Digital Promise Promotes Dr. Ximena Dominguez to Executive Director, Learning Sciences and Early Learning Research

Dr. Dominguez to oversee Learning Sciences Research team alongside Dr. Jeremy Roschelle; Dr. Barbara Means to become Principal Learning Sciences Researcher

JUNE 8, 2023 | Washington, D.C. – Digital Promise announced today that effective immediately, Dr. Ximena (Xime) Dominguez has been named Executive Director, Learning Sciences and Early Learning Research. In this capacity, Dr. Dominguez will lead the Learning Sciences Research Center of Excellence alongside Dr. Jeremy Roschelle, investigating how people learn and using research to improve opportunities for each learner.

Dr. Dominguez steps into the role as Dr. Barbara Means, the former Co-Executive Director of Learning Sciences Research who has led multiple federally and philanthropically funded studies on the effectiveness of innovative education approaches supported by digital technology, shifts away from day-to-day management responsibilities to focus on research work and serve as Principal Learning Sciences Researcher. She will lead work in the area of post-secondary learning experiences and outcomes for historically and systematically excluded learners.

"Xime's considerable expertise and her years of experience in leading Early STEM Research at Digital Promise make her uniquely qualified to step into the Executive Director role," said Digital Promise President and CEO Jean-Claude Brizard. "I am excited for the research-driven, learner-focused perspective that Xime will bring as we collectively work to achieve Digital Promise's North Star goals. I am also grateful that Barbara will remain at Digital Promise and continue to provide her research expertise and mentorship."

"I am humbled and excited to serve as Executive Director of the Learning Sciences Research team, which includes some of the brightest and kindest colleagues I've worked with throughout my career," said Dr. Dominguez. "I am grateful for Barbara's mentorship over the years and privileged to be part of a team of researchers committed to making education

more accessible and equitable. I look forward to partnering with colleagues across Digital Promise and beyond to help ensure we meet our North Star goals."

"Ximena Dominguez is a tremendously talented and committed researcher and mentor," said Dr. Means. "Under her leadership, our Learning Sciences Research team will deepen and expand its use of inclusive and culturally sustaining research methods."

Prior to the promotion, Dr. Dominguez served as the Director of Early STEM Research at Digital Promise. Across research and development efforts, she and her team aim to make early learning experiences more accessible and equitable for historically excluded young learners by centering families' funds of knowledge. More specifically, her work involves co-designing and evaluating educational innovations in partnership with curriculum developers, media designers, educators in public early childhood programs and families from historically excluded communities. In addition to studying how young children's interests, cultural assets, and everyday experiences can be leveraged to meaningfully promote STEM learning across home and school, she and her partners explore when and how STEM domains can be feasibly and meaningfully integrated with each other and with other learning disciplines to promote learning broadly. Across these efforts, she explores the affordances of technology and media for supporting early STEM teaching and learning—documenting how digital tools can be designed to strengthen (not replace) the hands-on, socially rich, and collaborative learning that is key early in childhood.

In addition to leading various grants from federal agencies (e.g., National Science Foundation) and philanthropic organizations, Xime leads Digital Promise's strategic effort on multilingual learners. She also serves as reviewer for multiple early childhood journals and was recently selected as a member of the NASEM consensus study, *Science and Engineering in Preschool Through Elementary Grades: The Brilliance of Children and the Strengths of Educators.*

Xime grew up in El Salvador and has lived in numerous cities across the United States, where she has partnered with many Head Start programs and public school districts. She earned an M.S.Ed. in education from the University of Pennsylvania and a Ph.D. in applied developmental psychology from the University of Miami.

Press Contact:
My Nguyen
Digital Promise
mnguyen@digitalpromise.org
202.455.6230

About Digital Promise

Digital Promise is a global nonprofit working to expand opportunity for every learner. We work with educators, researchers, technology leaders, and communities to design, investigate, and scale innovations that support learners, especially those who've been historically and systematically excluded. Our vision is that every person engages in powerful learning experiences that lead to a life of well-being, fulfillment, and economic mobility. For more information, visit the Digital Promise website and follow @digitalpromise for updates.