

NEA EARLY CAREER LEARNING LABS



What are the NEA Early Career Learning Labs?

The Early Career Learning Labs (ECLL) are a professional learning program meant to support early career educators (ECEs) around instructional and classroom problems of practice (PoP). The Labs occur in a blended learning format both in face to face and online. The entire process will last approximately 6-8 weeks for each cycle depending on the problems of practice identified by the educators.



What are the issues ECEs face?

- Most ECEs are trying to “figure out” their professional craft
- ECEs struggle with translating teacher preparation experiences to current teaching realities
- Few ECEs receive comprehensive induction and mentoring



What are the program goals?

- Demonstrate association support for ECEs
- Assist ECEs in improving practice and enhancing student learning
- Introduce ECEs to the local and state affiliate as one way to increase membership and retention in affiliates



Our Theory of Change:

We are organizing teacher leaders who believe that we must address early career educators’ instructional and classroom problems of practice by creating blended learning opportunities, so that by the end of their learning cycle, early career educators will be a supported path to improve each student’s learning environment.

To learn more about ECLL, and explore whether your affiliate should become an ECLL site, please contact Ambereen Khan-Baker, NBCT: akhanbaker@nea.org and Ann Nutter Coffman, Ph.D. acoffman@nea.org.



What is the learning cycle?

DISCOVER

Problem of Practice

- Face to face
- Small local team
- Facilitated by local affiliate
- GOAL: Discover shared Problem(s) of Practice (PoP)—content, learning and/or teaching problem, group or individualized

ENGAGE

Group Process

- Bring PoP to the larger, national teaching community
- Facilitated by virtual coaches via Zoom
- GOAL: Refine PoP and get feedback beyond local context (informal learning)

LEARN

Coaching and Curated Playlists

- Engage with informal learning curriculum
- Create individualized playlist of resources/ instructional options
- Facilitated by virtual coach via Zoom
- GOAL: Engage in deep learning and study around the PoP

TEACH

Try It Out Protocol

- Apply new knowledge techniques with students
- Assess learning
- Facilitated by learner
- GOAL: Teach to address the PoP

REFLECT

How Did I Grow?

- Share experience with local team and larger teaching community
- Document teaching experiences
- Refine teaching and reflect
- GOAL: Refine teaching strategies and spread educator expertise