

**IDAHO SUPERINTENDENTS NETWORK**  
**LEADING THE WAY TO IMPROVED OUTCOMES**  
**APPLICATION FOR PARTICIPATION**  
**School Year 2015-2016**

**PROJECT SUMMARY**

The [Idaho Superintendents Network](#) (ISN) is a project developed by the State Department of Education (SDE) to support the work of district leaders in improving outcomes for all students by focusing on the quality of instruction. Since the network was established in 2008, superintendents and heads of charter school LEAs have been working together voluntarily to develop a cohesive and dedicated leadership community focused on teaching and learning. ISN members support each other as they bring about change and collectively brainstorm obstacles that prevent improvement in the quality of teaching and learning within their districts.

ISN will be taking on a new role this year. Superintendent Ybarra is hoping to use ISN as a vehicle for informing the Office of the State Superintendent on a variety of legislative and policy issues. Time will be set aside at each meeting for district leaders to provide feedback to the Superintendent and her team.

**Superintendent Ybarra** will be attending ISN events, so too will be **Dr. Chuck Zimmerly**, Community Outreach Officer, [czimmerly@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:czimmerly@sde.idaho.gov), and the project will be coordinated by **Tyson Carter**, Coordinator of Educator Effectiveness, [tcarter@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:tcarter@sde.idaho.gov) assisting Tyson will be **Betsy Bearden**, [bbearden@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:bbearden@sde.idaho.gov). Betsy will be sending out electronic invitations to participants. If you have not participated in the past but are interested in joining ISN please contact Dr. Zimmerly, Tyson Carter or Betsy Bearden.

**Facilitators**

**Marybeth Flachbart** and **Chris Mazzeo** from Education Northwest (EDNW) will be facilitating ISN this year. EDNW is a nonprofit organization headquartered in Portland, Oregon, dedicated to building capacity to strengthen education systems. For nearly 50 years, EDNW experts have worked side-by-side with schools and communities to identify and address their most critical educational needs. EDNW offers expertise in evaluation, capacity building, and training services. EDNW roots are in the Northwest region but the services and products have a national reach ([educationnorthwest.org](http://educationnorthwest.org)).

**PLAN for 2015-2016**

A key strategy of ISN is to be responsive to the needs of district leaders. Based on results from the 2014–2015 ISN participants, the focus of 2015–2016 will be *Personalized Learning*. This year will combine three face-to-face meetings (October 12<sup>th</sup>, December 9<sup>th</sup>, and February 10<sup>th</sup>) with two webinars and a new opportunity for “Think Chats” with content area experts at EDNW.

*All face-to-face meetings will be held at the Spring Hill Suites, 424 Parkcenter Blvd., Boise. 208-342-1044*

**Face-to-Face Meetings**

**October 12<sup>th</sup> – Dr. Robert Marzano,**  
High Reliability Schools

**December 9<sup>th</sup> – EdCamp Model, Powering Up Professional Learning**

**February 10<sup>th</sup> – Strength Based Teams, Using Gallup StrengthFinders to Build your Team**

**October 12<sup>th</sup> – Dr. Robert Marzano,  
High Reliability Schools**

**8:30 -4:00 Program, 4:00-6:00 Reception for  
ISN Members and Invited Guests**

Dr. Marzano will be discussing his research on using a research-based five-level hierarchy to prevent failure and ensure achievement. Leaders will learn how to assess, monitor, and confirm the effectiveness of their school and students' success. Participants will receive a copy of the book [A Handbook for High Reliability Schools: Next Steps in School Reform.](#)

**December 8<sup>th</sup> ISN Network and Invited  
Guests Reception and Dinner,**

**December 9<sup>th</sup> The Edcamp Model:  
Powering Up Professional Learning.**

**Janet Avery, Curriculum Director for Jerome** has been instrumental in bringing Edcamp to Idaho. **Edcamp** is a grassroots movement, started by teachers who were interested in having input in their own learning. Unlike traditional conferences, at EdCamp participants create their own agenda and sessions are created and facilitated on the spot. To quote one of the founders, "There are no experts, only expertise." Idaho has now hosted three EdCamps and the movement is being replicated across the country, internationally, as well as at the U.S. Department of Education. The focus for ISN participants will be to create their own areas of discussion and network/share with peers. As well as learn how to use this model within their district to extend their current professional development and learning opportunities.

**February 9<sup>th</sup>, Evening Reception for ISN  
Members and Invited Guests, February**

**10<sup>th</sup> – Strength Based Teams, Using Gallup  
StrengthFinders to Build your Team**

In 2013/2014 ISN participants each completed, Gallup's *StrengthsFinder* assessment. *StrengthsFinder* was developed by Gallup Inc. and has been used by organizations in every industry and all over the world. The *StrengthsFinder* assessment identifies 34 different areas of talent. ISN participants received a report that included their top five areas of strength and each member received a one hour coaching call to discuss their individual strengths and how to both maximize their talents and improve their leadership skills.

This follow up session will be dedicated to coaching of others. Education Northwest personnel will lead the session. The objective is to increase ISN members' ability to:

- Coach administrators to use their strengths and maximize talent to reach desired performance outcomes for teachers and students
- Provide superintendents with techniques for using strengths-based development to address specific team-related challenges
- Model how teams can discover, develop, and use their unique talents for greater engagement
- Equip superintendents with strategies for maximizing their individual and collective talents to improve teaching and learning

ISN members who have not completed the *StrengthsFinder* assessment will have the opportunity to do so prior to the February meeting as well as have a one hour debrief on the managerial implications of their particular talents.

## **Virtual Opportunities**

### ***Webinars***

Another intention of ISN is to expand the reach of the network by providing resources to superintendents to use at the local level. This year we will be offering two webinars (one in November and one in January) around improving outcomes for students in poverty. The guest speaker for both webinars will be Dr. Ben Castleman, Assistant Professor of Education and Public Policy at the University of Virginia. His research combines behavioral economics and social psychology to improve college access and success for low-income and non-traditional students. He is the author of *Summer Melt*, and *Decision Making for Student Success: Behavioral Insights to Improve College Access and Persistence*.

### ***Virtual Collaboration***

The collaboration sessions will be approximately 90 minutes each and will be delivered virtually through an online meeting platform (i.e., WebEx). They will offer opportunities for ISN members to collaborate with each other as well as the Office of the State Superintendent on issues currently facing local leaders.

### ***Think Chats***

The mission of Education Northwest is to improve learning by building capacity in schools, families, and communities through applied research and development. Idaho has had a long standing relationship with NWCC and REL NW. However, at any given time Education Northwest staff members are working on other projects designed to improve everything from the

school registration process to postsecondary attendance. During the coming school year, ISN participants will have the opportunity to have one-on-one “think chats” with staff members. Think chats will be voluntary and personalized. ISN participants may select from a range of topics and Education Northwest will match the superintendents’ interest with a staff member that has expertise in that particular area. Topics may include:

- Educator effectiveness (evaluation and feedback)
- School system improvement
- Large scale implementation
- Change management
- Project management
- Equity issues
- Specific content areas (e.g., literacy, mathematics)
- Increasing postsecondary attendance
- Family and community engagement
- Virtual learning
- English learner
- Rural and Native Education

## **APPLICATION SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

Applications are due to Betsy Bearden, [bbearden@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:bbearden@sde.idaho.gov). Please submit your application electronically.

**In a brief narrative (no more than one page), please respond to the following:**

What outcomes do you expect in your district and/or charter schools as a result of participation in the Idaho Superintendents Network?