



The Center for Education Market Dynamics (CEMD), Digital Promise, EdTech Evidence Exchange, ISTE, and Project Unicorn Announce Partnership to Establish Easy Access to Information about the Quality of Edtech Products

Collective Action Leads to Streamlined Access to Edtech that Supports Powerful Learning

SEPTEMBER 22, 2021 | Washington, D.C. - [The Center for Education Market Dynamics \(CEMD\)](#), [Digital Promise](#), [EdTech Evidence Exchange](#), [International Society for Technology in Education \(ISTE\)](#), and [Project Unicorn](#) are thrilled to announce their partnership to increase transparency of information across the marketplace and empower educators to make informed edtech decisions. These five organizations have committed to working together to build new solutions that share critical information about edtech products and support a more cohesive marketplace for both solution providers and educators.

This collaborative will work together to provide education leaders and educators with easy access to valuable information, including certifications about edtech quality, accessibility, usability, interoperability, and implementation to find the right tools for learners.

“Too often educators have to search for hours to understand if a product is relevant to and designed for their student population, aligned to privacy and security best practices, has the ability to export data, has been successfully implemented in schools like theirs, or has been independently studied to examine its efficacy. This initiative, powered by an alliance of organizations seeking to bring equity to education, seeks to lessen this burden, create efficiencies from collaboration and scale, and bring actionable information together in one place,” said Erin Mote, Executive Director of InnovateEDU.

The [EdSurge Product Index](#) has been a resource for educators to find accurate, up-to-date, and trustworthy product information to make the best technology choices for teaching and

learning. This fall, ISTE will launch a *reimagined* EdSurge Product Index that will give educators better access to real-time product information, including third-party certifications and other product validations never before included in the original platform. The new functionality will give educators the confidence and information they need at those critical moments in the product discovery and selection process.

Digital Promise co-designed [Product Certifications](#) with educators to provide straightforward information about the quality of edtech tools across dimensions that matter most for powerful learning. The Research-Based Design and Learner Variability Product Certifications are currently available on the [Product Certification Platform](#) and to date, Digital Promise has [certified](#) more than 75 edtech products that provided evidence to demonstrate that they've met the certification criteria. Current partnerships are under way to expand the dimensions of certifications and create a one-stop resource for product companies to demonstrate their competencies. The certifications provide education leaders and educators with a streamlined signal to differentiate the quality of edtech products.

"Educators deserve a clear way to find products that were designed to support powerful learning," said Jean-Claude Brizard, president and CEO of Digital Promise. "This collective partnership is essential to creating a transparent edtech market where educators can seamlessly find the right tools for their learners. Digital Promise is committed to vetting the many edtech products out there to help make this work less time-consuming and complicated."

For two years, Project Unicorn has shared how products line up against its rubric for interoperability and privacy. By leveraging the certification platform from Digital Promise, Project Unicorn will create an enhanced vendor experience to get certified and, with ISTE, a new showcase for its interoperability tier rankings which signal to a district or teacher this product is interoperable.

Soon, products registered in ISTE's [Learning Technology Directory](#) will be able to display their Product Certification badges on the EdSurge Product Index, making it easier for education leaders and educators to filter products based on quality as they look for tools to support powerful learning.

"Educators need access to actionable and reliable information about edtech products. We want to provide them with answers to the questions they might not even realize they have yet," said Joseph South, Chief Learning Officer at ISTE. "The EdSurge Product Index will feature critical product information all in one place as we aim to provide a new and stronger approach to edtech selection that prioritizes educators' needs."

One of the things educators most want to know is how various edtech tools are being used in schools like theirs. What has worked for their peers? What are pitfalls to avoid during implementation? The [EdTech Evidence Exchange](#), in collaboration with its University of Virginia research team, is working to collect, analyze, and disseminate detailed context, implementation, and edtech tool performance data from a representative sample of hundreds of thousands of educators nationwide.

“Thanks to the work of more than a hundred education stakeholder organizations who collaborated on the [EdTech Genome Project](#), we now have the measurement instruments and shared language we need to help educators learn from each other at scale,” said Bart Epstein, chief executive of the EdTech Evidence Exchange and a research associate professor at the University of Virginia School of Education and Human Development.

Together, these organizations are working collectively and in partnership with educators to establish an edtech market that provides educators with essential information to find the right tools for their learners.

“The market for educational products and services currently works far below its capacity to get the best innovations to the students and teachers most in need of them. The Center for Education Market Dynamics is proud to join this effort in correcting the market failure caused by the dearth of reliable, unbiased information about the quality of technology products,” said Jeff Livingston, founder of the Center for Education Market Dynamics.

Press Contact:

Crystal Williams

Digital Promise

cwilliams@digitalpromise.org

Gabrielle Lue

InnovateEDU/Project Unicorn

gabrielle@innovateedunyc.org

Thomas Rodgers

ISTE

media@iste.org

Brian Belardi

CEMD

brian@edsolutions.com

Ivy Missen
EdTech Evidence Exchange
ivy@edtechevidence.org

###

About The Center for Education Market Dynamics (CEMD)

The Center for Education Market Dynamics (CEMD) is a social impact organization with a mission to redeem and retool the Education markets in America by expanding access to market insights, disseminating data, and creating catalytic connections.

<https://educationmarkets.org/>

About Digital Promise

Digital Promise is a nonprofit organization 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 access to learning experiences that help them acquire the knowledge and skills they need to thrive and continuously learn in an ever-changing world. For more information, visit the [Digital Promise website](#) and follow [@digitalpromise](#) for updates.

About EdTech Evidence Exchange

The EdTech Evidence Exchange is a nonprofit affiliated with the University of Virginia School of Education and Human Development that taps teacher insights to help schools make better-informed decisions about education technology. With support from philanthropic and social impact organizations including Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, and Strada Education Network, the Exchange is working toward providing stipends to hundreds of thousands of educators who will document their unique experiences with education technology, share insights with others in similar contexts, and contribute to the EdTech Evidence Exchange Platform — enabling educators nationwide to learn from one another at scale. For more information visit the [EdTech Evidence Exchange website](#).

About ISTE

The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) is a nonprofit organization that works with the global education community to accelerate the use of technology to solve tough problems and inspire innovation. Our worldwide network believes in the potential technology holds to transform teaching and learning.

ISTE sets a bold vision for education transformation through the ISTE Standards, a framework for students, educators, administrators, coaches and computer science

educators to rethink education and create innovative learning environments. ISTE hosts the annual ISTE Conference & Expo, one of the world's most influential edtech events. The organization's professional learning offerings include online courses, professional networks, year-round academies, peer-reviewed journals and other publications. ISTE is also the leading publisher of books focused on technology in education. For more information or to become an ISTE member, [visit iste.org](http://iste.org).

About Project Unicorn

Project Unicorn is a national initiative coordinated by InnovateEDU and powered by a coalition of organizations representing stakeholders across the education sector focused on the goal to optimize and radicalize education data with interoperability. Project Unicorn leads the development of events, tools, and resources to educate K-12 buyers of edtech products, bring clarity to interoperability standards, help edtech vendors meet the demand for interoperability, raise awareness of the importance of interoperability for understanding all students' paths to graduation regardless of income or zip code, and ultimately see how interoperability can create data magic for schools and students.

Project Unicorn does not endorse a specific product or data standard but instead is an educational advocacy initiative dedicated to the secure, controlled interchange of data.