

# A Web of Support for New Teachers

Webinar  
October 6, 2022

If you can see the slide and hear the music, you are all set.

**Welcome! We will begin shortly.**

All attendees are muted upon entry.  
Please use the chat feature for comments and questions during the webinar.

# Thank you for joining us

**The webinar will be recorded and available.**

All webinar registrants will receive a follow-up email that will include the webinar slide deck, recording, and other resources mentioned during the presentation.

Please introduce yourselves in the chat box

- Your name
- Your location
- Your role in the educational sector



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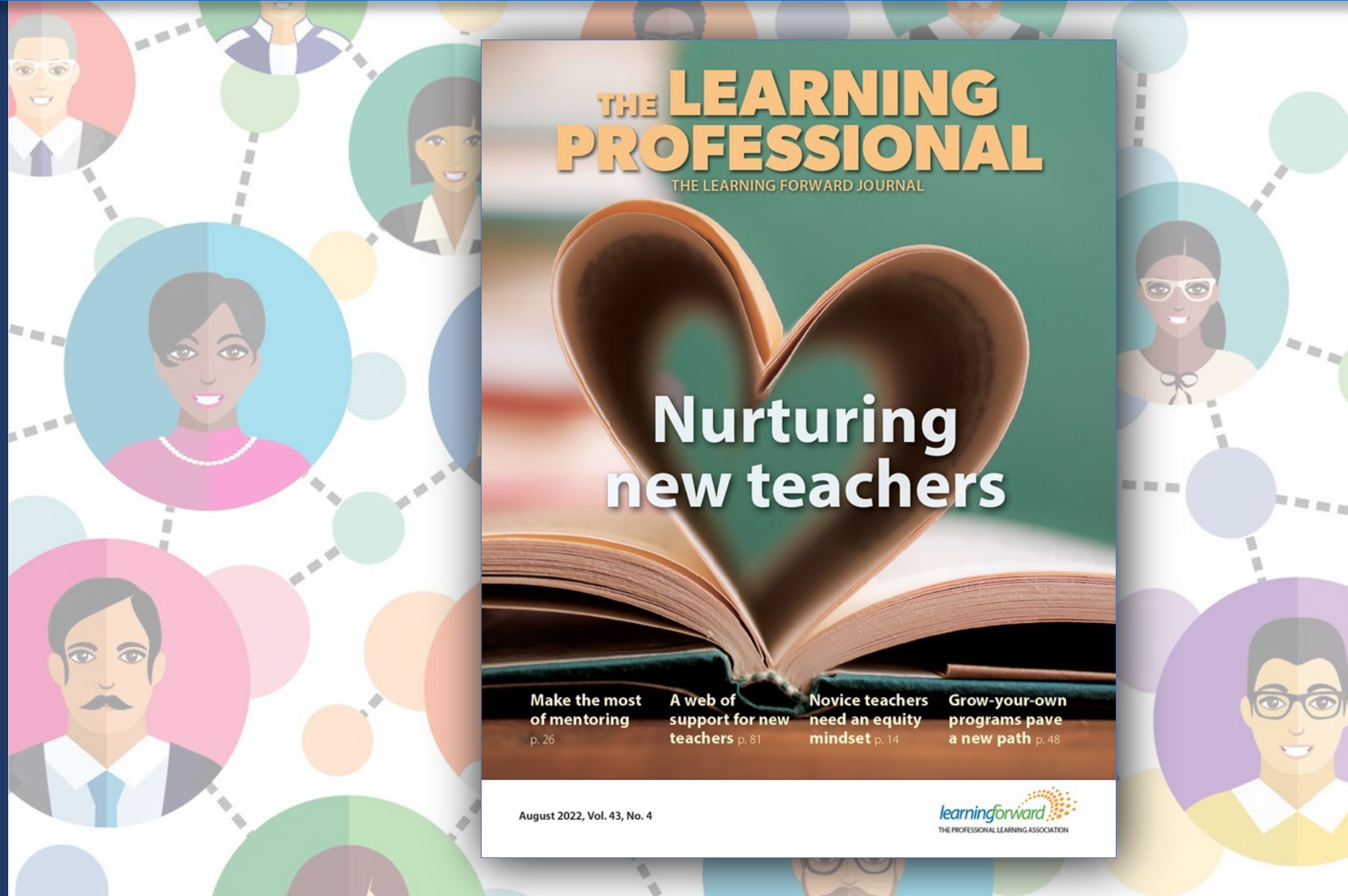
# What do new teachers need?



**Suzanne Bouffard**

Senior Vice President  
Communications and  
Publications

Learning Forward



# Participants will ...

- Learn why new teachers need more than a “buddy teacher” and explore what a web of support looks like
- Identify roles in your district/school/organization that can help support new teachers
- Consider unique issues facing new teachers of color and how to build communities that support teachers of color
- Examine best practices in mentoring
- Develop strategies for ongoing check-ins and support throughout the school year



## **How many new teachers are you working with this year?**

- More than usual
- About the same number as usual
- Fewer than usual

## **What is the biggest challenge for these new teachers this year?**

- Instructional practices/strategies
- Learning acceleration/Student academic needs due to COVID
- Classroom management/Behavioral support
- Procedural matters (e.g. submitting grades)
- Isolation/Overwhelm/Other social and emotional factors

# A network of support for new teachers

## Meet Jordan

7th-grade  
math teacher,  
first year



**To Rayschell, math instructional coach:** “Why aren’t students understanding how to convert ratios to percentages?”



**To Ben, school social worker:** “Some days, I’m so overwhelmed I cry in my car. Am I a failure?”



**To Vivienne, mentor and veteran teacher:** “How do I submit grades?”



**To Jake, 7th-grade team lead:** “I think one of my students needs special services. What’s the next step?”



**To Margot, SEL specialist:** “One of my students is saying disrespectful things to me. What do I do?”



**To Maria, technology specialist:** “How do I access and use the online curriculum resources with my students?”

# Panel discussion



**Sharron Helmke**

Vice President  
Professional Services  
Learning Forward



**Elizabeth Simons**

Instructional Mentor  
Teacher  
Greece Central  
School District  
Rochester, NY



**Antonio Hoyo**

Student and Family  
Engagement Specialist  
Middleton-Cross Plains  
Area School District  
Middleton, WI

# Mentoring addresses three highly important questions we always seem to be asking ourselves

1. How can we increase teacher retention?
2. How can we better meet student learning needs?
3. How can we shift campus culture to more fully embrace collaborative, continuous improvement?

**Sharron Helmke**

Vice President, Professional Services, Learning Forward

**FOCUS** NURTURING NEW TEACHERS



**TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR EVERY STUDENT,  
GIVE EVERY NEW TEACHER A MENTOR**

BY SHARRON HELMKE

still cringe when I remember my first year as a special education teacher at a suburban high school. I met my assigned mentor during the whirlwind week of meetings leading up to the start of school and learned that she was also mentoring two other teachers in addition to having a full teaching schedule of her own. In those early weeks, her time was stretched thin, and I was lucky to get a five-minute conversation with her during hall breaks. As fall wore on, I saw even less of her, and by Halloween, my mentoring was effectively over. On my own, without guidance, I struggled just to get through each day. That was not a recipe for successful instruction, and it left no opportunity to learn by reflecting on my occasional successes. The year was less a learning

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# How can we increase teacher retention?

Make a new teacher's learning curve less steep by offering numerous and readily accessible human resources:

**Emotional  
needs**

**Logistical  
needs**

**Cultural  
needs**

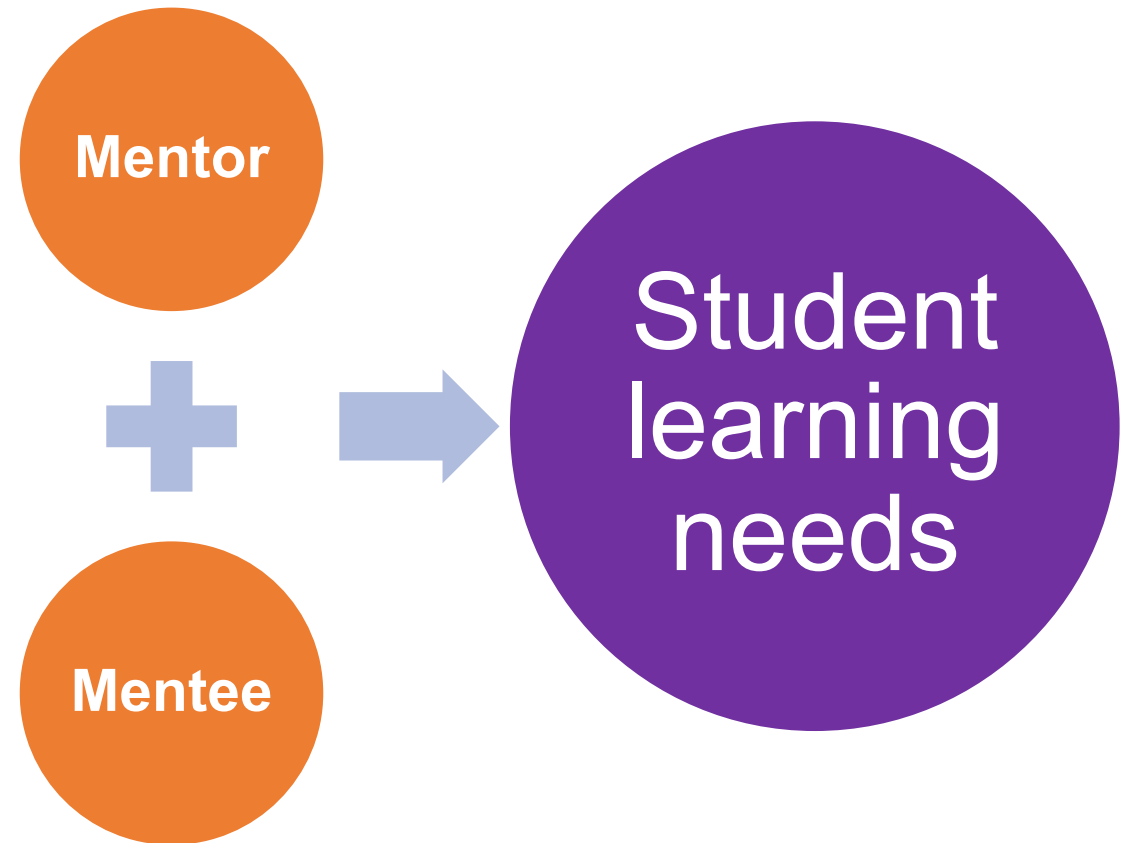
**Instructional  
needs**

Support need	Purpose	Potential roles or people to consider
<b>Emergency emotional support</b>	Coping with feelings of stress or overwhelm. Many new teachers don't know to whom they can turn in these situations.	School psychologist, social worker, other mental health professional, SEL coach
<b>Instructional strategies</b>	Addressing a variety of student needs, abilities, and learning paces. New teachers need advice from an educator with deep understanding of learners and how to meet diverse needs.	Instructional coach, experienced teacher in the same grade level or content area, content specialist, mentor
<b>Content and subject matter</b>	Teaching content and implementing curriculum. Even teachers well trained in their subject areas encounter new challenges.	Content specialist, department chair, instructional coach
<b>Classroom management/SEL</b>	Building a positive classroom climate and supporting students with challenging behaviors or emotional issues. This is one of the most important and difficult topics for new teachers, so support should be readily available and intentional, not driven by an educator who happens to be nearby.	SEL or behavior coach, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports specialist
<b>Family relationships and communication</b>	Learning to have positive and proactive relationships with families and handling challenging situations with parents. In addition to general guidance, teachers sometimes need to know legal guidelines, such as what information is confidential and how to handle communication in families where a parent has restricted access to a child.	School counselor or social worker, assistant principal
<b>Grading processes and policies</b>	Explaining how to assign, record, and submit grades. Procedural tasks like grading can be confusing even for experienced teachers when they are navigating a new school or system.	Coach, mentor, assistant principal
<b>Maintenance and housekeeping</b>	Responding to urgent needs for cleaning or repair, such as when a child gets sick in the classroom. This information is often shared by word of mouth among teachers rather than through formal channels. It can save new teachers a lot of stress.	Custodian
<b>Technology</b>	Supporting technology use, including integration for effective instruction and troubleshooting hardware.	Technology specialist, district IT office

Support need	Name	Role	Phone number	Email
Emergency emotional support				
Instructional strategies				
Content and subject matter				
Classroom management / SEL				
Family relationships and communication				
Grading processes and policies				
Maintenance and housekeeping				
Technology				

# How can we better meet student learning needs?

We institute a mentoring approach that builds partnership for professional growth focused on understanding and responding to student learning needs.





# How can we shift campus culture to more fully embrace collaborative, continuous improvement?

## A novice teacher asks...

- How do I do this job?
- What do you expect from me?
- What do I do with data?
- How do I respond when students don't understand or struggle?

## We ask ourselves...

- How do we want teachers to collaborate?
- How do we want teachers to respond to student learning needs?
- What do we want PLCs talking about?

**Elizabeth Simons**  
Instructional Mentor Teacher  
Greece Central School District

**FOCUS** NURTURING NEW TEACHERS

# COVID-19 reshaped new teacher induction — FOR THE BETTER

BY ELIZABETH SIMONS, SHEILA B. ROBINSON, AND MARGUERITE DIMGBA

**E**ach August, Greece Central School District, in northern New York, hosts a new teacher induction program for all new hires, designed by the director of professional learning and a large, diverse committee. The district's longstanding new teacher induction model suddenly changed when the COVID-19 pandemic forced schools to close abruptly in March 2020.

Initially, we faced questions about how to prepare a remote program if we weren't able to meet in person and how to support new teachers as they navigated a hybrid teaching model. When schools reopened, these challenges shifted, and new ones emerged.

The national teacher shortage that had been predicted for years began to impact our students directly, and experienced teachers began retiring or leaving in increasing numbers. We had a pronounced need for new teachers and faced the challenge of scaling our support to larger numbers.

As a result of these shifts, we rapidly transformed the way we support our new and novice teachers. Positive changes in how our district supports, develops expertise in, and retains highly qualified and satisfied new teachers are here to stay.

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# A hybrid model for new teacher induction





## To support new teachers of color, build communities, not committees

BY JAY GARVEY SHAH, SARADA HANUMADASS WEBER, ANTONIO HOYE, MARISA FLOWERS, AND HEATHER LOTT

**T**he Dane County New Teacher Project, a consortium of 17 school districts in Wisconsin, believes that new teacher induction is everyone's responsibility. To that end, the group pools resources from member districts to ensure support for new educators as they improve their effectiveness with students, find joy and purpose in their

careers, and continue in the profession.

In keeping with our decades-long partnership with the New Teacher Center, our work aims to strengthen multiple roles that support new teachers — mentors, coaches, and principals — as well as supporting the new educators themselves. Within this work, a new dimension of support has emerged over the last two years that is showing promise as a practice for supporting and

retaining new teachers of color through a project called Partners for Racial Inclusion, which pairs experienced teachers with novice teachers of color.

The need for such a project became clear as the COVID-19 pandemic amplified existing racial disparities in educational experiences. Locally, the Dane County Equity Consortium explored root causes and sought insights from students throughout the county



From left: Jay Garvey Shah, Marisa Flowers, Sarada Hanumadass Weber, and Antonio Hoye are lead partners in the Partners for Racial Inclusion project in Wisconsin. Photo by Heather Lott.

during a forum on social justice.

One finding from that forum was clear: There was a significant disparity in racial diversity among staff and students, and this disparity factored greatly in how students of color experienced school. Students told of microaggressions, including misrepresentation and underrepresentation in curriculum and among their teachers. Students who could see themselves represented among the school staff were more engaged.

When we looked at data from 25 Dane County Equity Consortium districts (including urban, suburban, and rural communities), we saw that 31% of students identified as people of color, but only 6% of educators did. (See charts on p. 40.)

This pattern was particularly troubling because research shows that students of color benefit when they have teachers who look like them. For example, a Black student's likelihood of graduating from high school increases by 7% and of enrolling in college increases by 13% when that student has just one Black teacher by 3rd grade. The likelihood of college enrollment jumps to 32% higher when that student has two Black teachers by the same age (Gershenson et al., 2018).

With this knowledge, the members of Dane County New Teacher Project and Dane County Equity Consortium recognized that we needed to do more to recruit and retain teachers of color. A group of educators from various roles, districts, and racial backgrounds collaborated to design a pilot project called Partners for Racial Inclusion.

The project called for hiring four lead partners — full-time educators who would work an additional six to eight hours per week, each supporting four novice educators of color from across the county. Project leaders invited experienced teachers to apply and hired the lead partners in July 2021. Outreach to new educators began in August 2021.

### DEVELOPING THE PARTNERSHIPS

A racially diverse group of educators and leaders from several districts in Dane County formed a design team. The team felt it was important to honor the well-developed instructional mentoring work already existing in districts.

They agreed the focus of conversation would be to process the experience of living as an educator of color in a vastly white-majority district, county, and state, and that the agenda

### WHAT THESE LEAD PARTNERS SAY

**Antonio Hoye:** "I have a deep appreciation for the opportunities out of my own district that have opened doors for me to experience this with others. ... It has helped me continue to find my value in supporting our students."

**Jay Garvey Shah:** "... [T]he level of discrimination and systemic racism and the universality of some of those things are surprising. I don't know if I didn't predict it or if I wasn't thinking about it, but some of the things were unfortunate and came as a surprise."

**Sarada Hanumadass Weber:** "What does it mean to be the 'only' in my department? The design of this program took the burden of judgment away and freed us to have these conversations."

**Marisa Flowers:** "Community is the primary appreciation. We're all teachers of color, but the backgrounds we all have with experiences, cultures, and ages are all varied. It is a true community with a sense of belonging and a feeling of being heard."

for each partnership meeting would be determined by the new educators, not the lead partners.

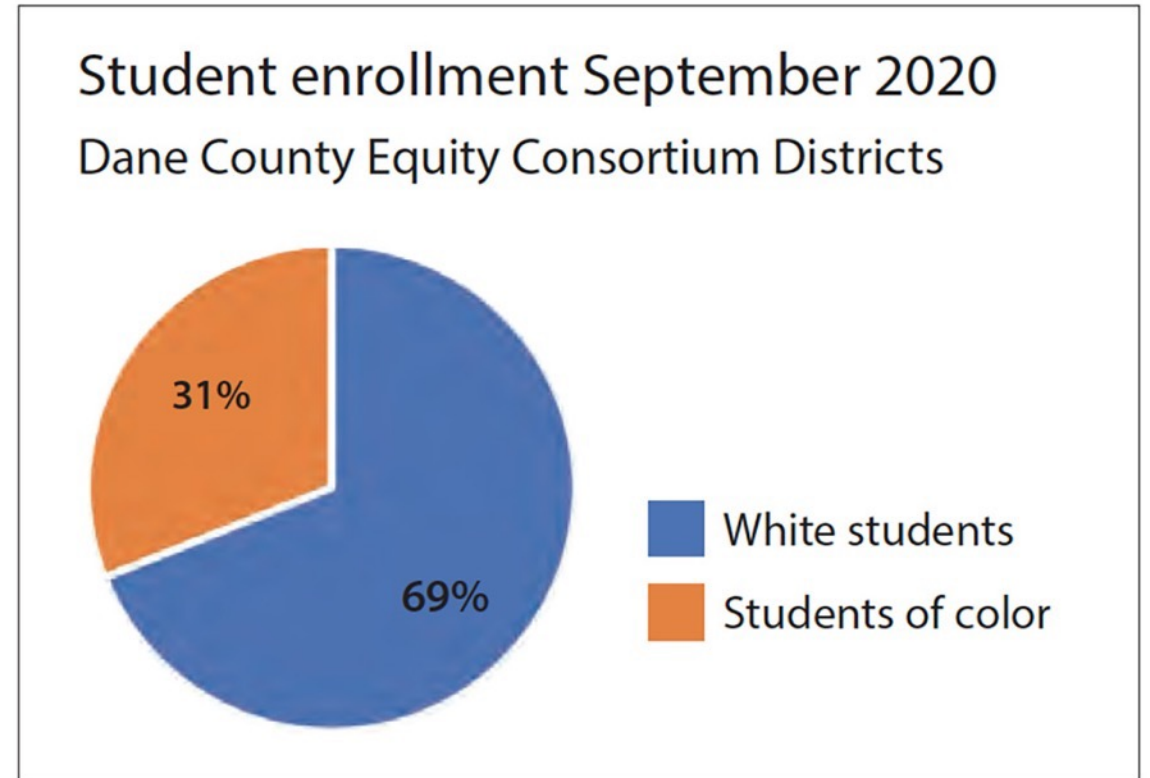
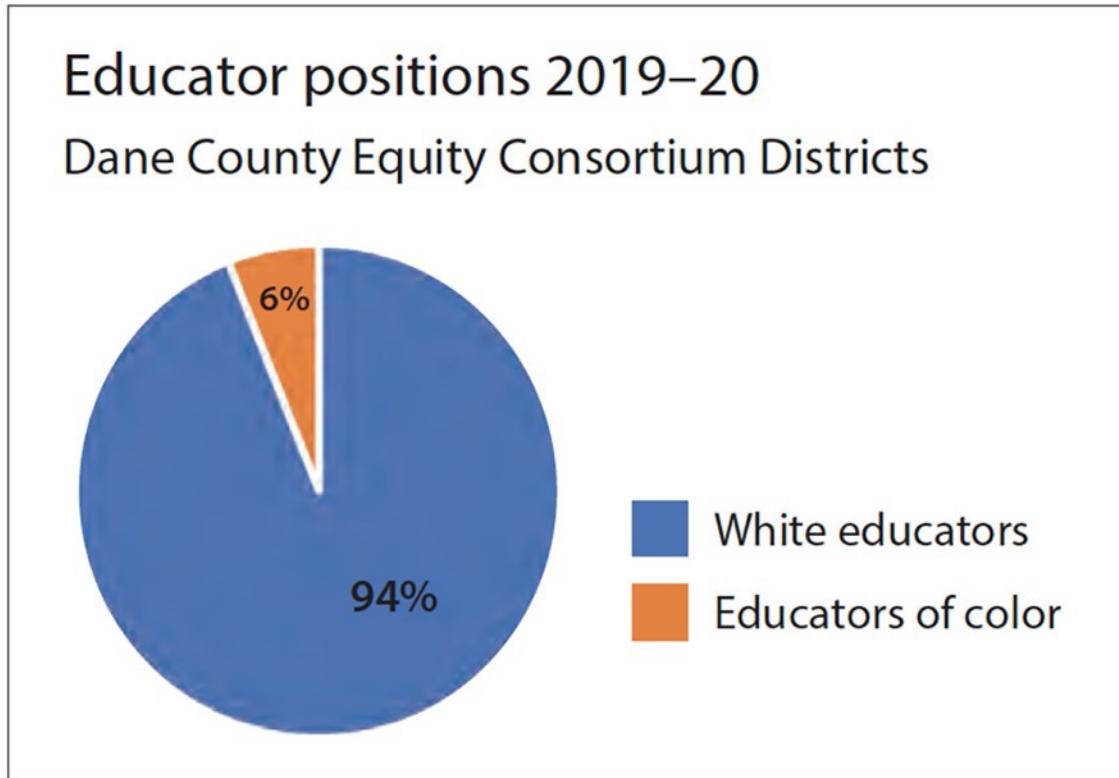
Even more important to designers was that all hierarchies be eliminated — all four experienced lead partners and their 16 new educator colleagues would be equal learners and supporters. To honor this collaborative status, new educators were paid for participating at the same hourly rate as the lead partners.

**Antonio Hoye**  
Student and Family Engagement Specialist (SAFE)  
Middleton-Cross Plains Area School District



# Student and educator demographics

The percentage of students and educators in the 25 Dane County Equity Consortium districts who identified as white or people of color.



Source: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

# Discussion and Questions



Let us hear from you

**Please fill out our  
post-webinar  
survey**

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/R2LN3VW>

# Mark your calendars

**Thursday,  
October 20  
3 pm ET**

**Setting the Standard  
for School Success:  
The Power of the  
Principalship**

**Thursday,  
November 3  
3 pm ET**

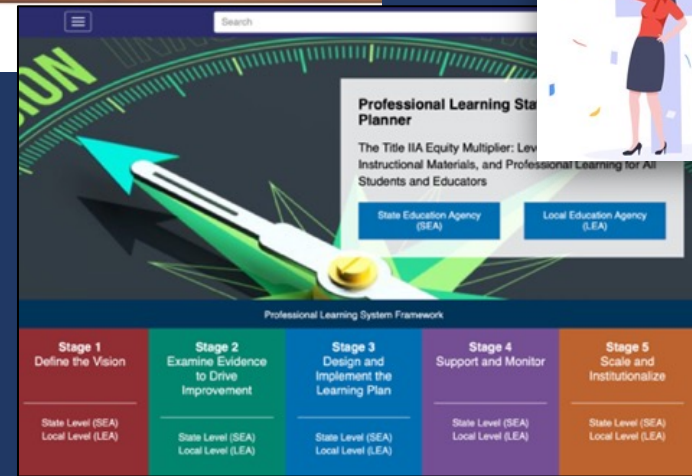
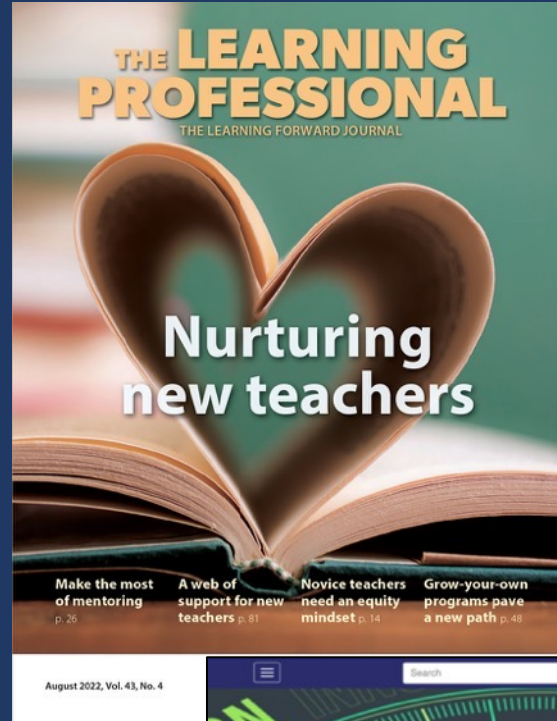
**Living Equity in  
Your Work**



# Online resources

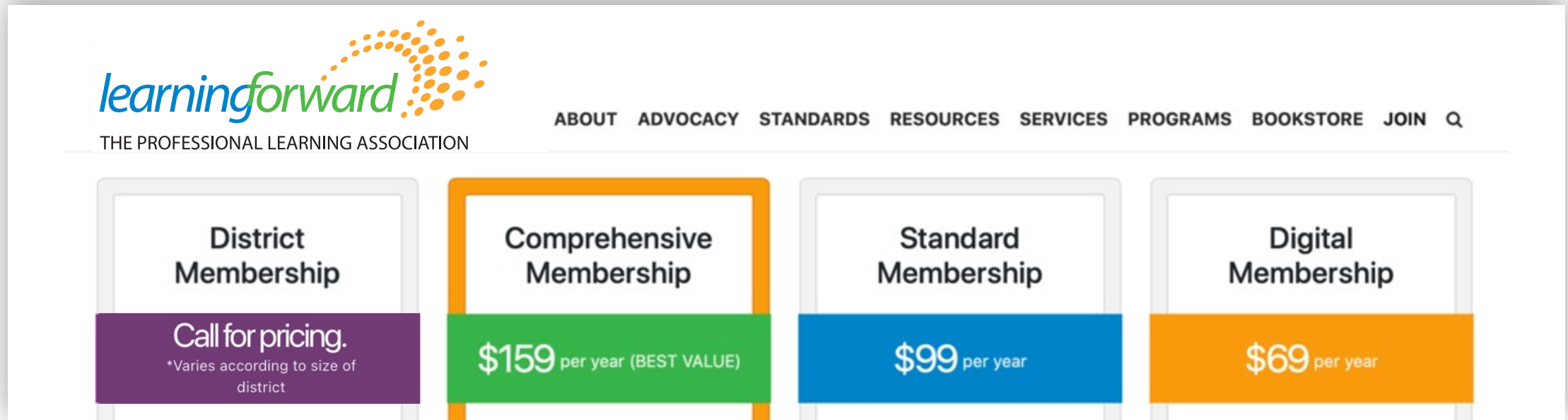
Look for follow-up resources, including a recording of this webinar and slides

- Read latest issue of [The Learning Professional](#)
- Check out the [Learning Forward blog](#)
- Use the planner at [Professional Learning State and District Planner](#)



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- Get \$10 off any new Learning Forward membership
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  - **Visit** <http://learningforward.org/membership>
- \* Code valid for new members only



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Membership Type	Price
District Membership	Call for pricing. <small>*Varies according to size of district</small>
Comprehensive Membership	\$159 per year (BEST VALUE)
Standard Membership	\$99 per year
Digital Membership	\$69 per year



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# Mentor Teacher Academy

Instructionally focused mentoring to foster career-long teaching effectiveness

- Ensure that new teachers have the support they need to meet the needs of all students
- Offer an opportunity for experienced teachers to step into a leadership role
- Guide the development of the next generation of teachers, shaping campus culture, and extending their impact.

Visit [services.learningforward.org](https://services.learningforward.org) to learn more.



Understanding mentor roles, responsibilities, and expectations



Applying an instruction-focused mentoring plan



Establishing and maintaining trust with beginning teachers



Leading classroom observations



Mentoring for classroom management



Analyzing observation data





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Thank you!

