

WEBINAR SERIES

2026 Legislative Prep Series: Education Challenges and Solutions

EVOLVING HIGH SCHOOLS TO ENGAGE
TODAY'S STUDENTS



Tuesday, December 9, 2025

Welcome



Elena Silva

President and CEO
Learning Policy Institute

Introduction and Research Presentation



Cheryl Jones-Walker

Director, Center for School and System Redesign
Learning Policy Institute

Today's Agenda

- ▷ Research Presentation
- ▷ Moderated Panel
- ▷ Audience Q&A
- ▷ Closing Remarks



Evolving High Schools to Engage Today's Students

December 9, 2025

Why Redesign High School?

- The current model of schooling was designed in the 1900s
 - Designed to be efficient (rote memorization vs learning and dev)
 - Teachers are isolated, instruct large numbers of students, discrete content
 - Tracking facilitates the select and sort model (fixed ability mindset)
- Recent surveys of high school students find:
 - Less than 30% of students find school caring or supportive
 - Most students don't feel well known by any adults
 - 75% report feeling stressed, tired, or bored by school
- School structures are not aligned with Science of Learning and Development nor do they facilitate deep relationships

What Is a Redesigned School?

▷ Typical high school:

- Large and bureaucratic w/depersonalized learning
- Disconnected content, facts, and skills
- School structures rank & sort by ability
- Funding inequities & lack of adequate resources
- Schools discipline and punish

▷ Redesigned school:

- Personalized learning environments
- Authentic and relevant instruction/assessment
- Learning happens through projects, social interactions, internships
- Youth co-create norms and expectations and engage restorative practices



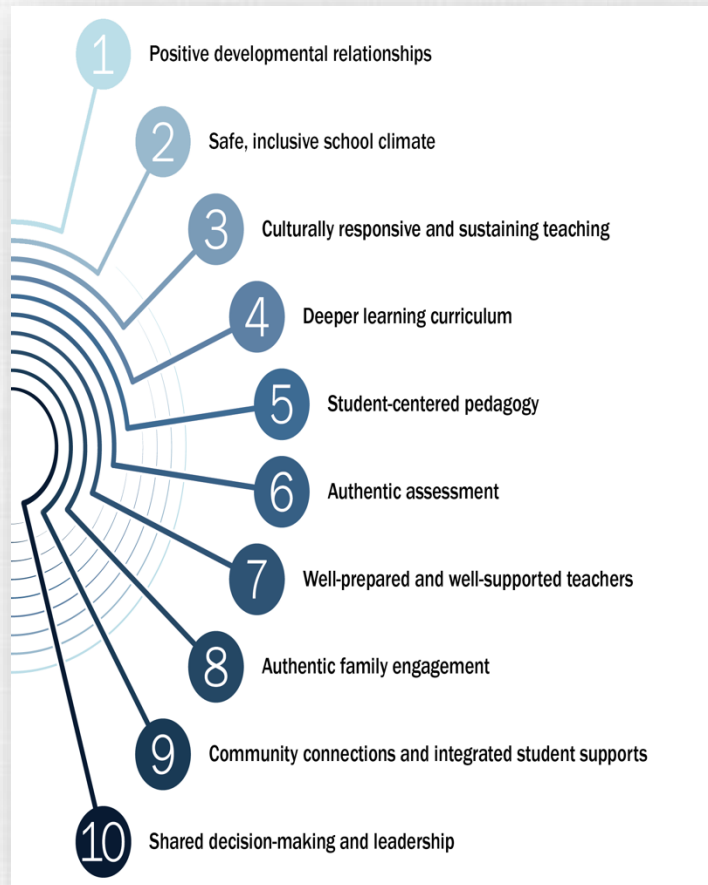
Redesigning High Schools

10 Features for Success

Linda Darling-Hammond, Matt Alexander, and Laura E. Hernández



MARCH 2024



Building Professional Capacity

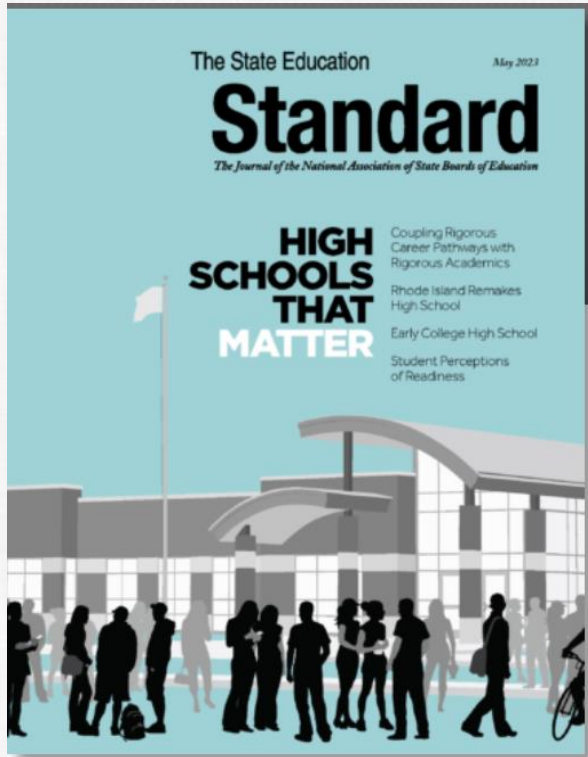
DISTRICTS

- ▷ Building and sustaining pipelines of diverse well-prepared educators
- ▷ High-quality PD, instructional coaches/mentors
- ▷ High-quality instructional materials and resources
- ▷ Effective/efficient provisions of services

STATE/FED AGENCIES

- ▷ Focus on building capacity (not enforcing procedures)
- ▷ Manage improvement cycles (not compliance)
- ▷ Rewarding improvements in student outcomes
- ▷ Expanding + replicating powerful learning experiences
- ▷ Reallocate funds to most under-resourced students

High School Transformation State Network



- ▶ Report explores: How can students' high school experience be restructured for their long-term success?
- ▶ NASBE HSTSN with KnowledgeWorks coordinated with Carnegie
- ▶ Network of 6 states: California, Indiana, Kentucky, Missouri, New York, and Washington
- ▶ A goal is to develop a shared understanding of barriers and opportunities in redesigning state systems

Panel Moderator



Ryan Saunders

Director, Center for School and System Redesign
Learning Policy Institute

Panel Discussion



**Robert W.
Behning**

Representative,
Indiana House of
Representatives



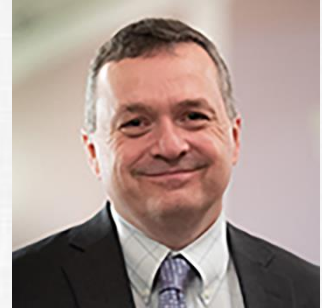
Byron L. Ernest

Member, Indiana
State Board of
Education; Chair,
National
Association of
State Boards of
Education



Alissa Muller

Director of Policy,
Washington State
Board of
Education



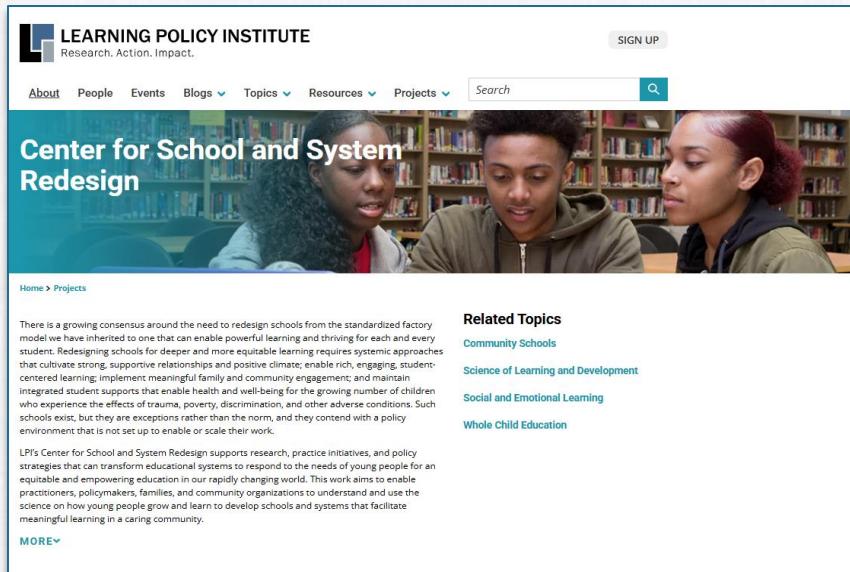
Randy Spaulding

Executive Director,
Washington State
Board of
Education



2026 Legislative Prep Session: Education Challenges Solutions

**Navigating Federal Changes in
Education Funding for Student Success**
Thursday, December 11, 2 – 3 p.m. ET



For more information



Scan the QR code to visit LPI's
Center for School and System
Redesign webpage



Sign up for updates, blogs,
publications and news from CSSR

Contact Cheryl Jones-Walker,
Director, Center for School and System Redesign
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A group of four diverse young women are sitting around a table, looking at a tablet together. The woman on the left is a Black woman with braided hair, wearing a red and black plaid shirt. The woman next to her is a white woman with long brown hair, wearing a red and white shirt. The woman next to her is a white woman with long brown hair, wearing a red and white shirt and a green patterned scarf. The woman on the right is a white woman with long brown hair, wearing a light blue shirt. They are all smiling and looking at the tablet. The background is a blurred office or library setting with bookshelves.

Thank you for joining!



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