionally sheltered roles commensurate with their skill, and their responsibilities increase and differentiate as they grow and develop).

Deeper and personalized professional learning
The team, school and/or district recognizes and rewards strategic, personalized, role-based professional learning for educators.

Clear advancement pathways
There are clear pathways for how educators can enter and advance in the system. Prior knowledge and skill is valued, and educators can take on new and more complex roles through established pathways.

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