2020 Annual Report



It is my immense honor and privilege to serve as the new President and Chief Executive Officer of Digital Promise. I am fully committed to build on the great work of my predecessors and provide leadership and support to fulfill the “promise” of Digital Promise: close the Digital Learning Gap, improve student and adult learning, and help put our most underserved students on a path to succeed in school, work, and life.



Several priorities are clear. We are facing the largest global education crisis in the last century. At the same time, we know the challenges we saw in 2020 are not new. The COVID-19 pandemic has only highlighted long-standing disparities in outcomes and resource distribution. In this Annual Report, we highlight the transformational work our organization took on last year in response to these ongoing challenges, and how we're innovating our way to broader definitions of success.

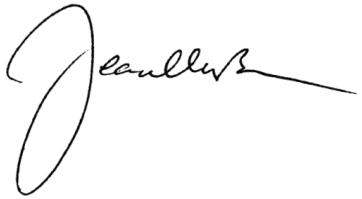
In the wake of the pandemic, we were not deterred in our mission to accelerate innovation in education and improve opportunities to learn. We created the Center for Inclusive Innovation, which helps communities engage in equity-centered research and development to change the trajectories of Black, Brown, and Indigenous students. We also launched multiple webinar series and built resource libraries and toolkits to help engage educators in powerful digital learning opportunities online. The Verizon Innovative Learning Schools initiative helped smooth the transition to distance learning by providing devices and data plans, while also coaching educators on how to effectively leverage technology for powerful learning. These examples represent just a small slice of the work that came together last year.

Over the last 10 years, Digital Promise's impact, influence, and size have grown significantly. We have developed dozens of programs that have placed Digital Promise at the cutting edge of research, practice, and technology innovation. All in all, Digital Promise's work tells a story of rapid growth, diversification, and innovation over the last decade.

As we prepare to celebrate our 10th anniversary this fall, we are contemplating what our next 10 years of impact will look like. We plan to spend the next few months wrestling with some of the core questions that naturally come at this stage of an organization's evolution. We intend for this effort to play a critical role in shaping the narrative surrounding innovation and technology in education, especially in light of the COVID-

19 pandemic and our nation's racial reckoning. We look forward to engaging you in this important conversation.

I'd like to thank all of our partners and staff for their support and dedication during exceptionally difficult times. I'm proud to continue this work alongside you.



Jean-Claude Brizard
CEO, Digital Promise

Powerful Learning Resources



Online Learning Resources Library

When in-person learning shifted online in 2020, there was a sudden rush to find resources, tools, and lesson plans that could help educators across the country manage this unprecedented crisis. In response, Digital Promise created an Online Learning Resources Library that allows users to search by resource type, grade level, and subject. All of the resources are free and meet student data privacy criteria. Users also have the option of recommending a resource for review by Digital Promise staff. Even as schools return to in-person learning, online learning still presents a powerful option for many students, keeping these tools relevant in this new education landscape.

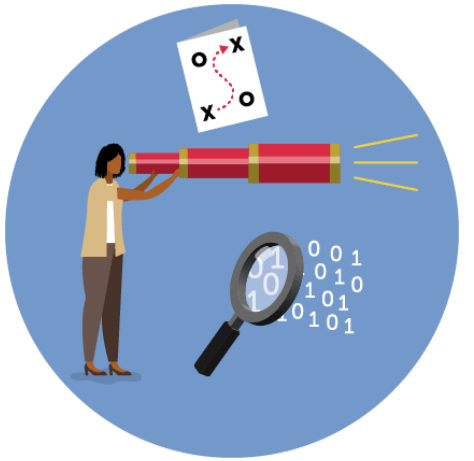




Resources for Supporting Learners with Disabilities

The move to distance learning during the pandemic was destabilizing to many educators, students, and their families. This was especially true for learners with disabilities. As schools transitioned, it was imperative that equity be kept at the center of all learning. It's why we created a searchable library of Special Education resources and edtech products for educators. Users can filter by grade and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) disability categories. All of the resources are free and meet student data privacy criteria. As schools return to in-person learning, there are still many lessons about the power of digital learning that can be carried over from 2020, including the ways in which different students thrive in different learning environments.

Digital Learning Playbook



During the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, we introduced the Digital Learning Playbook, which includes strategies for establishing leadership teams, planning for technology implementation, assessing human infrastructure needs and capacity, and identifying tools and resources for school and home use. Establishing digital learning environments will remain vital to districts because they promote personalization and student agency in all learning scenarios. No matter where your district or school's starting point lies, the Playbook can help support the development of powerful, effective digital learning.

Micro-credentials

Educators and learners found countless ways to adapt and grow in 2020. To support the transition to widespread digital learning, we published the Transitioning to Digital Learning micro-credentials. The stack joined our existing library of over 550 micro-credentials, published in partnership with over 50 organizations, available to recognize the skills of educators. In 2020, more than 131,000 educators visited the micro-credential platform. Educators most frequently searched for content related to powerful use of technology, digital learning, media literacy, and supporting diverse learners. Micro-credentials offered educators flexible, virtual avenues to earn recognition for the many ways they shifted practice to meet the needs of students in unprecedented conditions.

Webinars



COVID-19 kept us away from the in-person events that fortify and expand our networks. Still, while there weren't opportunities to meet and learn with our networks in person, we found and created new ways to interact and learn. Digital Promise established a regular webinars program, including (but not limited to) webinars focused on Education Leadership for a Digital World, integrating technology into online or in-person learning, personalized learning, learning sciences, and much more. Since May 2020, Digital Promise has organized more than 130 webinars, with plans to continue to do so for the foreseeable future.

Powerful Digital Learning through Networks



League of Innovative Schools



As a forward-thinking network focused on advancing innovative teaching and learning practices, the League of Innovative Schools was uniquely positioned to partner with school districts during the COVID-19 crisis. Advocating for digital equity with renewed urgency, we organized a purchasing consortium to deliver devices to schools and launched #ConnectKidsNow to call for a national solution to close the Homework Gap. Our responsive town hall series leveraged League expertise on topics including student well-being, technology sustainability, and more. At our fall convening, superintendents connected virtually and learned from leading voices in education, technology and access, and social-emotional learning.



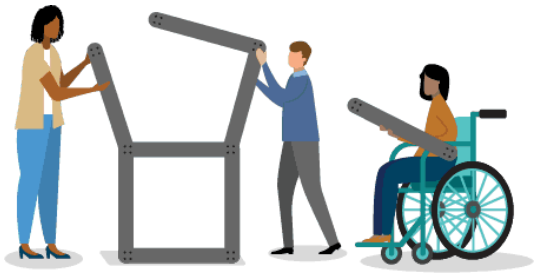
Verizon Innovative Learning Schools

In 2020, Verizon Innovative Learning Schools were well-positioned for a smoother transition to distance and hybrid learning than most. In addition to devices with monthly data plans for every student and teacher, the program provides professional learning for educators on how to effectively leverage technology wherever learning is taking place. Throughout the spring and summer, the VILS team provided webinars to support educators both within and outside the VILS network in integrating technology into learning, as well as with planning to roll out new devices to students for at-home use. By the fall, additional professional learning opportunities were available to all teachers nationwide on the Teacher Training Pathways platform, which offers free courses aligned with Digital Promise micro-credentials.

Edcamp: Powerful Learning at Home

A new member of the Digital Promise family of programs, Edcamps are regional, in-person events where educators engage in professional learning centered in the topics most important to them. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and the shift to distance learning, Digital Promise hosted Edcamp: Powerful Learning at Home, an Edcamp dedicated to connecting educators to discuss their challenges, share successes, and support one another as they navigated teaching online. As some Edcamps continue online, the Edcamp Community at Digital Promise offers resources for Edcamp organizers to create virtual events and continue professional learning at home.

Maker Learning

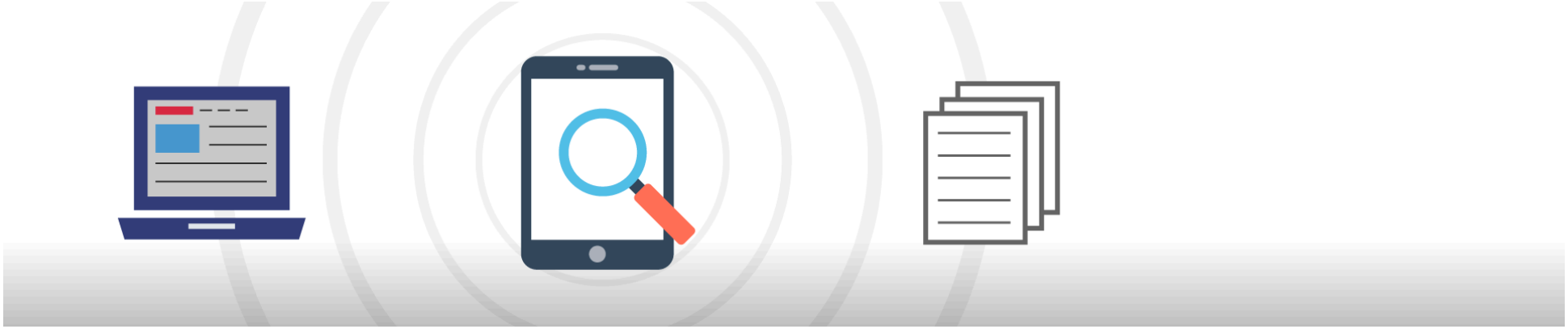


Edcamp: Maker Learning provided a space for educators to discuss their most pressing ideas and challenges related to continuing powerful maker learning experiences in hybrid and remote learning contexts. The Powerful Learning at Home: Planning Maker Learning webinar series also guided educators through designing maker learning experiences using each Powerful Learning principle. This series acted as a preview to the Maker Learning @ Home Cohort, a six-month professional learning opportunity designed to support organizations designing maker projects for their learners to engage in at home.

Reinvent the Classroom

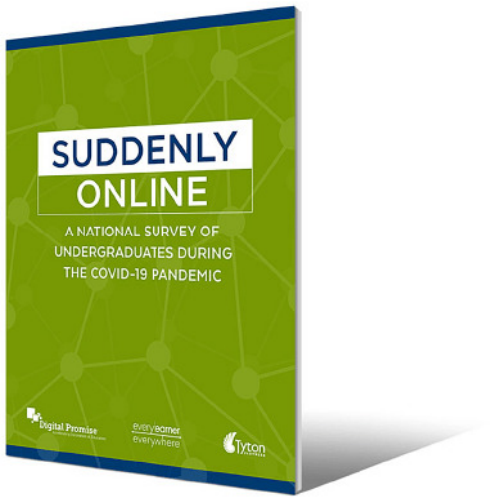
Educators involved with the Reinvent the Classroom initiative rose to the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. Through continued professional learning and community building, educators shared how to cultivate powerful learning in a hybrid and distance learning environment through articles and webinars such as “Distance Learning in a Crisis” and “Starting the School Year with Blended Learning.” The HP Teaching Fellows program also offered virtual gatherings where educators could seek support and advice on navigating their specific challenges.

Powerful Digital Learning through Research



Learning Sciences Research/Suddenly Online Report

What challenges did college students face in the shift to remote learning in the wake of COVID-19? Digital Promise and Langer Research Associates developed a survey in spring 2020 to capture the experiences of over 1,000 undergraduates taking courses that transitioned to online instruction. The Suddenly Online report features the findings from this national survey and explores how college courses were taught during the COVID-19 outbreak, the pervasiveness of various challenges undergraduates faced after the remote instruction transition, and course features associated with higher levels of student satisfaction.

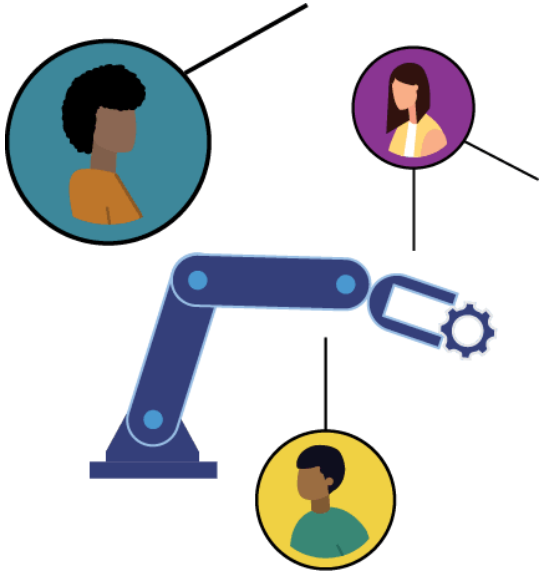




Learner Variability Project

The release of the Learner Variability Project's Adult Learner Model was prescient, as interest in weaving social and emotional skills into academic learning piqued as a response to COVID-19. Our 2019 national survey found that among teachers who use edtech, 76 percent often or sometimes use data from edtech products to help them support individual students' learner variability. This past year, Digital Promise's edtech certification program added learner variability as a new certification, and a new product assessment tool was launched for developers to explore how well their products support learner variability and identify features that could reach more learners in the Learner Variability Navigator.

Adult Learning



The pandemic exposed and widened existing inequities in rural America. In 2020, the Adult Learning initiative developed a landscape research project with Ascendium Education Group to explore how micro-credentials may be used to promote an inclusive economic recovery for rural learners. We began documenting innovative ways that postsecondary education and training institutions are using digital learning models and micro-credentials among rural learners who are impacted by poverty, particularly in Black, Latinx, and Indigenous communities. As we continue this work, our goal is to inform the field about the value and use of micro-credentials to increase social mobility for adult learners.



Inclusive Innovation

The Center for Inclusive Innovation launched with a vision focused on resourcing the ingenuity of Black, Brown, and Indigenous students and communities through equity-centered, community-driven R&D. Our Teachers of Color recruitment and retention project culminated in a virtual showcase of 22 teacher-created concepts to more than 600 attendees. Our Data Ready cohort also engaged 11 districts in developing resilient data systems to support deeper learning and address equity gaps. Additionally, we launched new projects to engage three districts in addressing challenges in adolescent writing and 14 districts to develop open educational resources to support classroom discourse on racial and social justice.

Powerful Digital Learning through Networks

About Digital Promise



Digital Promise is an independent nonprofit that builds powerful networks and takes on grand challenges by working at the intersection of researchers, entrepreneurs, and educators. Our vision is that all people, at every stage of their lives, have equitable access to learning experiences that help them acquire the knowledge and skills they need to thrive in an ever-changing world. Digital Promise was originally authorized by Congress in 2008 through the Higher Education Opportunity Act, signed into law by President George W. Bush, and formally launched by President Barack Obama in September 2011.

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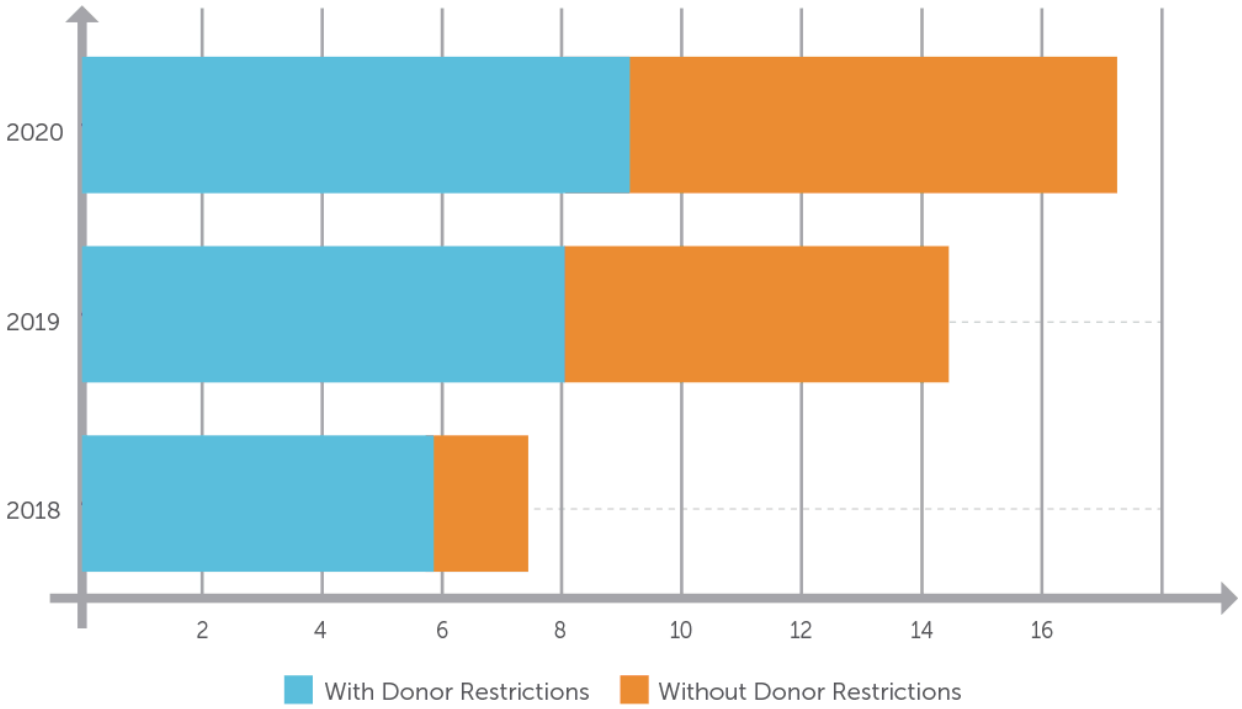
Verizon Innovative Learning

World 101 from the Council on Foreign Relations

Digital Promise Financials

Digital Promise Global, Net Assets by Year

(Millions of dollars)



Total net assets: $17.2 million

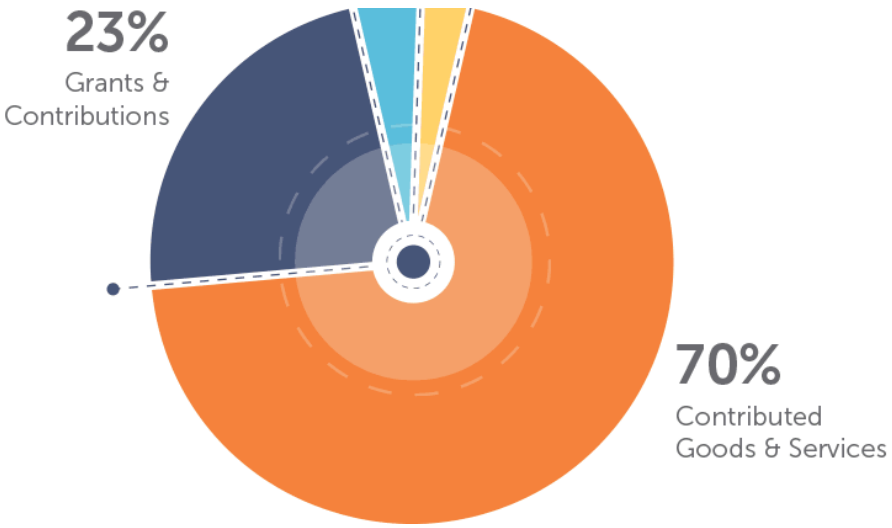
Digital Promise 2020 revenue, by source

Total Revenue of $132 million including
$92 million of revenue from contributed goods & services

4%
Federal Awards

3%
Educational Services and
Other Earned Income




23%
Grants &
Contributions
70%
Contributed
Goods & Services