

Homewood-Flossmoor High School
Planning Committee Agenda
August 28, 2025 - 11:00 am
South District Conference Room

1. Call to Order
2. [Approval of Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting of May 20, 2025](#)
3. Comments
4. Old Business
5. New Business
 - a. Strategic Plan - Year 2
 - b. [Foundation Districts High School Course Update](#)
 - c. [Summative Designation Scores Report \(2024\)](#)
 - d. [Catalyst for Educational Change \(CEC\) Proposal](#)
 - e. [New Leaders Proposal](#)
 - f. [Discover U Program Proposal \(You Matter 2\)](#)
 - g. US News & World Report School Ranking

Approval of Minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting of May 20, 2025

MINUTES OF PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING
Homewood-Flossmoor High School, 999 Kedzie, Flossmoor, IL
May 20, 2025

In attendance for all of the meeting were, Ms. Jackson, Dr. Smith, Mr. Legardy, Dr. Wakeley, Dr. Alexander, Dr. Hester, Mrs. Rudan, Dr. Cook and Mrs. Erdey. Incoming Superintendent Dr. Jennifer Norrell and Incoming Director of Career Pathways & Workforce Development Dr. Lisa Dallacqua were also in attendance for all of the meeting. In addition, IB Coordinator Ms. Day was in attendance.

Marilyn Thomas from the HF Chronicle was also present. Ms. Beth Larocca, community member, was also in attendance.

The meeting was called to order at 8:37 a.m.

Approval of Minutes. The minutes from March 19, 2025 stand approved as presented.

Comments.

Mr. Legardy welcomed everyone to the last meeting of the 2024-25 school year.

Ms. Larocca requested an update on tutoring services. She also commented on the low enrollment discussion that was reflected in the last meeting's minutes regarding not running courses with low enrollment, Ms. Larocca expressed that it is not unusual for colleges not to run classes due to low enrollment and that saying no to running low enrollment courses is part of reality.

Dr. Hester shared that they recently celebrated IB and AP teachers who have been providing tutoring sessions that included evenings. She also noted that teachers have been prepping for the administration of the SAT exam. Dr. Hester shared that there have been some glitches in the assessments' testing systems that they are working through. Students who completed the testing felt it went well in general. Retakes are available for anyone who had problems with the AP testing particularly not being able to access the Blue Book. Concerns were expressed regarding if there would be enough time for students to re-engage due to the systems' glitch. Dr. Alexander shared that retakes will be available tomorrow, Friday or next Wednesday. Dr. Norrell, who is a CollegeBoard Trustee, will find out this afternoon during her Trustee meeting if there will be a charge for retakes and report back.

Dr. Wakeley noted PRESS Policies on today's agenda will be tabled as a result of moving policies to the Personnel Committee for their review. He noted that there are no policies that need immediate attention at this point.

Ms. Jackson expressed that she is happy to be rejoining the Planning Committee and looks forward to the work ahead.

Dr. Smith shared that she is also very excited to be on the board and happy to be a member of this committee. She expressed her thanks to Ms. Diaz, Mrs. Gnaster and the whole team for helping her get her acclimated in her new role.

Mr. Legardy welcomed Ms. Jackson and Dr. Smith and noted that Ms. Jackson was a very active member during her first tour on this committee. He noted that this is Dr. Wakeley's last Planning Committee meeting and expressed his appreciation to Dr. Wakeley for "leaning in and taking action," in getting this ship steered in the right direction on many fronts. He addressed Dr. Wakeley and stated, "the school needed a turn around and you did that turn around." Mr. Legardy extended his best wishes and congratulated Dr. Wakeley on his retirement and the new chapter that is about to begin for him. Mr. Legardy noted that they have been able

to get their arms around a lot of issues that plagued this school and this district and credited Dr. Wakeley for making it happen.

Old Business

Student Services Update

Mrs. Rudan provided a Summary of Findings regarding the 2024-25 Terrace Metrics Resiliency Project that was completed in the fall of 2024. She noted that this is the third year of getting the mental health screener. Mrs. Rudan pointed out that we are on the right pathway and remain committed to educating the whole child at an optimal academic, interpersonal, and psychological functioning level, now and later as adults. She reported that overall, 42% of students reported resiliency wellness in the satisfactory or optimal functioning categories, which was 7% higher than baseline with fewer student reporting resiliency in the “may need assistance” category over time. Most mean resiliency scores have increased over time, with the exception of incoming 9th grade students, anxiety levels have gradually decreased over time. In addition, there is a downward trend in self-criticism across grade levels. Ms. Jackson expressed the trends make sense and in an effort to help drive them down further, she suggested finding an opportunity to use the data reported to give students a better space perhaps directing them to Snowball or Snowflurry. She remarked that she is interested in hearing some of the actions that will be taken to address this. Mr. Legardy commented on the dramatic improvement that can be seen this year. Mrs. Rudan stated she feels that over the last three years, they have been intentional about making students feel more comfortable to talk. Dr. Smith commented on the positive impact the Bridge Program had on her own sister who was part of the Bridge Program’s inaugural year. Dr. Alexander added that the Bridge Program gives kids a sense of involvement and has a wraparound effect that positively impacts our school’s culture. Mr. Legardy stated that he is aware that students are assessed in the fall and asked if freshmen could also be assessed in the spring. Mrs. Rudan stated that everyone was assessed in the fall, but in the future, they will probably move back to assessing all students in the fall and spring. In addition, the state of Illinois has mandated mental health screening for all students and so far 13 percent of schools in Illinois are ready which includes HF. Mrs. Rudan added that the district is in a very good position and is way ahead of the game and will be looked at as a model district to help other schools. Mr. Legardy stated that this is another initiative brought by Dr. Wakeley and the district is well ahead of the curve in this category.

Instructional Coach Program

Dr. Norrell stated that she and Dr. Hester have been working together on this initiative. In an effort to work at full capacity as a true Professional Learning Community (PLC) there is a need to participate in the national training being offered this summer through Learning Forward. One of the biggest impactors of student achievement and student growth is the efficacy of teachers. She explained this professional learning is designed to strengthen instructional coaching practices and build professional capacity within the district. They are recommending entering into a contract agreement with Learning Forward to provide an Instructional Coaching Academy for the district. The contract includes: the facilitation of six days of on-site professional learning for up to 20 participants. The duration is May 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026 at a cost not to exceed \$43,120. The cost covers on-site facilitation, travel, professional learning materials and one year

Learning Forward membership. Dr. Cook added that the contract will be funded from the Fiscal Year 2025 budget. Although this initiative was not originally budgeted, it is aligned with the district's instructional priorities and vision to grow and support coaching practices. Dr. Norrell stated that she is requesting permission from this committee to move forward. Dr. Cook recommended that they move forward with the agreement as it has been delayed and it is now a priority. The committee members agreed to move Dr. Norrell's request forward to the board for approval. Mr. Legardy shared that Dr. Wakeley has already shared this information regarding entering into an Agreement with Learning Forward last Friday so all board members are aware of the training being requested. Dr. Hester noted there are 5 Instructional Coaches. Dr. Norrell added that school leadership as well as the Department Leads has been invited next week to attend so they can help support the coaches when they come into their departments. This item will be on the June 17, 2025 agenda for board approval.

IB for All Proposal

Dr. Norrell expressed her appreciation to Dr. Wakeley and Dr. Hester who met with her three months ago giving her a real in-depth look at the current state of the district's International Baccalaureate program. Initially she received the Hanover Report and there were many pros and cons that have been expressed including using the resources of the district on the program. She added that Dr. Wakeley and Dr. Hester took the time to share some of the concerns of running the IB program and it was helpful in analyzing if there was any feasibility in salvaging something that is still highly regarded in the world. Dr. Norrell noted that one of the biggest concerns is being responsive to the community in terms of the resources that it takes to run that program based upon the number of students actually receiving the benefit. She added that leveraging the work the school already is doing, and the work required in the future to maintain the district's status on the school report card, they have found a way to save and re-imagining and elevating the IB Programme's impact to include all students. Dr. Norrell also thanked Dr. Alexander and Mrs. Rudan along with Ms. Day who also provided helpful information. She also pointed out that being able to connect with Dr. Dellacqua whose work will be poised around workforce learning and career training and preparing students for career readiness. Today's presentation will talk about the IB Programme being elevated, also the College and Career Pathways which is mandated by the state of Illinois. Schools are just getting on board with this and this is year two for our district. She added taking this path will ramp up some of our designations as a district in the state and includes the work the faculty has already engaged in which is standards-based learning. The leveraging of these things will be the sole focus going forward for at least the next one to three years. Dr. Norrell added that this committee would monitor the work that they are doing. With the plan that they are proposing, all students would be able to receive the IB designation. She added that there are schools successfully doing this that look like HF. In addition, Dr. Norrell noted that the district's Strategic Plan has been utilized in this proposal. They are anticipating to provide this opportunity to students in the fall of 2026 and they will be working on this plan all next year. Dr. Dallacqua has done this in her current district and they are one of the leaders in the state. An extensive presentation on Elevating the IB Programme with College and Career Pathways through Standards-Based Learning was provided which outlined the comprehensive alignment of the Diploma Programme with the Career-related Programme.

Dr. Alexander added that as they prepare to increase the district's internal capacity they will attend the IB Global conference in New Orleans. He noted that there will be a year of thoughtful planning as they expand the internal capacity and what the program will bring as it pertains to teachers, students, families and the community. Dr. Alexander asked for the committee's approval of the conference and the reallocation of resources along with the scheduling of two additional 6th assignments. Mr. Legardy extended his appreciation for the detailed and informative presentation along with the plan moving forward. Ms. Jackson stated that she appreciates the thoughtfulness and collaboration for our students. She added that she really appreciates how they have been able to leverage information from other districts who have done this. Ms. Jackson expressed a concern that the community may believe this is just an opportunity for our top students. She added that to open this up to all students the way it is laid out and the holistic approach is fantastic in addition to having a resource here to avoid the pitfalls and land mines. Ms. Jackson asked that as this evolves to provide the committee with a check point. Dr. Smith asked if there will be a barrier if not all of their plan can be implemented. Dr. Hester responded that they will have to ensure that it all goes together, being carefully constructed so there are not barriers. Mr. Legardy expressed that he is extremely pleased with the plan that has been presented and it appears to rectify the IB Program which is exciting to him. Dr. Norrell noted that there is just an additional \$1,000.00 cost to IB to proceed. Through articulation with the feeder schools, Dr. Norrell stated that their focus will be shared along with what the future focus will be so that the feeder schools can align themselves in the same direction. Mr. Legardy reiterated that this is a good path forward and he is glad that the IB Programme is salvageable and will not risk being canceled.

New Business

Policy Updates

This item was tabled and will be reviewed at a future date.

Instructional Resource for Introduction to Education

Dr. Hester requested approval for the purchase of an instructional resource for the Introduction to Education Course for the 2025-26 school year. Introduction to Education is offered for dual credit with Lewis University. The text being recommended is also being used by the students at Lewis University. The committee approved the administration's request and this item will be on the June 17, 2025 board agenda for approval.

Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 10:49 a.m.

Foundation Districts High School Course Update

Foundation Districts High School Course Update

August 28, 2025



ISBE Graduation Requirements, All Disciplines

Requirement	Description of Requirement	Entering 9th Grade in				
		SY 2016-2022	SY 2022-2023	SY 2023-2024	SY 2024-2025 thru 2027-2028	SY 2028-2029 (and beyond)
Language Arts	4 years: 1 year must include a writing-intensive English course.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Writing-Intensive	2 years: 1 year must be in an English course; 1 year can be embedded as part of any course offered. Can be counted toward the fulfillment of other graduation requirements.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mathematics	3 years: Algebra I or integrated equivalent (1 year); nonspecified content (1 year); Advanced Placement (AP) computer science is eligible.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Computer Literacy	One year of a course that includes intensive instruction in computer literacy, which may be English, social science, or any other subject and which may be counted toward the fulfillment of other graduation requirements. (PA 101-0654)		✓	✓	✓	✓
Science	2 years: no content specified. 2 years of laboratory science: no content specified.*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Social Science	2 years: Must include 1 year of U.S. History or a combination of U.S. History and American government; 1 semester of civics.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
IL/US Constitution	American patriotism, principles of representative government, and proper use and display of the flag (105 ILCS 5/27-3 and 27-4). Passing score on examination required for high school graduation.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓



Illinois School Code Section 27-22.10

(105 ILCS 5/27-22.10)

Sec. 27-22.10. Course credit for high school diploma.

(a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Code, the school board of a school district that maintains any of grades 9 through 12 is authorized to adopt a policy under which a student enrolled in grade 7 or 8 who is enrolled in the unit school district or would be enrolled in the high school district upon completion of elementary school, whichever is applicable, may enroll in a course required under Section 27-22 of this Code, provided that the course is offered by the high school that the student would attend, and (i) the student participates in the course at the location of the high school, and the elementary student's enrollment in the course would not prevent a high school student from being able to enroll, or (ii) the student participates in the course where the student attends school as long as the course is taught by a teacher who holds a professional educator license issued under Article 21B of this Code and endorsed for the grade level and content area of the course.



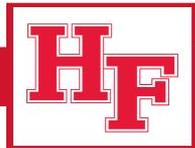
Current Number of 7th & 8th Grade Students at HF

Integrated Math I	9 students (Hart)
Integrated Math II	1 student (Parker)
Algebra 2/Trig	1 student (Parker)
French I	35 students (Hart) 8 students (Parker) = 43 TOTAL
Mandarin I	14 students (Hart) 9 students (Parker) =23 TOTAL



Next Steps:

- Finalize the Algebra Exam with Math Department Lead
- Finalize room reservations and email students the locations for Algebra Proficiency Review Session (September 4) & Algebra Proficiency Test Day (September 9)
- Email families resources in IXL for extra practice and expectations for communicating results.
 - P = Pass
 - T = Try again





Summative Designation Scores Report

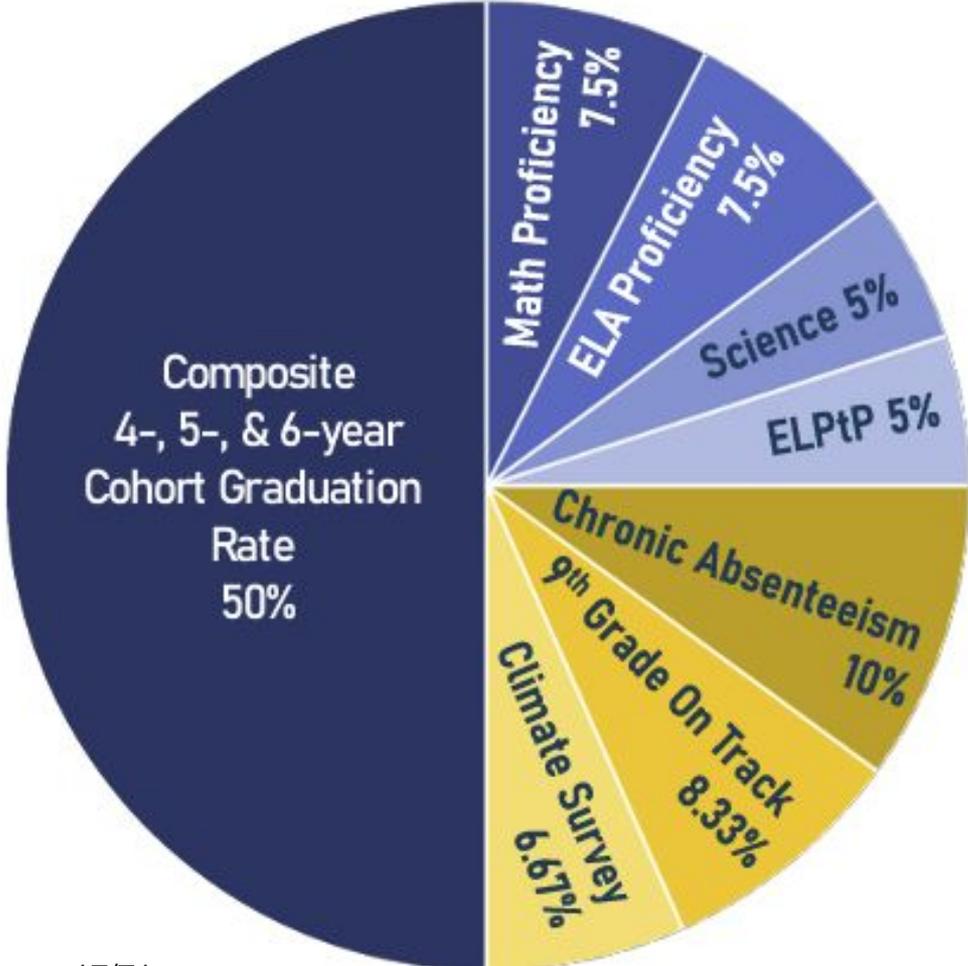
Summative Designation Presentation SY 2024



The Five Annual Summative Designations

<p>Exemplary</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall performance in the top 10% of all schools Must have no targeted student groups at or below the “all students” group of the lowest-performing 5% of schools High schools must have a graduation rate higher than 67% 						
<p>Commendable</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall performance not in the top 10% of all schools Must have no targeted student groups at or below the “all students” group of the lowest-performing 5% of schools High schools must have a graduation rate higher than 67% 						
<p>Targeted Support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One or more student groups performing at or below the “all students” group of the lowest performing 5 percent of schools; groups must have at least 20 students in at least five of eight indicators, one of which must be non-academic <table border="0" data-bbox="575 442 1410 687"> <tr> <td data-bbox="575 442 1043 464">STUDENT GROUPS</td> <td data-bbox="1043 442 1410 464">Programs</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="575 464 1043 485">Demographics</td> <td data-bbox="1043 464 1410 485"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="575 485 1043 687"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> American Indian or Alaska Native Asian Black or African American Hispanic or Latino Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander Two or More Races White </td> <td data-bbox="1043 485 1410 687"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children with disabilities Economically disadvantaged students English Learners Former English Learners </td> </tr> </table> <p>A Targeted Support designation initiates targeted school improvement status and the school begins a four-year cycle of school improvement.</p>	STUDENT GROUPS	Programs	Demographics		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> American Indian or Alaska Native Asian Black or African American Hispanic or Latino Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander Two or More Races White 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children with disabilities Economically disadvantaged students English Learners Former English Learners
STUDENT GROUPS	Programs						
Demographics							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> American Indian or Alaska Native Asian Black or African American Hispanic or Latino Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander Two or More Races White 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children with disabilities Economically disadvantaged students English Learners Former English Learners 						
<p>Comprehensive Support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall performance in the bottom 5 percent of Title I-eligible schools statewide AND All high schools with a graduation rate below 67 percent AND All schools that have completed a full four-year Targeted Support school improvement cycle, where the performance of one or more of the originally Targeted student groups remains at or below the level of the “all students” group in the lowest-performing 5 percent of Title I eligible schools at the end of the cycle <p>A Comprehensive Support designation initiates comprehensive school improvement status and the school begins a four-year cycle of school improvement.</p>						
<p>Intensive Support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A school that has completed a full four-year Comprehensive Support school improvement cycle, but whose performance remains in the lowest-performing 5 percent Title I eligible schools in Illinois or is a high school that has a graduation rate of less than 67 percent or less at the end of the four-year improvement cycle. <p>An Intensive Support designation initiates intensive school improvement status and the school is subject to more rigorous state-determined action.</p>						

ESSA Framework: Current High School Indicators & Weights



Academic Indicator Definitions

Indicator	How it is defined	% Weight
ELA Proficiency	SAT - Evidence Based Reading and Writing Score (EBRW) of 540 or higher <i>*Changing to ACT for the new school year</i>	7.5%
Math Proficiency	SAT - Math Score (EBRW) of 540 or higher <i>*Changing to ACT for the new school year</i>	7.5%
Science Proficiency	Illinois Science Assessment (ISA)	5.0%
English Learner Progress to Proficiency (EL PTP)	ACCESS Assessment - Student's growth formula for improvement in English Language Development	5.0%
Graduation Rate	4th year cohort - Graduation Rate 5th year cohort - Graduation Rate 6th year cohort - Graduation Rate	4th year - 30% 5th year - 15% 6th year - 5% (50% in total)



School Quality Indicator Definitions

Indicator	How it is defined	% Weight
Chronic Absenteeism	The percentage of students who miss more than 10% of the school year (both excused and unexcused absences)	10%
Climate Survey	The percentage of students who participate on the 5 Essentials Survey	6.67%
Freshmen on Track Rate	The percentage of 9th graders with no more than 1 semester of an “F” earned for a core content course (language arts, math, science and social studies)	8.33%



Subgroups & Indicators: Learning More

- The ESSA Framework is an equity-based accountability system.
- This means that for schools that have subgroup populations, those school-specific populations are given indicator score reports in addition to the overall school performance score.
- **Subgroup performance matters.** In order to earn a commendable rating, there cannot be any subgroup performing at or below the lowest 5% of schools in the state.
- If this is the case, no matter how well the school performs overall, it will be designated as “targeted” for gaps in performance among subgroups.



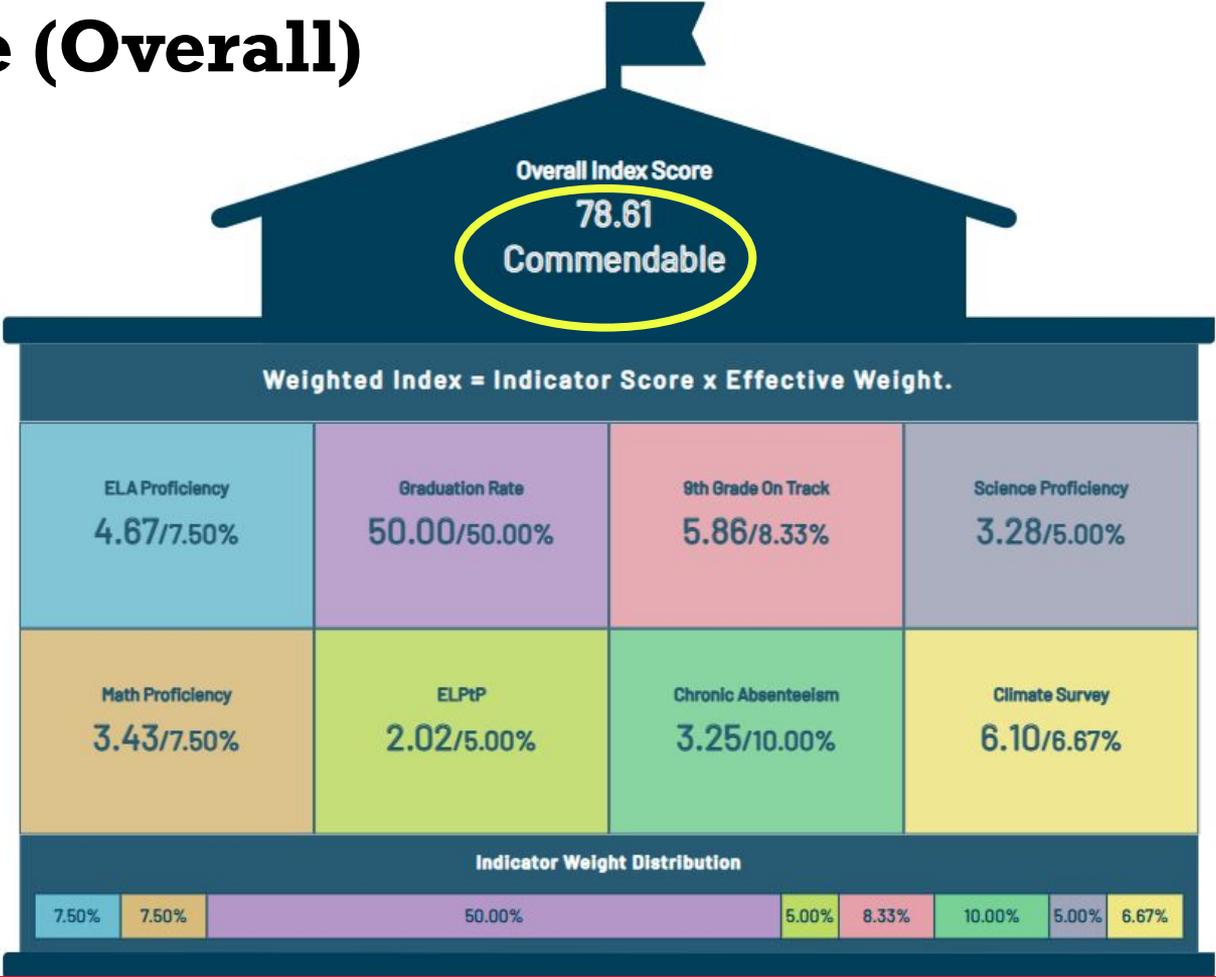
Subgroups at Homewood-Flossmoor High School

- A subgroup is defined for a school building when there are **at least 20 students with data** in at least five of eight indicators, one of which must be non-academic.

Student Groups (demographics)	Programs
Black or African American	CWD - Children with disabilities (This also includes students with 504s)
Hispanic or Latino	Economically disadvantaged students
Two or more races	Former English Learners
White	



HF's House (Overall)



HF's House Broken Down by Subgroup

Group	Data Type	ELA Proficiency* <small>(Nominal Weight: 7.5%)</small>	Math Proficiency* <small>(Nominal Weight: 7.5%)</small>	Science Proficiency* <small>(Nominal Weight: 5%)</small>	Composite GraduationRate <small>(Nominal Weight: 50%)</small>	9th Grade on Track <small>(Nominal Weight: 8.33%)</small>	EL Progress to Proficiency <small>(Nominal Weight: 5%)</small>	Chronic Absenteeism <small>(Nominal Weight: 10%)</small>	Climate Survey <small>(Nominal Weight: 6.67%)</small>	Summative Score
ALL	Raw Calculation	26.37	17.99	38.05	95.66	90.11	40.42	33.77	91.15	78.61
ALL	Indicator Score	62.30	45.72	65.60	100.00	70.34	40.42	32.45	91.44	78.61
ALL	Weighted Index	4.67	3.43	3.28	50.00	5.86	2.02	3.25	6.10	78.61
ALL	Effective Weight	7.50	7.50	5.00	50.00	8.33	5.00	10.00	6.67	78.61
BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERIC	Raw Calculation	18.82	11.63	35.01	95.74	89.00		34.94	91.03	83.98
BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERIC	Indicator Score	76.82	52.29	100.00	100.00	67.03		30.12	91.18	83.98
BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERIC	Weighted Index	6.17	4.20	5.36	53.57	5.58		3.01	6.08	83.98
BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERIC	Effective Weight	8.04	8.04	5.36	53.57	8.33		10.00	6.67	83.98
CWD	Raw Calculation	11.36	3.41	12.68	95.18	97.73		42.00	84.20	73.75
CWD	Indicator Score	38.00	12.39	31.64	100.00	93.20		16.00	75.99	73.75
CWD	Weighted Index	3.05	1.00	1.69	53.57	7.76		1.60	5.07	73.75
CWD	Effective Weight	8.04	8.04	5.36	53.57	8.33		10.00	6.67	73.75
FORMER EL	Raw Calculation	40.00	20.00	46.32		90.91		25.49	96.04	77.26
FORMER EL	Indicator Score	100.00	58.25	80.65		72.75		49.02	100.00	77.26
FORMER EL	Weighted Index	28.13	16.38	15.12		6.06		4.90	6.67	77.26
FORMER EL	Effective Weight	28.13	28.13	18.75		8.33		10.00	6.67	77.26
HISPANIC OR LATINO	Raw Calculation	28.99	19.83	22.33	94.34	86.36	43.29	34.56	90.77	80.94
HISPANIC OR LATINO	Indicator Score	94.27	70.67	47.05	100.00	59.11	43.29	30.88	90.60	80.94
HISPANIC OR LATINO	Weighted Index	7.07	5.30	2.35	50.00	4.92	2.16	3.09	6.04	80.94



HF's House Broken Down by Subgroup

Group	Data Type	ELA Proficiency* <small>(Nominal Weight: 7.5%)</small>	Math Proficiency* <small>(Nominal Weight: 7.5%)</small>	Science Proficiency* <small>(Nominal Weight: 5%)</small>	Composite GraduationRate <small>(Nominal Weight: 50%)</small>	9th Grade on Track <small>(Nominal Weight: 8.33%)</small>	EL Progress to Proficiency <small>(Nominal Weight: 5%)</small>	Chronic Absenteeism <small>(Nominal Weight: 10%)</small>	Climate Survey <small>(Nominal Weight: 6.67%)</small>	Summative Score
HISPANIC OR LATINO	Effective Weight	7.50	7.50	5.00	50.00	8.33	5.00	10.00	6.67	80.94
LOW INCOME	Raw Calculation	15.79	5.26	27.40		87.37		48.26	90.06	45.06
LOW INCOME	Indicator Score	56.85	20.49	63.20		62.13		3.49	89.02	45.06
LOW INCOME	Weighted Index	15.99	5.76	11.85		5.18		0.35	5.94	45.06
LOW INCOME	Effective Weight	28.13	28.13	18.75		8.33		10.00	6.67	45.06
TWO OR MORE RACES	Raw Calculation	46.43	35.71	65.34	96.95	100.00		34.26	90.48	91.43
TWO OR MORE RACES	Indicator Score	100.00	86.96	100.00	100.00	100.00		31.48	89.95	91.43
TWO OR MORE RACES	Weighted Index	8.04	6.99	5.36	53.57	8.33		3.15	6.00	91.43
TWO OR MORE RACES	Effective Weight	8.04	8.04	5.36	53.57	8.33		10.00	6.67	91.43
WHITE	Raw Calculation	57.95	44.32	56.77	95.15	96.34		26.50	93.15	92.10
WHITE	Indicator Score	100.00	93.38	83.52	100.00	89.04		47.01	95.90	92.10
WHITE	Weighted Index	8.04	7.50	4.47	53.57	7.42		4.70	6.40	92.10
WHITE	Effective Weight	8.04	8.04	5.36	53.57	8.33		10.00	6.67	92.10



Important Stories

- Without having 20+ students identified as economically disadvantaged in the graduating class of 2024, there is no graduation rate for this subgroup.
- Without graduation rate, the indicator weights shift. The proficiency scores for ELA and Math become 28.13% of this subgroup's data story. Science proficiency becomes 18.75%.
- This also happens with our Former EL subgroup. However, because their proficiency rates as raw scores are high, they are not as vulnerable a population.



What Can We Learn from This?

- Data reporting with accuracy is incredibly important for our overall designation.
- Learning more about the chronic absenteeism rate and how we can mitigate attendance challenges will be critical in the next coming months.
- Having a laser focus on who the students are within subgroups for SY 25-26 will help us better target what is needed.





Catalyst for Educational Change (CEC) Proposal



MEMO

To: Dr. Jennifer Norrell, Superintendent for Homewood-Flossmoor 233
From: Dr. Lisa Dallacqua, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction & Professional Learning
Date: August 28th, 2025
Subject: Recommendation to Approve Contract with Catalyst for Educational Change

Background: Catalyst for Educational Change provides services for school districts in a variety of educational areas. This proposal contains contractual support through both a comprehensive needs assessment and professional learning series in the following areas:

- Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Needs Assessment: Data Review, Self-Assessment, Focus Groups, Report Writing and Delivery of Findings
- Assessment Literacy Professional Development for Department Leads and Collaborative Team Leads
- Rubric Design Professional Development for Department Leads and Collaborative Team Leads
- Asynchronous Assessment Literacy Course for All Staff

The focus groups and professional learning series will be conducted in person with our teachers and administrators over the course of the school year. The pacing of learning will reflect our place in the Collaborative Team Planning Calendar in order to provide timely support for teachers and administrators during the first year of Collaborative Team implementation.

Total Cost for services: [\\$32,650.00](#), paid for through local funds.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Board of Education of Homewood-Flossmoor Community High School District approve the contract with Catalyst for Educational Change in the amount of \$32,650.00.

Please let me know if you would like to discuss this recommendation further or need additional details.



Homewood-Flossmoor HS

Homewood-Flossmoor Community High School

Flossmoor, IL 60422

Lisa Dallacqua

lisa.dallacqua@hf233.org

708-335-5330

Reference: 20250818-133710700

Quote created: August 18, 2025

Quote expires: November 16, 2025

Quote created by: Elisa Brente

Managing Director

elisa.brente@cecweb.org

Comments from Elisa Brente

This is an exciting opportunity for us to collaborate and achieve great results together. Please note that this will serve as our service agreement. If you have any questions or require further clarification, feel free to reach out. Thank you for your trust in us. We look forward to working together!

Best regards,

Products & Services

Item & Description	Quantity	Unit Price	Total
MTSS Needs Assessment-Readiness This virtual meeting with key stakeholders is to discuss the purpose and anticipated outcomes of the needs assessment process. The CEC consultants will review the needs assessment process, ensure clarity around the next steps, and begin pre-preparedness steps for the work.	1	\$1,450.00	\$1,450.00
MTSS Needs Assessment-Self-Assessment The CEC consultant will work with district contact to plan for distribution of the self-assessment to stakeholders. CEC will then review the findings as data toward the final report.	1	\$1,750.00	\$1,750.00

Item & Description	Quantity	Unit Price	Total
<p>MTSS Needs Assessment- Focus Groups</p> <p>These 1-hour virtual focus groups are designed to engage a range of key stakeholder groups to provide a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the needs assessment focus. Stakeholder groups may include, but are not limited to, special education teachers, general education teachers, paraprofessionals, LEAs/coordinators, district special education staff, district leaders, parents, and students (if desired). The exact number of focus groups will be determined in collaboration with the client to ensure all relevant perspectives are included. A minimum of 10 sessions will be conducted, facilitated by two experienced CEC consultants, ensuring thorough and impactful data collection.</p>	1	\$8,750.00	\$8,750.00
<p>MTSS Needs Assessment: Data Review</p> <p>The support includes one consultant day for an in-depth review of policies, processes, and curriculum implementation.</p>	1	\$3,500.00	\$3,500.00
<p>MTSS Needs Assessment-Report Writing</p> <p>This dedicated support empowers the CEC consulting team to conduct comprehensive analysis and develop a strategic final report that evaluates organizational strengths, identifies opportunities, and provides actionable recommendations for future strategic initiatives.</p>	1	\$3,500.00	\$3,500.00
<p>MTSS Needs Assessment-Delivery of Findings</p> <p>The CEC Consultant will lead a virtual meeting with key stakeholders to facilitate an open, in-depth discussion of the needs assessment findings and recommendations. This session will provide a platform for transparent dialogue, ensuring all perspectives are considered in shaping the next steps forward.</p>	1	\$1,750.00	\$1,750.00
<p>Assessment Literacy</p> <p>3 half days to train Collaborative Team Leads and Department Leads</p>	3	\$1,750.00	\$5,250.00
<p>Asynchronous Assessment Literacy Course</p> <p>Asynchronous Assessment Literacy Course for the district to use with educators. This course will be available for the SY 25/26.</p>	1	\$1,450.00	\$1,450.00
<p>Rubric Design Course</p> <p>3 half days to work with CTLs and the DLs.</p>	3	\$1,750.00	\$5,250.00
One-time subtotal			\$32,650.00
Total		\$32,650.00	

Purchase terms

Service Agreement Summary

The District agrees to compensate CEC for services outlined in the Quote of Services, plus any mutually approved expenses and materials. CEC will invoice monthly; payment is due within 30 days, in accordance with the Illinois Prompt Payment Act. Both parties will provide appropriate staff to support fulfillment of services.

This Agreement is valid upon signature through June 30. Services begin only after execution of this Agreement. If required, the District must provide a Purchase Order, to be sent to info@cecweb.org.

Partnership Flexibility

CEC offers flexibility to support evolving district needs:

- **Additional Services:** Subject to fee adjustments.
- **Schedule Adjustments:** No fee change.
- **Service Topic Changes:** No fee change.
- **Expertise Adaptation:** Additional specialists provided as needed, no fee change.

Cancellations & Termination

Both parties agree to provide at least 72 hours' notice for cancellations. Late cancellations by the District (within 72 hours) will incur full charges per the Quote of Services. This Agreement may be terminated by either party via written notice. The District is responsible for payment of services rendered up to the termination date.

Materials & Content

The District must supply any required materials and equipment one week in advance. Materials may only be reproduced for the specified sessions. All content is copyrighted by Catalyst for Educational Change and may not be reused or distributed without prior written consent.

Prepaid Hours

Prepaid hours are non-refundable and must be used within the agreed term. CEC will collaborate with the District to schedule and optimize use of these hours.

Signature

Choose a profile to start the e-signature process.

Lisa Dallacqua

lisa.dallacqua@hf233.org

[sig|req|signer1]

Questions? Contact me



Elisa Brente
Managing Director
elisa.brente@cecweb.org

Catalyst for Educational Change
205 N. Michigan Ave
Suite 801
Chicago, IL 60601

New Leaders Proposal



MEMO

To: Dr. Jennifer Norrell, Superintendent for Homewood-Flossmoor 233
From: Dr. Lisa Dallacqua, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction & Professional Learning
Date: August 28th, 2025
Subject: Recommendation to Approve Contract with New Leaders

Background: New Leaders provides services for school districts in the area of school leadership. This includes, but is not limited to, school leadership at both the building and district office level. This proposal contains contractual support through school leadership coaching and mentoring for administrators at both the district office and school-based level.

New Leaders offers evidence-based leadership counsel, grounding their support in best practices for leveraging leadership to increase student achievement, to focus school leaders on data-driven results and sustained student outcomes. Through their Transformational Leadership Framework (TLF), school leaders receive actionable coaching and support in the categories of:

- Learning and Teaching
- School Culture
- Talent Management
- Planning and Operations
- Personal Leadership

This [video clip](#) provides testimonies of New Leaders who have experienced the benefits of the professional development services.

Total Cost for services: \$34,300.00, paid for through local funds.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Board of Education of Homewood-Flossmoor Community High School District approve the contract with New Leaders in the amount of \$34,300.

Please let me know if you would like to discuss this recommendation further or need additional details.

New Leaders Proposal for Homewood- Flossmoor Community High School District

Championing Educational
Excellence

August 15, 2025

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Executive Summary

Transformational Leadership Pathway in Homewood-Flossmoor High School District

New Leaders is pleased to propose a partnership with Homewood-Flossmoor High School District to provide our Transformational Leadership Pathway—Improving Outcomes through Observation and Coaching—to a cohort of 4 senior leaders for a six-month engagement.

Our leadership development enhances proven leadership skills that drive school improvement. We combine cohort-based learning with one-on-one coaching to ensure your leaders receive expert guidance and actionable feedback. By pathway completion, your leaders will develop leadership skills to deepen their impact and demonstrate measurable results.

IMPROVING OUTCOMES THROUGH OBSERVATION AND COACHING (SCHOOL LEADERS)

Impact & Accountability

As New Leaders works alongside Homewood-Flossmoor to provide our Transformational Leadership Pathway services, we expect to see changes in leadership practices that can improve teaching and learning outcomes. To that end, we will develop a Learning and Impact data report at the end of the engagement that describes metrics our partners have found most beneficial, including:

- The degree to which participants were engaged and satisfied with the learning experience;
- Self-reported and demonstrated changes in practice against targeted leadership skills; and
- Self-reported outcomes at the system, school, and student level.

At the end of the program year, New Leaders will provide a comprehensive Learning and Impact data report, demonstrating progress against key performance indicators and metrics. This report will be discussed during a partner impact meeting with senior district leaders.

Proposed Services

Transformational Leadership Pathway

Ensure every leader in your system can be a change agent. Our Transformational Leadership Pathways enable school leaders to develop and enhance proven leadership skills that drive school improvement.

DEVELOP leaders who know how to drive meaningful change

PRIORITIZE areas of highest-need and impact in schools

BUILD collective action to bring best practices to scale

DELIVER measurable results to accelerate student learning

Improving Outcomes through Observation and Coaching

Working in tandem, observation and coaching are two powerful tools that strengthen teacher practice and deepen student learning. Observation offers a window into day-to-day instruction, and coaching illuminates how teachers can overcome challenges, shift mindsets, and improve their practice to the benefit of all students. This transformational leadership pathway prepares leaders to be highly effective coaches. Participants learn how to:

- Forge collaborative coaching relationships, rooted in trust, that push past compliance to drive meaningful change
- Unpack what to look for in classrooms, how to prioritize coaching opportunities, why effective feedback matters, and how to coach with an equity lens
- Lead coaching conversations and gain strategies to navigate resistance and track growth over time

Examine and leverage the impact of personal leadership to advance instructional excellence. Actionable and timely observation and coaching provide teachers with the support they need to bring best practices to scale in their classrooms—and accelerate student learning.

The Power of School Leaders

At New Leaders, we believe school leadership matters. In fact, we were founded on that very principle. We were the first organization in the country to concentrate exclusively on the professional development of school leaders. Here's why.

Research from the Wallace Foundation shows that a strong, equity-focused school leader accounts for 25 percent of a school's impact on student learning. A high-quality teacher influences 20-30 students; a strong principal, upwards of 500 students on average. The most effective principals attract and develop great teachers too. They create the culture and working conditions that keep great teachers in the field.

Similar research also finds that assistant principals are uniquely positioned to drive learning gains. Why? Their interactions with students, teachers, and families put them on the ground, every day, working to improve learning and teaching outcomes. In fact, research shows that when assistant principals received PD on instructional leadership practices, student achievement in their schools rose.

Effective teacher leadership combined with strong instructional leadership from the principal is also linked to improved student achievement outcomes in ELA and math. Those gains are even more significant when teacher leaders are involved in schoolwide decision-making processes—which have been shown to lead to higher teacher motivation, retention, and overall job satisfaction.

We know school leadership can be a lonely place. Many leaders report leaving the field due to a lack of support or access to ongoing professional development. Investing in leadership development for a cohort of your leaders is an easy and impactful way to reverse that trend.

Transformational Leadership Pathway Scope

Our job-embedded approach combines cohort-based learning with one-on-one coaching to grow your leaders. Over the course of six months, leaders receive expert guidance and actionable feedback from our New Leaders coaches, all former school and district leaders. Each pathway includes:

- Interactive professional learning communities to build shared language and co-create solutions
- Authentic practice via job-embedded exercises to demonstrate proficiency with new skills
- Personalized coaching to develop a leader’s capacity to reflect, analyze, and problem solve independently

All of our pathways and leadership development programming are grounded in our Transformational Leadership Framework™ (TLF™) which identifies five evidence-based domains and leadership actions that are central to driving and sustaining district improvement.

Our Pathway Program Components

Program Orientation: To kick off our engagement and ensure the best participant experience, our asynchronous program orientation will introduce participants to New Leaders, outline the program components and expectations, and define roles and responsibilities. The orientation also explores our online platform where participants can access important resources throughout the engagement.

Communities of Practice: Four monthly community of practice sessions engage participants in cohort-based professional development to build and enhance effective data-driven leadership practices. Working collaboratively, each four-hour virtual session provides participants with:

- Actionable and practical learning, including opportunities to address school-based challenges
- Tools, resources, and strategies to improve student achievement
- Planning strategies to distribute and leverage leadership across teams
- Continuous professional learning and mentoring from peers

These sessions will strengthen the collective capacity of participants to use data to diagnose and solve school-based challenges that accelerate or impede learning in ELA and math. For a full list of the four community of practice sessions, see the Scope and Sequence in the Appendix.

One-on-One Coaching: Over the six-month engagement, each participant works towards a specific coaching goal to enhance leadership practices. The New Leaders coach will create a customized coaching experience that is personalized to each participant’s unique context, areas of strength, and areas for growth. Key coaching components include:

- **Introductory Meeting and Goal Setting:** Based on an initial self-assessment completed by the participant prior to this conversation, the 90-minute introductory meeting sets the foundation. The New Leaders coach and participant discuss high priority areas of focus. Together, they begin co-constructing a

SMARTER coaching goal and action plan, aligned to the priority area of focus, that will be tracked and reported on over the course of the engagement. SMARTER goals are: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, timely, and able to be evaluated and revised.

- **One-on-One Coaching Sessions:** Three 60-minute leadership coaching sessions are scheduled over the six-month engagement. All sessions are virtual. During each session, the New Leaders coach uses a cycle of inquiry and data to drive deep thinking, shift practice, and build the capacity of participants to reflect, analyze, and problem solve independently. Together, they monitor progress toward the goal and course-correct the action plan, as needed.
- **Closing Meeting:** The final 90-minute closing meeting requires each participant to reflect and share progress toward the SMARTER coaching goal and then build a plan that sustains the integration of new learning and practices moving forward. The plan must cite concrete action steps to drive systemic decision-making and fuel continuous improvement.

Reflective Learning Exercise: To calibrate their lens to effective data practices, participants complete four reflective learning exercises. These job-embedded tasks allow participants to drive impact by translating theory into practice at their schools and demonstrate proficiency with their newly acquired skills. For this pathway, the reflective learning exercises focus on facilitating effective data meetings and executing against the SMARTER coaching goal (detailed above).

Participant Surveys: Each participant completes surveys to capture insights and reflections on their participant experience as well as leadership growth, progress to goals, and impact of coaching. Data from these surveys is aggregated and included in progress reports and our comprehensive Learning and Impact Report at the end of the engagement.

Sample Pathway Implementation Calendar

Component	Location	Total Sessions	Session Length	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6
Program Orientation	Asynchronous	1	30 minutes	•					
Communities of Practice	Virtual	4	4 hours		•	•	•	•	•
One-on-One Coaching	Virtual	5	6	•	•		•		•
Reflective Learning Exercises	Virtual	4	Up to 2 hours	•	•			•	•

Topical Scope and Sequence

Orientation (Asynchronous)	<p>Session Topics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to New Leaders • Program expectations and components • Clarity in roles and responsibilities, New Leaders policies • Technology platform: The Learning Hub
Introductory Meeting	<p>Session Topics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster strong and trusting relationships between Program Director and participants receiving coaching Learn about the participant’s district context • Explore the participant’s personal practice - strengths and growth areas using the self-assessment tool • Describe the coaching process and establish norms for working together
BoP: 360/Coaching Goal	
<p>Workshop 1: The Power of Personal Leadership to Advance Educational Excellence</p>	
<p>Overview: Tap into the power of personal leadership skills and build a school culture in which all students and adults excel.</p>	
Community of Practice	<p>Session Topics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal Leadership • Facilitating necessary conversations • Leadership actions that educational excellence
Coaching Conversation	
<p>Workshop 2: How to Build Trust and Lay the Foundations for Effective Coaching</p>	
<p>Overview: Discover how to build powerful and trusting coaching relationship to drive meaningful change and advance more equitable outcomes</p>	

<p>Community of Practice</p>	<p>Session Topics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building trust • Knowing self as a coach • Understanding the professional capacity of coachees • Leveraging relationships for coaching
<p>Coaching Conversation</p>	
<p>Workshop 3: How to Coach Teachers and Improve Learning Outcomes</p> <p>Overview: Establish equitable systems and structures to effectively coach teachers and deepen their capacity to advance student achievement.</p>	
<p>Community of Practice</p>	<p>Session Topics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shifting mindsets • Coaching Cycles • Observation and coaching for educational excellence • Targeted and actionable feedback
<p>Coaching Conversation</p>	
<p>Workshop 4: Instructional Coaching: The Art of a Coaching Conversation</p> <p>Overview: Uncover the art of the coaching conversation and how to drive shifts in teacher practice that yield more equitable student learning outcomes.</p>	
<p>Community of Practice</p>	<p>Session Topics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaching cycles • Providing meaningful feedback • Coaching plans
<p>EoP: 360/Coaching Goal</p>	
<p>Closing Conversation</p>	<p>Session Topics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress to goals • Sustaining the work

What Makes PD Effective—and Lasting

Results-driven leadership development is essential to retaining your best leaders and giving them the working conditions in which they thrive—and their teachers and students too. Your investment sends a message that your leaders are valued, offering them professional learning pathways that show them how to achieve their goals. This kind of real-time support can transform student achievement gains.

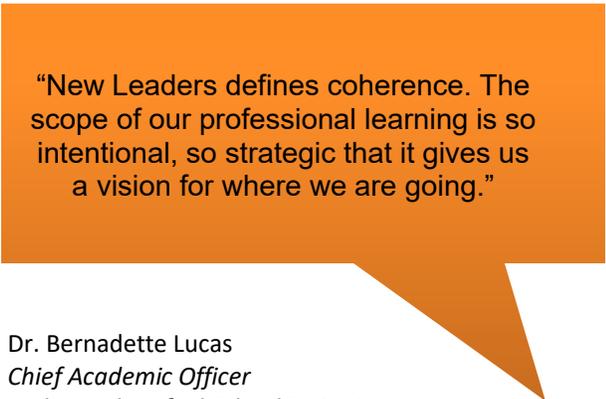
At New Leaders, we equip leaders to be powerful and positive forces for change. Here are four proven practices we use that drive high-impact—and sustainable—professional growth.

Continuous, job-embedded PD. When school leaders are able to apply what they’ve learned through incremental and targeted practice, it becomes an embedded part of their daily work. Individualized coaching allows leaders to reflect, consider more perspectives, and move toward solutions faster.

Community of learners. Cohort-based learning promotes collaborative problem solving. Communities of practice offer trusted spaces to explore bold ideas and strategies with fellow leaders who understand the obstacles. These collaborative professional networks fuel continuous improvement.

High-quality feedback. Adult learning is dynamic, and the feedback your leaders receive needs to be rooted in evidence that illuminates the gap between their practice and transformational leadership skill being learned. With this kind of objective guidance, leaders can quickly take action to improve.

Opportunities for self-reflection. Self-awareness, sometimes called a hidden superpower, is essential for leaders to cultivate. It allows leaders to do the inner work and let go of limiting actions or beliefs. In return, their newly acquired leadership practices can remove barriers and drive better outcomes.



“New Leaders defines coherence. The scope of our professional learning is so intentional, so strategic that it gives us a vision for where we are going.”

Dr. Bernadette Lucas
Chief Academic Officer
Inglewood Unified School District

Our Research and Program Design

Our Evidence Base

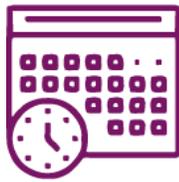
We lead the field with evidence of impact.

Our leaders drive quantifiable outcomes in learning, teaching, and educational excellence and get results where it matters most: in schools, for students. According to the RAND Corporation, **New Leaders has the strongest evidence base of any education leadership program in the country.**

Multiple independent evaluations have proven that in schools led by a New Leaders principal:



Students perform better in reading and math



Students gain additional months of learning



Students have better attendance rates



And principals themselves stay in their roles longer

We drive sustainable results.

Because the leaders we develop stay in their roles longer, they attract and retain high-quality teachers. This helps ensure that school improvement gains endure, long after our partnership.

Research shows that a strong school leader accounts for about 25% of a school’s impact on student learning. Research also shows that there are better school and student outcomes, especially for teachers and children of color, when a principal of color is at the helm.

We know effective leadership.

Our work is rooted in five evidence-based leadership domains proven to drive school improvement and accelerate student success. These domains, as outlined in our Transformational Leadership Framework™, identify highly effective leadership actions and guide our approach to professional learning.



Evaluating our Impact

As New Leaders works alongside Homewood-Flossmoor High School District to provide our Transformational Leadership Pathway services to your leadership team, we expect to see changes in leadership practices that can improve teaching and learning outcomes.

We know from experience that transformational change takes time; therefore, when looking to understand impact—either growth of a leader’s practice or improvement of student performance on standardized assessment measure—it is essential to consider the right cadence, methods and expectations that account for local context.

To that end we develop learning and impact data reports that describe metrics our partners have found most beneficial, including:

- The degree to which participants were engaged and satisfied with the learning experience;
- Self-reported and demonstrated changes in practice against select leadership skills; and
- Self-reported outcomes at the system, school, and student level.

At the end of the engagement, New Leaders will prepare a comprehensive Homewood-Flossmoor Learning and Impact report, that outlines the key performance indicators and metrics for our engagement. Reporting will be discussed during a closing partner impact meeting.

Evaluation Measures

Participant Engagement and Satisfaction

- % of participants planning leadership actions and implementing commitments
- % of participants recommending the learning experience to colleagues

Participant Learning

- Knowledge and skills that have been acquired or enhanced
- Confidence in core leadership actions has improved

Participant Change in Practice

- Capacity to plan and implement knowledge, leadership skills, and actions to see results
- Demonstrated evidence of impact related to pathway leadership skills and coaching goal

Participant Outcomes

- Participant reported improvement in student outcomes as a result of the engagement

Partner Commitments

To facilitate our work together, New Leaders requests that Homewood-Flossmoor commit to supporting program participants and the overall program delivery in the following ways.

Participant Selection

Encourage full participation, including participant accountability toward goal setting, attendance at community of practice and coaching sessions, and execution of action items identified in coaching

Scheduling

Coordinate with New Leaders to identify a mutually acceptable implementation calendar prior to the launch of services, including participant availability to participate in one-on-one coaching sessions.

Logistics

Coordinate logistics for all in-person sessions, including the meeting space, technology, catering, and/or other set-up needs.

Access to Data

Make certain participant and district data available to New Leaders for programmatic purposes as well as to support the impact and evaluation of the Transformational Leadership Pathway services.

Check-Ins

Plan for district leadership to make themselves available to engage in monthly check-ins and a formal Partner Impact meeting over the course of the six-month engagement to ensure overall impact, alignment and satisfaction.

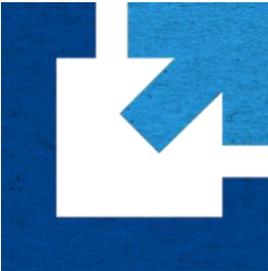
Investment

The table below provides the cost summary:

Transformational Leadership Pathway	Cost
Improving Outcomes through Observation & Coaching <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4 virtual workshops• 5 coaching sessions (6 hours total) for each program participant	\$34,300
Total	\$34,300

At New Leaders, we believe education leaders, in partnership with the communities they serve, have an unparalleled impact on the academic success and well-being of their students.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve your school leaders and their communities.



LEADERSHIP CHANGES EVERYTHING

Discover U Program Proposal (You Matter 2)



MEMO

To: Dr. Jennifer Norrell, Superintendent for Homewood-Flossmoor 233
From: Dr. Lisa Dallacqua, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction & Professional Learning
Date: August 28th, 2025
Subject: Recommendation to Approve Contract with You Matter 2

Background: You Matter 2 (YM2) is a community-rooted nonprofit dedicated to empowering high school students, particularly those from underserved backgrounds, through mentorship, leadership development, and experiential learning. Their flagship program, *Discover U*, provides structured opportunities for students to build college, career, and life readiness skills. Through a blend of workshops, internships, and enrichment programs, YM2 helps students gain confidence, professional exposure, and practical skills that prepare them for post-secondary success. A central feature of *Discover U* is its integration of Education Design Lab's *Durable Skills Micro-Credentials*, which certify student achievement in competencies like collaboration, oral communication, resilience, and critical thinking.

YM2's programs address a critical need: ensuring students leave high school not only with academic knowledge but also with the skills, networks, and confidence to thrive in college, careers, and life. Many students report that participation in YM2 programs has been their first exposure to college campuses, structured professional experiences, and mentorship. Through interactive learning, performance-based assessments, and real-world applications such as mock interviews, internships, and goal-setting plans, *Discover U* provides students with tangible proof of readiness. These verifiable digital credentials strengthen college applications, internship prospects, and job portfolios. By focusing on skills that employers and higher education institutions consistently value, the program ensures students can compete and excel beyond high school.

For the 2025–26 academic year, YM2 proposes to run Discover U at Homewood-Flossmoor High School on Wednesdays after school. Students will take part in monthly, themed workshop series—such as Career Exploration, Communication Skills, and Job Readiness—each culminating in a micro-credential. The program includes trained facilitators, low student-to-staff ratios, curriculum design, assessment tools, reporting systems, and optional enhancements like site visits and college tours. YM2 handles registration, program delivery, data tracking, and evaluation, while the school provides space, a staff liaison, and promotional support. Students benefit from free access to Discover U and additional YM2 enrichment programs, with progress monitored through digital portfolios and regular reporting to the district.

Total Cost for services: [\\$11,500.00](#), paid for through local funds.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Board of Education of Homewood-Flossmoor Community High School District approve the contract with You Matter 2 in the amount of \$11,500.00.

Please let me know if you would like to discuss this recommendation further or need additional details.



You Matter 2
Discover U Program Proposal
2025 - 2026 Academic School Year

Point of Contact:

Destiny Watson | Founder & CEO

708-996-0871 | dwatson@youmatter2.org

Program Lead:

Kalyn Victor, High School Program Worker

708-996-1043 | kvictor@youmatter2.org

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Section 1: Introduction & Background

About You Matter 2 (YM2)

You Matter 2 is a community-rooted nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering youth from underserved communities through mentorship, leadership development, and transformative educational experiences. Our mission is to equip students with the confidence, skills, and networks to thrive academically, personally, and professionally. By fostering spaces where young people feel seen, supported, and challenged, we prepare them to step into their futures with clarity and purpose.

High School Engagement & Impact

Over the past year, YM2 has directly served over **50 high school students** through immersive programming such as **Discover U College Tours**, **Future Forward**, and the **NextGEN Summer Internship**. These experiences have targeted students' college and career readiness, professional development, and personal growth.

Quantitative Highlights

Discover U: College Tour

- **23 Students (Grades 10–12)** from Homewood-Flossmoor High School
 - 3 - 10th grade
 - 17 - 11th grade
 - 3 - 12th grade
- **100%** said they enjoyed the experience and found it helpful
- **45%** reported it was their **first time ever visiting a college campus**
- **100%** expressed interest in continuing with YM2 programs
- Top-rated experiences included:
 - Interacting with college students
 - Bonding with peers
 - Exploring new cities

NextGEN Summer Internship (8 weeks) 14 Students (including graduates from HF, Rich Township, and Hillcrest)

- HF Students: 9 (3 Class of 2025 Grads)
- Rich Township HS: 3 Class of 2025 Grads
- Received mentorship, industry exposure, and led student-run departments
- **Professional Skills Growth (resume building, research, goal-setting): 70.3%**
- **Soft Skills Growth (public speaking, teamwork, confidence): 84.4%**
- Participants cited key takeaways like:

- Improved public speaking
 - Stronger time management
 - Networking and professionalism
 - Increased self-confidence and life direction
-

Student Voices

“This internship has taught me great professional and life skills that I will harbor for the rest of my life.”

“Going on this tour opened my eyes to a lot of information about college. It helped bring me out of my shell.”

“I feel like I have grown more as a person and mentally thanks to this internship, I started off not knowing exactly what impact I wanted to make in the world or just on my life and now I feel like my mind is clearer with a straight path to success.”

“The healthcare panel impacted me the most because I heard about non-traditional career paths.”

Section 2: Discover U Program Overview

Program Summary

Discover U is a career and college readiness program that equips high school students with the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to make informed post-secondary decisions. Delivered through weekly, themed workshops, Discover U focuses on **real-life application of college, career, and life readiness**.

Each month, students participate in a four-session workshop series that aligns with one of the **nine nationally recognized durable skills** defined by **Education Design Lab**, a leader in innovative, evidence-based workforce credentialing. Students who demonstrate competency in all areas of a selected skill earn a **digital micro-credential badge** they can showcase in college applications, internships, or job portfolios.

About the Micro-Credentials

Discover U utilizes **The Lab’s Durable Skills Micro-credentials**, developed by **Education Design Lab** after years of collaboration with students, employers, academic institutions, and workforce experts.

These credentials transform the way students **recognize, activate, and display in-demand skills**, and are designed to certify real-world readiness in key 21st-century competencies such as **initiative, collaboration, oral communication, resilience, and critical thinking**.

Each micro-credential represents one core skill, broken down into **four clearly defined sub-competencies** (e.g., “Listen Actively” or “Demonstrate Self-Awareness”). Mastery of **all four sub-competencies** is required to earn the full credential.

Assessment Model: How Students Earn a Micro-Credential

Throughout the month, students are guided through interactive lessons, reflection, and skill practice tied to the sub-competencies. To demonstrate proficiency, students must complete:

- A **performance-based “proving ground” assessment** for **each sub-competency**
- **Self-assessment and reflection** activities to build self-awareness
- **Facilitator or peer evaluation**, depending on the session structure

Proving grounds are carefully designed to **activate the skill in real-world contexts** (e.g., mock interviews, elevator pitches, goal-setting plans, or collaboration on a team project). Each is scored using a standards-aligned rubric to ensure rigor and reliability.

Students who meet proficiency on all four proving ground tasks earn a **verifiable, portable digital badge** to document their success.

Skill Development Integrated with College, Career, and Life Readiness

Each monthly workshop series is organized around a **student-relevant life theme**, such as financial literacy, communication, or career pathways. While sessions focus on **practical content and real-life application**, each theme is **strategically mapped to a core durable skill**. These skills are drawn from Education Design Lab’s nationally recognized framework, ensuring alignment with what employers, colleges, and communities value most.

By linking applied learning to skill certification, students not only gain knowledge — they earn credentials that **prove** their readiness for what comes next.

Standard Schedule (Fall 2025 Launch)

To kick off the 2025–26 academic year, we propose the following three workshop series and associated micro-credentials:

Month	Workshop Theme	Micro-Credential Focus	Real-World Outcome
September	Career Exploration	Self-Directed Learning	Students explore personal interests, set meaningful goals, and build agency around future planning
October	Communication Skills	Oral Communication	Students build confidence in public speaking, active listening, and presenting ideas effectively
Nov–Dec	Job Readiness	Collaboration	Students strengthen their ability to work on teams, communicate professionally, and prepare for job settings

Optional Themes for Future Monthly Series

Schools participating in Discover U will also have the opportunity to **select additional monthly workshop topics** later in the school year. These options are designed to support a wide range of life-readiness goals and are each paired with a corresponding micro-credential:

Workshop Theme	Description	Suggested Micro-Credential(s)

Financial Literacy	Learn to budget, manage credit, save, and make responsible financial decisions	Critical Thinking or Resilience
College Knowledge	Explore college types, application strategies, scholarships, and FAFSA	Initiative or Oral Communication
Self-Leadership	Strengthen motivation, time management, and personal goal-setting	Initiative or Resilience
Entrepreneurship 101	Build entrepreneurial thinking, pitch ideas, and learn branding basics	Creative Problem Solving or Initiative
Life Skills for Adulthood	Develop real-world skills like meal planning, renting, and digital safety	Critical Thinking or Resilience
Civic Engagement & Community Impact	Cultivate student voice, leadership, and local activism	Empathy or Intercultural Fluency

Each of these themes has been designed to support both personal growth and post-secondary readiness. The final selection and scheduling of additional monthly topics can be determined collaboratively with each school site based on student needs and interests.

Why This Approach Works

Discover U isn't just informative — it's **transformational**. By combining active learning with validated credentialing, students:

- Gain **tangible proof of critical soft skills**
- Build a **personal skill portfolio** to use beyond high school
- Experience **relevant learning connected to their future**

- Learn to **self-evaluate, collaborate, lead, and reflect** — skills that translate to any path

This structure ensures that Discover U aligns with **school goals for college and career readiness**, while offering **personalized, competency-based growth** for each participant.

Section 3: Implementation & Delivery Plan

Program Format & Delivery Structure

Discover U offers a **flexible delivery model** that allows schools to choose a schedule that fits their calendar while still ensuring all students earn a durable skill micro-credential. Each credential requires completion of **4 sessions** (aligned to 4 sub-competencies) and a **performance-based assessment** (“proving ground”).

Partner schools may choose one of two delivery options:

Delivery Model	Session Frequency	Credential Pacing	Best Fit For
Standard (Weekly)	1 session per week	1 micro-credential per month	Schools with consistent weekly after-school time
Extended (Bi-Weekly)	2 sessions per month	1 micro-credential every 2 months	Schools with limited availability or on block scheduling

Program Sites & Schedules

Discover U will run across **three delivery sites**, each offering students consistent access to programming:

Site	Schedule	Notes
Rich Township HS	Tuesdays (after school)	On-site delivery in partnership with school leadership
Homewood-Flossmoor HS (HF)	Wednesdays (after school)	On-site delivery in partnership with school leadership
YM2 Headquarters (HQ)	Mondays or Tuesdays, 6:00–7:30pm	Open to students not enrolled at Rich or HF and to accommodate current Discover U participants with after-school conflicts

Note: The HQ evening session is designed to **complement, not compete** with school-based offerings. Students who attend Rich or HF will be encouraged to attend their school’s session. The HQ session provides expanded access for other students or those with extracurricular obligations.

Program Calendar

Discover U will run from **September through May**, excluding major school breaks and holidays.

Month	Workshop Theme	Credential Focus
September	Career Exploration	Self-Directed Learning
October	Communication Skills	Oral Communication
November–December	Job Readiness	Collaboration
Jan–May	Additional themes selected by district from Discover U Workshop Menu	

Additional sessions and themes can be selected and scheduled in collaboration with each partner school.

Facilitator Model & Staffing

Each session is facilitated by trained **YM2 (You Matter 2) staff** members with experience in youth development, college and career readiness, and culturally responsive instruction.

Staffing Ratio:

Student Count	Staffing Model
Up to 15 students	1 YM2 Staff Member
16–30 students	1 YM2 Staff Member + 1 School Faculty Member

This staffing structure ensures a **low student-to-staff ratio** for individualized support, safe supervision, and quality engagement.

Facilitators are responsible for:

- Delivering each session based on the selected workshop theme
- Supporting students through reflection, assessment, and credentialing
- Leading “proving ground” assessment activities with rubric scoring

- Managing attendance, badge submissions, and reporting to schools

All facilitators are trained in:

- Education Design Lab’s Durable Skills Micro-Credentials
 - Performance-based assessments and rubrics
 - Youth-centered facilitation and trauma-informed practices
-

Program Materials & Supplies

YM2 will provide all necessary materials and logistics support, including:

- Workshop curriculum and handouts
 - Rubrics and assessment tools
 - Kits for interactive and simulation-based activities
 - Badge tracking and issuing system
 - Optional student folders or digital portfolios
-

Flexibility & Equity Considerations

To ensure equitable access and full participation:

- **Make-up opportunities** or asynchronous alternatives are available for excused absences
 - **Transportation support** may be coordinated for students attending HQ sessions
 - All materials and activities are designed to be **inclusive, culturally relevant, and youth-centered**
-

Section 4: Registration Rollout

Registration Process & Access

To ensure ease of access and clear communication with students and families, Discover U uses a centralized, rolling registration system housed on the **YM2 website**, integrated with **Salesforce** for enrollment tracking and management.

Registration Channels

- **Initial Registration Launch:** Open online registration will be available for all sites (Rich Township, HF, and YM2 HQ) via the **YM2 website** prior to the program start.
- **Ongoing Monthly Registration:** Registration will remain open on a **rolling monthly basis**, allowing students to register **only for the monthly series they're interested in** — promoting flexibility and engagement without requiring semester-long commitment.

Monthly Promotion & Reminders

- **Mid-Month Outreach:** Approximately **2 weeks prior to the end of each month**, a new round of flyers, email/text reminders, and school-based promotional materials will be distributed to encourage registration for the upcoming month's workshop theme.
- Materials will include:
 - Theme overview
 - Session dates/times
 - Skill focus (durable skill + micro-credential)
 - Link to registration page

This approach allows students and families to make informed decisions each month while keeping the program responsive and relevant to student interests and availability.

Student Commitment & Flexibility

- Students may **register month-to-month** based on interest and schedule — they are not required to commit to an entire semester or year.
 - Each monthly workshop series is self-contained and includes 4 sessions (1 per sub-competency) leading to a **standalone micro-credential**.
 - This model respects student autonomy, extracurricular commitments, and seasonal obligations (sports, jobs, etc.).
-

YM2 Headquarters (HQ) Site Enrollment Guidelines

- A **minimum of 10 students** must be enrolled in the monthly series for that HQ cohort to run.
- If fewer than 10 students are registered 72 hours before the first session of the month, that month's HQ session may be canceled or combined with another site. Registrants will be notified and given alternate participation options.

Note: Due to Discover U's contracted partnership with participating school districts, students from Rich Township or HF who choose to attend the HQ evening session will **not be charged a registration fee**.

This ensures that all students have full, equitable access to Discover U programming — whether at their school site or HQ — regardless of their scheduling needs.

Section 5: Roles & Responsibilities

This section outlines the distinct but collaborative roles of **You Matter 2 (YM2)** and each **partner school/district** in delivering the Discover U program. Shared responsibility ensures high-quality programming, efficient logistics, and strong student outcomes.

YM2 Responsibilities

YM2 will provide full program implementation, including:

Program Design & Curriculum

- Develop and deliver monthly workshop series aligned to college, career, and life readiness
- Align all content to Education Design Lab's durable skills micro-credentials and sub-competencies
- Design performance-based assessments ("proving grounds") and scoring rubrics
- Continuously update curriculum to ensure cultural relevance and student engagement

Facilitation & Staffing

- Recruit, train, and manage experienced youth facilitators
- Maintain facilitator-to-student ratio as follows:
 - **1 YM2 staff per 15 students**

- **1 YM2 staff + 1 school staff per 30 students**
- Train facilitators in trauma-informed practices, credential assessments, and youth-centered delivery

Logistics & Operations

- Manage site logistics including supplies, attendance, technology, and setup
- Coordinate transportation support for HQ students (as needed)
- Track student progress toward micro-credentials
- Handle registration, rosters, attendance, and digital badge issuing via Salesforce

Marketing & Outreach

- Develop and distribute registration flyers and workshop announcements
- Conduct mid-month outreach to drive monthly enrollment
- Maintain centralized online registration portal via YM2 website

Evaluation & Reporting

- Conduct pre/post student reflections or assessments to measure skill growth
- Track micro-credential completion rates and workshop attendance
- Provide mid-semester and end-of-semester reports to school leadership
- Collect feedback from students and school partners for continuous improvement

Partner School/District Responsibilities

The partner school or district agrees to:

Site Support

- Identify and confirm a consistent after-school space for workshop delivery (e.g., classroom, library, or multipurpose space)
- Ensure access to basic technology needs (e.g., projector, Wi-Fi, power access)
- Assign a school staff member (e.g., liaison, counselor, faculty advisor) to support student oversight

Student Engagement

- Promote Discover U programming through school announcements, staff, and internal communication channels
- Support student recruitment and encourage consistent attendance
- Assist with registration promotion using provided flyers and messaging
- Offer insight on student needs and schedules to inform session planning

On-Site Safety & Compliance

- Ensure that a school staff member is present during each session when group size exceeds 15 students
 - Communicate school-specific policies and emergency procedures to YM2 staff
 - Assist with any disciplinary concerns or behavioral issues if they arise
-

Shared Commitments

Both YM2 and school partners agree to:

- Foster a safe, inclusive, and welcoming learning environment
- Communicate regularly on student progress, scheduling, and concerns
- Collaborate to resolve challenges and ensure program fidelity
- Prioritize equitable access for all students, especially those from underserved backgrounds

Section 6: Budget & Cost Breakdown

The following cost structure reflects the comprehensive delivery of Discover U, including facilitation, durable skill micro-credentials, assessment tracking, mentorship, and materials. This model ensures high-quality programming with measurable student outcomes while offering flexibility and value to each school partner.

Discover U Monthly Program Package

For High School (1 Session/Week + Micro-Credential Delivery)

Item	Description	Pilot (3 months - 12 sessions)
Program Facilitation	4 sessions/month × \$125/session	\$1,500
Micro-Credential Access	Student licenses for Education Design Lab platform	\$3,000
Program Manager Oversight	Curriculum design, quality control, and mentorship	\$1,750
Admin & Operations Support	Scheduling, communication, reporting	\$1,250
Industry Exposure & Site Visits	Field trips, panels, transportation, coordination	\$2,000

Materials & Student Incentives	Workshop supplies, certificates, incentives	\$2,000
Total Fee (per site)		\$11,500

Included Student Benefits

Students registered through Discover U (Rich Township or HF sites) will also receive access to the following **YM2 enrichment programs and supports**:

Program	Access Level
Expressions Unleashed	Available with separate registration & program fee
Study Break on Us	Free drop-in homework and wellness sessions
Teen Night	Access to exclusive events at discounted member rate

This cross-program access supports holistic student development and encourages further connection to leadership, arts, wellness, and enrichment.

Note: Students participating through school-based contracts (Rich Township or HF) will **not be charged any registration fee** for Discover U programming, including if they attend HQ sessions due to schedule conflicts.

Add-On Optional Enhancements

YM2 offers a range of enrichment options to deepen impact and extend engagement.

Add-On	Description	Cost
Additional Weekly Session	Adds 1 weekly session (e.g. IGNITE or additional Discover U)	+\$1,250/month per site
Spring Break College Tour	Multi-state campus experience organized and staffed by YM2	\$15,000 – \$25,000

Note: Sites participating in Discover U through district contract agreements will not charge students registration fees, including those opting to attend sessions at YM2 HQ.

Section 7: Evaluation & Reporting

Discover U is committed to measurable outcomes, continuous improvement, and shared accountability. We utilize both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods to monitor student progress, evaluate program quality, and ensure alignment with college, career, and life readiness benchmarks.

Key Evaluation Metrics

Category	What We Measure
Skill Development	Pre- and post-program assessments to track growth in durable skills & sub-competencies
Micro-Credential Completion	Number of micro-credentials awarded per student; sub-competency progress rates
Engagement & Participation	Attendance, session completion, active participation in discussions/activities
Student Reflection & Self-Assessment	Guided journaling, proving ground reflections, and confidence/goal-setting surveys

Facilitator Observation	Session logs, rubric-based evaluations, qualitative notes
Real-World Readiness	Resume updates, mock interviews, elevator pitches, and applied project performance
Student Feedback	End-of-month feedback surveys on workshop content, facilitator quality, and relevance
School Partner Feedback	Mid- and end-of-semester check-ins to assess partnership experience and logistics

Reporting Schedule

Report Type	Contents	Timing
Monthly Site Report	Attendance, micro-credential progress, session notes, key highlights	By 1st week of following month
Semester Summary Report	Aggregate metrics, student growth insights, testimonials, and school feedback	Mid-Year & End-of-Year
Customized Reports (Optional)	Tailored insights per district request (e.g. SEL indicators, subgroup data)	Upon request

Data Collection Methods

- **Salesforce-Integrated Registration & Attendance System**
- **Student Digital Portfolios** tracking proving ground assessments and reflections
- **Education Design Lab Badge Platform** for issuing and managing micro-credentials
- **Google Forms + Surveys** for student/family/facilitator feedback

Continuous Improvement Process

We analyze data monthly to:

- Adjust content pacing based on student understanding and facilitator insights
- Adapt engagement strategies based on student feedback
- Ensure equitable access and relevance across school sites