



## **District and State Micro-credential Implementation Best Practices Guide**

This guide highlights several best practices Digital Promise has identified from working with district and state partners leading highly-engaged micro-credential implementation efforts. The best practices fall into four categories - Engaging Educators, Organizational Management, Internal Communications and External Messaging, and Technical Management.

### **Engaging Educators**

- Leverage existing, or if necessary establish, Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) or other mechanisms that enable educators to collaborate and support each other as they go through the micro-credential process. This will help ensure a culture of collegiality and shared responsibility for growth.
- Implement “chains of support” with instructional coaches, department heads, grade-level chairs, etc. where educators can receive school-based and scaffolded guidance through their micro-credential process.
- Ensure that classroom educators are involved in every stage of the micro-credential implementation process from planning to execution by establishing a taskforce or through another concerted effort.
- Survey educators before, during, and after the pilot and integrate findings into next steps to ensure that educator voice and need are the foundation for the pilot’s structure and micro-credential content.

### **Organizational Management**

- Identify specific district personnel to oversee implementation. Ideally, these individual(s) should sit in an already-established department (e.g., Office of Digital Learning, Department of Educational Technology, etc.) that has ownership over the goals and process of the pilot.
- Create methods (e.g., bi-weekly virtual meetings/webinars, monthly pulse surveys, dedicated portions during staff meetings, etc.) to capture ongoing feedback from educators about the micro-credential pilot so that necessary shifts in implementation can be made.
- Curate a specific catalogue of micro-credentials educators can choose to earn that aligns to district/state-level instructional priorities and the educator needs articulated in the pre-pilot survey.

- Establish a clear mechanism to recognize the micro-credentials educators earn that is valuable and meaningful to educators and can be sustained at the district and/or state-level through policy.

### Internal Communications and External Messaging

- Ensure that messaging is clear, compelling, and frequent at each level -- district, school, and subject/grade department -- to convey the goals of the micro-credential pilot, how educators can participate, and where they can go to get support.
- Create buy-in among administrators by providing them with additional support and information about micro-credentials and how they can support the pilot process.
- Develop content and messaging collateral that speaks to the ways the micro-credential earning process reinforces growth and reflection, not necessarily mastery, as key to educator effectiveness.
- Avoid circulating messaging that utilizes punitive language when describing the micro-credential earning process and outcomes.

### Technical Management

- Leverage an existing, if possible, LMS (Learning Management System) for educators (e.g., Canvas) to house micro-credential pilot information and facilitate the earning process.
- Establish a district micro-credential technical troubleshooting process that educators can easily access.
- Design or curate digitally-accessible resources to provide wraparound support for the micro-credential earning process. These could include curriculum maps extending the ways micro-credential content can be applied in the classroom or a recorded webinar explaining research supporting a teacher protocol explored by a micro-credential.

