

January 2026

# American Public Schools and the Great Opportunity

## TNTP's Strategy to Transform Education



# Contents

**A Message from the CEO** 3

**A Shift Toward Access and Capability** 4

**Our Goal** 6

**A Deep Dive into Our Priorities**

Building a Coherent Student Experience 9

Bridging the Gap Between Education and Career 12

Harnessing AI for Human Potential 15

**Where to Start** 21

**Appendix: Our Work in Action** 22

# A Message from the CEO

TNTP has spent almost three decades helping expand access to opportunity—putting better teachers in classrooms, strengthening schools, and opening more pathways to college. That important work has delivered meaningful gains for millions of young people, but I no longer believe that's enough. Too often, even when they have access to opportunities, our young people leave our education systems without the capability to shape their lives and contribute meaningfully to their communities. That gap between access and capability is the defining challenge facing American education.

The social contract that has held for generations—hard work, a degree, a path to stability—has quietly broken. Millennials became the most educated generation in American history and also the most economically precarious. Gen Z is following the same path: more credentials, less security.

The young people in schools today are telling us they need something different. Chronic absenteeism has surged. They are disengaging, not because they don't care, but because what we are offering does not connect to a future they can see or trust. That realization is shaping TNTP's next chapter.

**Our new strategy is designed to hold access and capability together and build the solutions required to deliver both at scale.**

This strategy extends rather than replaces our core work—strengthening access while ensuring it translates into real long-term mobility for young people. Our ambition is clear and measurable: to put 50 million young people on a path to economic and social mobility by 2035.

This work cannot be done by any one organization alone. It requires educators, system leaders, partners, and communities to rethink what student preparation means and to build conditions that will make it possible. Fifty million young people are counting on us—on all of us.

The moment is here. Let's rise together to meet it.

In solidarity,

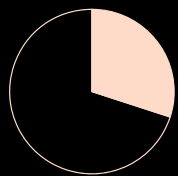


*Tequilla Brownie*

**Dr. Tequilla Brownie**  
CEO, TNTP

# A Shift Toward Access *and* Capability

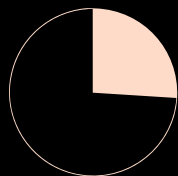
These days, young people are earning degrees and diplomas at record rates, but too many of them graduate unable to secure meaningful work or choose their own futures. This happens not only because they lack academic preparation but also because they're missing other essential ingredients: the chance to build relevant, future-ready skills, connections that open doors to opportunity, and guidance to navigate critical decisions.



## Reading Proficiency

**31%**

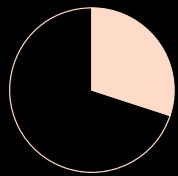
of 8th graders scored at or above Proficient in Reading.



## Math Proficiency

**26%**

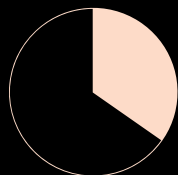
of 8th graders scored at or above Proficient in Mathematics.



## Individual Agency

**30%**

of young people report feeling prepared for their chosen path.



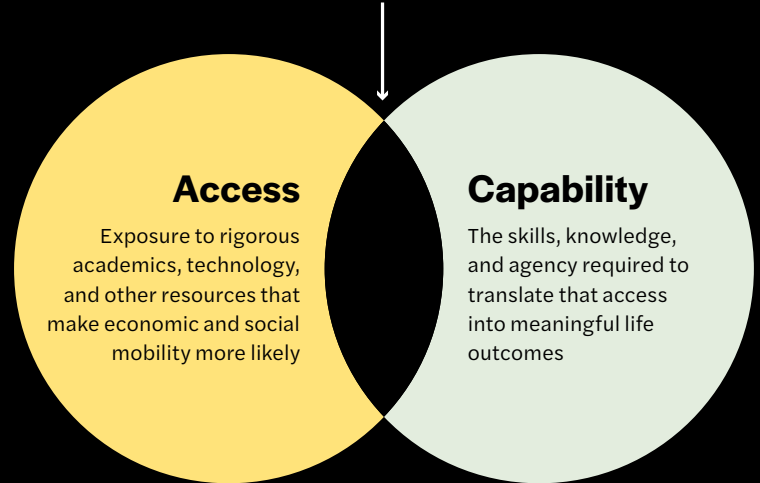
## Career Readiness

**34%**

of students believe they'll graduate ready for the job market.

Sources: [2024 Nation's Report Card](#); [Gallup, Walton Family Foundation & Jobs for the Future](#), [Strada Education Network & Gallup, 2017 College Student Survey](#).

## Unlocking Mobility



### Access

Exposure to rigorous academics, technology, and other resources that make economic and social mobility more likely

### Capability

The skills, knowledge, and agency required to translate that access into meaningful life outcomes

## Access to rigorous academics remains foundational.

College and other postsecondary pathways matter enormously. But today's young people are entering a world that demands more than access alone can deliver. They also need the capability to apply learning in unfamiliar situations, exercise discernment when there is no clear right answer, and adapt as circumstances change.

## Nationwide, the current state of academic performance is abysmal.

In 2024, just 26 percent of eighth graders in Math and 31 percent in Reading scored at or above proficient on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Disparities in performance are firmly set along lines of race, class, and geography, and the gaps between the highest and lowest performing students continue to grow.

Our research in *Paths of Opportunity* showed that students growing up in poverty who did well in school still ended up earning no more at age 30 than the average student who was simply born into a more affluent family. Additionally, only 30 percent of high school graduates reported feeling prepared for their chosen career path, a clear signal that we must overhaul not only how we're approaching academics but also how we're equipping students to navigate a path to their future.

## Economic Mobility Shouldn't Be a Game of Chance

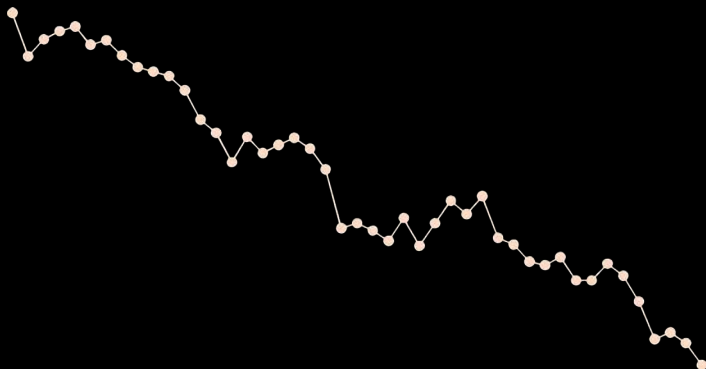
In 1940, 90 percent of children grew up to earn more than their parents. By the 1980s, just 50 percent did. For more than four decades, mobility has been stuck at that same level, making economic security a coin toss for everyone. No one's children are exempt from that game of chance.

Technology didn't create this gap. But it has exposed it, accelerated it, and raised the stakes for an entire generation. Closing it means delivering both access and capability together. TNTP's new strategy is critical to ensure that all young people are future-ready. They can't wait, and neither can we.

### Percent of Children Earning More than their Parents

Those born in 1940

**90%**



Those born in 1985

**50%**

Source: [Opportunity Insights: The Fading American Dream: Trends in Absolute Income Mobility Since 1940](#).



Students arrive at a community meeting.



First-grade students use movement to stay engaged during morning reading.

## Our Goal

# Preparing 50 million young people for meaningful work and meaningful lives by 2035

It's time to redesign public education around a single unifying principle: every young person deserves preparation for meaningful work and a meaningful life. Not one or the other. Both. We envision 50 million young people—an entire generation—leaving school prepared for the lives they're actually going to live. Not just counted as graduates or marked by credentials. But equipped to handle complexity, make informed choices, and keep learning long after school ends.

Our strategy is built on interdependence: three strategic pillars that define where we're headed and a set of priorities that drive how we get there. Each is connected to the others, because at this scale, nothing succeeds in isolation. Together, they will transform how public education prepares young people for the future. If we succeed, we reshape what's possible for all young people for decades to come.

## Three Levels of Impact

Lasting change requires supporting students directly, strengthening the systems around them, and aligning national priorities. We work across all three levels because they are interdependent.



### Thriving Ecosystems

Schools, communities, and partners come together to open doors to satisfying, high-wage, in-demand careers and lifelong opportunities for all young people.

### Thriving Learners

Every young person discovers their strengths, succeeds academically, and develops real-world capabilities to shape their own future.



### Thriving Nation

Our country grows stronger when everyone works together—guided by bold ideas and shared commitment—to help the next generation thrive.



A student leads a group discussion on opportunities in their community.

## Priorities Guiding Our Work

TNTP's priorities are our starting point for expanding what public education must deliver. To drive outsized impact, we will:

### **Build a coherent student experience**

We will provide young people with seamless, high-quality learning experiences that accelerate academic growth and future readiness.

### **Bridge the gap between education and career**

We will work across sectors—public, private, civic, and corporate—to provide young people with multiple pathways to high-wage careers.

### **Harness AI for human potential**

We will leverage technology to strengthen instruction, support educators, and expand access to opportunity.



A middle school teacher listens to his student.

## Strategic Priority Deep Dive

# Building a Coherent Student Experience

In *Paths of Opportunity*, TNTP identified five interconnected factors that shape how young people can thrive now and in the future. A strong academic foundation is critical, but it is not enough on its own to guarantee mobility or success in adulthood. Students also need clear connections between their learning and real-world work and careers; access to social capital through relationships and networks that open doors and provide guidance; personalized support grounded in their aspirations; and a sense of civic identity and belonging that anchors them in their communities.

When these elements work together, they have transformative power. Too often, however, they are fragmented—treated as add-ons, pilots, or siloed initiatives rather than as connected components of a student’s daily experience. Career exploration may occur outside the school day. Advising may be disconnected from what students are learning in class. Intervention may unintentionally pull students away from grade-level work rather than help them access it. Students who most need support may encounter different content, strategies, or standards across core instruction, intervention, tutoring, and extended learning time, undermining acceleration and creating confusion.

The core challenge is not a lack of promising programs or committed educators. It is a lack of coherence. Without coherence, even well-intentioned efforts compete for time and attention, making it harder for students to benefit and harder for educators to deliver.

When systems create coherent experiences for every student, by contrast, young people move through school with a seamless, connected set of learning opportunities that are academically strong, clearly aligned, and intentionally designed to support long-term mobility and opportunity. Coherent systems intentionally align policies, schedules, staffing, materials, and data so educators can reinforce, not compete with, grade-level learning across every instructional setting.

When systems are designed this way, the structures surrounding classrooms enable strong teaching and learning. Instructional coherence becomes possible at scale, ensuring that additional support helps students access rigorous content, and every learning minute contributes to meaningful academic progress.

Instructional coherence means aligning instruction, content, and goals across all learning spaces—from core instruction to intervention and other academic supports—so that all students engage in, and are actively prepared for, grade-level learning.

# How TNTP Builds Coherence

A coherent student experience occurs when:

1

Every student receives **strong instruction and grade-level work** every day, along with the support they need to tackle it.

2

**Instruction, content, and goals are aligned across all learning spaces**—from core instruction to intervention and other academic supports.

3

Students **explore careers, build relevant skills, and receive targeted support** as part of the school day.

4

Everyone from the statehouse to the classroom (policymakers, system and school leaders, teachers, tutors, counselors) **work from the same playbook toward the same goals**.

Our hypothesis is that if students receive these experiences and supports, academic achievement will soar, gaps will close, and students will be more prepared for postsecondary opportunities.

Over the next three years, TNTP will make meaningful progress on ensuring a coherent experience for all students by supporting states, districts, and schools with the following work:

## Executing an instructionally coherent vision for academic success

Through our field research and consulting practice, we will support systems to ensure every student receives access to high-quality materials and strong instruction that is aligned across core instruction, and any additional academic supports or interventions students receive.

## Ensuring students are prepared for postsecondary success

We will support our system- and school-level partners to design and deliver rigorous and relevant career-connected experiences and content, opportunities for students to build social capital, and personalized and targeted supports throughout their educational journeys.

## Designing for systems coherence

We will support our partners to ground their work in a vision for academic success and mobility and then to set up the systems to align policies, teams, resources, data, and accountability to that vision. TNTP will support our partners with both vertical alignment from the system-level to the classroom as well as horizontal alignment across teams and divisions within any given level of the system—along with the change management necessary to ensure all parties are rowing in the same direction toward a vision for student success.

## Case Study

# A Coherent Approach to Early Literacy in Rural Missouri

## Strengthening the Early Literacy Workforce

The Missouri Rural Schools Early Literacy Collaborative includes two interconnected work streams that together create coherence across the full ecosystem of early literacy instruction. First, to strengthen the state's pipeline for literacy coaches, TNTP is partnering with a local university to develop an early literacy coaching certificate aligned to state requirements and the science of reading. Second, TNTP directly coaches 50 K–1 teachers while simultaneously building the capacity of school administrators to sustain and scale the work over years to come.

## Early Results: Dramatic Gains in K–1 Literacy

After the first year of coaching support in kindergarten and first grade, the growth in these Missouri schools was striking. In Dent-Phelps R-3 Schools in Salem, the percentage of first graders reading at grade level soared from 25.5 percent to 89.4 percent between fall and spring in the 2024-25 school year. In Newburg Elementary School, 100 percent of kindergarten and first grade students demonstrated growth on reading assessments, making gains that, on average, doubled typical annual growth rates. As a result of this aligned approach—linking preparation, practice, and leadership—the state has asked TNTP to replicate this coaching model across 60 schools.

# 250%+

increase in  
grade-level reading

First-grade proficiency rose from 25.5% ➔ 89.4% in a single year.



Strategic Priority Deep Dive

Students apply new skills in their career-connected learning program.

# Bridging the Gap Between Education and Career

Across the country, young people are navigating an economy that is changing faster than our education systems. Work-based learning, dual enrollment, and career pathways are associated with [higher graduation rates](#), [increased postsecondary success](#), and [higher earnings](#), yet only about [one-third](#) of high school students participate. Students of color and students from low-income communities tend to have decreased access to those career-connected experiences. More than [4 million young people](#) aged 16-24 are neither in school nor working, and millions more are employed in jobs that do not pay a living wage. At the same time, employers struggle to find workers with needed skills, even as they shift toward skills-based hiring and away from degree-only requirements.

These gaps are not just individual challenges; they are systemic failures. Too many students graduate having done “everything right”—earning strong grades, completing requirements, even gaining credentials—only to discover that their education has not prepared them for a viable path toward a high-wage, high-demand career. Bridging education and career is essential to ensuring that learning leads to real opportunity—and that education fulfills its promise as a driver of economic and social mobility.

Too often, students are left to navigate complex systems on their own, deciphering requirements, finding opportunities, and building networks without consistent guidance or validation from the labor market. Credentials may be earned, but their value is unclear. Pathways may exist, but access is uneven. Without connection across education and workforce systems, even well-designed efforts struggle to produce durable, equitable outcomes at scale.

# How TNTP Approaches Bridging Education to Career

A seamlessly connected PK–12 to career continuum is one in which:

1

Pathways are clear, inclusive, and aligned to labor-market demand, connecting strong academics to high-wage, high-demand careers starting in PK–12.

2

Career-connected learning is intentionally sequenced and embedded across the student experience, building knowledge, skills, and momentum over time rather than through one-off experiences.

3

Employers and industry partners validate pathways and credentials, co-designing programs, defining skill standards, and signaling which credentials matter for hiring and advancement.

4

Students build skills, credentials, and social capital together, gaining access to work-based learning, trusted relationships, and guidance that help them navigate choices and transitions.

5

Education, workforce, and policy leaders operate from a shared playbook, using aligned data, incentives, and accountability to reduce fragmentation and expand access at scale.

TNTP views education to career (E2C) as a system-building challenge, not a collection of standalone programs. We start by conducting landscape and equity gap analyses to better understand local talent pipeline needs and pinpoint where access to career pathways breaks down. From there, we support districts, communities, and states in designing and scaling inclusive pathway programs that work for all students.

When the infrastructure for E2C exists, more young people will enter and persist in high-wage, high-demand pathways, including college, reducing inequities in access to opportunity and strengthening regional talent pipelines.

Over the next several years, TNTP will make progress toward this vision by focusing on three interconnected areas of work:

## Designing and scaling coherent pathways

We will support districts, states, and regions to design durable education-to-career pathways that align curriculum, credentials, work-based learning, and postsecondary options to labor-market demand. Our decades of work building educator pathways (through apprenticeships, [hands-on preparation](#), and job-embedded development) offer a proven model we will adapt and scale across sectors.

## Aligning systems, data, and accountability

We will help partners build and use linked education and workforce data systems, creating dashboards that track progress in real time and reveal equity gaps. These shared success metrics and cross-sector governance structures will enable leaders to monitor, improve, and sustain pathways over time so they can see what's working and make adjustments quickly.

## Strengthening cross-sector partnerships and field leadership

We will launch education-to-career hubs to coordinate partnerships across PK–12, higher education, and industry. We will convene coalitions of education leaders, employers, postsecondary institutions, and policymakers to co-own outcomes, validate credentials, and advance policies and practices that expand equitable access.

## Case Study

# Improving Postsecondary Planning with the Texas Effective Advising Framework

## Strengthening Advising to Connect Students to Their Futures

TNTP's partnership with the Texas Education Agency supports the [Effective Advising Framework](#) (EAF) through a pilot grant program to improve students' postsecondary planning. Embedded within school counseling programs, effective advising is designed to help students make connections between academic choices, career possibilities, and postsecondary education. TNTP trains EAF coaches to help districts support students with career exploration, career-connected pathways, work-based learning, academic and career planning, and financial aid awareness.

## Expanding a High-Impact Advising Model Statewide

At the beginning of the pilot in 2021-22, TNTP supported 18 districts with EAF implementation. Now in the partnership's fifth year, TNTP provides training and development to 30 EAF coaches who serve 75 districts across the state of Texas. In a survey administered in June 2025 to more than 300 district and campus staff engaged in the pilot, 94% were satisfied with their EAF coaching experience. The EAF empowers students to engage in individual academic and career planning and equips educators with the knowledge, resources, and time to prepare all students for their futures.

**94%**

satisfaction with  
EAF coaching  
statewide



Students collaborate during a math lesson.

## Strategic Priority Deep Dive

# Harnessing AI for Human Potential

The rise of artificial intelligence marks a global inflection point—one in which technology is advancing faster than our social contracts, institutions, and norms for human development. It is also reshaping how knowledge is produced, where learning happens, and what it will take for systems to support young people at scale. Nowhere is this more visible than in the labor market, where AI is redefining what it means to be prepared for college, career, and civic life.

These shifts are not theoretical. Students today move through schools and into postsecondary pathways mediated by algorithms—systems that screen applications, shape access to information, and increasingly influence judgment and opportunity before a human even engages. In this environment, what it means to be prepared for college, career, and civic life is fundamentally changing. Academic credentials remain necessary but are insufficient on their own. Students must develop the ability to navigate AI-enabled systems with agency: to evaluate information critically, understand bias, and adapt as technologies evolve.

Yet access to these capabilities remains deeply uneven. Without intentional leadership, AI risks compounding existing inequities—accelerating advantage for some while further marginalizing students and communities already furthest from opportunity. Students in historically underserved communities are the least likely to benefit from AI-enabled personalization, real-

time feedback, and data-informed instruction, placing them at risk of falling even further behind as expectations continue to rise.

At the same time, the challenge is not simply technical. As AI scales, urgent questions are emerging about what should be automated, what must remain human, and how education can protect dignity, connection, and wellbeing in systems increasingly designed for efficiency. Progress without human connection is fragile at best.

To truly harness AI for human potential will require more than merely adopting technology. It demands coherence, guardrails, and a clear commitment to human agency. When designed and governed intentionally, AI can strengthen instruction, support educators, and expand access to opportunity. Without that intentionality, it risks eroding trust, widening gaps, and diminishing the very human capacities education exists to cultivate.

Educators, meanwhile, are being asked to meet increasingly complex student needs with limited time, fragmented tools, and disconnected data systems. In this context, AI is not a neutral force. Used well, it can reduce friction and amplify expertise; used poorly, it can deepen inequities and accelerate burnout. Harnessing AI for human potential is therefore not optional. It is essential to accelerating academic growth, expanding access to opportunity, and ensuring education keeps pace with the world students are entering.

# How TNTP Approaches AI

When AI is used effectively:

1

Students experience learning that is **coherent, responsive, and relevant**.

2

Educators **gain timely insights** to inform instruction and support.

3

Systems **align curriculum, talent, and data** around shared goals for readiness and mobility.

Over the next several years, TNTP will advance this priority through four interconnected strategies, designed to ensure AI strengthens—not replaces—human judgment, relationships, and agency:

## Building the AI-enabled coherence layer

We will integrate AI across curriculum, instruction, talent, data, and family engagement efforts so educators and leaders can see what matters, act in real time, and deliver coherent learning experiences for students. This includes helping districts select high-quality AI and edtech tools—and supporting educators in using them well. The goal is more consistent instruction, faster learning acceleration, stronger support for students who are behind, and clearer connections between classroom learning and real-world pathways.

## Building AI fluency for educators and leaders

We will invest in professional learning that builds confidence, judgment, and practical knowledge around AI use. This work is designed to enhance—not automate—educators' practice and decision-making, ensuring AI serves as an amplifier of expertise rather than a substitute for it.

## Enhancing and extending our core work with AI

We will strengthen TNTP's existing services, including coaching, diagnostics, analytics, and systems supports, using AI to deepen the effectiveness, reach, and coherence of TNTP's core work.

## Responsible AI for opportunity

We will partner with districts and states to translate research into policies and practices that ensure AI expands access and opportunity. Our focus is on governance, incentives, and safeguards that protect students, respect educator professionalism, and prevent AI from widening gaps—using it instead to accelerate learning and readiness for all.



A Learning Acceleration Specialist reviews her lesson.

## Case Study

# Coherent Career-Connected Learning in Colorado

## Integrating AI-Enabled Career Navigation Into Advisory

This pilot brings together TNTP's expertise in instructional coherence and career-connected learning and Willow Education's curriculum and AI-powered platform for career readiness and postsecondary navigation. Students in two schools in the Colorado Alternative School Leader Cohort use Willow's AI career and college coach to connect their interests and aptitudes to high-quality colleges and career pathways.

## Strengthening Advising Through High Quality Tools and Coherent Support

TNTP is embedding this curriculum and technology at no cost into advisory programs while supporting professional development and ensuring instructional coherence. Willow's high-quality instructional materials, dynamic dashboards for teachers and counselors, and ROI-focused recommendations make advising more efficient and actionable. These partnerships are demonstrating how AI can reduce barriers, expand opportunities, and empower educators to help all young people access rigorous pathways leading to meaningful work and meaningful lives.

AI-powered career and college advising now supports students at two Colorado schools with actionable recommendations focused on ROI.

# Measuring What Matters

The system that exists today is not set up to measure the kinds of results and life outcomes that matter most for mobility. School systems measure academic growth, proficiency, and graduation rates, but the data stops short after young people finish high school. Points of connectivity between existing academic data and other indicators of mobility don't exist, making it difficult or impossible to know whether and where mobility is happening.

Measuring student experiences and capabilities is essential to scaling mobility for all young people. TNTP's measurement strategy ensures we track what works, for whom, and under what conditions, so that we can build on proof points to scale and transform student trajectories.

Our new measurement tools will include frameworks that will track whether students are building capability and agency alongside academics, surveys that reveal whether systems are coherent or fragmented, and indicators that show whether career pathways actually work. And our longitudinal measurement system will strengthen not only TNTP's accountability to our mission, but the entire sector's ability to pursue transformation based on evidence, not guesswork.

## Key Components of Our Measurement System

### Student Mobility Experiences Survey

This first-of-its-kind survey will measure student experiences and capabilities over time, providing a clear picture of how young people grow and thrive.

### Mobility Research Lab

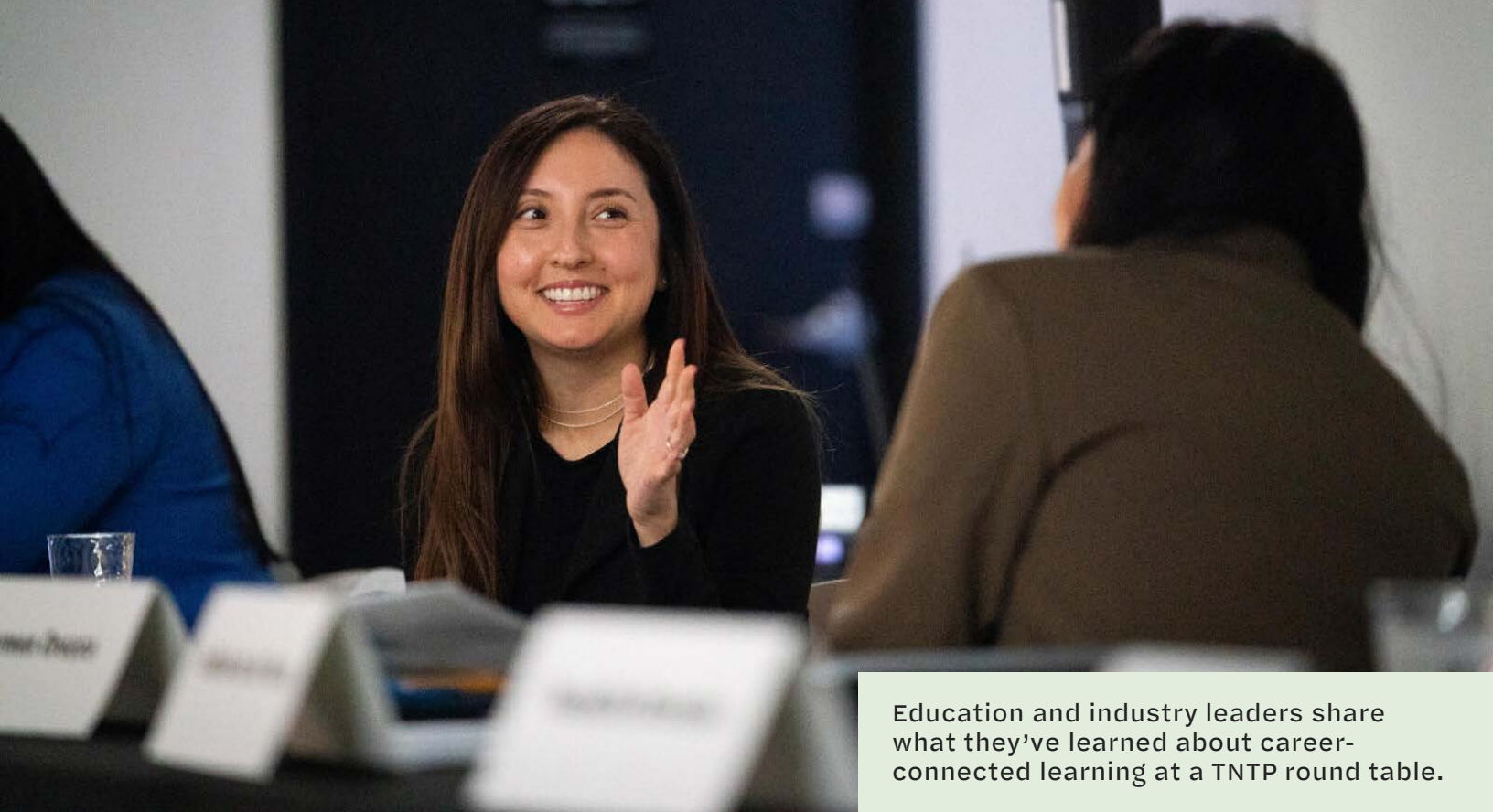
The new lab will codify longitudinal data and scale actionable insights, serving as a hub for innovation and learning that advances TNTP's national research and learning agenda.

### Progress Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

We will track leading indicators—for example, whether students are accessing rigorous instruction, participating in career pathways, building professional networks, receiving personalized guidance—to help systems identify what's working and make real-time adjustments. We also will track lagging indicators to confirm impact and ensure interventions are scalable and inclusive.

### Cross-Sector Synthesis

We will connect data across education, workforce, and community sectors to reveal how different factors work together to create opportunity—guiding smarter, more strategic investments.



Education and industry leaders share what they've learned about career-connected learning at a TNTP round table.

## Bringing Access and Capability Together at a National Scale

At TNTP, we've built something rare: an organization that connects research rigor, implementation experience, and policy expertise. Twenty-eight years of working inside schools and districts mean we understand how systems work and how change takes hold. Our track record of success is built on decades of trusted relationships and working side-by-side with our partners to deliver results for young people. Currently, TNTP partners with 4,500 districts and 35,000 schools across 39 states—bringing actionable research, proven experience transforming practice, and policy expertise few organizations can match. In more than a dozen states, those partnerships run deep, with years of sustained work that's changed how systems operate.

**In 2025 alone, TNTP improved academic experiences for millions of students.**

**6M**

students in 25 states  
experienced improved  
academic outcomes

**1.7M**

students in 15 states  
experienced personal  
systems of support

**842K**

students in 10 states  
experienced career-  
connected learning

**856K**

students in 8 states  
experienced gains in  
social capital

## Building Momentum for a National Movement

True transformation happens when local innovation scales nationally and national policy reinforces local impact. TNTP's innovations, insights, and proof points must count for millions more students than we could ever serve directly. By joining forces with cross-sector partners, TNTP can ensure that change is durable, measurable, and self-sustaining. Systemic change requires collective will. Transformational shifts in education—like Race to the Top, early standards-based reform, and the charter school movement—succeeded only when philanthropic investment, political alignment, and public belief converged around a shared agenda. TNTP's vision demands the same level of mobilization.

Sustained change requires shared ownership. By galvanizing financial, political, and social will, we create conditions where local innovation scales nationally and national policy reinforces local impact, closing the loop between practice and policy. Achieving our goal will take each of us working together to build alignment, forge partnerships, and deliver what all young people urgently need: an education that prepares them for meaningful work and meaningful lives.



Students participate in a community event prioritizing their viewpoints and arming them with new skills.

# Where to Start

## 1. Understand the Student Experience

For state and system leaders ready to act, the starting point is understanding the lived experiences of young people in your system today. Before setting new policies or launching programs, leaders must first see clearly:

- What does a student actually experience as they move through classrooms and schools and transition to their future careers?
- Where is learning coherent—and where does it fragment?
- Where does technology strengthen learning—and where is it adding confusion?
- Where are students building real capability and agency, and where are they navigating complexity on their own?

## 2. Diagnose Your System

From there, leaders must diagnose their system honestly and rigorously. This means assessing not just outcomes, but the conditions producing them—how instruction, supports, data, and pathways interact across grade levels and institutions. Diagnose where misalignment, duplication, or gaps are holding students back and where leverage points already exist. Importantly, this step allows leaders to resist the temptation to do everything at once. Transformation begins with focus.

## 3. Commit and Stay the Course

The final step is commitment. Leaders must choose a small number of clear, measurable goals aligned to student experience and relentlessly work toward them over time. Build data systems that track whether students are gaining capability and agency—and progressing toward their desired careers. Deepen coherence with each cycle.

Systems that succeed are not necessarily those that move fastest, but those that stay focused, returning again and again to what matters most for students.



A student shares her recommendation during a community meeting.

### We're here to help.

Working together, we can make sure durable transformation takes hold in your system, so it begins to deliver both access and capability at scale.

# Coherence Work in Action

## From Targeted Support to Districtwide Coherence in Cumberland County

### Accelerating Support for Students with Learning Differences

After working with TNTP to implement high-quality instructional materials in 2020, Cumberland County expanded the partnership to strengthen academic strategies across the district. First, the district provided individualized support to students with learning differences in schools identified as Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI), including their basic-skills high school and Stone Elementary School. Both schools improved enough to exit the ATSI list within two years.

### Expanding Instructional Coherence Across the District

Building on those successes, the district continued its work with TNTP to grow instructional coherence districtwide, beginning with the special education department. As elementary and middle schools saw gains from implementation partnerships, the district extended similar support to two high schools. TNTP has supported district leadership in building capacity, implementing high-quality instructional materials, and shaping a districtwide vision for instructional coherence.

Support for students with learning differences led to **two schools exiting the Additional Targeted Support & Improvement list** in just two years.

## A Scalable Model for Literacy Gains in Knox County, TN

### Piloting a Skills-Based Approach to Reading Intervention

Tennessee's investments in literacy were paying off, but achievement gaps remained. TNTP supported Knox County in launching an intervention pilot to group students not by tier, but according to specific skill needs. By anchoring intervention in Tier I-aligned instructional materials, the new model created consistency and coherence for both students and teachers.

### A Model for Scalable Literacy Gains

Students in the new model gained two extra months of learning in one year, and teachers and leaders showed strong support for the approach. Bridging state policy and classroom practice, this collaboration demonstrates the power of coherence across all levels of a system. Knox County's scalable model offers a roadmap for other districts and states seeking to improve reading outcomes for all students.

Students gained **two extra months** of learning in one year.

## Building Educator Expertise in the Science of Reading for Diverse Learners

### Accelerating Early Literacy Growth Through Coherent, Evidence-Based Instruction

To ensure every student learns how to read by the end of first grade, the Fresno High Region partnered with TNTP to build educators' knowledge and skills in evidence-based literacy instruction. Using the science of reading as a foundation, TNTP's professional learning sessions in the science of language and literacy included specific strategies for students with learning differences and multilingual learners.

### Driving K–2 Literacy Gains Through Aligned Professional Learning

Professional learning sessions supported both K-2 teachers and school leaders, contributing to coherence at the district and school levels. In two years, every grade in K-2 across the Fresno High Region experienced growth. The percentage of first graders on grade level rose from 7 percent at the beginning of the 2024-25 school year to 52 percent by the end of the year.

First graders reading on grade level increased from **7** to **52 percent** in one year.

## Driving Citywide Gains in NYC Through Coherent Professional Learning

### Supporting NYCPS to Implement Systemwide Literacy and Math Initiatives

In 2023-24, New York City Public Schools (NYCPS) launched two massive initiatives—NYC Reads and NYC Solves—to ensure all students in the nation's largest public school system become strong readers and develop the math skills required for educational, career, and lifetime success. In addition to guiding planning and analytics, TNTP manages professional learning providers to ensure consistent and effective coaching to teachers serving 435,000 students across 840 schools. In addition, TNTP is helping to strengthen coherence along the vertical spine of NYCPS by managing professional learning providers to support school and district leaders.

### Accelerating Student Outcomes Through High-Quality, Consistent Coaching

Recent state assessment data reveals that student outcomes are improving considerably. Across grades 3-8 in a single year, students made a 3.5-point gain in Math proficiency. Students in third grade made a 13-point gain in English Language Arts (ELA) scores, while those in fifth grade made a 15-point gain. The scale of NYC Reads will expand in future years so that by 2035, all NYCPS students will be thriving readers and writers.

Third-grade students gained **13 points** and fifth graders gained **15 points** in English Language Arts.

# Building Academically Rigorous CTE Programs in Portland, OR

## Embedding Literacy Instruction in CTE Classrooms

TNTP is partnering with Portland Public Schools to support literacy instruction embedded in Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses, aligning directly with our research on the five factors of economic and social mobility. After the initial three-hour professional learning session, 100% of participating CTE teachers implemented literacy routines within one week, including technical writing and student-led text analysis, driving measurable gains in engagement and retention that were in evidence in all classrooms one month later.

## A Scalable Model for Literacy-Rich Career-Connected Learning

This pilot demonstrates how rigorous academics and career-connected learning can coexist, creating pathways to high-wage careers and long-term mobility. With plans to scale nationally, Portland's success is setting the standard for literacy-rich CTE programs.

Just one week after an initial three-hour professional learning session, **100% of participating CTE teachers implemented rigorous literacy instruction**, driving measurable gains in engagement and retention.

# Education-to-Career Work in Action

## Expanding Students' Career Pathways at Alton HS, IL

### Redesigning Career Pathways to Align with Local Workforce Needs

Across the Mississippi River from St. Louis, Alton High School set out to redesign career-connected learning (CCL) to align students' academic experiences in school with the needs of the current and future workforce. The district leaders partnered with TNTP to bring the vision to life and help all students gain the skills, knowledge, and experiences they need for thriving careers and lives after graduation.

### Integrated Programs of Study Expand Opportunities for Every Student

TNTP and Alton leaders convened a broad set of stakeholders, including students, educators, industry professionals, and business leaders to design career pathways that prepare Alton's young people for various roles in the local job market. New programs of study in the fields of engineering, cyber security, automotive technology, biomedicine, and architectural design combine relevant coursework throughout grades 9-12, internships and other workplace experience during school hours, and state-recognized endorsements earned upon graduation so all Alton students can access greater opportunities.

Broad stakeholder engagement led to **new programs of study aligned to local career opportunities.**

## Expanding BioSTEM Pathways for Rural East TN Students

### Elevating CTE Through Teacher-Led Design and Industry Partnerships

To increase student access to BioSTEM careers, TNTP and the Niswonger Foundation have partnered since 2023 to develop new CTE pathways in rural East Tennessee. Bolstering CTE pathways with high-quality curriculum and professional learning, this partnership is facilitating teacher-driven course design and bringing in industry expertise and work-based learning experiences to improve students' opportunities in high-wage, high-skill careers.

### Expanding and Launching New Pathways for High-Skill Careers

In 2024-25, TNTP supported 10 teachers in their design of the first two courses in a BioSTEM pathway and trained 11 teachers to teach the newly designed courses to 500 students. In the summer of 2025, TNTP trained 21 educators to deliver instruction to nearly 900 students in BioSTEM during the 2025-26 school year. Now embarking on a new five-year partnership, TNTP and Niswonger are expanding BioSTEM throughout East Tennessee and developing a new pathway for Data Sciences.

Nearly **900 rural students accessed CTE instruction** in a BioSTEM pathway program.

# **Strengthening Educator Preparation for High-Quality Literacy Instruction in Tennessee**

## **Creating a Shared Vision for Strong Literacy Practices Across EPPs**

TNTP supports a group of Tennessee educator prep programs (EPPs) to align training to national best practices for literacy curriculum implementation. Drawing on collaborations between public school systems and local universities, the network of partners constructed a shared vision of strong literacy instructional practices and necessary coursework for future elementary teachers in EPPs, including practices for multilingual and neurodiverse learners.

## **Aligning Coursework and Practice to Prepare Future Teachers for Diverse Learners**

In school site visits, partnership teams held robust discussions about aligning coursework and practice for future teachers in Tennessee. With a sustained focus on diverse learners in literacy classrooms, teams collaborated monthly to work through shared problems of practice, enhancing communication between early-career educators and mentors. By establishing systems and structures for training and support, these partnerships aim to prepare all licensure-seeking candidates to teach early literacy using HQIM to all students in the state of Tennessee.

Aligning state systems for educator prep programs  
**ensures all students receive high-quality literacy instruction.**

# Harnessing AI in Action

## Using AI to Strengthen Coaching with Indianapolis Teaching Fellows

### Using AI to Deepen Teacher Reflection and Classroom Insights

Now in its third iteration, this pilot with the Indianapolis Teaching Fellows demonstrates how AI can strengthen instruction. Using the Sibme platform, educators record their lessons on video, and the AI model analyzes patterns in teacher movement, student voices, and rubric-aligned instruction. In peer-learning sessions, teachers swap videos and reflect together using shared AI-generated data.

### Expanding Coaching Capacity to Focus on Consistency and Growth

In addition to freeing up coaching capacity, this pilot demonstrates how AI tools can accelerate development in meaningful ways, so that educators can focus on consistent routines and instructional growth. This work is shaping TNTP's emerging perspective on how AI tools can be used responsibly to enhance coaching, strengthen instructional improvement, and expand access to high-quality support for educators.

AI tools **free up coaching capacity** so educators can focus on instructional growth.

## Building the Foundation for AI-Ready Systems in Indianapolis

### Establishing Coherent Data Systems in Indiana's Second-Largest District

In December 2024, TNTP partnered with Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS), Indiana's second-largest district serving ~32,000 students, to support the Chief Systems Officer in launching a new Systems Division comprising three departments: Digital Strategy, Data Governance, and Enterprise Data Strategy. TNTP began with a landscape analysis to assess data culture. Through strategic advising, the co-development of data management and analytics strategy, and adaptive leadership coaching, TNTP is helping IPS build the foundation for AI-ready systems.

### Creating the Infrastructure for District-Wide AI Capabilities

Early wins include mapping key data systems (Transportation, Munis, PowerSchool), increasing operational understanding, and building stakeholder trust. TNTP's change and talent management expertise has been recognized as transformative for IPS leadership. By establishing data governance and coherent systems strategy, this partnership is creating the trusted infrastructure needed for future AI integration to support both instructional and operational innovation.

Early work created IPS's first unified map of key data systems, **strengthening trust and collaboration.**

# About TNTP

TNTP has spent nearly three decades building credible partnerships with schools, districts, states, and policymakers across the country. We don't just research what works—we implement it alongside educators and leaders, then use what we learn to shape policy. This cycle of research, hands-on work, and advocacy is how we've earned trust at every level of the system.



Discover resources and more at [tntp.org](https://tntp.org)

