

Innovation Leadership Council Charter

Achieving Educational Excellence: 2025-2030 Strategic Plan

Pillar 6: Lead Transformative Change (P6.F1.A1-A3)

Prepared by

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1. Background and Purpose

North Carolina's Achieving Educational Excellence: 2025-2030 Strategic Plan calls for transforming schools through research and development and for celebrating excellence in public education. Under Pillar 6 Focus Area 1 of the Strategic Plan, Actions 1-3 (P6.F1.A1-3) direct the state to:

1. Create a cross-sector Innovation Leadership Council (ILC).
2. Establish a structured process to identify, pilot, evaluate, and/or scale innovative school models and instructional practices.
3. Publish and promote an annual collection of effective and innovative practices.

This charter establishes the **Innovation Leadership Council (ILC)** as an advisory council to support the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) in identifying, vetting, and elevating promising and effective practices that advance all eight pillars of Achieving Educational Excellence: 2025–2030. The ILC will serve as a structured, cross-sector forum that brings together educators and leaders from traditional and public charter schools, as well as lab schools at our institutions of higher education, to help identify and elevate innovative solutions to our state's most pressing educational problems. By intentionally supporting professional dialogue across school governance models and communities, the ILC will help surface what is working, while strengthening shared understanding and promoting productive, respectful collaboration that helps bridge divides within the public education community.

2. Authority

The ILC is created by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI), with endorsement from the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, as an advisory council and working group to support implementation of Strategic Plan Action P6.F1.A1-3. While the ILC may provide recommendations and guidance to NCDPI and the State Board of Education (SBE) resulting from implementation of P6.F1.A1-3, it does not have decision-making authority over policy, funding, or local implementation.

3. Scope of Work and Responsibilities

3.1 In-Scope Responsibilities

The ILC is responsible for:

1. **Strategic focus and themes**
 - Recommend annual focus areas for promising practices that are aligned with Pillars 1–8 and recently launched Strategic Plan actions including (as examples):
 - Pillar 1: early literacy and foundational math, rigorous pathways, and durable skills

- Pillar 2: educator recruitment, retention, professional learning, and career pathways
- Pillar 3: family engagement and community partnerships that reduce barriers to learning
- Pillar 4: student well-being, safe and secure environments, chronic absenteeism, WSCC-aligned supports
- Pillar 5: operational excellence, modernized systems, and data-informed service delivery
- Pillar 6: research, development, and scale-up of innovation through networks
- Pillar 7: storytelling and messaging that celebrates public education excellence
- Pillar 8: partnerships and champions that mobilize support and investment in public education

2. Promising practices framework and tools

- Co-design and periodically refine the Promising Practice framework, including but not limited to:
 - PSU submission template for the annual Call for Evidence-Based Promising Practices.
 - Scoring rubric and reviewer guidance, including evidence, equity, and scalability criteria.

3. Review and selection of promising practices

- Participate in reviewing, scoring, and recommending promising practices for inclusion in the annual compendium.
- Ensure recommendations are grounded in evidence and reflect geographic, demographic, and PSU-type diversity.

4. Support for networks convenings (P6.F2.A3)

- Collaborate with the team responsible for the statewide education networks convening under P6.F2.A3 by:
 - Curating ILC-selected practices, presenters, and session topics.
 - Providing content for an “innovation and promising practices” strand.
 - Sharing lessons learned to inform network agendas.

5. Storytelling and Celebrate the Good

- Work with the NCDPI Communications team to identify stories, exemplars, and voices that can be featured in the Celebrate the Good campaign and related communications products.

6. Advising on scale and alignment

- Provide recommendations to NCDPI and SBE on:
 - Opportunities to replicate and scale promising practices through education networks and regional supports.
 - Policy, guidance, or funding considerations that could enable or accelerate innovation.

7. Cross-sector collaboration and “bridge-building”

- Design and uphold structures that enable educators from traditional public schools/districts, charter schools, and lab schools to learn with and from one another in ways that are productive, respectful, and solutions-oriented. This includes:
 - Establishing clear collaboration norms that support constructive dialogue, reduce misconceptions, and keep focus on shared goals for students.
 - Curating cross-sector learning opportunities (for example, site visits, practitioner panels, and problem-of-practice sessions) that highlight effective practices across settings.
 - Identifying barriers to shared learning and proposing practical strategies, guidance, or supports that help promising practices transfer across contexts.

3.2 Out-of-Scope Activities

The ILC is **not** responsible for:

- Direct planning, funding, or hosting of the statewide networks convening under P6.F2.A3.
- Direct management of local implementation in PSUs.
- Final policy decisions, budget allocations, or statutory changes (these remain with SBE, the General Assembly, and DPI leadership).

4. Membership and Composition

4.1 Composition

The ILC will include a mix of practitioners, partners, and NCDPI staff. Membership should reflect:

- Geographic diversity inclusive of all 8 SBE regions.

- Representation across PSU types and sizes (districts, charters, lab schools; rural, suburban, urban).
- Role diversity (system leaders, school leaders, teacher leaders, students/families, IHE and community partners).
- Attention to demographic diversity and equity.

Membership should include:

- NCDPI staff (ORPP, program offices, Communications) responsible for Strategic Plan actions
- District superintendents, assistant superintendents, or other key leaders (e.g., 3–5).
- Charter and lab school leaders (e.g., 2–3).
- School-level leaders and teacher leaders (e.g., 4–6).
 - POY and TOY networks
- IHE/research partners (e.g., 2–3)

4.2 Appointment and Terms

- Members are appointed by [DPI leadership / State Superintendent] with notice to the State Board of Education.
- Terms of service are one year, with the option for one renewal, and staggered to support continuity.
- Vacancies may be filled mid-term by appointment, prioritizing continuity of representation (region, role, or sector).

4.3 Member Expectations

Members are expected to:

- Attend and actively participate in scheduled meetings and working sessions.
- Review materials in advance and contribute to scoring and feedback processes.
- Share innovations and experiences from their own contexts.
- Uphold the Council's commitment to evidence, equity, and transparency.
- Contribute to cross-sector learning by sharing practices from their local context in ways that are transparent about conditions for success and adaptable to other settings.
- Engage in good-faith collaboration across traditional, charter, and lab school contexts by maintaining professional respect, focusing on shared outcomes, and supporting dialogue that bridges differences in perspective.

5. Leadership and Governance

- The ILC will have a **Chair** and **Vice Chair**, selected from among members, and an NCDPI **Council Liaison** (e.g., ORPP lead).
- The Chair and Vice Chair are responsible for:
 - Working with ORPP to set agendas and meeting priorities.
 - Facilitating meetings and ensuring balanced participation.
- The Council Liaison coordinates logistics, documentation, and alignment with DPI and SBE timelines.

6. Meetings and Decision-Making

- The ILC will meet at least **four times per year**, including:
 - An annual fall retreat at the North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching (NCCAT) to set themes, calibrate on the framework and rubric, and set calendar and for annual cycles.
 - Additional meetings focused on evaluating submissions, reviewing progress, supporting convening planning, and preparing recommendations for NCDPI and SBE.
- Meetings will be facilitated using structured protocols and collaboration norms designed to promote respectful, inclusive participation and cross-sector learning, including constructive handling of disagreements and documentation of differing perspectives when needed.
- Subcommittees or workgroups may be formed (e.g., Design & Rubric, Selection & Evidence, Communications & Storytelling).
- A quorum for formal recommendations consists of [at least half] of voting members.
- The ILC will strive for consensus. When consensus is not possible, recommendations may be adopted by a simple majority of members present, with minority views documented as needed.

7. Equity, Evidence, and Data Use

The ILC commits to:

- Using evidence to inform selection decisions and recommendations, including both quantitative and qualitative data.
- Elevating practices that address persistent gaps and advance equity for historically underserved students and communities.
- Respecting confidentiality and data privacy requirements in reviewing submissions.

- Managing conflicts of interest by requiring members to disclose potential conflicts and recuse themselves from scoring or decisions on practices where they have a direct stake beyond allowed roles.

8. Relationships to Other Bodies

- **NCDPI Leadership and Program Offices:** The ILC works with DPI leadership and program offices, particularly those aligned to Pillars 1–4, to ensure promising practices inform implementation guidance, technical assistance, and future pilots.
- **Education Networks and P6.F2 Convening Team:** The ILC collaborates with the team responsible for education networks and the statewide convening under P6.F2.A3 to integrate promising practices into network agendas and convening content.
- **External Partners and Investors:** The ILC, through ORPP and DPI leadership, may help identify promising practices that could be candidates for philanthropic or corporate investment, while recognizing that funding decisions are made outside the Council.
- **State Superintendent and Board of Education:** The ILC provides periodic updates and recommendations to State Superintendent and SBE, including highlights from the annual compendium and implications for policy and resource alignment.

9. Reporting and Accountability

Each year, the ILC, in collaboration with ORPP, will:

- Contribute to the annual compendium of effective and innovative practices.
- Provide a brief summary of submissions, selected practices, and cross-cutting insights.
- Highlight policy, practice, and funding considerations for DPI leadership and SBE.
- Document adjustments to the R&D framework and rubric based on lessons learned.

10. Charter Adoption, Review, and Revision

- This charter is adopted by NCDPI Leadership and Strategic Plan Committee, with endorsement by the State Superintendent.
- The ILC and ORPP will review the charter once per year and recommend revisions as needed.
- Substantive revisions require approval by NCDPI leadership, with notice to the State Superintendent.