



MICRO-CREDENTIALS PARTNERSHIP OF STATES

WORKPLAN (Updated October 2023)

ABOUT

digiLEARN and the North Carolina State Board of Education developed the North Carolina Partnership for Micro-credentials with other state and national partners, including RTI International and New America, in 2019 to investigate the use of micro-credentials as a tool for teacher retention and development in North Carolina and other states. Our work was based on the premise that educator micro-credentials for teachers could be a potential strategy for ensuring that every student has a high-quality, effective teacher.

Through our work in North Carolina, we identified key issues to effectively utilize micro-credentials for teacher retention, development, and career advancement that are applicable to other states across the country. Starting in 2022, we are expanding the work together with our partners into a multi-state Micro-Credentials Partnership of States (MPOS) to develop solutions to the issues identified. Partners in Wyoming, South Carolina and Arkansas have joined our partners in North Carolina to identify opportunities and challenges across states and develop model policy recommendations. In addition to the Carnegie Corporation, NEA and the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation are also funders for this phase of the work.

With the Developing and Retaining Strong Teacher Talent in Multiple States Through Micro-credentials initiative, the Micro-credentials Partnership of States will produce recommendations for how microcredentials can be used to improve how teachers are developed, recognized, and rewarded across the country. Ultimately, these recommendations will lead to policies and practices that influence state-level systematic improvements in the educator human capital ecosystem, including recruitment, credentialing, professional development, and retention.

A consistent definition, standards, and impact data are needed to help states and micro-credential users vet and determine the quality of the micro-credentials. Project deliverables and outcomes are designed to develop the research, guide the work, and communicate the learning from the work of the partner states. By developing consistent quality assurance standards accepted by the Partnership states, microcredential providers, including states, school districts, schools, public and private vendors that develop micro-credentials will have a method to better inform teachers, principals, school districts, and state leaders about micro-credentials' quality and impact.

OUR VISION

Imagine a system of professional learning for all educators that is aligned with high-quality standards, that provides personalized professional learning opportunities in multiple formats, and that is designed around the skills, knowledge, and competencies necessary to improve practice and maximize student potential. This system will have the capacity to assess and recognize the acquisition of each educator's skills, knowledge, and competencies so they can advance in their career, and be acknowledged and rewarded as professionals across schools and districts nationwide.

OUR MISSION

The Micro-credentials Partnership of States will develop consistent quality assurance standards for competency-based micro-credentials that promote, and are integrated with, a high-quality system of educator professional learning that recognizes educator professional growth and advancement. As part of this broader system of professional learning, competency-based micro-credentials will encourage and support the expansion of educators' skills and knowledge to improve academic and other important outcomes of all students.

OUR OBJECTIVES

Create consistently recognized quality assurance standards for micro-credentials that:

- **promote evidence-based practices and nationally recognized frameworks that demonstrate positive outcomes** for educators and the students, families, and communities they serve, and that reinforce the need to support a robust research agenda designed to continuously improve and validate the quality and value of micro-credentials.
- **support universal quality, portability, and value to educators** across the nation that is broadly recognized by educators, leaders, policy makers, and wider community members.
- **address the equitable access, application, assessment, impact, and benefits of micro-credentials for educators.** The system will represent all educator groups, all

sectors of education (teachers, paraprofessionals, instructional support staff, operational support staff, and school/district leaders), and be representative of all geographic regions of the country.

- **are co-developed with practicing educators** to ensure quality is informed by practice and its daily work, impact, and outcomes.
- **support the modernization of existing systems of professional preparation**, learning, and compensation to tightly align professional learning to professional practice, and to provide opportunities to reimagine the role teachers play as leaders in the system.
- **demonstrate alignment with three universal goals for education** to show value for and gain credibility from both internal and external interested parties. These goals are, generally, 1) improving student learning, 2) ensuring safe and healthy students and staff, and 3) delivering effective and efficient operations.

GOALS OF THE WORKPLAN

- To learn more about how micro-credentials influence teachers' instructional practice and student learning,
- Ascertain how micro-credentials can be a supplement to other professional development approaches,
- Develop a consistent definition and standards for quality assurance of micro-credentials, and
- Develop strategies to integrate micro-credentials into the ecosystem for teacher development and licensure.

DELIVERABLES/OUTCOMES OF THE WORKPLAN

- A consistent definition for micro-credentials,
- A set of consistent standards for quality assurance of micro-credentials,
- State and multi-state surveys with teachers and other stakeholders on micro-credentials and professional learning, and
- A set of policy briefs with state models for integrating MCs into the ecosystem for teacher development and licensure.

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Phase/Milestone	Timeframe	Status	Outcome
Phase One			
Develop a multi-state partnership with state leaders and national advisors to oversee and advise on the MPOS work and develop a task force to carry out the work.	Sep 2021-Feb 2022	Success!	See who is part of our Partnership.
The Task force develops a draft vision, mission and workplan in collaboration with the states.	Sep 2021-Feb 2022	Success!	The initial workplan was completed in August 2022.
Develop a leadership team for the multi-state partnership and a leadership team within each state to vet and provide feedback on the work.	Sep 2021-May 2022	Success!	See who is part of our Partnership.
Develop a consistent definition for micro-credentials and the Quality Assurance Standards for Micro-Credentials report in collaboration with the MPOS members, advisors and state level teams.	May 2022-Jan 2023	Success!	Download the Quality Assurance Standards.
Create a set of policy briefs with state models for integrating micro-credentials into the ecosystem for teacher recruitment, development and licensure that improve teacher practice and student learning.	Mar 2023-Jun 2024	In progress	See our policy brief created in partnership with RTI International. See our final report from the North Carolina Partnership for Micro-Credentials.
Phase Two			
Develop and implement a communications plan to promote the Quality Assurance Standards, invite other states and organizations to join the work and show how each state is integrating the work into their human capital ecosystem.	Mar-Dec 2023	In progress	See some of our communications efforts here.

<p>Develop and submit an Education Innovation Research Grant (EIR) to provide a research framework and gather data on the impact of MCs on teacher practice and student learning. Notification of the grant is Nov 2023 (see note below)</p>	<p>Jul-Aug 2023</p>	<p>Submitted</p>	
<p>Pilot the Quality Assurance Standards and develop a rubric to assess and validate the standards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Draft an initial rubric to assess micro-credentials using the Quality Assurance Standards ● Identify up to 12 micro-credentials for an anonymous review, including one to two micro-credentials from each state currently being used for review and one to two micro-credentials from national providers (e.g., Digital Promise, BloomBoard, National Education Association) ● Develop a process to review and assess the micro-credentials in collaboration with the MPOS state partners ● Develop review teams and orient reviewers to the process. Review teams will be inclusive of teachers, state leads from the Partnership, and third-party reviewers ● The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) will promote with their National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs) who are already trained as assessors. ● A small group of national advisors will be identified to review the same micro-credentials using the Quality 	<p>Sep-Nov 2023</p>	<p>In progress</p>	

<p>Assurance Standards rubric</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze the results from the reviewers and use that data to revise the rubric and/or Quality Assurance Standards Conduct a second and broader review (including data collection and analysis) to further finalize the rubric and Quality Assurance Standards for general use in reviewing micro-credentials Final review of the Quality Assurance Standards, rubric, and assessor process 			
<p>Add the rubric to the Quality Assurance Standards ready for implementation in partner states and begin expansion to other states</p>	<p>Nov 2023-Jan 2024</p>	<p>In progress</p>	
<p>Review progress of implementation and revise the Quality Assurance Standards rubric accordingly</p>	<p>Jan 2023</p>		
<p>Develop a research design to assess micro-credential impact on teacher practice and student learning (included in the EIR Grant)</p>	<p>Jan 2024</p>		
<p>Conduct state and multi-state level focus groups and surveys with teachers and other stakeholders on micro-credentials implementation and professional learning</p>	<p>Jan 2024-Apr 2024</p>		
<p>Continue data collection and implementation with a deep progress review in June</p>	<p>Jan-Jun 2024</p>		
<p>Phase Three</p>			
<p>Define next steps for continued implementation after progress and data</p>	<p>Jun-Aug 2024</p>		

review. Revise the work plan, including development of a national clearinghouse for quality micro-credentials			
Outcomes			
States have begun integrating high-quality micro-credentials into their state human capital ecosystem with human, technical and financial support in place	Dec 2024		
A national clearinghouse for micro-credentials is place	Dec 2024		

Note: An Education Innovation Research grant has been developed and submitted to address the research design and impact of specific micro-credentials on teacher practice and student learning as part of Phases two and three.