

# The Learning Accelerator



## What Will We Bring With Us?

Practice Innovations Towards  
Personalization and Equity During COVID-19

Aurora Symposium -- October 27, 2021  
@bethrabbitt @learningaccel

**The Learning Accelerator envisions a world in which each student receives the effective, equitable, and engaging education they need to reach their full and unique potential**

**Personalized** **Mastery Based**



**Whole Child**



**This vision isn't a new one,  
but making it a daily reality has proven hard in practice**

**In this moment, it's never been more important  
to make this vision possible  
for every learner in every school in America**

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# COVID has brought many pressing needs into sharper focus. It has also created an opportunity.

## LONGSTANDING NEEDS

- *Significant racial and economic inequities*
- *Stagnant models that don't serve all learners*
- *Unequal access to networks and resources*
- *Lack of access to high quality tools for emerging learning models (e.g., virtual, blended)*



***The disruption of COVID is  
creating urgency and clarity  
needed to***

***transform the  
education system  
to work for every child***

## TRANSFORMATION OPPORTUNITY

- *Advancing racial and economic equity*
- *Supporting ALL learners effectively through transformation to new models of learning*
- *Increasing access to networks and resources*
- *Adopting practices that increase holistic wellbeing for students and educators*



**HOW can we learn from  
COVID-19 innovations to help  
school systems advance resiliency  
and ensure an  
effective, engaging, and equitable  
learning experience for each child?**





**HopSkip  
Leapfrog**

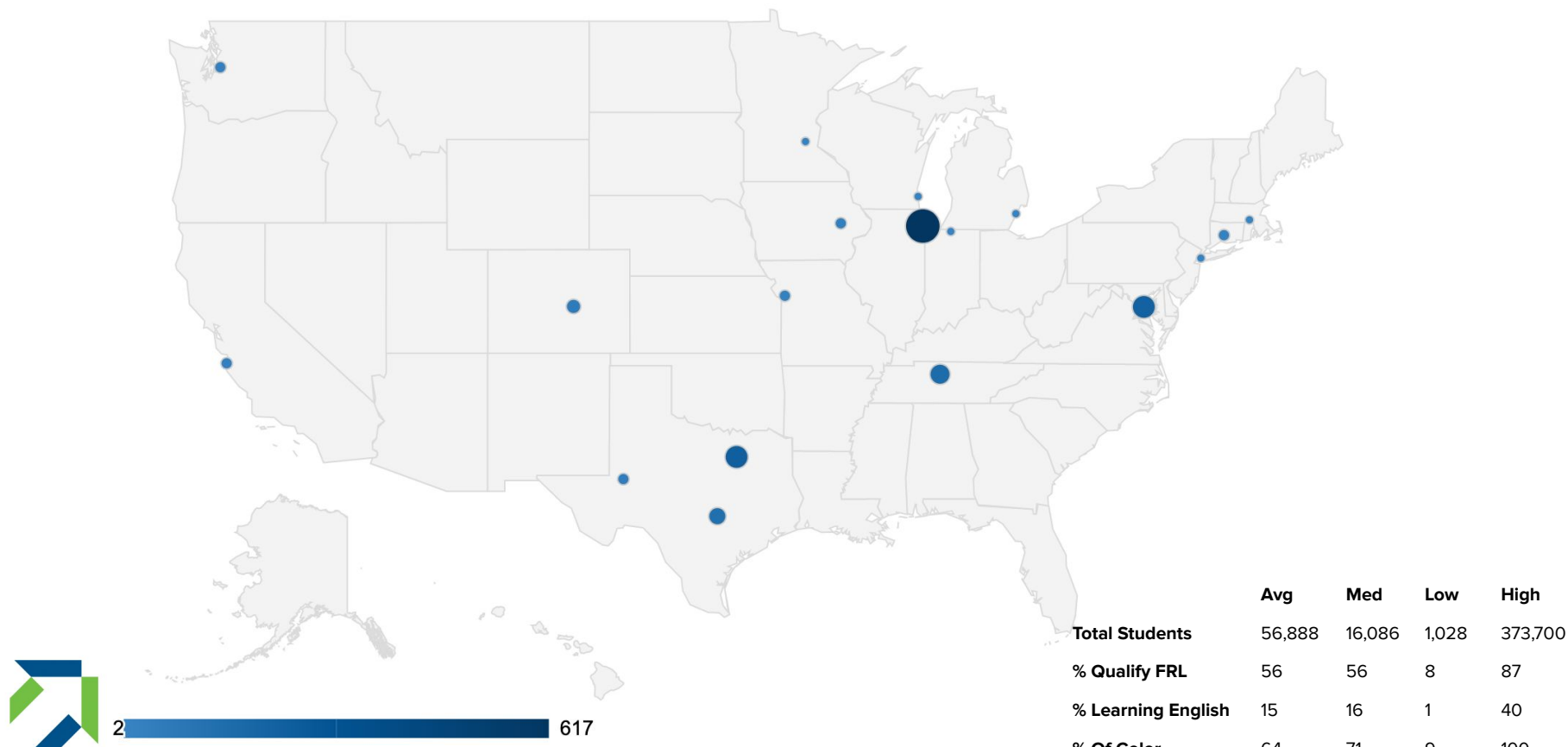
*Exploring concrete  
ways schools and  
systems pursued  
student-centered  
innovation  
during COVID-19*



*A project of The Learning Accelerator*

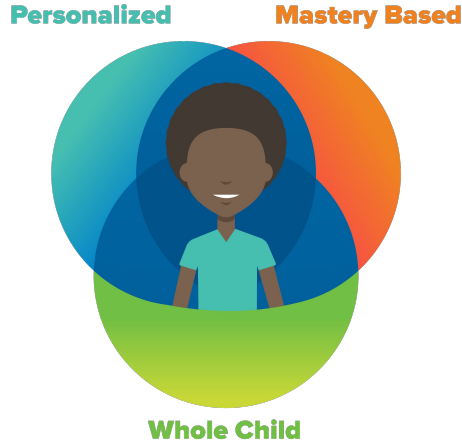
*@bethrabbitt @learningaccel hopskipleapfrog.org*

## March-April 2021: 23 School Systems and 10 Subject-Matter Experts



## PRACTICE ADOPTION

Meaningful, concrete teaching and learning practices put into place



## CONDITION CREATION

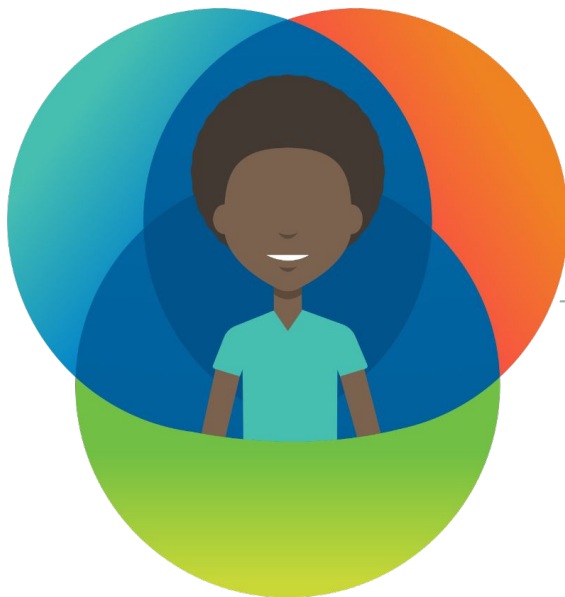
System, support and process shifts to sustain and deepen innovations





**Personalized**

**Mastery Based**



**Whole Child**



**Targeted and Relevant**

Every student can access and interact with materials and experiences aligned to achieve community goals and competencies for learning. Instruction and materials are tailored to their unique needs, strengths, interests, and identities.



**Actively Engaging**

Learning activities are planned and executed in ways that encourage deep interaction with content, in ways to build motivation and ownership and support the transfer of new knowledge and skills to application.



**Socially Connected**

Students are encouraged and able to make meaningful, supportive connections with teachers, experts, peers, and the content of their learning to persist, deepen commitment, and co-create together.



**Growth Oriented**

Learning experiences build intentionally towards mastery. Students have a clear understanding of where they are and where they are going, with multiple opportunities and ways to get feedback, demonstrate competency, and plan next steps.



**Good news!**

**We have starting points and momentum.**



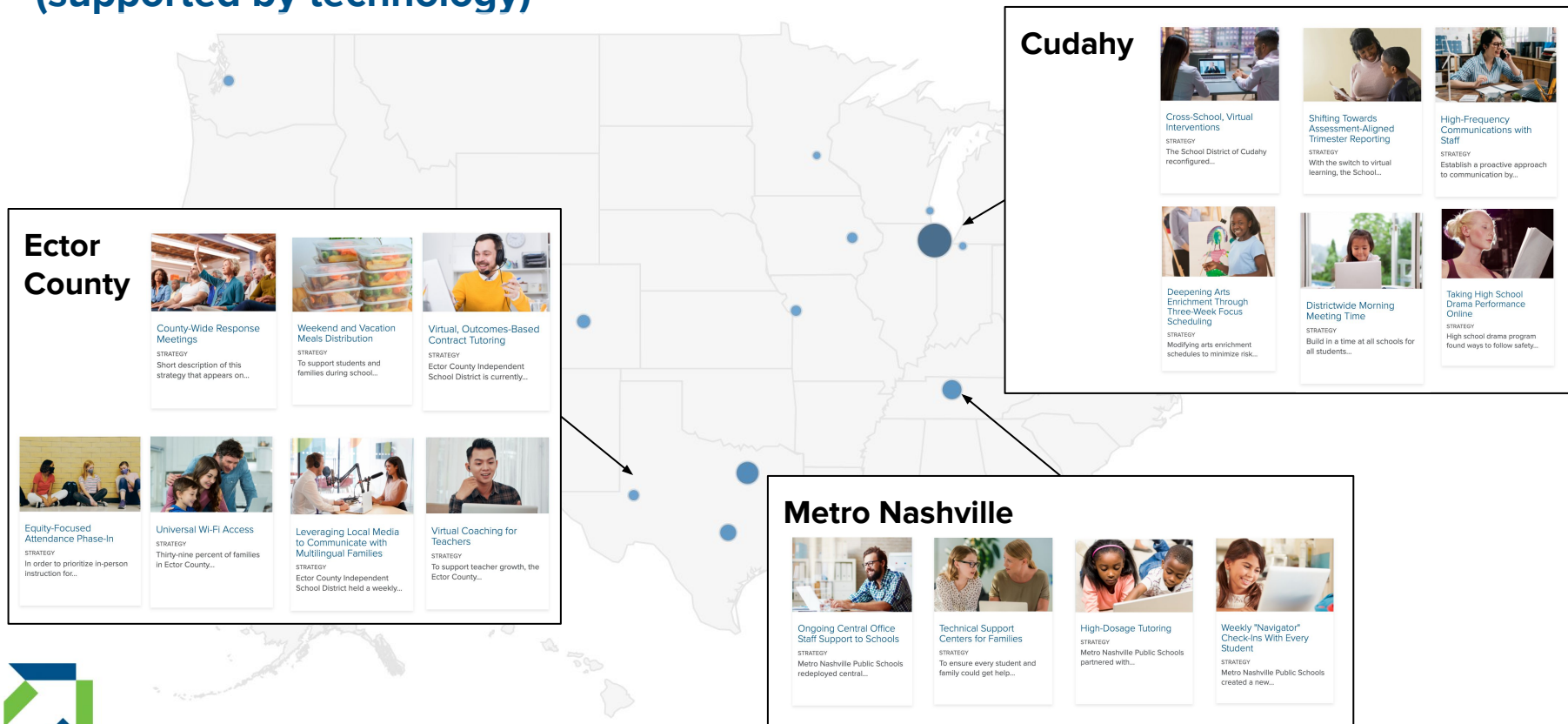
“ We're no longer planning for teaching, we're planning for learning. ”

**NICOLE OTTMER**

PERSONALIZED LEARNING SYSTEMS COORDINATOR, COLORADO SPRINGS SCHOOL  
DISTRICT 11



# Emerging pictures of new practices, conditions, and \*habits\* (supported by technology)



# Field Resources: Toolkit strategies, stories, artifacts



## Weekly "Navigator" Check-Ins With Every Student

### STRATEGY

Metro Nashville Public Schools created a new...

## Weekly "Navigator" Check-Ins With Every Student

Metro Nashville Public Schools created a new district-wide point-person program to ensure every student was known, cared for, respected, and supported

### Overview

In the summer of 2020, Metro Nashville Public Schools gathered a cross-functional district team to plan for school reopening. Across conversations, it became clear that a key challenge would be rebuilding and maintaining each student's connection to school. Dr. Keri Randolph, Executive Officer of Strategic State, Federal and Philanthropic Investments at Metro Nashville Public Schools, reflected on the realization that a new program would be necessary to meet this goal:

*"We have a real need; we can do this. We're going to open virtually and these [Navigator check-ins] are usually the conversations we have in the hall or in the cafeteria or when we can see a student in person. And just to make that connection, we have to have a system—a really intentional system—around those check ins in this virtual world."* - Dr. Randolph

### Approach

The Metro Nashville team oriented around a goal of having "every student known" and launched an ambitious program called Navigator to ensure every student had an ongoing, weekly connection point to a dedicated adult. To do this, the team worked with schools to assemble a corps of over 5,600 adult navigators—ranging from teachers, to support faculty, to central office staff—who were paired with 6 to 12 students.

*"We met with all of the principals and all of the executive directors over those schools to talk about the non-negotiables. [...] Every student must have a weekly check-in from a navigator at the school level, but we encouraged schools to think beyond teachers. We needed to think holistically about the staff at the school and who can serve in this role. Our goal was to take all the students at the school as our numerator and grow the denominator as big as possible. We have some front office staff and cafeteria workers serving as navigators. The criteria that we encouraged schools to think about was who can form strong relationships with kids."* - Dr. Randolph

The district team provided core training, check-in scripts, and, if needed, translators, for navigators. Navigators focused on building relationships with each student as well as collecting holistic data on students' needs ranging from food and housing security, to technology, to social, emotional, mental, and academic wellbeing. These data were centrally reviewed and stored in a central dashboard, allowing

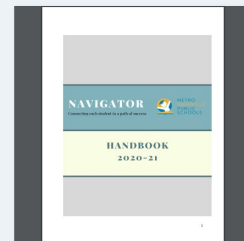
## Strategy Resources

### Metro Nashville Public Schools Navigator Handbook

This tool outlines key goals, processes, and tools associated with the MNPS Navigator program. It... [Learn More](#)

[DOWNLOAD PDF](#)

You will leave the Blended & Personalized Learning at Work site.



### Launching the Navigator Program: "Every Student Known, Cared For, Respected, and Supported"

Dr. Keri Randolph, Executive Officer of Strategic State, Federal and Philanthropic Investments at Metropolitan Nashville... [Learn More](#)

[FULL SCREEN](#)

You will leave the Blended & Personalized Learning at Work site.

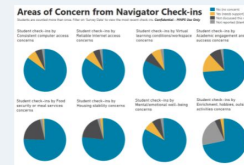


### Navigator Dashboard & Areas of Concern

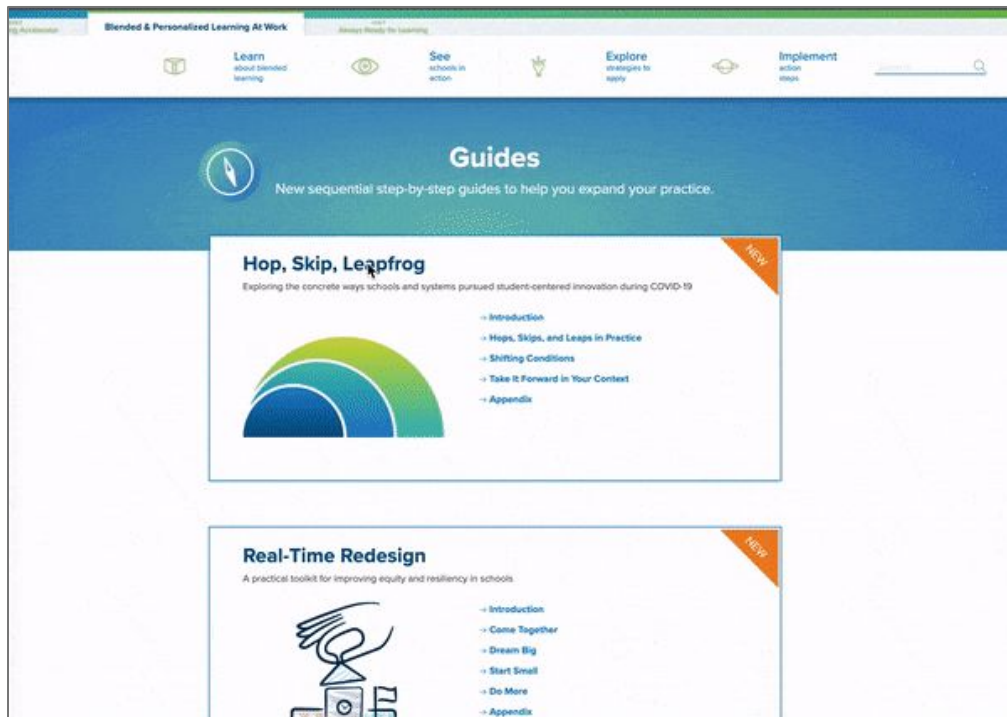
Metro Nashville Public Schools created a new district-wide point-person program to ensure every student was... [Learn More](#)

[DOWNLOAD IMAGE](#)

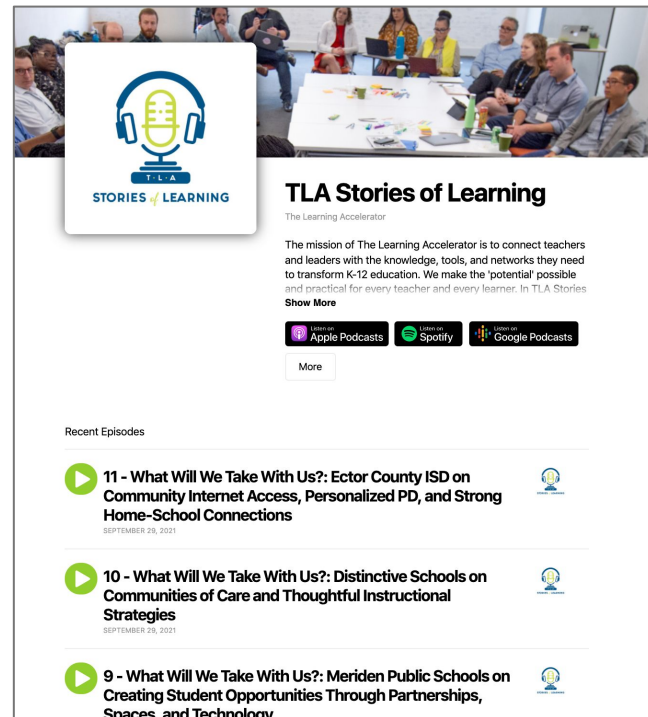
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# Field Resources: 100+ Examples of Hops, Skips, and Leaps



The screenshot shows the 'Guides' section of the TLA website. At the top, there's a navigation bar with icons for 'Learn about blended learning', 'See schools in action', 'Explore strategies to apply', and 'Implement action plans'. Below this, a blue banner reads 'Guides' with a subtext 'New sequential step-by-step guides to help you expand your practice.' Two guide cards are visible: 'Hop, Skip, Leapfrog' and 'Real-Time Redesign'. Both cards have a 'NEW' badge in the top right corner. The 'Hop, Skip, Leapfrog' card features a rainbow graphic and lists sections: Introduction, Hops, Skips, and Leaps in Practice, Shifting Conditions, Take It Forward in Your Context, and Appendix. The 'Real-Time Redesign' card features a graphic of a hand holding a stack of books and lists sections: Introduction, Come Together, Dream Big, Start Small, Do More, and Appendix.



The screenshot shows the 'TLA Stories of Learning' podcast page. At the top, there's a photo of a group of people in a meeting. Below it is the podcast logo, which features a microphone and the text 'TLA STORIES OF LEARNING'. The page title is 'TLA Stories of Learning' with the subtitle 'The Learning Accelerator'. A mission statement follows: 'The mission of The Learning Accelerator is to connect teachers and leaders with the knowledge, tools, and networks they need to transform K-12 education. We make the 'potential' possible and practical for every teacher and every learner. In TLA Stories Show More'. Below the mission statement are icons for 'Listen on Apple Podcasts', 'Listen on Spotify', and 'Listen on Google Podcasts', followed by a 'More' button. The 'Recent Episodes' section lists three episodes, each with a play button icon, a title, and a date: '11 - What Will We Take With Us?: Ector County ISD on Community Internet Access, Personalized PD, and Strong Home-School Connections' (SEPTEMBER 28, 2021), '10 - What Will We Take With Us?: Distinctive Schools on Communities of Care and Thoughtful Instructional Strategies' (SEPTEMBER 29, 2021), and '9 - What Will We Take With Us?: Meriden Public Schools on Creating Student Opportunities Through Partnerships, Spaces, and Technology'.



# What can we learn looking across these stories and strategies?



## Launching Forward:

Leveraging pandemic  
innovations to advance  
school systems



The Learning  
Accelerator

July 2021



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**We are not where we were before COVID-19.**





# New Strengths to Propel Us Forward

## *Ways of Doing and Thinking*

**Teacher mindsets, skills, and readiness** for innovation and change

**Proactive district team habits** creating greater agility, proximity, and trust

**Students' readiness and skills** for greater self-direction

## *Tools and Systems*

**Infrastructure** (tech, curriculum) that spurs more efficient and quality-improving practices

**Personalized educator learning models** that target educator needs and build ongoing professional practice.



# Launch Points for Bigger Leaps

**Family engagement strategies** to build home-school partnerships for learning.

**Identity-affirming, “tier 1” instructional approaches** to flex to unique learner needs

**Whole child assessment and development approaches** that broaden support for students’ wellbeing and learning



**Virtual learning to offer more flexible remote and hybrid school models** for students and families

**Innovative staffing models** that equitably expand teacher time and expertise

**Rigorous and engaging hybrid materials** through collaborative and inclusive design



“

What I get excited about is that there are glimpses of that happening and, you know, with people feeling maybe more confident or more like it's allowed. What's crazy is a lot of people think, 'I'm not allowed to do this.' We're just like, 'Yeah, you can do it.' ”

**PK DIFFENBAUGH**

SUPERINTENDENT, MONTEREY PENINSULA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT



## Your Calls to Action

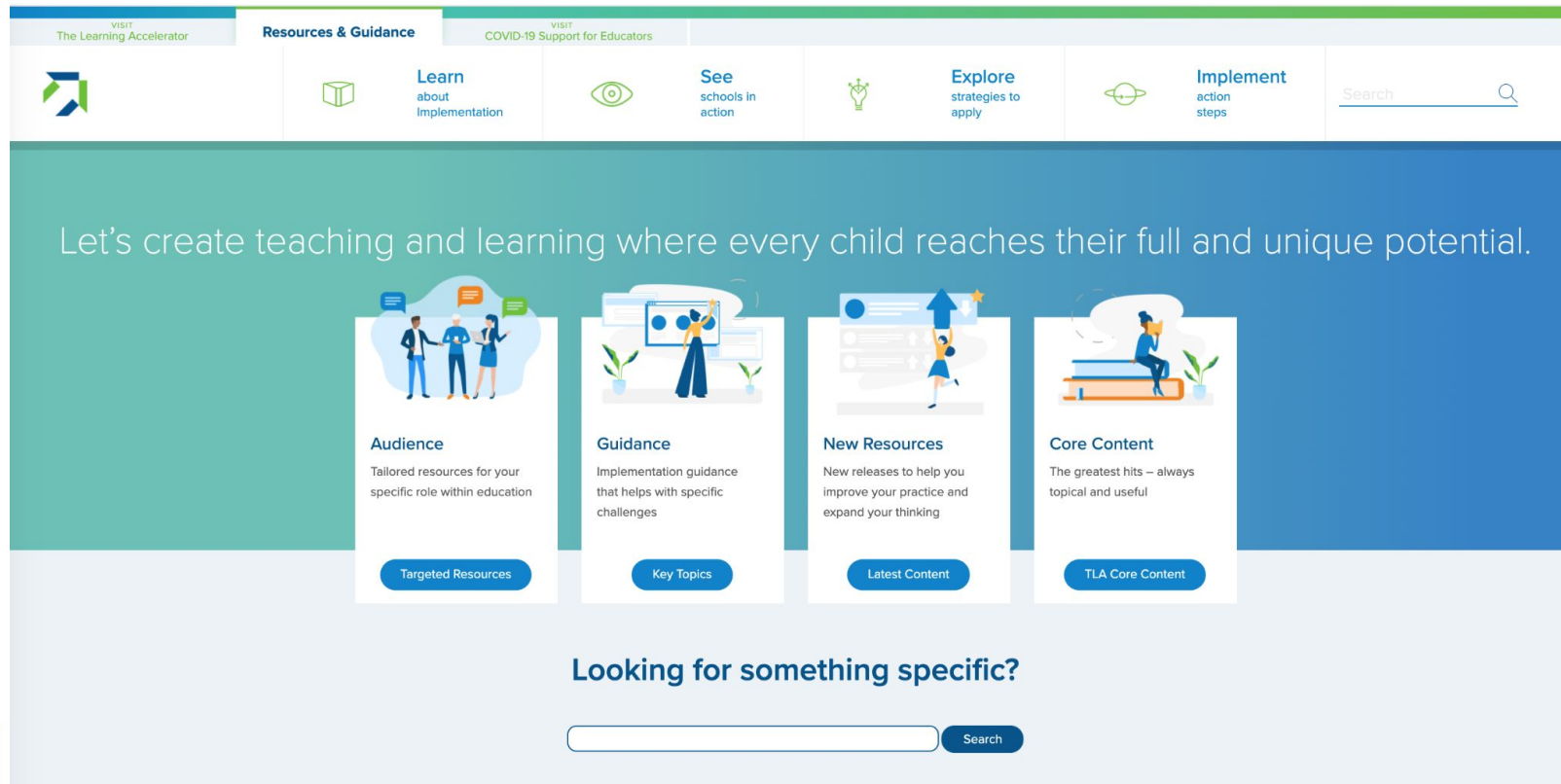
- 1) Where are your bright spots and new strengths?
- 2) How will you use them to tackle opportunities and advance equity and personalization?

[hopskip leapfrog.org](https://hopskip leapfrog.org)



Many free tools and guides at [learningaccelerator.org](https://learningaccelerator.org)

Need or not sure where to start advice? We have pro-bono coaching too (COVID-19 Support)



The screenshot shows the homepage of the Learning Accelerator website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the following links: "VISIT The Learning Accelerator", "Resources & Guidance", "VISIT COVID-19 Support for Educators", and a search bar. Below the navigation bar, there are four main sections: "Learn about Implementation" (with a cube icon), "See schools in action" (with an eye icon), "Explore strategies to apply" (with a lightbulb icon), and "Implement action steps" (with a magnifying glass icon). The main content area features a large blue banner with the text "Let's create teaching and learning where every child reaches their full and unique potential." Below the banner, there are four white cards, each with an illustration and a title: "Audience" (illustration of three people), "Guidance" (illustration of a person pointing at a screen), "New Resources" (illustration of a person holding a star), and "Core Content" (illustration of a person sitting on a book). Each card has a description and a button: "Audience" (Targeted Resources), "Guidance" (Key Topics), "New Resources" (Latest Content), and "Core Content" (TLA Core Content). At the bottom, there is a section titled "Looking for something specific?" with a search bar and a "Search" button.

VISIT  
The Learning Accelerator

Resources & Guidance

VISIT  
COVID-19 Support for Educators

Learn  
about  
Implementation

See  
schools in  
action

Explore  
strategies to  
apply

Implement  
action  
steps

Search

Let's create teaching and learning where every child reaches their full and unique potential.

**Audience**  
Tailored resources for your specific role within education  
Targeted Resources

**Guidance**  
Implementation guidance that helps with specific challenges  
Key Topics

**New Resources**  
New releases to help you improve your practice and expand your thinking  
Latest Content

**Core Content**  
The greatest hits – always topical and useful  
TLA Core Content

Looking for something specific?

Search



This presentation was created by  
The Learning Accelerator (TLA) team in 2021. For further  
information please contact us  
at [info@learningaccelerator.org](mailto:info@learningaccelerator.org)

For further information about The Learning Accelerator  
and for access to free and open tools to support your  
work, please visit  
[www.learningaccelerator.org](http://www.learningaccelerator.org)

