

Education Progress Fellows

Within any local education agency committed to continuous improvement, there are individuals who thrive on the sense of dissatisfaction. The dissatisfaction drives an innate compulsion for pragmatic problem solving. At the Collaborative for Teaching and Learning (CTL), we call these individuals “Fellows.”

CTL will identify, guide, and challenge a dozen dissatisfied problem-solvers from KY, TN, IN, and OH in the new 18-month experience, Education Progress Fellows (EPF). In this inaugural year of the EPF, Fellows will pursue independently identified projects that advance policy and practice related to equity.

With 25 years experience leading educational thought and educator development, CTL launches the EPF with the capacity to create an environment suitable for Fellows’ wild thinking and reasonable resolution. The organizational independence, skills of facilitation, and ability to question underlying assumptions and biases signifies to Fellows that the CTL space created is both safe and stimulating as they pursue that which may only be considered possible become probable.

CTL provides the linkages to expertise and experience in the fields demanded by the Fellows’ chosen projects. In their 18 months together – gathering in person for six weekends and virtually more often – Fellows work in consult with those who offer pertinent and often unique knowledge and information; they formulate hypotheses and plan methodical testing; they process evidence underpinning positions; and commit to the constant evaluation and evolution of ideas.

Fellows need not be revolutionaries or iconic, charismatic heroes or sheroes (though they may in fact be). It is okay for Fellows to support that which is common or generally endorsed; it is okay to lead from the front, behind, or alongside. Fellows need others who share their inventive perspective and yet still respond to the history and meaning of boundaries established. They need others to help them face their greatest fear, that not every inefficiency is a problem and therefore sometimes change is not needed.

The EPF experience culminates in the Fellows’ shifting of an educational paradigm as it relates to equity. Final products - made public to all - may take the form of a forum, initiative, or other means. Along the way, CTL will document the Fellows’ progress and process through tools of a virtual community, such as social media, podcasts, and publication.

Beyond the EPF experience, CTL ensures that Fellows drive an expanding regional network noted for its creativity, courage, and leadership in meeting the promises of education.