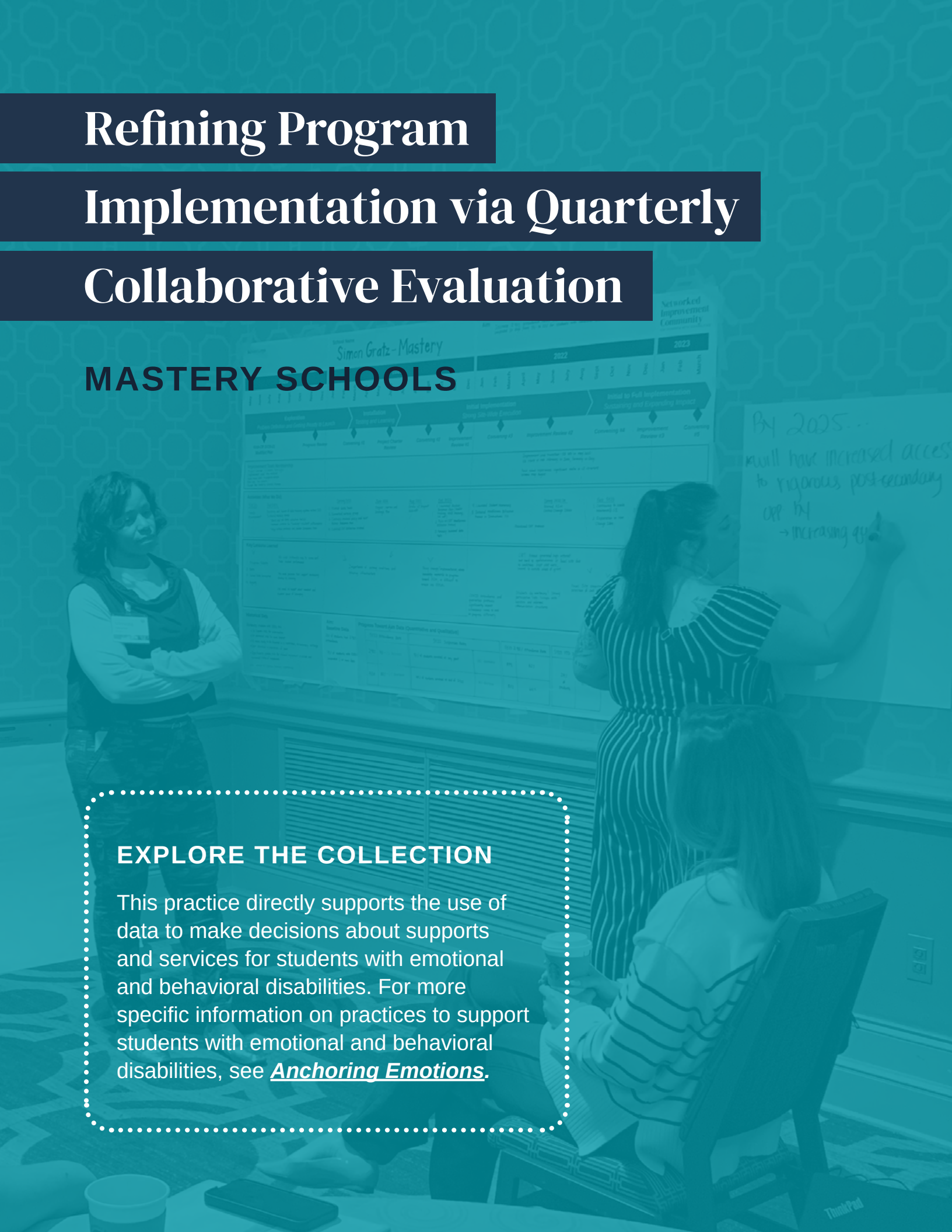
# Refining Program Implementation via Quarterly Collaborative Evaluation

## MASTERY SCHOOLS




### EXPLORE THE COLLECTION

This practice directly supports the use of data to make decisions about supports and services for students with emotional and behavioral disabilities. For more specific information on practices to support students with emotional and behavioral disabilities, see ***Anchoring Emotions***.

# Snapshot

## WHAT IS THE PRACTICE?

On a quarterly basis, network leadership and campus leaders collaboratively conduct observations and review data against a multi-phase rubric to evaluate the effectiveness of program implementation and develop prioritized goals for improvement.

## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

- Networks with multiple schools need systems and processes to ensure fidelity and quality of program implementation, particularly for programs like Anchor.
- Across a network, outcomes can vary for students based on the way programs are implemented. This variation in outcomes may be even greater for students with disabilities and those in emotional support programs.
- Networks need ways to identify positive examples of programs and determine how to allocate resources to ensure students are well served. Networks can measure programs against these exemplars and use them to devise action plans for program improvement.
- Importantly, program improvement using a variety of data sources on an ongoing basis helps improve the academic, social-emotional, and behavioral learning that students experience.
- Networks can use data from program evaluation to inform network-level support, coaching, and professional development.

[1] van Geel, Marieke, Trynke Keuning, Adrie J. Visscher, and Paul Fox. "Assessing the Effects of a School-Wide Data-Based Decision-Making Intervention on Student Achievement Growth in Primary Schools." American Educational Research Journal 53, no. 2 (2016): 360–394. https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831216637346



# The Challenge

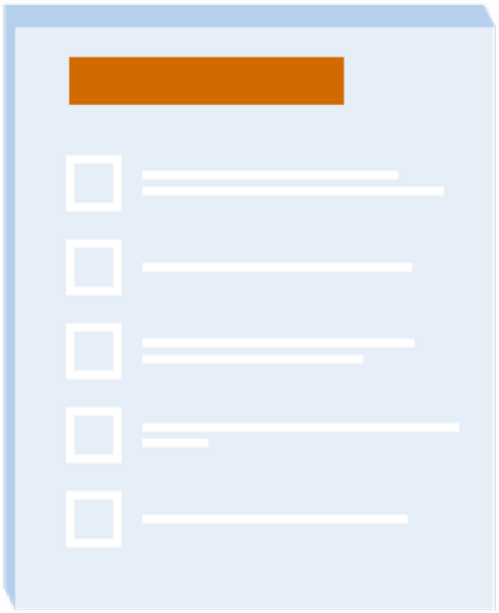
## Ensuring High-Quality Programming Across the Mastery Network

Mastery Schools created the Anchor program to provide an educational environment where students with emotional and behavioral disabilities can explicitly learn skills that meet their IEP goals. Mastery created Anchor to be a supportive setting that can flexibly increase the amount of time students receive education in general education classrooms. To accomplish this, Anchor has multiple levels of programmatic support and intervention, ranging from students receiving direct support for 20% of their day to others receiving support for more than half the day when needed. Mastery now offers Anchor programming at each of their secondary campuses.

School-level program directors need to ensure that the skills students are working to master align with their IEP goals, that staffing is adequate to provide various levels of support and education for those skills, and that students have the necessary reinforcement and opportunities to master them. Mastery's network-level director for Anchor needs to oversee program implementation fidelity and student outcomes across campuses so that all students in Anchor programs receive a high-quality program. To make this possible, Mastery needed a valid and reliable way to monitor program effectiveness, provide feedback on strengths and growth areas, and provide targeted support for each school's Anchor program.

# The Practice

## Using a Program-Specific Rubric to Identify Areas of Strength and Need



To keep the Anchor program consistent in implementation and outcomes for students, the Mastery network team developed a "**Must Haves"** rubric. The rubric is aligned with the Anchor program components that are essential for students to experience the program's full benefits. The Must Haves show that the program is implementing each component as intended. The rubric also pushes each school's program to progress from meeting minimum expectations — referred to as Phase 1 on the rubric — to a higher level of implementation that can result in the best outcomes for students — the rubric's Phase 2. The table on the following page presents each Must Haves component and what it shows about the implementation.

## Mastery Schools Anchor Program Must Haves Rubric Components

| Rubric Component | Must Haves Show |
|---|---|
| Schedule & Staffing | There is intentionality given to both student and staff schedules; staffing and schedules allow student programming to be responsive based on data trends and needs. |
| Goal Alignment & Progress Monitoring | Student programming is data-driven and aligned. Students' present levels of need drive the SAM skills they are working on, the behavioral feedback they are receiving, and the IEP goals being progress-monitored. When students' needs change, programming adjusts accordingly and is accurately documented. |
| SAM Skills | SAM skills are the foundation of the Anchor program and visible to all stakeholders. SAM skills are aligned to student needs and at the forefront of student development. |
| Data Collection & Point Card | Student data is front and center, and Kickboard/Point Card is the system to ensure strong data collection. The Kickboard/Point data allows staff/student to reflect on student performance during the daily conference. This data will be used to reinforce student behavior through a token economy. Archived data provides longitudinal data to analyze trends over time. |
| Behavioral Feedback | Behavioral Feedback is the evidence-based intervention that we use to change student behavior. We use the intervention with fidelity across all settings. |
| Behavioral Escalation Response Plan | Trained professionals are available and skilled at supporting our students during all phases of the Crisis Development Model. Those trained professionals have a school-normed process and designated area(s) where this support occurs. Professionals will manage students' surface behaviors in order to maximize their time spent learning in the classroom. |
| Level System | Multiple data points are consistently collected, analyzed, and responded to in an effort to provide appropriate support and reinforcement to students based on trends in their skill acquisition. Student's level is a reflection of their current performance and demonstrates the level of adult support and therapeutic programming that is required for the student to be successful. |
| Safety Planning & Therapeutic Holds | In the rare instance when a student in the Anchor program is displaying significant risk behavior(s), members of the Anchor team have both the skills and resources to ensure student safety 100% of the time. |
| Daily Skills Class | Students in the Anchor program receive social and emotional skill development through a daily skills class in order to promote the transition of skill acquisition across multiple settings. Curriculum should be aligned with SAM skills and adjusted to meet trends and students' skill development needs. Participation is based on the student performance data (student Level and behavioral goal growth). |
| Individual Counseling | Students receive quality school-based counseling as a related service based on their individual needs. Counseling goals are aligned with the students' IEP goals and should be determined by the IEP team by referencing assessment data, observation data, and performance data. |
| Small Therapeutic Groups | Small therapeutic groups (STG) are readily available to all students within the Anchor program and are strategically and effectively used to address targeted student needs. |

At Mastery's Simon Gratz High School in Philadelphia, Veronica Koff manages all of these pieces with expertise. Her network-level manager, Ann McKetta, helps her keep the program improving through regular meetings to evaluate the program's health and determine what types of campus support and ongoing professional development are needed. Ann and Veronica meet quarterly to document artifacts and analyze data demonstrating how Anchor is being implemented using the Must Haves rubric. This routine allows Veronica and Ann to set goals for Gratz's program together and ensure the best outcomes for students.

## Collecting Data Across the Program

The quarterly meetings provide the school and network leaders opportunities to gather data across Anchor's whole program for measurement against the rubric's criteria. To gather evidence on the school's performance on the program components, Veronica leads Ann through various Anchor program spaces to observe and collect data together.

For example, during a recent third-quarter visit to the school, Veronica and Ann focused on Gratz's current performance on Goal Alignment & Progress Monitoring. Ann could see that Gratz had not yet set up systems to conduct ongoing progress monitoring three or more times per quarter and therefore was performing at Phase 1 of Goal Alignment (see the table on the following page for rubric details). In their walkthrough debrief, Ann and Veronica used their observation data to develop a plan for how Gratz could progress toward Phase 2 on the program component.

As Gratz implements the plan, Veronica can ask Ann to come back at any time to observe the changes they have made, rather than waiting for the next quarter's formal observations.



Mastery Schools

## Program Component: Goal Alignment & Progress Monitoring

Student programming is data-driven and aligned. Students' present levels of need drive the SAM skills they are working on, the behavioral feedback they are receiving, and the IEP goals being progress-monitored. When students' needs change, programming adjusts accordingly and is accurately documented.

| PHASE 1 | PHASE 1 LOOK FORS |
|---|---|
| • 1 or more student behavioral goals in the student's IEP are aligned to a target SAM skill and accurately represent frequency and type of data collection.<br>• Students in Anchor have one or two relevant and aligned behavioral goals listed in CMSAT. | ☐ Audit 3–5 current IEPs and look for each IEP to have 1+ IEP goals aligned to SAM skill(s); confirm student is receiving consistent BF on those skills via Kickboard.<br>☐ Review Cognos - Case Manager Student Achievement Detail Report and confirm all students in Anchor have 1–2 SAM skills listed for behavior. |
| **PHASE 2** | **PHASE 2 LOOK FORS** |
| • If/when a student requires the addition/ removal of a SAM skill based on current need, programming and documentation is adjusted to reflect those changes.<br>• Anchor team members are utilizing appropriate progress monitoring tools to collect progress monitoring data a minimum of 3x per report period | ☐ Provide evidence of objective progress monitoring data collected at 3 intervals throughout current and/or previous report period.<br>☐ Student "Target" SAM skill is aligned across all areas: Eschools, IEP, CMSAT, and Kickboard. |

*The Goal Alignment & Progress Monitoring criteria of Anchor's Must Haves rubric with Phase 1 criteria at the top and Phase 2 at the bottom of the table.*

# Looking for Areas of Growth

During each quarterly meeting, Ann and Veronica look for places where there are opportunities for growth or for greater focus on a component of the program. First, they look for program fidelity, that is, whether the Must Haves are present (Phase 1). Then they work toward program quality (Phase 2). Gratz's program has already met Phase 1 expectations across most of the program components, so when Veronica and Ann meet, they look down and across the entire rubric to find components where the program is not yet at Phase 2.



## Adding Context to the Data

Ann and Veronica review the observation data and discuss questions based on their observations. Using both their observation data and quantitative data from the program, they align on what they believe to be the program's strengths and areas for improvement. This is also an opportunity for Veronica to discuss barriers that she and the program are experiencing.

At the example visit described above, the pair also used rubric components to examine how Veronica was reviewing and using behavioral feedback data collected in Kickboard to make programmatic decisions. (Read ***Providing Timely Behavioral Feedback Across Classrooms*** to learn more about this practice.) Together, they pulled up Gratz's behavioral feedback data to see how the team and individual counselors were implementing the program. By looking at the frequency of positive and learning feedback, they could identify trends in what feedback is given, and in which settings, that might indicate areas for program improvement. On this occasion, the data led them to examine the coaching Veronica was providing. Veronica had been reviewing each counselor's feedback before checking in one-on-one. Coaching meetings were focused on ensuring that counselors provided adequate feedback to students and used the feedback scripts that increased consistency across the staff. Through the data, Ann and Veronica discovered that the Gratz counselors would benefit from additional coaching to work on the quality of the behavioral feedback they give students specifically related to discrete skill development and giving praise. This discovery led Veronica to train the Anchor team on how to better identify skills and effectively use behavioral feedback scripts to give praise.

### Making Use of Data to Drive Program Improvement

The Anchor program has a substantial amount of data that staff use to evaluate the program's health and identify goals for improvement. The team sees all of the data, both qualitative and quantitative, as valuable.

- Call logs (between school leaders, teachers, and Anchor staff)
- Leveling reports (behavioral feedback points, infractions, and attendance)
- Calm Corner logs
- De-escalation Room log
- Student information system (grades, behavioral feedback from Kickboard)
- Student perception survey
- Daily conferences during cashout
- Behavioral feedback points (ratio of positive to negative feedback, with the goal of 5:1; timing of feedback, with the goal of every 7 min.; notes on class and opportunity)
- Phone calls home

## Making Plans for Improvement

After analyzing the data at each visit, Ann and Veronica devise a plan to reach their improvement goals, and they discuss how they will measure improvement.

In the example visit, for the goal of improving the behavioral feedback students receive, the pair came up with a few specific action steps that Veronica could take going forward:

- Train staff on the quality of discrete skill feedback.
- Have staff implement discrete skill feedback.
- Monitor data at the staff and student levels in Kickboard.

To measure the effect of these changes, they would look at:

- the change in the frequency of interactions and
- the change in the quality of interactions.

By analyzing quantitative and qualitative data, they will be able to discern how effective the action steps were and understand how to improve for better results going forward. They will also be able to see whether the focus on this component of the rubric makes a difference to the implementation of the behavioral feedback program and, ultimately, student outcomes.

From the quarterly program evaluation visits, Ann also accumulates data that she can bring back to her team at the network. She reviews Gratz's rubric along with those from Mastery's other Anchor programs to prioritize areas of support for program implementation and drive decisions for the types of support and coaching each program needs to receive. Ann can determine whether program directors, counselors, or school administrators need additional training or other resources in order to implement Anchor with quality and fidelity across the network.

# The Impact

## Using Data to Drive Program Improvement Across Schools

The Anchor Must Haves rubric drives goal setting and focus areas for progress for program staff. While the data helps identify areas for program improvement at each school, it can also be analyzed at the network level to ensure programmatic alignment across Anchor campuses in the Mastery network. Over time, Mastery has been able to improve the Anchor program design, fidelity, and quality across their network to better educate students with emotional and behavioral disabilities.

**FURTHER LEARNING**

**Successful K–12 Program Implementation Toolkit**

HANOVER RESEARCH

**Program Evaluation**

THE VIRTUAL LAB SCHOOL

**To learn more about how emotional support programs can help you improve learning outcomes for students with disabilities, see *Anchoring Emotions*.**

***Mastery Schools*** *serves approximately 14,000 students in grades K–12 across Philadelphia, PA, and Camden, NJ. The focal school for the practice was Mastery Simon Gratz High School in Philadelphia.*

*Mastery Schools is a part of the* ***Marshall Street Networked Improvement Community,*** *a three-year intentional community of 10 public charter school networks nationwide aiming to make dramatic gains for Black and Latinx students with disabilities experiencing poverty. Collectively, the 10 networks identified over 20 best practices that improve learning outcomes and school culture for students positioned furthest from opportunity. Learn more* here.