

WHY
CAN'T
TEACHERS?

DEAR FELLOW TEACHERS,

Welcome to the ECET² community.

ECET² — Elevating and Celebrating Effective Teaching and Teachers — changed my life. For the better. Forever.

I went to the ECET² Snowbird convening with the mission of presenting the instructional shifts in the Common Core State Standards. I left with a vision of empowering other teacher leaders to have the experience I did.

Since the ECET² convening, I live each educational day as an opportunity to make a difference. I try to inspire, motivate, and encourage my brothers and sisters in education to find their internal ECET² and let that passionate moral compass guide them. I use social media to form relationships with other teachers, identify their strengths as educators, and connect them with organizations that have given me opportunities. I want my colleagues to have their day in the snow. Otherwise I didn't live an authentic life and do what I set out to do post-convening.

By finding my teacher voice outside my classroom, and seeing the power of my words, I've flourished.

I started a weekly #ECET2 Twitter chat with a teacher I met at the convening. It has been a source of inspiration and deep discussion for all involved. I planned and hosted the first ECET² in New Jersey and served as a member of the Steering Committee for ECET² New Orleans.

I also write for the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) and *Education Week* and serve as an ASCD Emerging Leader. I've presented for the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), the NJ School Boards Association, and the NJ Department of Education. All of these opportunities have happened since Snowbird.

ECET² is about empowerment and validation. It allows teachers to embrace a culture of trust, accountability, honesty, and respect by treating an educator as a person who chooses to serve others, as opposed to someone who's "just a teacher." It focuses on educational purity: if we support each other, then we can impact lives positively.

—**Barry Saide** @barrykid1
5th grade teacher, Mount Prospect
School, Bernards Township, NJ

Barry has been an educator for 14 years. Father of two. Lovingly nicknamed "Nerd Camp" by his wife because of his love of teaching, learning, and turn-keying all things education-related. Barry considers himself an accidental leader, having initially entered education with the sole goals of teaching 3rd grade and coaching baseball. He does neither.

WHAT'S ECET²?

It isn't a conference, it's a community.

Elevating and Celebrating Effective Teaching and Teachers was founded on two strongly held beliefs: *nothing in education matters more than great teaching* and *nobody knows teaching like teachers*.

Designed “for teachers, by teachers,” ECET² harnesses teachers’ passion for serving their students and their intellectual hunger to solve the challenges in their profession. It creates the connections and supports for teachers to become decision makers, innovators, and leaders — not just in their classrooms but also in their school, district, state, and even nationally.

ECET² began in 2012 as a small national convening. A Teacher Advisory Council supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation helped design the experience and vet the first set of sessions. Since then, ECET² teachers from across the country have taken the reins, leading more than 100 state, regional, and district convenings, while also growing an #ECET2 presence online.

ECET² teachers credit their colleagues for igniting their passion and giving them the confidence, collegial support, and concrete strategies — whether face-to-face or virtually — for finding their voices, solving problems, and taking on new leadership roles.

“When you’re in your classroom or in your school building you tend to see your walls as being the walls. These are my walls; this is my world. When you come outside your walls, whether it’s virtually or actually face-to-face, you begin to see that there are so many other things that are going on that you can learn from and can contribute to. When you go back and you sit in those offices or you begin teaching in those classrooms, **you see your walls differently.** They’re more transparent. The [space] is actually larger. Your room doesn’t feel as small. Your classroom doesn’t feel like a confined space anymore.”

—Jennifer Barnett, teacher,
Childersburg High School,
Talladega County, AL

WHAT WE CARE ABOUT

All ECET² experiences are founded on these guiding principles.

- We nurture trust among teachers.
- We focus on each teacher's potential for growth.
- We inspire both the intellect and the passion that drive teachers in their work.
- We provide time for collaboration and learning.
- We put teachers in the lead.
- We recognize teachers as talented professionals.

“ ECET² is the teacher revolution. We are **empowering teachers** in a way that hasn't happened. I don't think ever.”

—Jennifer Born
@Thunderbird1240

“ ECET² is a way to tap into a network of educators who are passionate and **at the top of their game.** [It] brings this type of educator together and creates the space where change can happen.”

—Joanne Wright

“ Since ECET² I've opened up my classrooms to people from the outside, meaning administrators, to walk in and observe me teach. Newspaper reporters came in to do an article on me. I'm much more open, more **willing to open up** my classroom and get out of those four walls.”

—Brent Balkaran
@BrentBalkaran

Meet an ECET² Teacher:

JESSICA WILLIE @jrwillie2783

Houston Independent School District, TX

How she connects: A Colleague Circle with fellow ECET² teachers Janette Barela (CO), Jenifer Born (FL) and Greg Mullenholz (MD).

Their innovation: An online professional development resource bank focused on developing student discourse.

What you can find there: Instructional strategies, videos that showcase practices, research, and more.

Her takeaway: “We made personal connections... We really bonded and connected through the project.”

See it live: www.sites.google.com/site/ecet2parabolas/

CON
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OR

DYNAMIC AND DIVERSE

ECET² teachers from around the U.S.

ECET² started with 300 teachers and has grown to 9,000-plus teachers. And it keeps growing — from California to Maine, from Florida to Montana! Across subjects and grades, ECET² teachers are connecting through their passion for teaching and their desire to broadly impact education. Read on to meet a few ECET² teachers:

Lilliana Gallo

Spanish and ESL teacher,
Alliance College-Ready Public Schools, CA

Committed teacher. Partner of families and communities; students' support system. Builder of strength, tenacity, and courage in students. And... chocolate lover!

Peter Haun @HaunPeter

ELA teacher, Oak Park School District, MI

Father, husband, and teacher. Lover of: food and fun; books, bikes, and backyards; beer or gin or wine. Biggest love: kids. His own — biologically and contractually. They need him *and he needs them!*

Ann Rose Santoro @Arsant10

Port Chester-Rye Union Free School District, NY

AKA the Teacher Whisperer, instructional coach, lifelong learner, Responsive Classroom consultant, and Gates Foundation Teacher Advisory Council member.





Doug Hodum @DougHodum

Science teacher, Mt. Blue School District, ME

Teacher and teacher leader, 2013 Hope Street Group National Teacher Fellow, former president of the Maine Science Teachers Association, Gates Foundation Teacher Advisory Council member, wearer of many hats, runner, occasional reader, and cook.

Marcus Walker

U.S. History and African American Music Studies teacher, Boston Public Schools, MA

Passionate music lover discovering and nurturing rhythm in schools, students, children, family, friends, and life.

Eric Russo @erusso78

Special Education, Prince George's County Public Schools, MD

Instructional Lead Teacher, Drew Freeman Middle School, ASCD Whole Child Network member, Gates Foundation Teacher Advisory Council member, father of three, husband of one.

Tanesha Dixon @tdixontweets

Social Studies teacher, District of Columbia Public Schools, Washington, DC

DC Public Schools teacher and Mary Jane Patterson Fellow. Passionate about teaching Social Studies, loves technology, aims to create global citizens.

Heidi Givens @heidigasl

K-12 teacher for deaf and hard-of-hearing students, Daviess County Public Schools, KY

Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, National Board Certified Teacher, National Interpreter Certification. Deaf children can do *anything* hearing children can, except hear!

Meet an ECET² Teacher:

SUZY BROOKS @SimplySuzy
Falmouth Public Schools, MA

Five ways to connect with Suzy

1. Check out her Technically Invisible Daily that supports technology integration into the classroom and her #ECET2 daily #SHOUTOUT on all things teacher leadership on Twitter.
2. Become one of her 16,000 followers on Pinterest to find elementary resources, reading strategies, and teaching videos.
3. Search for her guest pins on Edutopia, ASCD, and EdTechTeacher's Pinterest pages.
4. Read her blogs on teaching, technology, and teacher leadership at:
blogs.falmouth.k12.ma.us/simplysuzy/
5. Follow her on Twitter @SimplySuzy.

**BEL
BLOGGER**

MAKE YOUR OWN PATH

Each teacher holds unique expertise, experiences, passions, and ambitions for teacher leadership. Here's an example of the leadership pathways of two teachers. Where will your journey lead you?

Kim, Middle School Science

Years Teaching: 6

Tech Profile: Avid user of professional and social sites

School Community: Rural



Kim began her journey by connecting with other science teachers and teacher coaches through Twitter, Pinterest, and teacher leader blogs.



She then created a blog about teaching science and engaging students, while also launching a Twitter presence where she began tweeting out her weekly blog posts to her growing list of online connections.



Her regional district then went on to establish an instructional coach role and Kim was brought on as a part-time coach/part-time classroom teacher.



One of Kim's followers turned out to be an ECET² teacher and nominated her as a participant at the regional convening.



Kim then joined a Colleague Circle from the ECET² network.



Finally, Kim applied to LearnZillion's Dream Team to create science curricula and was accepted as a fellow.



The result was co-created middle school science lesson plans that seamlessly integrated literacy standards — they even made their lesson plans available online through Twitter and a blog. In addition to creating content for these spaces, Kim and her colleagues also proactively asked their growing network to share the work, to ensure it saw wide distribution among teachers.

Matthew, High School English Language Arts & Instructional Coach

Years teaching: 10

Tech Profile: As needed

School Community: Urban



A well-respected teacher in his school, Matthew was nominated by his principal to participate with a team of teachers and administrators in redesigning the high schools in the district.



After succeeding on some changes to policies but not all, Matthew became a member of Educators 4 Excellence and served on a policy team.

ECET²

Matthew went on to serve as part of the steering committee for his state's ECET² convening.



After successful implementation of the new high school model (in his role as part-time teacher/part-time instructional coach), Matthew testified to the state legislature on school master scheduling and graduation requirements.



Later that year, a colleague from Educators 4 Excellence nominated Matthew as an attendee to the national ECET² convening. There, Matthew presented on how to testify to legislators and influence policy.



He now blogs, tweets, and writes op-eds on education policy issues and their impact on students and the classroom.

LEADER

Meet an ECET² Teacher:

CHERYL REDFIELD @caredfield
Gilbert Public Schools, AZ

The 411 on Cheryl Redfield — Middle School teacher, tireless advocate, and knowledgeable policy maker

4 National Influencer Advocating on teacher leadership issues as the 2014–15 Teacherpreneur with the Center for Teaching Quality.

Impacted federal policies as a 2012 Teacher Ambassador Fellow to the U.S. Department of Education.

Helped the National Board revise the English Language Arts professional teaching standards as a committee member in 2010–11.

Assisted in developing a code of professional ethics for educators as a task force member for the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification.

1 State Leader Co-led the successful ECET² Arizona statewide convening.

1 District Innovator Co-designed her district's new teacher evaluation tool.

HOW DO I GET INVOLVED?

There's more than one way to connect with the ECET² community.

1) Join the #ECET2 conversation on Twitter.

Following #ECET2 or @ECET2NATL is a terrific — and quick — way to celebrate a success, voice a frustration, gather some advice, or get a virtual hug from teacher leader colleagues. As Arkansas ECET² teacher Jessica Wright told a Maryland colleague during the first ECET² chat, “Tweet one of us when you feel that way.”

- #ECET2 Twitter chats happen every Sunday night at 8pm EST during the school year. Hosted by New Jersey teacher Barry Saide and Illinois teacher Christopher Bronke, chats include special guests, teacher-selected topics, and advice and encouragement for leading change.
- New to Twitter? Learn about the power of the platform here: www.teachingquality.org/content/blogs/samantha-hulsman/using-power-twitter-learn-and-lead/

2) Attend a regional convening.

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation provides seed funding to organizers to bring ECET² convenings to their own communities. Regional convenings have the same guiding principles as the national conference but are organized by local teacher leaders; they are often looking for teachers to lead sessions or simply attend and learn more.

Requests for proposals (RFPs) are announced annually and you can find out if there is a regional ECET² being organized near you by checking this website: www.ECET2.org.

3) Get invited.

Want to go to a national ECET² convening? There are two ways to get invited: teachers who attend one are asked to recommend colleagues, and national teacher networks (many of them described in this booklet) can also recommend teachers. Recommended teachers stand out in their school or district for their passion and ability to get students to succeed. Connect with one of the teachers or networks in this book to find out more. If you do get invited, here's what you can expect:

- TED-like talks that celebrate teaching and the difference teachers make in the lives of their students.
- Colleague Circles, which are safe, confidential spaces for 8–10 teachers, defining how and when they work together and what topics to work on.
- Teacher-led, hands-on workshops that focus on developing leadership skills, classroom innovations, and risk-taking.
- A community of peers to help you tackle the challenges you face in the classroom each and every day.

Meet an ECET² Teacher:

ANTHONY MARSHALL

Tulsa Public Schools, OK

Dreamer, risk-taker, and leader

His dream: To teach.

His chance: Left a 20-year law career in Washington, DC, to become an Oklahoma history teacher.

His leadership: Increased the number of students of color who take AP History, and increased the exam passage rate.

Founded the Hornet Ambassador Program, the Men of Power male achievement program, and the summer reading program for incoming 9th graders at his school.

Served as a member of Tulsa's education policy summit and helped build public support for reversing Oklahoma's repeal of the Common Core.

One risk: Singing in front of 400-plus colleagues at the 2014 ECET² convening!

Most memorable line: "If I can help one student as they pass along, then my teaching shall not be in vain."

DREAMER

FOUR WAYS TO LEAD

Examples from ECET² teachers

1) Don't leave the classroom.

A growing number of districts and unions are working together to create new “official” leadership roles for teachers. In these roles, teachers stay in the classroom, collaborating with and leading colleagues through in-class modeling, facilitating professional development and coaching new or struggling teachers, or acting as teacher fellows and teachers on special assignment for district or state initiatives. Find out what your school or district offers — or propose your own leadership role!

Teachers who lead: *Ann Rose Santoro of Port Chester, NY, serves as a district teacher coach and a New York State Common Core Ambassador. William Anderson is a Social Studies teacher and teacher effectiveness coach at Martin Luther King Jr. Early College in Denver, CO.*

2) Why wait for someone to tell you what the next big innovation is?

Some of the most powerful teacher learning that leads to change in schools happens organically — when a teacher identifies a specific learning need, seeks out a successful strategy that addresses the need, and shares it with colleagues.

Teachers who lead: *Marcus Walker of Excel High School in Boston read about an innovative writing program and introduced the idea to a few colleagues. They then traveled to a high school in Staten Island to observe the program in action and attend training. When they returned, Marcus and his colleagues engaged other teachers in his department and are now helping other departments at his school use the program. From one article, Marcus led a school-wide change.*

3) Why not think bigger than your school?

Teachers often step into leadership by creating their own opportunities. Ask yourself: What supports or opportunities do the students in my school or community need? What solutions do I have and how could I implement them?

Teachers who lead: *Ashleigh Ferguson in Long Beach, CA, developed a mentoring program for foster care students that was adopted by her district.*

4) What's beyond your district?

Use professional and social connections to organize your own informal network.

Teachers who lead: *Teachers, like the ones who started the National Blogging Collaborative or who launched Educators 4 Excellence, are seeing a national need and then creating their own spaces and leadership roles.*

While these examples make it look easy, organically leading professional learning in one's school and district does take time, energy, will, and skill. It means engaging colleagues and “managing up” with administrators. But the potential upside is invaluable.

Meet a Community:

SHOUT OUT!

The National Blogging Collaborative

Telling stories and sharing expertise publicly — outside of trusted circles of other teachers — can be intimidating. As a solution, ECET² teachers launched a terrific resource for peers to find and nurture their teacher voice: the National Blogging Collaborative. Although focused on blogging, their tools and advice could be used in different ways to share your ideas and expertise.

Born from their conversation at a 2014 national ECET² convening, the National Blogging Collaborative was cofounded by Illinois teacher Christopher Bronke, Pennsylvania teacher Lisa Hollenbach and Washington teacher Brooke Perry. Their goal? To cultivate and support the capacity of all educators to use their unique voice to elevate the craft of teaching and learning.

While focused on blogging, Christopher Bronke's advice to teachers for "why write" applies to editorials, legislative testimonials, presentations, and more.

Why write?

1. Because I don't know what I don't know until I write about it.
2. Because my words are my kids.
3. Because teachers need to do a better job of self-promoting.
4. Because it makes me a better model for my students.
5. Because it is fun!

Check it out at:

www.nationalbloggingcollaborative.com

NETWORKS BEYOND ECET²

Inspiration and opportunities from ECET² teachers

Interested in instruction and curriculum? Take a look at the videos, posts, and resources from teacher leaders on the Teaching Channel.

www.teachingchannel.org

Want to see what teacher innovation and collaborating around “bold ideas” look like? Check out Teach Plus bloggers on the Huffington Post or teacher postings on the Collaboratory, hosted by the Center for Teaching Quality.

www.huffingtonpost.com/teach-plus/
www.teachingquality.org/collaboratory/

For examples of teachers shaping policy, follow teacher leader blogs on the Hope Street Group’s website.

www.hopestreetwork.org/blog/

Find out what State Teachers of the Year are saying. Read their reflections and strategies.

www.nnstoy.org

ASCD: EMERGING LEADERS

Opportunity: Each year ASCD selects and engages an active, powerful cadre of teachers to support in becoming influencers and leaders.

Focus: Emerging Leaders participate in their areas of interest: influencing policy and legislation, advising ASCD in practice areas and at the executive level locally and nationally, starting ASCD chapters, facilitating professional development, or writing for ASCD.

Learn more: www.ascd.org/programs/Emerging-Leaders/Emerging-Leaders.aspx/

BETTERLESSON: MASTER TEACHER PROJECT

Opportunity: Through the Master Teacher Project, BetterLesson selects and engages expert teachers in designing curriculum in specific content areas.

Focus: To provide supports and create teacher networks that engage selected teachers in documenting and sharing their work and resources. Past MTPs include work in ELA, Math, Science, and Blended Learning.

Learn more: www.betterlesson.com/public/opportunities/

“ Teacher leadership might look different in different places. I wanted to explore this idea with other Arizona teachers. What are the various opportunities for teacher leadership? How do we lead and affect change without stepping away from our classrooms? You don’t have to go in front of the state senate to be leading as educator. If you are doing curriculum work with your district, that is being a teacher leader. If you are working closely with administrators on school policy, you are being a teacher leader.

—Kristie Martorelli,
ECET² participant and
co-leader of ECET²
@azstoykristie

CENTER FOR TEACHING QUALITY (CTQ): TEACHERPRENEURS

Opportunity: CTQ collaborates with schools and districts to implement teacherpreneur roles — expert teachers whose workweeks are divided between teaching students, and designing systems-level solutions for public education.

Focus: To provide supports, resources, and a network for teacherpreneurs, as well as for their schools and districts. Teacherpreneurs design solutions to agreed-upon needs (for example, curriculum development and instructional innovations, new evaluation systems or community/school partnerships).

Learn more: www.teachingquality.org/teacherpreneurs/

EDUCATORS 4 EXCELLENCE: TEACHER POLICY TEAMS

Opportunity: Educators 4 Excellence is a teacher-led organization that seeks to include teacher voice in the creation of policies that shape their classrooms and careers.

Focus: Through E4E Teacher Policy Teams, teachers have a unique opportunity to write and advocate on an issue affecting the teaching profession and student outcomes in their district.

Learn more: www.educators4excellence.org/teacher-policy-teams/

HOPE STREET GROUP: STATE AND NATIONAL FELLOWS

Opportunity: The State Teacher Fellowship engages teachers as local spokespeople for educators' ideas and perspectives.

The National Teacher Fellowship helps educators learn new skills and provides them with the tools they need to advocate for national policy changes.

Focus: State Fellows develop understanding of state reform efforts, learn media skills, and receive support in writing blog posts, op-eds, and letters to the editor. They meet directly with state policymakers to present educator-generated solutions.

National Fellows work with teacher, district, and state leaders to develop strategic, practical solutions to public policy challenges. Fellows meet with U.S. legislators and national policy leaders to propose ideas.

Learn more: www.hopestreetgroup.org/impact/education/teacher-fellowships/

LEARNZILLON: DREAM TEAM

Opportunity: Each year LearnZillion selects great teachers to design high quality curricula for its teacher resources site.

Focus: Dream Team teachers engage in a collaborative process of creating, curating, and sharing high-quality resources for use with students.

Learn more: www.learnzillion.com/dreamteam/

LITERACY DESIGN COLLABORATIVE: LDC EXPERT TEACHER

Opportunity: The LDC engages experienced teachers in designing and sharing literacy-saturated assignments and instruction in all subject areas.

Focus: Teachers gain leadership experience in curriculum design and have opportunities to become online contributors, coaches, and members of the national jurying team that provides feedback to colleagues and selects exemplary materials.

Learn more: www ldc.org

NATIONAL BOARD: NATIONAL BOARD TEACHERS

Opportunity: The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards engages, selects, and supports teachers in obtaining national certification — the highest professional recognition for their teaching expertise and accomplishments. Additionally, Board partners, states, and districts often provide teachers with financial supports and incentives, resources, and networks of colleagues that support each other.

Focus: Through a rigorous process, teachers hone their practice, showcase their talent in the classroom, and demonstrate their dedication to their students and their profession to obtain national recognition of their expertise and accomplishments.

Learn more: www.boardcertifiedteachers.org

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION: TEACHING AMBASSADOR FELLOWS

Opportunity: The U.S. Department of Education's Teaching Ambassador Fellowship is designed to improve education by involving teachers in the development and implementation of national education policy.

Focus: The Fellowship seeks to create a community of teacher leaders who share expertise and collaborate with policymakers and leaders in the federal government on national education issues.

Learn more: www2.ed.gov/programs/teacherfellowship/

TEACH PLUS: POLICY FELLOWS & T3 TEACHER LEADERS

Opportunity: The Teaching Policy Fellowship supports teachers in leading change in their district, state, and unions through a partnership with the National Education Association.

T3 (Turnaround Teacher Teams) engages experienced, effective teachers as a team in high-needs schools to learn, lead, and collaborate to improve teacher practice and outcomes.

Focus: Teach Plus Policy Fellows commit to a two-year program in which they engage in online and in-person workshops to hone their leadership skills and learn tools to help them lead change. For the T3 Teacher Leader program, Teach Plus partners closely with schools for a 2–3 year cycle to engage a teacher team in designing and sustaining systems and structures in their school to support ongoing student achievement.

Learn more: www.teachplus.org

“ I really had no intention of doing the things that I've done since being involved in ECET², but somehow it gives you a sense that you need to speak up and you need to make your voice part of the reform and it's not okay just to sit back... And I think just being around other teachers and being told that you do matter gives you the power to do that. So all of our professional development in Brevard County is now teacher-led thanks to the reforms that have come about from ECET². It's incredible. And Florida is on fire with ECET². It really is.”

—Jill Whitacre,
National ECET² participant,
FL ECET² participant,
steering committee for
ECET² Brevard County, FL

**Join the community
conversation by following
#ECET2 or @ECET2NATL**